POBALScoil IOSOLDE PALMERSTOWN GETS GREEN LIGHT
FOR MAJOR EXTENSION

Congratulations to the principal, staff, students and parents of Pobalscoil Iosolde on the recent announcement that the school has been granted planning permission for a major extension which will include a new school library, 5 new permanent classrooms and 2 resource rooms. I pushed this issue with Minister Ruairí Quinn after I was asked by the school to do so, and I am delighted that he has managed to put the money in place for the extension as part of Labour’s school building programme, which is designed to get children out of prefabs and into permanent classrooms.

I was delighted to be able to help the school out in their effort to get this important extension. It’s very important for the Palmerstown Community that the children of the area have the best facilities for their education and this extension will certainly help with that. I’m particularly pleased that the extension will have a new school library as part of it which will provide pupils with a very good study space, which will be a great help for exams.

I wish all the staff, students and parents of Pobalscoil Iosolde the very best of luck with the new extension and I hope it will be built and opened without delay.

WORKING ON THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE TO EXPOSE WRONGDOING

I have been working hard on the Public Accounts Committee to expose wrongdoing in charities and public bodies, such as the Central Remedial Clinic (CRC). As a former teacher of children with special needs in a CRC run school, I was outraged by the revelations at the Public Accounts Committee that the former chair of the charity received a pension lump sum of over €740,000.

The Public Accounts Committee is the taxpayer’s watchdog and is there to ensure that there is full accountability with the taxpayer’s money. The revelations of lavish pay and pensions at the CRC charity, which was receiving millions of euro in taxpayer’s money, were sickening and quite shocking to the entire country, and the PAC was ultimately the body that uncovered the scandal.

I worked for over 10 years helping children with special needs in Clondalkin to develop to their full potential, and I was horrified and deeply angered by the incredible pay and pensions which senior people at the CRC were getting. I am committed to rooting out this kind of practice across any body in receipt of public money.

I take very seriously my responsibility to the citizens of our country that their taxes are spent well and not wasted, and that wrongdoing in any form should be uncovered and punished. I will continue to work on the Public Accounts Committee to uncover scandals and waste of taxpayers money and to hold those responsible to account.

MASSIVE BOOST OF 58,000 JOBS IN 2013

Creating jobs is the best route to growth and the fight against poverty. To date:

- 58,000 jobs were created in 2013.
- 1,200 on average are being created per week.
- Unemployment has reduced from 15.1% in 2012 to 12.4% by the end of 2013.
- Over €500 million pro-jobs measures planned for 2014.
- There has been a 6% increase in the number of skilled positions available year on year.
- Over 13,000 new positions created in overseas trade and investment
- 20,200 education, training, work and apprentice places ring-fenced for young people.
- €2.5m invested in 2014 in funding young entrepreneurs e.g. Micro Finance Ireland.

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AFTER THE BAILOUT

The Government can correctly claim to have pulled the country back from the brink. But there is still a way to go. Virtually all the indicators show that economic recovery has started. However unless people experience economic recovery in their own lives, they will remain sceptical.

The fact that there are more than 60,000 additional people at work over 2013 is an improvement on a scale that has taken all commentators by surprise. At the peak of the boom the unemployment rate never fell much below 5%. This means that we still have more than 200,000 unemployed who are capable and actively looking for work. The biggest category is unemployed building workers followed by workers who lost their jobs in retail.

Whereas we are never going back to 16% of the workforce engaged in construction, the fact is that we can comfortably double the number at work in building. Big public projects such as the National Children’s Hospital, the Grange Gorman DIT Project and some 40 new primary schools as well as the need for affordable family housing will employ about 15,000 building workers. There is ironically a capacity issue in the building industry caused by banks being reluctant to fund building companies that got into trouble during the boom. Both Government and NAMA are attempting to come up with workable solutions.

PALMERSTOWN ALLOTMENTS PROJECT GETTING GREAT SUPPORT FROM COMMUNITY

The Palmerstown Allotment Project, located at Mill Lane, has been a great success and is getting huge support from the Palmerstown Community. The allotment project in an educational and inter-generational scheme where older people teach younger people gardening and horticultural skills, and in return, younger people teach older people IT and computer skills.

The project has 100 people involved in 10 working groups. The groups are working to grow all kinds of flowers, plants and vegetables, and is the first inter-generational project of its kind in the county. Anybody who wishes to get involved or to donate old gardening equipment can contact: Hazel Proctor on 086 393 8467.

Robert said: "The Palmerstown allotments project is a great example of community spirit in action, and really is a credit to Palmerstown. When I visited the project, it was great to see young and old working together and learning about gardening and growing flowers and plants. I want to commend everyone involved with the project for their hard work and encourage the community to continue to support the project as they have done to this point."

NEW PRIMARY CARE CENTRE SERVING PALMERSTOWN OPENS

A new Primary Healthcare Centre which will serve the Palmerstown Community opened recently on the Cherry Orchard Hospital Campus. The Ballyfermot Primary Care Centre will offer a wide range of services such as GP services, physiotherapy, dental, community nursing and community welfare, with creche services located in a separate building.

Welcoming the opening of the centre, Robert Dowds said: “This new facility will be a great resource for the entire community in Palmerstown and will be there to serve the sick and the elderly of the area for many years to come. It is great that the Government has provided the money for this project and for other similar projects in the area. The people of Palmerstown deserve the very best public services, and we in Labour are committed to providing them.”

“The physical and mental health of the people living in Palmerstown should be our top priority, and getting a new health centre built is a great way of providing important public services to those that need them, and helping people who are sick to get better. I hope that the centre provides great service to the Palmerstown community for many years to come.”

EMER COSTELLO MEP WELCOMES IRELAND’S YOUTH GUARANTEE PLAN

Labour MEP for Dublin, Emer Costello, has welcomed the publication of the Government’s plan to implement the European Youth Guarantee in Ireland.

The Youth Guarantee aims to offer young people (under-25) quality employment, continued education, training or an apprenticeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving full-time education. It is based on the approach pioneered in other European countries where youth unemployment is under 10% such as Austria and Finland.

“The publication of the Irish implementation plan is an important step in overcoming Ireland’s youth unemployment crisis. While it is encouraging to see the number of young people finding employment rising, we still have a long way to go. Moreover, as almost one third of the country’s young unemployed people live in Dublin, we need to ensure that Dublin’s young people are adequately catered for with the Youth Guarantee. As Dublin’s MEP, Emer Costello has long championed the implementation of a European-wide Youth Guarantee. Ireland is set to benefit from €130 million to implement the Youth Guarantee initiative.”

If you wish to raise any issue with me, whether personal, local or national, please contact me.

You can talk to me at my advice centres:
- 10am every Monday morning on Main Street, Clondalkin
- 12 noon, on the 3rd Saturday of every month in Palmerstown Community Centre

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