

IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

STANDING AS A CANDIDATE IN ST PETER PORT NORTH

Proposer:
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LESTER QUERIPPEL

Hello fellow St Peter Port North resident.

I would like to start by saying that I consider it a privilege to have served as a St Peter Port North Deputy for these past four years. I have learnt a lot and I would very much like to use all of that knowledge in the next States Assembly as one of your representatives.

The easiest thing in the world for any candidate to do, would be to present you with a list of all the problems the island faces, then proceed to present you with a whole list of **unattainable aspirations and undeliverable promises**. Now I consider myself to be an optimistic realist. I'm always optimistic.....but at the same time I am rooted in reality. One thing I am acutely aware of is that no individual politician is going to provide the panacea for all of our ills.

What we all need the next Assembly to do, is work together and not just pay lip service to 'joined up government'.

Having already mentioned the issue of making 'undeliverable promises', what I **will** do, is make two promises to you that **I know I can deliver**, which are as follows:

- If you re-elect me, I promise 100% effort and commitment at all times.
- If you re-elect me, I promise to continue with my quest to attain honesty, transparency and accountability.

PASSIONATE ABOUT ST PETER PORT PASSIONATE ABOUT GUERNSEY

HONESTY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

If you've followed my political career over these past four years, you will know that I'm not afraid to challenge bureaucracy, or any of my political colleagues for that matter, should I feel the need to do so. I'd rather **not** have to be confrontational.....I'd much rather **work with** my colleagues, but the fact is, a Deputy has to stand their ground when they're doing their utmost to attain honesty, transparency and accountability.

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The current Assembly has debated and approved a number of strategies and plans. There is clearly a time for 'high level' planning and the next Assembly do need to plan for the future, strategically, economically, environmentally and socially. However, I feel the reason why so many islanders feel disconnected from their government, is because too much time is spent on the actual **formulation** of these high level aspirational strategies. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that strategies are converted into something tangible and are applied at grass roots level, so that we **all** feel the benefit, on a day to day basis.

As we all know, resources are precious, therefore prioritisation will need to be the theme in the next political term. The last thing the States should be allowed to do is add more and more costs to islanders' lives by creating more and more unnecessary bureaucracy and administration. Resources have to be targeted at what the island really needs and **not at 'wish lists'** or unnecessary strategies and policies.

Strategies without action plans attached to them, give islanders **false hope** that something is going to happen to benefit our community. A perfect example of that is when the States approved the Disability and Inclusion Strategy in November 2013 and then it sat on a shelf gathering dust for two years! **That cannot be allowed to happen again.** What islanders don't need is anymore false hope. What we all need is evidenced and necessary action. Hence my campaign slogan.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM

The States now has in place, a Public Service Reform initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to identify where efficiency savings can be made in administration and service delivery, without impacting on those services. In other words, this initiative, in theory, provides the opportunity for the States to **'get its own house in order'** and live within its means. With that in mind, this initiative simply has to succeed because islanders must not be threatened with any further cuts in services. Improvements can always be made to any system. The reason I say that is because a system (legislation, administration, service delivery etc) is supposed to serve you and I. It certainly shouldn't be designed to confuse us, or impose upon us or overwhelm us. **It needs to be simple.** It needs to be easy to negotiate and seek to assist and support us in the day to day living of our lives.....not burden us with unnecessary legislation or red tape. If you re-elect me, I can assure you that I will make every effort to hold 'the system' to account at all times.

THE VALUE OF SCRUTINY

Of course, what I'm really talking about in the previous section is scrutiny and accountability. I've served as a member of the Scrutiny Committee for the past three and a half years and in that time I've strived (as have all of my committee colleagues) to scrutinise States affairs and procedures from within an extremely restrictive mandate.

The good news is that from May 2016 onwards, the next Scrutiny Committee will have **a lot more powers and authority**, due to the committee mandate being strengthened and broadened. If you re-elect me, I intend to stand as a candidate in the internal election for President of the Scrutiny Management Committee. My passion for effective scrutiny is rooted in a genuine desire to ensure that the services, functions and policies of all States departments and committees, are operating as efficiently and as effectively as possible. This can be achieved by subjecting departments and committees to regular audits regarding policy and financial performance, thereby providing taxpayers, you and me, with the value for money services **we not only need, but also deserve.**

THE ROLE OF A DEPUTY

One thing a Deputy must never forget, is that they have been elected by the people, to not only resolve the problems the island encounters on the domestic and international stage, but to also help their fellow islanders resolve problems on a one to one basis. That could be a problem with accommodation, or with Income Tax, or perhaps trying to help that fellow islander find a job, or help them to access some much needed healthcare etc. There are all sorts of ways in which a Deputy can help a fellow islander in their 'hour of need'. I find that part of the job extremely rewarding indeed and I have worked on a 151 cases these past four years with the vast majority being successfully concluded. **I would very much like to continue working with my fellow islanders, on a one to one basis, during the course of the next political term.**

In my role as Deputy, I have also organised 19 of the 20 St Peter Port Parishioners Drop Ins. Those 19 Drop Ins were held at the Constables office on the Saturday morning prior to the monthly States debate. They are an opportunity for parishioners to engage, face to face, with their Deputies and if I'm re-elected, I will continue to organise these events.

YOU HAVE THE POWER

In a system of democratic representation, it is vitally important that a partnership is formed between the electorate and their elected representatives. Government has a duty to foster an inclusive society that values and enables its own people. That's where **you** come in. It's **you** who will decide which candidates are elected into the next States Assembly on the 27th of April.

Having said that, it concerns me greatly that so many of my fellow islanders have told me that, even though they're on the Electoral Roll, they have no intention whatsoever of voting in the forthcoming election because they are so dissillusioned with the States. With that thought uppermost in my mind, I can't emphasise enough that this is **your** island home and that this forthcoming election is the only opportunity that **you** will have to vote for candidates **you** would like to see elected into the States to represent **you**, and work on **your** behalf, for the next four years.

Therefore, I urge **you** not to deny **yourself** that opportunity and please, please, please, exercise **your** right to vote on polling day. Even if **you** only want to vote for one or two candidates, then just vote for them and put **your** voting slip into the ballot box. I would ask **you** also to please bear in mind that if **you** don't vote, then those candidates might just miss out on being elected by a single vote! That's how crucial every vote actually is.

I'll finish this section by repeating that **YOU HAVE THE POWER.**

THE TOWN SEAFRONT WORKING GROUP

I am currently a member of the Chief Minister's Town Seafront Working Group. The Chief Minister established the group following the problems that were caused by the Environment Department deciding to reduce two lanes of traffic down to one lane on the Quay. I asked the Chief Minister if I could join the group because not only am I extremely concerned about **the future of our Town** but also because, at that time, there was no other St Peter Port Deputy (therefore no parish representation) on the group.

The Terms of Reference for the group, as you may already know, are to look at short term, medium term and long term solutions for the seafront, from La Vallette to Salerie Corner. As we all know, reducing two lanes to one lane on the seafront caused no end of problems to the flow of the traffic and the stress levels of motorists and pedestrians alike. **The manner in which the changes on the seafront were introduced was completely unacceptable in my opinion.** Taxpayers' money was wasted on 'an experiment'. Like many of my fellow islanders, I was absolutely delighted when the Environment Department heeded the recommendation of the Working Group and made the decision to reintroduce two lanes of traffic. If you re-elect me, I will be calling for a thorough review of the 'changes' that happened on the Town seafront. Not only to establish why time and precious resources were wasted on an 'experiment', but also to ensure that that sort of thing never happens again. **I believe we should be supporting our beloved Town as much as we possibly can.**

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Every consultation undertaken by the States is a cost to the taxpayer, yet the general consensus seems to be that **the States rarely takes notice of public opinion**. This only serves to emphasise the view that there is a disconnect between government and the people. Therefore, I believe the whole approach to consultations undertaken by the States, needs to be reviewed.

Regarding the issue of communication, I think the levels of communication, both within the States and from the States to the public, need to be improved (I have focused on this a number of times during debates). **'Take the public with you on the journey'** is the phrase that springs to mind and I certainly resonate with that.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME

- I am currently a member of the Scrutiny Committee.
- I am currently a member of the Town Seafront Working Group.
- I am currently Chairman of Age Concern:Guernsey.
- I am currently Chairman of the Age Concern:Guernsey Fuel Fund committee.
- I am currently Facilitator of the Guernsey Poetry Group.
- I recently completed a four year term as a St Peter Port Douzenier. In my time on the Douzaine I served on the Profile Committee, the Waste Committee and also the Floral Committee.

PLEASE HELP ME TO HELP YOU

I will do my utmost to visit as many households as possible on the 'campaign trail' from March 21st until the day of the election. However, bearing in mind that there are 2,396 properties to visit, I have to be realistic and accept that I may not make it as far as your door. Therefore, please don't hesitate to contact me via email: lesterqueripel@cwgsy.net or call **729399** or **07781 400239** with any questions you may have. Alternatively I am more than happy to meet you in the comfort of your own home, should you prefer to meet at a mutually convenient time.



Take good care and I very much look forward to meeting you.