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I am a 4th generation Falkland Islander on both the Biggs and Middleton family trees, born and brought up in Darwin by hardy, practical, common-sense parents. I see myself as very much a typical Falkland Islander. As a young adult, present in the Islands in 1982, my stance on Argentina is a given.

The only promise I am making should I be voted in, is to listen to your thoughts and concerns, communicate with you as much as possible, and to always do my best to represent you in any way I can.

Here are some observations, please feel free to let me know your thoughts.

An increased camp population, with diverse businesses facilitated by increased communication would seem to be the ideal.

But.

Camp is caught in an endless catch 22.

In order to increase the camp population, we need more reliable facilities:

Radio: There is no radio signal in large areas – this is important if you live in a remote situation. Is there something that can be done?

Communications: The service provision in camp remains poor, in spite of ‘improvements’. This needs to be addressed, particular given the remoteness of some camp locations.

Transport: The ferry is amazing – how did we manage without it? do we need a second vessel to make remote deliveries and provide backup?

Roads: These are sometimes the difference between a business being viable or not – I hope to see the road network ever increasing.

Education: Ideally, we would need more schools; nobody likes sending their children away for half of their childhood and those children then grow up in town and are less inclined to settle in camp. In the absence of ideal, a review of camp education policies may be a little overdue.

However, these things are currently considered to be a low priority because of the sparse population!

If increased camp population is our aim, then something has got to give.

Although I am very much aware of the passage of time and the inevitability of change, I’m not convinced that all of the changes have been for the better:

Culture: Are we losing our cultural identity? I accept that, as we become a more diverse community, our culture may change and develop. However, I am concerned that our immigrants are not being given the opportunity to integrate and I do not relish the prospect

of cultural divide and all that it brings. I would like to see an aspect of our education system which helps immigrants to become Falkland Islanders, helping them to understand us and our culture and how they can become a part of it. We are one community and immigration is a valuable part of it.

The new immigration policy will help us to retain workforce, but work is still to be done on encouraging our young people to return to the islands and Contractors to stay and make their homes here.

Police: We are a small community, we have always been, and will be for a long time to come so why has community policing changed so dramatically?

I would like to see police officers back in the community (and this includes friendly camp visits), talking to people, getting to know the people they are employed to protect, earning the respect that will better enable them to carry out their duties.

Despite the many obvious advantages to living in our islands, there are also some less positive aspects, such as:

Telecommunications

I would like to see an improved service, particularly in camp where the service is poor, and communication is a vital link.

Regular, frequent reviews of the service and community expectations is required and results of these should be acted upon.

Availability and cost of housing

I believe work is being done to increase the number of houses available, this will help bring down the market rate of rents and help with affordability. We need learn from experience and keep up with this as the population increases. With this in mind, I believe that more residential building plots should be made available directly to those who have never owned property in the Islands.

Pensions

I would like to see a review of pensions so as to ensure that none of our senior citizens are living below the poverty line

Education & Health facilities

Our schools are bursting at the seams, overflowing into other buildings and would find it very difficult to cope with even the smallest increase in population. I would like to see a purpose-built and future-proofed facility to meet these shortcomings.

Our hospital seems to be undergoing major surgery, but I am concerned that its continued survival will forever depend on further interventions.

We need to ensure that these and other (power, water and sewerage) facilities are fit for purpose and prepared for long term growth - perhaps we can make our capital budget go a bit further by the use of local expertise, sometimes the 'Expert' we seek is right on our doorstep and keen to help.

Our environment:

Our land and its unique ecology are the very backbone of our existence here and I am sure we are all agreed that its protection must be a priority.

I would be very much in support of increasing our use of renewable energy and reducing our carbon footprint in any way we can.

A strong Biosecurity system is essential to keep out all invasive species from the seeds of thistles to potential, accidentally released, Salmon.

I feel quite strongly about the introduction of Salmon farming to our waters and the damage it could cause, even from an economic point of view, any gain which might be gleaned from Salmon farming should be compared very carefully with the prospective loss of our fishing industry, wildlife and consequently our tourist industry.

Having lived in the Falklands my whole life, I have seen the community and the economy develop and grow, with diversity and global involvement. I believe that the Falkland Islands have huge potential to expand further, in the right direction, led by people who care and whose motives and intentions are clear.