

Submission to the Bridging Island Plan Scrutiny Panel by Save Our Shoreline Jersey.

Our view is that that the Island finds itself at a crossroads; it has, for many years, stood dithering as to the direction in it wishes to go. Now is the time to step back and take stock. The Minister's proposal provides an opportunity to do just this.

Recent governments having inherited substantial but steadily dwindling economic reserves from past years and relied on the growing income tax revenues arising from uncontrolled inward migration; they have managed to get by but there are large clouds on the horizon; the unquantifiable medium and long term effects of both Brexit and Covid 19 hang over all its industries and the golden egg laying finance industry faces an uncertain future due to ever increasing international tax regulation.

The day of economic reckoning falling on future generations as a result of pursuing a 'Ponzi' scheme draws steadily nearer with successive governments failing to stem each year's population increase; continuing down this road is still a possibility in the absence of a clear mandate from a properly informed electorate. Indeed, it is the easiest one to sell to today's electorate but the longer term consequences are dire and finite. The island in its current state is not infrastructurally capable of supporting indefinite population increases nor is its current environment sustainable.

The symptoms of all this are already evidenced daily and are known to the residents who are resigned to their dysfunctional government. The root cause of these symptoms can only be altered by a fundamental change in the electoral system whereby prospective members elected on a proportionally representative basis work together to provide clearly set out manifestos based on major island-wide policy issues ( eg such as population growth) prior to their election which then stand a chance of materialising.

*It would seem likely that during the period of the proposed 3 Year Island Plan, little would in practice change. Population would continue to increase at the current rate as would house building. Our proposal is that the direction of the 2010/20 Island Plan be continued during the next three years and that in accepting the inevitable during these three years, priority could be given to both changing the electoral system (so as to dispel voter apathy and increase engagement in compiling the 2024/34 Island Plan) and agreeing a means whereby population is capable of being controlled effectively.*

Given this scenario we ourselves would work hard alongside those politicians who declared themselves in favour of maintaining the existing level of population and obtaining economic growth from productivity gains.

Summary of specific objectives to be achieved within the Minister's proposed three year plan:

Overriding priorities:

- Complete reform of electoral system
- Agree a population policy

Other reforms:

- Reestablish the States Assembly as the forum to which major proposals are submitted in a holistic format for decision.  
[ eg. abolish the means whereby JDC can embark on multi million pound projects without justifying them financially, environmentally, economically or socially to the full States Assembly]
- Introduce legislation by means of which the Attorney General has to explain to the Public why he has decided not to prosecute because it is 'in the Public Interest' not to do so.  
[eg. to help prevent government departments breaking the law in the knowledge that the AG's office cannot both prosecute and defend a crime committed by a government department.]

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