

# Cieran Perry

## Independent Community Councillor

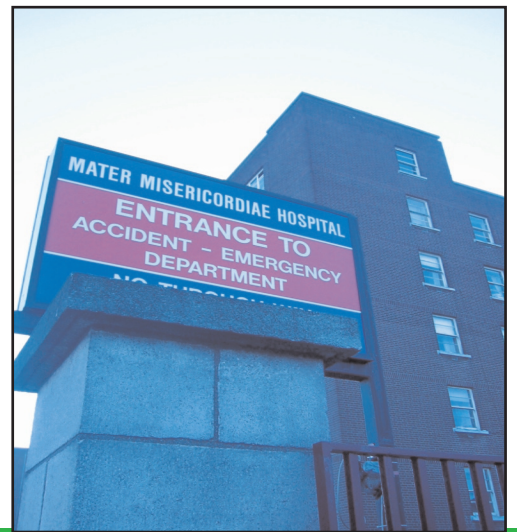


### It's Time For Real Change

As we face into the results of another savage budget, courtesy of the corrupt and incompetent policies of the Fianna Fail led Government, I remind people that the only outcome of these failed policies has been, and will continue to be, crippling taxation of ordinary workers, rising unemployment, wage cuts and forced emigration. Enough is Enough. Its time to kick-start the economy and kick out Fianna Fail. As for Fine Gael and Labour, any attempt to work with Fianna Fail in the so called national interest, will only lead to a return of the previous status quo where bankers and bondholders, top civil servants and tax exiled multimillionaires decided on our future using their political friends in Fianna Fail.

We need to take control of our banks and begin lending again to stimulate the economy. We need to protect, maintain and create jobs and not continue to fill the dole queues or see our families emigrate once again. We need to face down the bully boy bond holders and set terms that will not totally cripple our failing economy. We need to tax the wealthy who have been protected from paying their share for years through various schemes and tax write-offs. We need to rejuvenate our economy through innovative schemes which will get finance circulating again.

As the reality sinks in that NAMA will cost us billions, that the banks are still operating to their own agenda and not ours, that 500,000 unemployed is acceptable to politicians and that ordinary workers and pensioners are to be victimised again, I say its time for a real change.



### EMPTY HOUSING

Do you know that there are currently 2,536 brand new unoccupied housing units in Dublin while there are currently 17,591 on the housing list? 4,000 of these are in Dublin Central?

With all these unoccupied units in Dublin it is inconceivable that the numbers on the housing list have increased by **50%** since last year. Unless the Government is forced to tackle this issue we can expect to see an even bigger increase in families looking for housing next year.

Dublin City Council's Housing Department have confirmed to me that there is no separate funding for re-housing those from the Regeneration Projects such as O'Devaney Gardens and Dominick St. Contrary to what I had been told previously, the tenants from these complexes and those on the local housing list are chasing the same houses.

### A Sick Health System

A clear example of Fianna Fails intention to run down the public health service and promote the private health sector for the financial benefit of their friends, can be seen in the recent announcement of the building of a new private health centre in St. Josephs Deaf School in Cabra.

This new centre will be built and run by Meret Healthcare, a private company set up by Tom Kelly. Mr. Kelly worked for the public health boards for over 20 years before he became a special advisor to Mary Harney, the Health Minister. Mr. Kelly then resigned as a special advisor in 2007, established the private health company Meret and was then awarded the contract for 10 new private health centres by the same Department of Health. The new centre in St. Josephs is one of these 10 centres. Meret recently sold some of their shares to the big builders Sisk & Co for several million euros.

The centre in St. Josephs will be used by the HSE who will pay rents to Meret, thus ensuring that private health providers make a handsome profit while our public health service is collapsing.

After the announcement of the building of this new private facility, I raised my initial concerns for the downgrading of services in the Cabra Health Centre. The HSE has assured us that no immediate reduction in services is planned but they did inform us that the proposed new public primary health care centre in Grangegorman has been postponed indefinitely. Harney's and Fianna Fails position on health has been the constant rewarding of private contracts at the taxpayers expense while the public hospitals have been downgraded.

# There is an Alternative

After three severe budgets we now find ourselves in an even worse economic position than we were before those budgets. An even more savage budget in December will further damage the economy and create further financial difficulties for many ordinary families. It is absolutely clear that Fianna Fail don't have the ability, the will or intelligence to save our economy. It is also clear that employer's organisations such as IBEC and Chambers Ireland are supporting the Government in using the current crisis to drive down private and public sector wages, slash public services and social welfare, and impose further stealth taxes on ordinary people. None of these vested interests want to tackle the wealth imbalance in Ireland. On average people earning between €200,000 and €500,000 each year only pay 13.6% tax while ordinary workers are screwed. These attacks on our living standards are being done at the expense of the economy.

The disastrous bank guarantee agreed by the obviously incompetent Brian Lenihan in 2008 was based on false figures. Lenihan now admits this. This guarantee and the resulting bank bailouts are one of the main causes of our current economic crisis. The toxic debt from Anglo Irish Bank and the other banks is the reason the now infamous "Bond Markets" are charging such high interest rates for Irish borrowings. It is estimated by respected economists that the bank bailout will cost the tax payer over €66 billion. Another round of severe budget cuts will not significantly change loan charges from the Bond Markets. Lenihan and the other Government spokesmen are lying when they say it will.

As we said in our last newsletter, no country has managed to cut its way out of recession. We need to kick start the economy. Ill-conceived cuts will only further depress the economy. An alternative to the mindless cuts agenda is being promoted by a lot of respected economists. This alternative is to promote growth in our economy by a sustainable investment program financed from the National Pension Reserve Fund. The Pension Fund has approximately €25 billion worth of assets. A €3 billion job creation and investment program could build badly needed infrastructure such as schools like our own Gaelscoil Bharra in Cabra. This investment program could upgrade our water supply system, much of which is over 100 years old. This would create over 30,000 jobs during the upgrade and over 12,000 permanent jobs. Another investment project could be the countrywide rollout of fibre broadband so Ireland could become a real "Smart Economy" not just a Green Party sound bite.



If we tackle the scandal of private pensions, where 80% of the benefit of this tax relief is going to the richest 20%, we could add a saving of over €1 billion to any investment program. By introducing a Wealth Tax on the income and assets of the rich we could finance the re-capitalisation of a state bank to begin to lend to the viable small businesses that are being strangled by high interest rates and lack of cash flow. In a previous newsletter we suggested a third rate of tax at 48% for those earning over €100,000 which would raise in the region of €400 million annually. Another suggestion would be the introduction of a financial transaction tax on banks which could go towards paying back the taxpayer for the ridiculous bank bailouts.

There are plenty of other good ideas to boost the economy - a progressive property tax aimed at lavish properties, removing grants for private schools, increasing fees for private facilities in public hospitals, reducing the pay of consultants, politicians and other high earning professionals, etc... All these proposals have one common ideal - investing in the economy for recovery and not plunging the country into further crisis by slash & burn policies. Ironically, the current crisis gives us an opportunity to create a more equitable society by targeting those who can afford to pay more while protecting those most disadvantaged in our country.

The Labour Party and Fine Gael offer no real alternative. Both parties have accepted that Ireland must cut the deficit to 3% by 2014. This date is arbitrary and has been dictated by the European Commission. The Labour Party and Fine Gael are unwilling to tax the wealthy in Ireland. They are unwilling to reform society. They are happy to maintain the status quo where the wealthy dictate and working people pay.

**Lets Kick start The Economy**  
**Lets Kick Out Fianna Fail**

## Cabra FAS Centre Closure

The Board of FÁS have announced the permanent closure of the FÁS centre in Cabra on the 24th December. The excuse given for the closure is that the roof of the centre is in urgent need of repair. The suspicion is that the closure is down to cost cutting measures.

The loss of this resource in our area is disappointing. As well as the loss of local jobs, closure will have an impact on shops and other businesses in the area. At a time of unprecedented unemployment the closure of this facility is scandalous. I don't believe the claims that all the courses will be continued elsewhere.

## THE HEIGHT OF IGNORANCE.....

In my last newsletter I highlighted the fact that Labour and Fine Gael had ignored the wishes of local residents and voted for an uncontrolled high rise building policy for our City. In July they let local residents down for a second time and, no doubt, they will do so again in the final vote this year.

I was glad to have been a part of a group of over 24 resident & community groups from across Dublin Central, from Ashtown to East Wall, which met to draft our Communities strategy. We agreed on 5 major planning issues covering Height, Quality, Density and saving Green spaces. We lobbied all the local Councillors but once again, Labour and Fine Gael Councillors voted against the wishes of residents and for the policy of the City Manager and the developers. This means that 6 storey blocks may be built on many available sites throughout our residential areas. Even when I proposed to reduce this height to 5 Storeys, in an attempt to support local householders, the Labour and Fine Gael Councillors still supported the greater heights. The local Councillors who voted for the high rise policy against our combined Communities wishes are listed in the accompanying box. Cllr Fitzpatrick of Fianna Fail was absent.

I can however report that I had several successes in protecting local green space amenities. Following on from the great work of the residents of Riverston, my motion to protect the convent lands was successfully supported by all councillors. Furthermore, I successfully passed a motion which removed the word 'residential' from the possible uses associated with these institutional lands, thus stopping any future development without full community knowledge and consultation.

Another success was our motion to force developers into providing proper documentation and plans where they intend to build high rise units beside existing low rise houses.

Bad planning has been a blight on our City for years and I feel that as elected Councillors we should be tackling this issue. Sadly, Labour and Fine Gael, who control the City Council, have ignorantly voted to continue with the bad old ways.

### Local councillors who voted in favour of the High Rise policy were:

<b>Aine Clancy</b>	<b>(Labour)</b>
<b>Emer Costello</b>	<b>(Labour)</b>
<b>Claire O'Regan</b>	<b>(Labour)</b>
<b>Ray McAdam</b>	<b>(Fine Gael)</b>
<b>Mary O'Shea</b>	<b>(Fine Gael)</b>

## Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy & Criminal Sanctions Submission

Anti Social Behaviour is one of the biggest issues facing people in working class areas and Dublin City Council has an obligation to their tenants and the rest of the community to tackle this behaviour. I have recently been involved in the drafting of the new City Council policy on anti-social behaviour and I have ensured that there is now official recognition that there must be serious community consultation in tackling this unacceptable behaviour.

It must be recognised that only a small minority of people engage in these activities and this makes it all the more important that their activities have repercussions for them.

I believe that Dublin City Council have been found wanting in relation to tackling anti social behaviour in the past. Only 29 people have been evicted for anti social behaviour in Dublin Central in the last 9 years. I will be insisting that this new policy is now turned into action.

Another important submission I recently made was a comprehensive policy on criminal sanctions for the upcoming Government "White Paper on Crime". Some of the recommendations I have made include alternatives to imprisonment for lesser crimes, school intervention, local curfew schemes, non negotiable family intervention, mandatory sentences for drug and sexual crimes and a policy of mandatory work or training for all prisoners. I think it is essential that as a local representative I include the views of our communities in these important documents.

## Housing Waiting List Crisis

### Fianna Fail's Answer - More Bail Outs for the Big Builders

In an obvious attempt to bail out their builder supporters Fianna Fail are only providing finance for leasing the unsold properties of the building boom rather than buying houses for those on the housing list. The Dept. Of the Environment have instructed Dublin City Council to long term lease the empty units for social housing under the Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP). €20 million was provided in 2009 and another €40 million will be provided this year. This cosy little arrangement should provide a nice little earner for the builders until their properties regain their value. Along with the SHIP scheme the Government intends to use the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) as a method of housing people. Unfortunately both of these schemes will depend on private landlords and will create generous profits for the private sector without adding to the public housing stock.

# COUNCILLOR CIERAN PERRY'S REPORT:

I have had a series of successful motions passed by Dublin City Council over the last few months. My motion of no confidence in the Fianna Fail / Green Government was agreed and sent out a clear message that Dublin City Councillors want a change of Government. Another of my motions, which calls upon Dublin City Council to designate an official Dublin City Day, is very important to me. This official Dublin Day would give our residents & our communities an opportunity to celebrate all that is great about Dublin as well as attracting much needed tourists into our City. Another successful motion of mine called for the banning of fur products from our city in an attempt to tackle this cruel and unnecessary trade.

## Gaelscoil Bharra Update

The news that the Department of Education has not spent €331million of their budget this year is unbelievable considering the fact the children of Gaelscoil Bharra are entering their 15th year in prefabs. It is unacceptable that there is still no agreement to build a permanent school. The onus is back on the Dept. of Education and Dublin City Council now that St. Finbarrs GAA Club have agreed to surrender their lease on the land. The parents & children of the school owe a debt of gratitude to the club for their help on this issue. As a community we need to keep up the pressure on the Government to provide our children with a decent school.



Cieran canvassing with supporters

## Cabra Hills Update

The ongoing problems with the developer Niall Molloy with regard to the hills of clay at the back of resident's houses and the terrible state of the two houses at the end of Carnlough need to be resolved. Dublin City Council's enforcement office has been useless to date but I will not stop pursuing the issue. This site needs to be cleaned up and secured. I will continue to raise this issue at every Council meeting.

## Flood Swale on Drumcliffe Green & Killala Green

I have requested that no work commences on the proposed swales on Killala Green or Drumcliffe Green until a full report on the difficulties at the new swales in Kinvara is received. Swales are flood water retention ditches which allow flood water to drain away slowly. There were several initial problems with the Kinvara swales but I have been working with residents to get these resolved. I have informed DCC that when these swales have proven to work successfully we can discuss the proposed Cabra swales.

## St Josephs Deaf Village Project

As you may be aware, there are great plans to develop a Deaf Village in St. Josephs. Having met with the Chief Executive of the project, I have received assurances that local residents will be able to access all the new sports and recreational facilities. He also assured me that the Ratoath Road boundary wall will be retained as requested by local households. Finally, I was pleased that our submission to the planning authorities was successful in requesting all construction traffic enter through the Navan Road gate and not at Ratoath Road where it may pose a hazard to local residents.

## Protecting Local Lands From Rezoning

I was the only Councillor to inform local residents that the green spaces in the Dominican Convent were to be rezoned. Having informed local residents, we set about getting this plan overturned and ensured that the lands remain as a green belt. Some of the fields are used for sports and it's important that we retain all sports facilities. This site is where Naomh Fionnbarra GAA would like to have a new pitch.

**Contact CIERAN directly on any issue - Ph: 087 1477316**

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