

**House of Keys
General Election
Thursday
22 September 2016**



M Richard
McAleer

for Arbory, Castletown and Malew

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

My name is Richard McAleer

I was born and raised on the Island, by my parents Ella and Paddy. Educated at King William's College I went on to study for a degree in Banking and Finance at the University of Ulster Coleraine. Since graduating in 1992 I have gained a wealth of experience in both Public and Private sectors of the economy, qualifying as a Chartered Certified Accountant in 2009 and becoming a fellow in 2014. I was a keen sportsman and represented the Island at hockey, I have also completed 5 marathons for charity. I got married to Ruth (nee Hansbury) last October at King William's College and have two step-daughters, we live in Victoria Road Castletown.

In 2012 I was elected to the board of Castletown Commissioners and had the honour of being elected Chairman in 2014, I have since been returned to the board in the recent local elections and have once again been elected as Chairman. I am taking the step into national politics because I believe that the Island needs a new generation of politicians with fresh perspectives on the many issues facing the government.

Like many people I am concerned at the way the island's finances are being eroded by one mishandled project after another. The next five years are going to be challenging for us all and I believe I possess the skills, the drive and the passion to help the island prosper. Standing for MHK is not a lifelong ambition, but rather something that I feel is right at this time in my life, I want to use the knowledge I have gained both in the civil service and in local government in a positive manner. I give my commitment that if elected I will devote my full attention to the job in hand, you cannot be an MHK and try to continue your previous job, if you are committed to doing it properly.



I hope you will agree with my vision as laid out in my manifesto and I hope that you will put your faith in me by voting McAleer on 22 September.

ECONOMY



The Island has survived the recession since 2009, remarkably well, indeed the Isle of Man is one of the few jurisdictions to have maintained economic growth throughout this period. However, all is not rosy, there are challenges ahead and the continued efforts to balance the budget must continue.

Having said that it does not mean that the government has to stand still. With good stewardship it will still be possible to provide the frontline services that so many people on the Island rely on. Cutting out the waste within government is the key to this, unfortunately over the last five years there have been many examples of money being spent unwisely. The TT World Series and National Insurance fund consultations, buying a diesel engine that is not fit for purpose to name a few. This wastage on a whim must stop.

The government budgetary system needs a major overhaul, the current system unfortunately encourages the silo mentality and leads to waste at the end of the financial year on projects that ordinarily would not be done. A list of priorities for the government must be drawn up and business plans with detailed cost benefit analysis done to ensure that taxpayers money is not wasted. Health, Education, Welfare and Emergency services must be at the top of the queue when the resources are allocated. Each department would receive a budget to meet its core

duties anything above that would need to be justified with a business case. Capital budget schemes must continue as these give the construction industry a boost and in turn the Treasury will see its revenue increase in Tax and NI contributions and local spend in the economy through the multiplier effect.

A fully costed plan to reduce the £3 billion public sector pension liability must be developed and implemented. The government appointed new Investment advisors earlier this year, now is the time for them to prove their worth in terms of returns on the government's investments. The general reserves must not be allowed to be eroded to prop up the pensions, it is time for the ludicrous lump sum payments to cease, I would suggest a cap of a maximum of one year's salary with the balance paid out in larger monthly instalments. The current scheme is unsustainable, it will of course require the goodwill of employer, employee and unions for any new scheme to succeed.

The Island is too reliant on the finance sector, new sectors in the economy need to be identified, preferably ones that don't rely on

low taxation or beneficial VAT treatment. There are industries that can be targeted biomedical science and computer graphic design have been suggested as possible options. The Enterprise scheme should assist in this venture.

Brexit is an unknown quantity for the Isle of Man as nobody is sure exactly what the outcome of the UK triggering Article 50 would be. It is, therefore, vital that the new government maintain pressure on the UK to look after our interests in any negotiations. It would also be prudent to identify and investigate potential options such as links with Ireland, Far East and indeed Scotland if it chose independence in the future.



HEALTHCARE

The hospital is experiencing many problems, I have spoken to a number of nurses about the issues they are confronted with on a daily basis. They are dedicated individuals who just want to be able to do their jobs and provide care for the sick.

One of the main issues that has been raised is the lack of beds available in the hospital. The reason given is that due to lack of care home beds for the elderly, they are staying longer in hospital because there is nowhere for them to go, this is scandalous. Our population is getting older and living longer, we need to ensure that adequate provision is made for their care in later life. We should be opening new care homes not knocking them down. I would like to see a strategy to remedy this situation developed as a matter of urgency.



The Health service was created to provide medical care to the people, it was not created to be a book balancing exercise. I would like to see patients given the best treatment possible whether that be a revolutionary new drug or an alternative new therapy. We need to get back to basics let the Consultants, Doctors and nursing staff do their jobs without worrying about budgets, that is the responsibility of the minister and the department.

The Isle of Man spent around £17M in 2015/16 on third party referrals, a large proportion of this will relate to off-island appointments. I accept that these appointments are necessary, however, is it always necessary to send patients across to the UK when viable alternatives are available? Costs could be saved in this area by either flying the Consultant in to the Isle of Man more regularly or alternatively using the advances in technology by means of virtual appointments using videolinks and electronic records.

Mental healthcare is another area where the Island needs to do better, unfortunately there are many people on the Island who suffer from a wide range of mental health issues. They are often left to fend for themselves or the police are called out to deal with them. This is not fair on them or the police. As a matter of urgency more provision needs to be made for Mental healthcare, whether it be support at home, education for the wider population into symptoms and treatment and more secure units in the most extreme cases. Dementia friendly shops are becoming the norm now and I congratulate those responsible for educating the public into this horrible disease. As an island we need to be tolerant and offer support to those who suffer in silence.

EDUCATION

The island can be very proud of its achievements in terms of exam success, every year the schools seem to hit new record levels at A level and GCSE. This is in no small part due to the dedication of the teachers in all schools who go the extra mile to assist pupils hit their true potential.

There is room for improvement.

Primary school class sizes need reducing, there are too many examples of mixed aged classes at the moment putting a strain on teacher and pupil alike. Primary education is vital as it puts in place the building blocks for when the children move into secondary education and exam curricula. Giving the schools additional resources to assist with larger class sizes is a price worth paying.



EDUCATION CONTINUED

After school activities are just as important as the lessons taught in the classroom, in many ways it is outside the classroom where the child develops life skills. More financial support for after school clubs, youth clubs and sporting activities is needed. This should be extended where possible to the school holidays. The children are our future.

We need to do more to support our undergraduates while they are at university or indeed studying locally at the IOM College and Business schools.

Local business could be encouraged to sponsor students throughout their higher education in return for a guaranteed period of employment after graduation or qualification. Every young person deserves a start in life and it's the government's role in partnership with the private sector to provide it. Early diagnosis of learning difficulties

such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Autism, together with ongoing practical support are essential to give children a fighting chance in the academic studies and onward into early adult life.

The proposed new Castle Rushen High School must be built as soon as possible. Arbory School also needs consideration for new permanent classroom blocks to replace existing portacabins.

More vocational training schemes need to be introduced to cater for those not in employment or further education. These could be used to target skills gaps in the manufacturing sector of the economy.

I would welcome the introduction of Politics into the curriculum but as an option not a compulsory subject. Students could learn about the structure and workings of both Tynwald and Westminster and how what is decided in the parliaments affects their lives.



INFRASTRUCTURE

ROADS AND RIVERS

Many of our roads are a disgrace, especially in more rural areas, The DOI must develop a plan for regular repairs to our road network to ensure that the major reconstructions are not necessary. A lot of the issues in the past are simply down to lack of maintenance. All major routes should be included in a rolling maintenance schedule and the more rural routes done at least every 5 to 10 years. This includes maintaining drainage and underground culverts.

A similar plan is necessary on the waterways and harbours around the island, it won't prevent flooding but it will reduce the level of flooding if the rivers are cleared regularly. I welcome the flood defence plans for Castletown but the drains need new valves to prevent the water coming up through them in Hope Street in particular. Drainage work is also needed in Glen Road and Main Road Colby and also on Crossag Road in Ballasalla.

The entire system needs an overhaul, it is at best confusing and at worst a case of resubmitting applications until you have worn down your opposition. I would agree with proposals to give local authorities more control over the day to day issues like window replacement and small extensions, leaving the department to deal with large projects and any appeals. I would like to see the Minister take a back seat in the process and if a plan has been rejected for valid reasons in terms of infrastructure, their decision must stand. Too many times projects that have been refused by the planning inspector have been overturned by the minister.

PLANNING

There needs to be an element of flexibility re use of land for economic use, for instance if a piece of agricultural land is no longer used for farming it should be allowed to be used by the landowner for another business use within reason. Common sense needs to be applied.

Granting of interested party status at appeals should be limited to the Local authority, local MHKs, relevant government departments and those members of the community directly affected by the planning application. This should be on grounds of environmental and infrastructure issues only, to remove elements of Nimbyism.



INFRASTRUCTURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

I welcome the plans to give the local authorities more responsibility, however, it is vital that they are given the additional

resources to carry out additional tasks in terms of increased finance.

I would welcome an all-Island rate review, the current system is not fit for purpose and discriminates against ratepayers. I would also like to see the way public sector rents are calculated included in that process. Local authorities must be included in any discussions in these areas.

Local authorities should be working closer together, I am not advocating mergers into four regional authorities but more a system of identifying areas of mutual benefit and cost sharing to reduce the burden on ratepayers.

Shared Housing waiting lists are coming into force which is a major step in the right direction to bring the waiting lists down. I have no doubt this will benefit the people of the South over the next few years.

Finally, Waste, the Island needs a cohesive policy on recycling so that it can then formulate a plan to maximise the use of the Energy from Waste Plant. Currently, it is a mess and as a result the Energy from Waste Plant often works under capacity. It has been suggested that waste pellets be imported from the UK to make up the shortfall, I would need to see a proper cost benefit analysis before committing to that. Many of the smaller authorities have contracted out their waste collection giving a huge saving on the costs of collecting waste to their ratepayers.

OTHER ISSUES

Emergency services need to be maintained to a level whereby they can work effectively and have sufficient resources to maintain safe cover and the ability to respond to major incidents. Money seized from the proceeds of crime should be used to help fund these essential services.

Transport links to the UK & Ireland must be reliable, the Steam Packet must invest in new vessels capable of sailing in the rough Irish seas before any new user agreement is signed. The airlines must provide reliable services to all major UK centres and provide flights at convenient times for business and leisure travellers alike. The open skies policy needs revisiting to ensure it is doing as it was intended i.e provide choice to the traveller.

The welfare benefit system needs a major review to ensure that the people who are in need are receiving what they are entitled to and that those who are cheating the system are punished. Child maintenance payments should all be made through the courts to ensure that estranged parents do not default on these payments to support children. I've heard far too many cases of this happening on the island. Carers allowance for those looking after sick or incapacitated relatives should be paid automatically.

OTHER ISSUES

Manx meat is among the best in the world, more needs to be done to protect our producers, our supermarkets must stock bona fide Manx products. Likewise, the fisheries around our coastline need more protection. More stringent fines need to be implemented to punish overfishing and undersized catches.



Tourism – the halcyon days are long gone but there are still opportunities to be exploited, cruise ships are regular visitors to our shores, a dedicated welcome centre and shopping area within the sea terminal would give a good first impression, it is like a ghost town after 6pm.

Promoting more major sporting events on the Island would increase our profile worldwide, Cycling is a success story that we should be trying to exploit in terms of a major stage race eg Tour of Britain. Motorsports have always been a draw, Motorcycle trials events are becoming more regular now especially at junior level. For these to work we need sympathetic pricing from the ferry operators and organisers must maintain the goodwill of private landowners and public alike..

The TT, Festival of Motorcycling and Southern 100 continue to draw in the crowds, increased exposure on ITV4 has certainly helped. It is important that the DED do not allow them to be over commercialised or they will lose their appeal.

Our historic modes of transport must be protected, the horse trams should come under the same control as Electric and Steam railways they are part of our heritage.

Whoever is elected on the 22nd September must work smarter and harder to restore the faith of the island's electorate.

There must be an end to the waste that has happened in previous administrations and the future of the Island and its people secured for generations to come.

LOCAL ISSUES

The new constituency is split into the three local authorities that name it; Arbory, Castletown and Malew.

Each area has its own specific issues and problems to overcome.

Arbory

As I touched on earlier, the roads in the area particularly those leading up to the hills are in disrepair, caused primarily by lack of maintenance and flood waters after heavy rain. Glen Road and the Ronague road are particularly bad. I would like to see a comprehensive plan put in place to bring these roads up to standard and to install adequate road side drainage to prevent the issues that arise every winter. Adequate drainage also needs to be put in place outside the Colby Glen pub which is a black spot for standing water. Ballabeg needs a crossing point to enable pupils going to Arbory School to cross the road in safety. Friary Park residents are still experiencing difficulties selling properties due to the issue of banks being reluctant to grant mortgages on Cambar build houses, this issue needs to be resolved.

Malew

The industrial estates at Balthane and Ronaldsway are to be part of an Enterprise zone designed to attract new and exciting businesses to the area. These businesses will create jobs in the area, bring high net worth individuals who will buy houses, send their children to our schools, spend in our shops, pubs and restaurants giving the area in general a major boost. A lot of money has been spent by Malew Commissioners in upgrading facilities in Balthane estate, making it more inviting to industry and a viable alternative to Braddan. In many ways Ronaldsway and Ballasalla are the gateways to the south, talk of a bypass is in my view misplaced. I believe sensible traffic calming measures especially at peak times during the day is sufficient to keep the traffic moving through Ballasalla.

The traffic calming measures in St Mark's although cumbersome are having the desired effect, slowing the traffic down through the village. More traffic calming measures are needed in my opinion along Phildraw Road where drivers seem to be oblivious of the speed limits. Finally, Derbyhaven residents have raised concerns regarding the Golf Links Hotel redevelopment due to the residential aspect of the scheme and the implications of increased heavy goods traffic during construction and increased traffic after construction. I will pledge to work with them to get a satisfactory outcome for all parties.

LOCAL ISSUES

Castletown

The main issue is the continuing problems with the retail heart of the town, It has been in decline for several years, high rents and lack of footfall contributing to its demise. There are a number of empty retail units in both Arbory and Malew Streets, there needs to be a collective effort to try and attract new businesses and once in to encourage them to stay. The Department of Economic Development can play a key role here with its system of grants and small business support schemes. The existing traders also need support they have suffered over the last 18 months not only with the effects of the downturn but also due to Regeneration works. There is talk of a new retail outlet on the site of Ocean Ford garage, but I am concerned that it will seriously affect existing businesses due to its location. A location in the centre of the town would be more beneficial in terms of footfall. Several businesses have invested heavily for the future and with new businesses in the pipeline to supplement the existing retail outlets, things may be starting to turn. Working together is the key and the Commissioners and Chamber of Commerce need to lead the way by promoting a positive message about the future of the town.

Housing is still badly needed to help provide the footfall for the recovery of the town. Any developments need to be sited sympathetically to the town's infrastructure and protect its natural environment. I would not support any scheme to the south of Castle Rushen High School. There are better sites available elsewhere in the town.

The much vaunted flood defences are in the planning stage, there have been modifications requested by the Commissioners. The lake above the Apostles Bridge has been dredged and pressure will be maintained to get the river and harbour done too. The Silverburn has too much debris in it upstream and it needs a good clean up.



M Richard **McAleer**



for Arbory, Castletown and Malew

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto, I hope I have done enough to convince you that I have the skills, the passion and the experience needed to be your representative in the House of Keys for the next five years. The only promise that I make is that I will work tirelessly on your behalf to try and make the Island a fairer, more prosperous society for us all and not just the privileged few.

Polling Stations
Thursday 22nd September from 8am to 8pm
Methodist Hall, Main Road Colby
Methodist Hall, Main Road Ballabeg
Ballasalla Village Hall, Mill Road, Ballasalla
Civic Centre, Farrants Way, Castletown

Please check your polling cards carefully to find the right polling station. If you need any assistance getting to a polling station or you have any questions relating to my manifesto please use one of the methods below to contact me.

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Castletown and Malew



**Use your vote wisely and please
Vote McALEER on 22 September
for a fresh start**