

2008
SUMMER



Senator Larry Butler

Butler News

A resource for Election 2009

We have started the countdown to the local elections in 2009. It is important that we all use our best resources to ensure that sitting councillors are returned and that we regain all our lost council seats from the last election.

This is my priority from now until the election.

I have significant experience at local elections and will be assisting in any practical way I can.

I invite any councillor who wishes to visit and bring constituents to Leinster House to contact me and I will arrange the details.

HSE - Local Integration - Local Responsibility

I have been in favour of HSE reform for some time. The current forum should have greater responsibility for estimates and should be part of an accountable and democratic process. On the 19th of June 2008, I called on the leader of the house to have a one day debate in the Seanad on all things concerning the reorganisation of the HSE. I feel there is a need to have changes on the board with a new C.E.O and all party representation. A time frame that has been suggested by the HSE would have all phases completed by September 2009. The overall aim of the HSE as stated from there July 2008 briefing is that

“The long term objectives of these modifications are to provide:

- *A single national strategic approach to integrating care, supported by local responsibility for service delivery.*
- *Better value and tangible benefits for patients, clients and staff by optimising the efficient use of resources.*
- *Operational excellence and effectiveness - ie. service delivery.*
- *Clinical engagement at all levels and the facility for front-line clinicians and other professionals to make effective local decisions.*
- *Local decision making at the point of service delivery, leading to greater accountability and a lean organisation with clear roles and responsibilities.*
- *Consistent management of performance, quality and outcomes.*

The modifications will be introduced gradually and in a measured and planned way during the remainder of 2008 and 2009.”

I believe that this reform is long overdue and I look forward to seeing significant changes within the HSE and cllrs having a more active role in this area.

Local Authority Reforms

I support the LAMA submission on local authority reforms concerning cllrs, some of which I presented in my own Seanad election manifesto, including:

Pension rights, Salary increase for cllrs, further education and training options, secretarial allowance of €10,000.

I call on the Minister to withdraw the local election spending limit included in his recent proposals. I will not support a reduction in cllrs input into the planning process and to the proposed restrictions one off housing.

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Green Collar Workers

Many new job opportunities can be created if the Government's Greener Homes Scheme, operated by Sustainable Energy Ireland, was expanded to include all green areas such as insulation, double glazing, and home improvements.

The potential employment (of 25,000 jobs), is significant because of the number of older houses in the country.

My roles in the Seanad

Speaking on: Drugs, Overseas Development, Older people, Housing.

Joint committees: Arts, Sport, Tourism and Social & Family Affairs

You may have any of my notes and research items if you wish, just ask!

New Minister

I was delighted that Barry Andrews TD was appointed by An Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD to serve as Minister for Children and Youth affairs. The position is an exciting one for Barry and carries with it the responsibility for among other things, children's welfare, protection, childcare and youth affairs. I have known Barry for a long time and know that he will bring real commitment to his new role. I wish him every success for the future.



Barry Andrews TD, Senator Larry Butler, Cllr Gareth Crowe

Economy

I think we have to put this current situation into perspective, it is a downturn and it is temporary and we are better equipped than ever to deal with it. The recent growth rate was unsustainable and the faster we adjust to more realistic growth rates the better for our economy in the medium term. We must achieve better value for money in our public services. Every euro wasted here is an opportunity lost elsewhere. Previously Bertie Ahern, TD said he wanted "a world class public service, fit for purpose". I look forward to the task force, set up by Taoiseach Brian Cowen, reporting back to us with some practical recommendations of the reform of the public service.

New Consumer Website on Affordable Home Ownership

Minister Michael Finneran TD, has launched a new resource for affordable home purchase. The new web site will provide extensive information and will later support direct applications for affordable home purchase. It will become an invaluable tool for those seeking these homes. Look it up at:

www.affordablehome.ie

New Housing Bill

A new Housing (Misc. Provisions) Bill will be presented shortly by Ministers Gormley and Finneran. This will oblige local authorities to draw up proactive strategies to combat anti social behaviour on social housing estates. New legislation will outline ways in which the council can co-operate with other state bodies and Gardai.

Older People

Minister Marie Hctor, Minister for State at the Department of Health and Children with responsibility for Older People, welcomed the provision of €12 million in additional supports for older people in private nursing homes. John Curran, T.D., Minister of State (with special responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy and Community Affairs) at the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, is pleased to announce funding of over €320,000 (total now €2.1m) for a further 69 applicant organisations under the **Scheme of Community Support for Older People (CSOP)**,

Greater Investment in Local Authority Funding

€23.4 million is being allocated towards the cost to help local authorities run their water and sewerage treatment plants. €135 million announced by Minister Killeen for rural water supply projects including a contingency of €10 million for projects with potential quality issues. €74 million on Affordable housing €51 million on rental accommodation scheme €1 billion on social housing €199 million allocated for regeneration PPP schemes