

The Need for local housing

The provision of affordable and social housing is a major concern in our communities. Argyll and Bute Council must, through the planning system, speed up decisions on potential developments, and work with housing associations to ensure the availability of good quality homes.

Young people back Union

I was very pleased with the youth question time at Islay High School earlier this year, at which I was fortunate to be present. I was even happier with the results of the straw poll on Independence, with over a hundred students between the age of 16 to 17: four raised their hands for separation and over one hundred raised their hands for staying in the UK. A landslide result for common sense on Islay of about 96% to 4%.

The Renewables Question

On this matter it has always been my firm belief that we lleachs should be the ones who benefit from all of these Renewables projects. As it stands in Scotland and the rest of the UK, Renewables are funded by climate change levies or taxes on the energy bills of large and small businesses alike, and all residential bill payers through increases on our overall bill costs. An increase that hits all households, but the less well-off disproportionately more. However, the biggest beneficiaries of these projects are land owners, the crown estate and multimillion pound corporations. Islay has always produced far more in taxes than we have received back in public spending. I hope that when it comes to Renewables the same size of gap between production and benefits to the Island is not repeated.

Accounts Commission Report condemns previous SNP led council

The Accounts Commission Report investigating political instability at Argyll and Bute Council is a complete condemnation of the previous SNP led administration, who have been proven incapable of running the council. This confirms my belief that our local council must get away from the habit of making strong attacks on anyone who questions their decisions. Whether it is a member of the public raising concerns over the ballooning cost of the council's charge card usage that reached over £500,000 last year alone; the local press raising suspicions about the selling of the remaining snow ploughs, at the same time as giving funding to yet another office refurbishment; and of course the most notorious incident of all...the council being humiliated by a nine year old school girl during the "Spygate" School Dinners fiasco. The council must realise that Argyll is not the same as it was ten years ago, and now more than ever the public will quite rightfully be far more sceptical of what taxpayer funded councillors say is in our best interests and also question how their money is being spent and if it is being done so wisely. On an almost weekly basis many of our local press are bringing council failures to the attention of the public and that is something that should be encouraged not rebuked. Openness and transparency is in all our interests. I am pleased that Conservative Councillors are now part of the ruling administration and are fixing the mess that the SNP have left behind. I hope that they will focus on issues that concern local residents across our island communities, such as: investment in our infrastructure and creating the conditions for new jobs to be created.

Contact Alastair

If you have a local issue to raise or a local problem you think needs to be raised with the council, let Alastair know:

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