

NEW TOWN – IMAGINATIVE VISION ON HOUSING AND URBAN NEEDS

In a radical and striking initiative the PDP has launched an overall strategy to tackle the long-standing issues of housing and urban regeneration in a thorough and sustainable way.

The Party has revealed the outline of an exciting strategy that it will set out in greater detail in coming months and will form the cornerstone of its comprehensive approach.

The PDP is proud to confirm that the central aims of their strategy will be;

1. To resolve the housing problem through a combination of new build, repair of existing stock and a partial liberalisation of the private sector

GIBRALTARIANS DESPERATE FOR HOUSING

Housing has always been one of Gibraltar's largest and as yet unresolved dilemmas. This is one of the old chestnuts that is and has been a regular in every manifesto for years.

The PDP when in Government would seek to make this an issue of the past once and for all. Our people deserve nothing less than decent living conditions where it counts to them, at home, and no Gibraltarian should have to resort to finding accommodation in Spain because that is all they can afford or because

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housing market;

2. To create a land bank in an environmentally acceptable fashion to allow the development of the economy and provide for our social needs;

3. To maximise the conservation of our heritage assets while allowing economic development;

4. To grow our economy and develop our tourism product sensitively.

Taken together, this will lead to the creation of a "New Town" in an ambitious land reclamation project.

The proposed reclamation would be divided into "Residential New Town", "Tourism and Leisure", and "Commercial" zones. *Cont Page 3.*



PDP Executive Members

At its launch in June the PDP said that it would make further announcements as to other members of its Executive in September.

It is delighted to announce today that Mrs Moira Walsh, Mr Leo Olivero and Mrs Gigi Sene are part of the PDP project.

"All three have experience in different fields and have served Gibraltar well for many years. They bring a

wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the PDP and have already been working behind the scenes in

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**the editors
viewpoint**

THE BIRTH OF A PARTY

In life nothing happens in a vacuum. In an evolving political climate here in Gibraltar it is heartening to think that there will always be people to step up to the line and be counted. The PDP has been born of a growing disillusionment with the two established parties in Gibraltar and the feeling that there needs to be a movement towards a more mature management of our small society.

The fact that many of the Executive are people who have never been politically active and that there is an equal mix of men and women is a big positive for this emerging political force in Gibraltar. Not for the PDP the token woman to try to pander to political correctness.

There is also a very democratic feeling to meetings and a willingness to engage with people of all walks of life that are refreshing for our little country. The PDP genuinely want to meet with groups and associations to discuss issues affecting them BEFORE formulating their policies and papers and thereby try to achieve a Manifesto that is truly representative of a wide cross section of our society.

We are now very much at a crossroads and people are in general very tired and disillusioned with the style and type of government we have been enduring over the past years. We should and must aspire to more democracy in Gibraltar, to more self government and self regulation; to ensuring that we elect a government who is willing and able to legislate and put in place those very checks and balances that are so desperately needed to curb abuse of power.

In many ways the current Government has completely lost touch with the community and does not really take on board the day-to-day cares of the ordinary person in the street. They have seemingly ceased to communicate with the very people who put them in office, who they were elected to serve, who ultimately pay their wages. Public consultation is practically non-existent.

The PDP believes in a style of government that is sympathetic to the needs of the community and this will be at the very heart of the political change that the PDP will be trying to achieve. For those who are disillusioned with the current political scenario and are searching for an alternative – the PDP is that very alternative.

GIBRALTAR FIRST a newsletter for all Gibraltarians

I am delighted that we are launching this newsletter for members and the public. When we launched the PDP a few months ago we wanted to ensure that we conveyed our enthusiastic and exciting

agenda for Gibraltar.

We have a modern and progressive vision for Gibraltar that puts the needs and aspirations of the people of Gibraltar at the heart of our programme.

Already we

have made clear that our Agenda for Change programme puts certain key values at the forefront of our objectives – better economic management; more quality of life; more democracy; better planning The environment, health, housing and social services are just some of the areas we want to vigorously tackle in our desire to improve the quality of life for our community. Apart from that in the field of foreign affairs we are steadfast in our defence of Gibraltar's interests and aspirations. The intention is to issue this newsletter on a quarterly basis and I am sure it will go from strength to strength. We hope to persuade as many people as possible to support us. If you would like to join us or want more information please do not hesitate to contact us on our website at www.pdp.gi



Keith Azopardi
PDP Party Leader

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NEW TOWN – IMAGINATIVE VISION ON HOUSING AND URBAN NEEDS



The old town should be the pride of Gibraltar rather than its shame

The New Town would include sufficient parking, public transport and social facilities and amenities to include parks and recreational areas that would enhance the quality of life of our citizens.

More than 1500 genuinely low cost homes would be built over 10 years. The current Government's so-called affordable housing is beyond the financial reach of many. Houses built by a PDP administration would be within the purchasing power of a much greater number of families and homes for rental would be built for those unable to buy. A programme of providing specially adapted housing for the elderly and those with special needs is envisioned. Environmental impact studies and thorough and widespread consultation would be carried out for this ambitious project.

Under a PDP government Gibraltarians will not have to live in Spain out of necessity because there are insufficient houses in Gibraltar, or because they have been priced out of the market because of the un-

balanced prioritising of luxury housing by the current administration.

The "New Town" project will also allow the regeneration of parts of the old town to maximise its own natural and historical beauty. The PDP believe that the old town should be the pride of Gibraltar rather than its shame and could become more prominent in a well planned tourist experience.

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PDP Executive Members

the Party for some months. We are delighted that they have chosen to form part of our effort to present a solid, viable and progressive alternative for Gibraltar", said PDP Leader Keith Azopardi

Leo Olivero is a retired Superintendent of the Royal Gibraltar Police Force and during his career was involved in the preparation and im-

plementation of numerous community-oriented police initiatives. He was Chairperson of the Police Community Consultative Group for the first two years after its creation. Over the last three years he has been a regular writer in local newspapers particularly in the Panorama Daily. His articles have contributed to raising the level of awareness associated with important social issues such as the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

Moira Walsh dedicated more than thirty years of her life to the field of education. Children and the Youth have been at the centre of her life as a former Teacher for several decades. She was Vice-President of the Gibraltar Teachers Association at the time of the campaign against the fast lunches in 1995.

Gigi Sene has over the last 20 years dedicated her time and energy to her

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Letters to the editor

We welcome members of the public sending their views and opinions to the editor for publication.

Only letters which are accompanied by the senders full name and address will be considered for publication.

Send your letters to:

The Editor
Gibraltar First
Newsletter
PO Box 1373
Gibraltar

GIBRALTAR DESERVES A REFERENDUM ON AIRPORT AGREEMENT

AIRPORT CONCESSIONS

The PDP is entirely in favour of Trilateral dialogue and many aspects of the Cordoba Agreement. If a sovereignty-neutral Airport Agreement with all the economic benefits that could bring had been achieved, the PDP would have supported the Airport Agreement reached by the Government. To maximise the possibility of a beneficial agreement being reached the PDP had, on several occasions, urged the Government to discuss its contents prior to its announcement.

However the Government ignored all calls for details and proceeded regardless as if it only knows what is best for Gibraltar.

We are now faced with a scenario where the Chief Minister has taken it upon himself to decide what is best for Gibraltar on an issue as important and emotive as the Airport Agreement. This is the single most important agreement to emerge from the Trilaterals and should undoubtedly qualify for submission to a Referendum for the people of Gibraltar to endorse.

AIRPORT AGREEMENT: THE FACTS

The Agreement states for the first time ever by a Gibraltar Government in the first paragraph: *'The Gibraltar Government understands and accepts that the refer- ences to sovereignty are bilateral to UK and Spain.'* This is a massive

concession on sovereignty that has never previously been made by any Government. Sovereignty is not bi-lateral for Britain and Spain. The sovereignty of Gibraltar is vested in its people. This is so because of our right to self-determination.

Joint Liaison Committee to consider at a technical level any problem or issue relating to the functioning of the arrangements. Why the need to consult Spain on how OUR airport functions.

Passengers embarking from the Spanish side of the terminal will be treated as still in Schengen-Spain...no checks by any officials.

Passengers arriving from the Gibraltar side of the terminal will be checked by Spanish officials before boarding the plane if on route to a Spanish airport.

Passengers arriving from Spanish airport and exiting into Spain will be treated as if they are still in Spain.....therefore no checks by any officials.

Passengers arriving in Gibraltar will go through a Schengen/Spanish exit control (through a glass or whatever) then Gibraltar passport entry control to enter Gibraltar.

De facto, the plane and its passengers are being dealt with as if already on Spanish soil.

All aspects of the operations of the terminal will be run by a joint venture company owned by Gibraltar and Spanish commercial operators.

Why was Spain so insistent in obtaining this if it is not about gaining partial control over our airport.

If you as a Gibraltarian find this has no sovereignty implications and are completely comfortable with this then there is no argument. The PDP feel it would be politically irresponsible NOT to point out the dangers inherent in this agreement.

The PDP therefore urges that people should read the full agreement BEFORE making a final judgement on the merits of this agreement. Be cautious not to be swept away on the tide of the euphoria that the Chief Minister is promoting without setting all the facts out clearly.

Log on to www.fco.gov.uk, or www.mae.es/es or our website www.pdp.gi and download the agreements for yourselves or call us on Tel: 49000 and we will supply you with a printed copy. As a party we do not want to convince you of our own analysis – we want the people to make their own informed decision.

We believe the objectionable parts of the Airport Agreement should be dropped and not implemented. There are several issues that give Spain a real say in the running and control of our airport and of passengers in Gibraltar. It treats the territory of the airport as if it were Spanish territory. When elected to Government we would ensure that agreements that are not in our interests and have not been endorsed by the people in a referendum are abandoned.

PDP PRIORITISES DEMOCRACY AND DOMESTIC ISSUES

DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT

The PDP in its Pledge to Living Democracy announced in July this year committed itself to a radical overhaul of the democratic system in Gibraltar that will prevent future Governments abusing power.

We can all think of examples of political arrogance, failure to consult, running roughshod over people's concerns that show that a change of Government is now badly needed. Gibraltar needs to be governed with better consultation, freer debate and an acceptance of genuine political differences. From the Rosia Tanks debacle to the manner in which land has recently been allocated to private developers by direct allocation behind close doors or how appointments in Government employment are made we all have stories that demonstrate the need to ensure that power is curbed and exercised properly. Absolute power corrupts absolutely and Gibraltar is no exception.

Our concerns, which are shared by many Gibraltarians, are that the appropriate checks and balances that prevent abuse of power should become an important part of the way we govern ourselves.

The PDP recognises that the current 69 Constitution relies on colonial checks and balances that are outdated and insufficient. The net effect has been that the current Constitution does not deliver to the people either the necessary democratic check on our Government nor the ability or power to self regulate and impose checks and balances that safeguard the rights of citizens from day to day. General elections every four years are a wholly insufficient way to safeguard democracy.

Ensuring real democratic accountability not only requires constitutional reform but the introduction of legislation and other measures designed to achieve that. Above all it requires political willingness and a new style of Government that is much

more prepared to embrace real debate, democracy, public participation and accountability. Mr Caruana and the GSD appear unwilling to be subjected to such checks. Ask yourselves why?

It is precisely these concerns that led the PDP to formulate its 28 point "Pledge to Living Democracy" which was made public in a press conference on the 20th July 2006 and which is available on our website www.pdp.gi.

This 28-point pledge that will form part of our manifesto commitment at the next election included:

1. Enlargement and reform of our Parliament and electoral system to guarantee more Parliamentary accountability through a more representative Parliament that ensures back bench participation, freer debate and the better representation of minorities. The Government must listen to the people.
2. That a PDP Chief Minister would only serve for eight years in office.
3. Legislation to create a Parliamentary Ombudsman with investigative and other powers and an Independent Parliamentary Committee (IPC), appointed jointly by all parties represented in our Parliament, with power to consider any recommendation made by the Parliamentary Ombudsman pursuant to an investigation. The IPC would have extensive powers of recommendation, sanction and, where impropriety is identified, referral to the Attorney General for consideration.

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PDP PRIORITISES DEMOCRACY AND DOMESTIC ISSUES DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT

4. The introduction of monthly-televised meetings of our Parliament, including "Chief Minister's Question Time" in the House of Assembly, which will provide the Opposition parties regular opportunities to quiz the Government on matters of interest.
5. The provision of Statistical information requested by the Opposition freely, to them on request and the requirement that Members of the House supply annual updates to the Register of Interests.
6. The establishment of an Independent Tender Board.
7. A Code of Practice for Ministers and their Departments.
8. Amendment of our Legal Aid and Assistance Ordinance to give meaningful access to representative groups and individuals to challenge Government decisions.
9. Greater consultation and cooperation with the Opposition of the day and a general reduction of the climate of acrimony and personalities.
10. The greater use of referenda on important questions to allow the public a more frequent expression of opinion on these matters

We are the only party that has committed itself to these checks and balances. We want a Gibraltar in which Gibraltarians can live freely without any fear in a truly democratic society where those who are entrusted to govern are truly accountable and listen to the people. If you want to be part of that society then vote PDP at the next election.



Whilst Environmental issues are taking up more prominence with Governments world-wide and in the media these days, they deserve much more serious attention. There is much work to be done and quickly to address issues and in order for people to understand the seriousness in working together to ensure the survival of our planet.



The CEPSA refinery spewing smoke and toxic fumes

Gibraltar, although small in size (but large in population) can and MUST make changes to our way of life to ensure that we play our part in the world-wide collective effort for our own benefit and for the benefit of all.

Many people look to the refinery as a scapegoat for all our ills. This may be true in part, but we also have to look responsibly at our own problems and address those. There is no reason why, together with a Government willing to lead by example, we could not turn Gibraltar into a country to be held up as into an environmental model within Europe.

The PDP feel very strongly about and are fully committed to making Gibraltar a safer, cleaner and more environmentally friendly place for all our people to live in, and will, after due consultation with ESG, GONHS, Friends of the Earth and the Heritage Trust, reveal our policy document on this extremely important subject. We look forward to publishing this in the next edition of our newsletter.

PDP ANNOUNCES ITS "AGENDA FOR CHANGE"

As announced at its official launch the Progressive Democratic Party believes there are certain key areas where vigorous policies need to be followed to tackle areas of need.

The Party places central importance to five objectives in domestic affairs and will work towards achieving these.

It will outline detailed policies under each part of this Agenda and places this at the heart of its comprehensive and radical domestic programme.

For the PDP its main Agenda for Change is to ensure that there is;

1. More Democracy

The PDP has already stated its firm view that there should be a new style of politics and government. This needs to be supported by also enhancing democracy, public participation and parliamentary accountability. The Party is committed to bringing a fresh and positive style of politics.

2. More Vision

Government planning in any field should have vision and strategic thinking. Government needs to be proactive not reactive.

3. More Quality of Life

Policies to enhance social justice, equality and respect for people and property should be adopted. Much more attention needs to be paid to the key areas of housing, community services, the environment and youth policies.

The quality of life of our people should be central and achieved by better access to services and housing and through environmentally sustainable policies.

4. Better Services

Our public services should be more efficient, responsive and resourced. Hard-working public employees should be helped by Government to provide improvements to public services.

5. Better Economic Management

The creation of economic opportunities and any improvement to infrastructure should be sensitive and socially acceptable. Economic management needs to be geared to tackle the social agenda.

These objectives are consistent with the PDP's basic philosophy and political outlook outlined at the inaugural public event.

The PDP intends to announce specific and detailed policies in all these areas in coming months in fields as diverse as housing, the environment, health or social services. The Party has already done much work towards this.

It will make its first specific policy announcement on the topic of Enhancing Democracy within the next two weeks.

In the meantime it is today setting out the key objectives that will govern its domestic policy to make clear to people what its main aims are.

"We will place these five key objectives at the heart of domestic policy and will introduce reforms to achieve lasting change and improvement. This Agenda for Change will be at the heart of our programme and will remain so.

At the next election there should be a contest of ideas and the PDP will seek to persuade people that it should be entrusted with carrying out the specific policies it will announce in coming months to implement these five objectives within this Agenda for Change" said Keith Azopardi.

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DESPERATE FOR HOUSING

there is nothing available for them here. This is the result of a lack of planning and caring for those people who are not able to afford the so called "affordable" homes.

Our Housing policy therefore, tackles all areas of housing in a radical yet balanced and measured way, always ensuring that there is proper planning to maximise not just the short term, but the long term benefits of our beautiful City.

Our plans for a residential new town, as recently announced, would be one of our priority projects. As well as providing much needed environmentally friendly homes for rental, recreational areas and amenities that would enhance the quality of life of our citizens would be an intrinsic part of the project.

Additionally, we would be looking at providing low-cost homes for families who cannot afford to take on large mortgages and for single persons who are not able to buy on a single income. Specially adapted homes for the disabled and the elderly are also envisaged after due consultation with experts in the areas of design and building.

Our plans for the private sector include a much needed review of the Landlord and Tenant's Ordinance which is long overdue as well as providing incentives for landlords to refurbish their properties.

Last but not least, Gibraltar is fast turning into a concrete jungle with no direction and development can-

not continue in this manner. A PDP Government would ensure that the private luxury developments do not monopolise the allocation of land resources and prime sites.

Gibraltar is OUR home and we should all equally share in its enjoyment.

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PDP Executive Members

family and her business even though she comes from a family in which discussions on politics and the state of Gibraltar are commonplace. She had never previously been involved in politics or campaigning in any way until the Government's ill-fated decision to demolish the Rosia Tanks.

"I have entered the political arena in an attempt to change the current political status quo. Many people like me have become totally disillusioned at the way politics is conducted by other parties in Gibraltar. The PDP for me offers the only real alternative to the present two party scenario. My own political thoughts and objectives are very much in tune with the policies the PDP are offering and those that are planned for the future. I would like to think of myself as a campaigning community politician and one who is there to listen to the people that matter

the most – the public" said Leo Olivero.

"First and foremost I am a proud Gibraltarian. I have been married to Martin, a retired police officer, for 38 years and have three children and four grandchildren. Children have always been very important to me. Despite it being a time in my life when most would be thinking of taking it easy, I feel unable to do so in the present political climate in Gibraltar. The only other time when I have similarly felt compelled to get involved in public issues was at the time of the anti-launch campaign" said Moira Walsh.

"Last year what begun as residents lodging legitimate concerns with the Development and Planning Commission snowballed into a full blown campaign that highlighted a serious democratic deficit and abuse of power. This drove me to get involved much more actively with like-minded people so that Gibraltar could aspire to a more vibrant democracy. Gibraltar is a great place to live but we need to protect what makes it unique without hindering progress", said Gigi Sene.

The PDP intends to make further announcements on other members that form part of its project towards the end of the year and to continue building the momentum of the Party.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER

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- THE ENVIRONMENT
- DISABILITY



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WORKING TOGETHER
FOR THE FUTURE
YOU DESERVE

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