WHAT IS IT?
The Act is a key part of the Government response to the personal debt crisis affecting so many people. It will provide three ways of dealing with debt for those who are insolvent - ie, unable to pay your debts or meet your liabilities.

WHAT ARE THESE THREE STRANDS?
- A Debt Relief Notice which will allow for the write-off of debt up to €20,000. This will generally deal with unsecured debt - ie, typically bank loans and credit card debt, against which no property or goods have been placed as security against non-payment.
- A Debt Settlement Arrangement for the agreed settlement of unsecured debt, with no limit involved.
- A Personal Insolvency Arrangement for the agreed settlement of secured debt up to €3m, and unsecured debt with no limit involved. Mortgages are the most common form of secured loans.

DEBT RELIEF NOTICE [DRN]:
If a DRN is issued for you, it will allow for the write-off of your qualifying debt up to €20,000, subject to a 3-year supervision period. During this period your creditors will not be able to pursue you for payment, but if your circumstances improve, you may have to pay part of your debts accordingly. At the end of the 3 years, all of the debts covered by the DRN will be written off, even if you have not managed to pay anything off them.

To get a DRN, you must apply through an “Approved Intermediary”. Several Money Advice and Budgeting Services (MABS) have been authorised as Approved Intermediaries to date. The Approved Intermediary will not charge you for their assistance. However, the Insolvency Service, the State agency which oversees the system, will charge an application fee of €100.

DEBT SETTLEMENT ARRANGEMENT [DSA]:
This will provide for the agreed settlement of unsecured debt with one or more creditors over a period of 5 years, with a possible agreed extension to 6 years. You may apply for a DSA if the level of your income, assets and debts would make you ineligible for a Debt Relief Notice. You must be able to make some repayments to your creditors in return for a discount of your debts. The DSA will be a voluntary arrangement and it will have to get the support of creditors representing at least 65% of your total debt. When the agreed period ends, and if your DSA has operated successfully, you will be discharged from the debts that it covered.

To get a DSA, you must process your application through a Personal Insolvency Practitioner (PIP), an expert approved by the Insolvency Service. A PIP will charge a fee for the work they do.

PERSONAL INSOLVENCY ARRANGEMENT (PIA):
This will provide for the agreed settlement of secured debt up to a limit of €3 million (although this cap may be increased with the consent of all secured creditors) and an unlimited amount of unsecured debt. A PIA will run over a period of 6 years, with a possible agreed extension to 7 years.

You must be able to make some repayments to your creditors in return for a discount of your debts. It will be a voluntary arrangement and will have to get the support of a specified majority of your creditors.

When the agreed period ends, and if your PIA has operated successfully, you will be discharged from the unsecured debts that it covered but the secured debt will only be discharged to the extent specified in the PIA.

To get a PIA, you must process your application through a Personal Insolvency Practitioner.

For further information on all of the above, see www.isi.gov.ie.
Along with my colleague Cllr Michael O’Donovan, I am happy to report solid progress on several of our key Fingal Council projects in Dublin 15. Taking ownership of the historic Shackleton Gardens at Beechpark, Clonsilla was a great achievement, but now, thanks to a recent Government grant and some Council funding, we are in a position to speed up the work of restoring this important heritage site and opening it to local people. A path linking the children’s playground to the Gardens will mean that Dublin 15 residents, young and somewhat older, will be able to enjoy this new park.

Government funding has also been allocated to St. Catherine’s Park, on the back road to Lucan. This park is already very popular with walkers, but now a BMX track, Par 3 golf and extra G.A.A. and soccer pitches will greatly upgrade the facility.

Meanwhile, we are continuing work on the new 60-acre park at Tyrrelstown in consultation with the local clubs and the community, while in Hartstown Park, the recently opened all-weather facility is really delivering, as it is used intensively by the Community School for P.E., and by local clubs at evenings and weekends.

Joan and councillors are always available to advise and help local clubs and organisations. Feel free to contact us at any time.”

At the launch of the new Fingal Chamber website, Chamber President Siobhan Moore, Minister Joan Burton, Chamber CEO Tony Lambert and Louise Phelan, Vice President of Global Operations EMEA, Paypal
PUSH FOR FUNDS TO TACKLE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Tackling unemployment is the number one priority facing the country. The economic chaos which the Government inherited on taking office meant there was a very real risk that the Live Register would exceed 500,000. Thankfully, the work undertaken by the Government in stabilising the economy is now paying off. The number of people on the Live Register has fallen from 469,713 in August 2011 to 435,280 now. But there is still a long way to go.

The Youth Guarantee, designed to tackle youth unemployment, will help. Since her introduction to the European Parliament, Emer Costello championed the idea of a Youth Guarantee, and during the Irish Presidency of the EU, Joan Burton brokered the negotiations that saw member states agree to introduce such a system from next year.

The Guarantee will seek to ensure young people an offer of a quality job, education, an apprenticeship or work placement within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving-full-time education. Work is now under way in the Department of Social Protection on a phased rollout of the Guarantee from next year, while Emer is fighting at EU level for a suitable allocation of funds for the initiative.

FIGHTING DEPRIVATION ACROSS EUROPE

A new €3.5 billion programme to combat deprivation across the EU is set to be introduced early next year. During Ireland’s Presidency of the EU, Joan advanced the negotiations on the proposed new “Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived”, while Emer was appointed the European Parliament’s rapporteur for the initiative.

This meant Emer drafted a key report for the European Parliament on the proposals. As a result of her work, the Parliament overwhelmingly agreed that the fund should be increased from its proposed budget of €2.5 billion to €3.5 billion. The fund is intended to support the provision of food aid and essential items to people suffering from severe material deprivation, especially the homeless and poorer households with children, and to help bring them in from the margins of society. Emer is now working to ensure the new fund can start distributing grants from early 2014.

ROAD UPGRADES, PYRITE REPORT

Along with my colleague Cllr Mary McCamley who lives in the Mulhuddart area, we would like to thank the residents of Mulhuddart/Tyrrelstown and Corduff for their patience with the many on-going road works taking place around the area. The Mulhuddart Interchange will be a great asset to both commuters and pedestrians travelling to and from the area. The Interchange project is on time and is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.

The new N2/N3 road link is now fully completed and is a fantastic asset to the area providing a much needed connection between the Navan and Ashbourne Roads. Resurfacing works along the old Navan road are now completed, along with the Kilshane Road which also recently underwent road resurfacing. There is also the building of two new kiosks to facilitate new businesses in Mulhuddart Village which are to be welcomed and should be completed within a short time.

There has been some work completed on the pyrite issue and Cllr Mary McCamley is a member of the Pyrite Resolution Committee on Fingal County Council which meets regularly with a view of trying to contribute to the resolution of this terrible blight which has affected a number of estates in our area as well as the greater Fingal County.
This autumn marks the centenary of the famous Dublin Lockout in 1913. 20,000 workers were locked out as employers refused to recognise their right to be members of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU), led by Big Jim Larkin.

Joan Burton TD

Invites you to a Public Lecture by

Padraig Yeates

Padraig Yeates is the author of the definitive history of the 1913 Lockout.

Also Dr John Walsh: Lecturer in Education Trinity College

Sally Anne Kinihan Deputy General Secretary ICTU

Joan Burton TD Minister for Social Protection

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Blanchardstown Centre
8pm, Monday September 30th 2013

Do make time to visit the 'Dublin Lockout' exhibition at the National Library of Ireland beside the Dail in Kildare Street, www.nli.ie which examines the background, events and aftermath of the Lockout. This free exhibition runs from 21 August 2013 to 30 March 2014.

To contact Joan

- Call her on 6184006 (office hours)
- Email her: joan.burton@oireachtas.ie with any query or your views on current local and national issues
- Write to her: Joan Burton TD, Leinster House, Dublin 2
- Visit her web site www.joanburton.ie to keep up to date on her activites in the Dáil and in Dublin West.