

Election Times

#MakeItHappen February 2016



Driving the Long
Term Economic
Plan (page 3)

“We Need More
Programmes
Like Fiona’s”
- Varadkar (page 4)



D-Day looming for South Kildare Candidates

We sat down with first time candidate, FG's Fiona McLoughlin Healy, to find out why she is the right person for the job.

‘As a former nurse, I have researched and reported on what works best in other healthcare systems around the world. As a business owner for almost a decade, I understand the risks taken by entrepreneurs and why we need to support the small businesses creating three out of five of all the jobs being created at the moment. As a mum of three young children, I will continue to fight for youth facilities and a much needed new school for the Newbridge Kildare area. All children of the nation should be treated equally. Parents should have sufficient choice in the type of education they can access for their children including children with special educational needs so that all children can reach their maximum learning potential. A vote for me is a vote for an informed representative, committed to delivering the jobs, the healthcare provision, the education and the security within our homes that we deserve in Kildare South. It is an absolute privilege to be the first ever female Fine Gael candidate for the district. It would be an even greater honour to be the first female TD for Kildare South. I would relish the challenges ahead if given the opportunity.’

Q. We hear you talk about your ‘proven track record’. What exactly is that?

‘I have been an elected representative for just over 600 days! In that time alone my local achievements include a Busk and Food Festival in Newbridge which I founded to launch the Dubai Duty Free 150th Derby at the Curragh with the specific goal of generating business for the town - business on this street is up 40%. In conjunction with Dulux, I got an entire street painted in time for the festival. Dubai Duty Free was so delighted with the event they are doubling sponsorship of the event next year. The funding for the regeneration of the Town Hall was granted after countless motions were submitted by myself and others which carried the restoration over the line after many years. Youth Facilities have undergone a transformation across the county with Ellistown playground the latest to be added. Traffic calming at schools has been a hard fought battle but progress was made at the Gaelscoil, NETNS, Allen, and I’m currently in the process of delivering for Melitta Rd. and Kilcullen schools.

Another, even more difficult battle,



has centered around transparency and accountability. The most recent development is that the filming of council meetings has gone forward for exploration of an inexpensive option because the behaviours in the Chamber continues to be eye-opening! Artwork left in storage since 2009 was located and reinstated on George’s Street. I have called out Chairs of committees for not admitting that family were beneficiaries of monies over which the Chair had sign off. I have campaigned long and hard for greater traffic calming for residents in Great Connell. I called for the rejuvenation of buildings in Kildare Town. I have enacted a countywide review of pay-parking. But these are merely some of the projects raised by the motions I have submitted. In addition, through my office, we have processed 1,451 queries, predominantly housing related. We have directly helped 3,561 constituents. I have gained 7,892 followers online and reached

engagement of 632,821 people. Not bad for 600 days!

Q. What’s next for Fiona McLoughlin Healy?

‘As a constituency, I passionately believe that the potential of Kildare South has not been realised for a long, long time and in particular, Athy. Kildare South has so much more it can achieve in terms of employment opportunities, more youth facilities and more choice in terms of education. I am actively involved with the Kildare Wicklow ETB to map the skill sets and training required across South Kildare to close the gap between employment opportunities in North and South Kildare. Kildare Business Wisdom Council which I founded in 2013 has helped start-up companies all over South Kildare since it’s inception. These are the type of things that can happen when you focus on what you want to achieve as a community and decide to #MakeItHappen. The rest, well... my top priorities and red line national level issues can be seen on the next few pages. Enjoy!’

Taking in Charge of Estates

In response to a motion by Cllr. McLoughlin Healy, Kildare County Council has confirmed that nine estates are being advertised for taking in charge. “This is highly anticipated and very welcome news for the residents of Old Mill Race, Athgarvan; Ballymany Manor, Newbridge; Ruanbeg Manor, Kildare; Preston Heights, Kilmegague; The Elms, Newbridge; Curraghbeg, Kildare; The Meadows, Newbridge (Part of); Woodview, Rathangan; College Orchard, Newbridge. I am glad that these residents are seeing progress and it is hoped to have the taking in charge of these estates completed by early 2016,” added Cllr. McLoughlin Healy.

Minister for Housing, Planning and Co-ordination of Construction 2020, Paudie Coffey, TD, published the fourth annual progress report on tackling the issue of unfinished housing developments which reveals a 75% drop in the unfinished developments since 2010 from nearly 3000 to 668 and 324 developments resolved in 2015 alone. Minister Coffey signalled that the next step is to engage with the relevant local authorities to explore options on the future viability of unoccupied, unfinished developments.

“The resolution of some of the unfinished housing development issues has reached a crucial and final phase and I will continue to push for further progress in the year ahead,” concluded Fiona McLoughlin Healy.

News

In Brief

Improving Youth Facilities

Kildare's population has not yet peaked. There will continue to be pressure on facilities for young people. #youthfacilities was a recent campaign by McLoughlin Healy to highlight the lack of facilities and services across Kildare South, with its youth population of over 77,000.

72.5% of the population of Kildare are living in urban centres. These main centres should be the focus of more significant investments, either by private or public sectors. The regeneration of the People's Park in Athy, following almost €250,000 investment in Athy youth facilities by Kildare County Council was a very welcome development for the area. New developments at Ellistown GAA are also imminent. A Skatepark development for Newbridge has straddled KCC for several cycles and is currently at public consultation stage. When contacted for comment, Cllr. McLoughlin Healy stated that "It is very important that Kildare County Council includes the views of the whole community before making decisions about our future facilities. I welcome the increased focus on child and youth facilities to provide for the expanding population in the future. This has been a priority of mine since becoming a councillor."

Harmonisation of Commercial Rates

Kildare County Council plan to harmonise commercial rates across the County over a five year period. Legislation was enacted nationally which allowed for harmonisation over a longer 10 year period. Cllr. McLoughlin Healy campaigned for the ten year phasing in at Council level in order to give the town of Athy some breathing space following the deepest recession in living memory. Athy is distinct from other large towns in the County because it has the lowest rates in the County. The faster 5 year harmonisation therefore disproportionately affects the Town and its businesses. Rates should be commensurate with the level of economic activity in the area.

Where rates are disproportionate to the levels of economic activity KCC and all local authorities should seek to address the rates burden through targeted economic development programmes and/or rebate schemes.

Education - A Top Priority

Early Childhood Ireland has already made a series of recommendations for the new Government to address this issue of sustainability and expansion of current capacity to deliver the promised second free preschool year. Many of these recommendations featured heavily on the floor of a childcare seminar held by Cllr. McLoughlin Healy in June 2015. Fianna Fail are currently advocating tax credits for parents. Tax credits will NOT help the delivery of the Early Childhood Ireland recommendations - improvements which the childcare sector badly need. Tax credits has been proven globally to be ineffective. "I have listened closely to the experiences of the educators in our communities. I have informed myself through the manifestos released by unions. I am keeping up-to-date with the consultation papers and directives released by the Department. In generating my Education Platform I have selected the following three priorities as my immediate focus if elected as a TD in the forthcoming election," stated Fiona McLoughlin Healy.

Level 1- Preschool and Early Childcare Settings/ Childcare Seminar

1. Increasing the capitation payment for the ECCE free preschool scheme.
2. Exempting childcare settings from Commercial Rates - an issue which boils down to recognising crèches and preschools as education settings.
3. Increase the provision and access of children with special education needs into our pre-school setting to expand the reach of earlier intervention.

Level 2 - Primary Schools

1. Increase the capitation to schools. Primary schools get 92c per pupil per day which does not cover basic running costs. Schools are overly reliant on parent contributions and/or fundraising as a result.
2. Few primary schools have adequate broadband - unacceptable for a modern society.
3. Introduce additional supports from outside agencies in schools needed to allow for earlier intervention and support for SEN. Agencies such as NEPS, Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy are working at capacity but schools are receiving minimum support.

Level 3 - Second Level Schools

1. Work to lift the moratorium on posts of responsibility.
2. With schools at capacity in South Kildare, I will continue in earnest for the provision of choice - the establishment of an Educate Together Second Level school in our district is a priority.
3. Increase the provision, resourcing and access to ASD units across South Kildare to ensure we are catering for SEN.

Level 4 - Third Level and Apprenticeships

1. Continue to identify Kildare's current skills profile, provide a strategic vision and specific



Actively Campaigning with SKET across the District

objectives for Ireland's future skills requirements, and sets out a road map for how the vision and objectives can be achieved.

2. I want to towns and communities prioritised as locations for a newly invigorated apprenticeship sector capable of providing prized skill sets to industries like the equine, manufacturing and construction industries and hopefully to a newly returned sugar beet industry in South Kildare.

3. I will be advocating for further discussion for a 'study now, pay later' system' for third level fees whereby higher third-level fees are funded through a student-loan system.

Higher third-level fees funded through a student-loan system is the frontrunner in options being considered by an expert group set up to advise the Government on financing the soaring cost of college education. This is an excellent choice by McLoughlin Healy as a priority. The consultation group estimates that the current €2bn annual funding must rise by €1bn over the next decade if Ireland wants to deliver a quality education for the growing number of students. But in order to soften the blow for families, the group leans heavily towards a 'study now, pay later' system. This means students would not pay fees up front, but would instead reimburse the State once their income hits a certain level following graduation.

Apprenticeships and the National Skills Strategy 2025

This new Strategy is a key pillar in the Government's plan to build sustainable economic growth. The Government has a long term economic plan to keep the recovery going and the first step of that plan is the creation of more and better jobs. The ability to attract new jobs, and having our people fill those jobs, is dependent on having a well-educated, well-skilled and adaptable work force.

This National Skills Strategy aims to provide an education and training system that is flexible enough to respond to a rapidly changing environment and that can provide the mix of skills needed over the next ten years, and beyond. The commitment is to provide 50,000 modern apprenticeship and traineeship places to 2020 as an essential part of the long term economic plan to reach full employment. A wise choice by Fiona also including this in her Education Platform.

"I call on Fine Gael to bring together County Councils, the IDA, Enterprise Ireland and the Education and Training Boards, to develop a world class apprenticeship sector capable of increasing our competitiveness while spreading the recovery nationwide." - Fiona McLoughlin Healy, Speaking at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis in January 2016.

Lest We Forget the Ghosts of Estates Past



Our public services are still recovering from the impacts of Fianna Fáil's disastrous economic policies, which led to the ban on recruitment of public servants and hit the most vulnerable people in society hardest. Fianna Fáil brought this country to the brink of collapse, wasting years of prosperity and then mis-managing the crisis when it came. They have offered nothing over the last five years and have failed to take responsibility for their disastrous record in office. Our

national deficit ballooned to €18 billion in 2010 but it has now been reduced to €3 billion. FF built an unsustainable boom on the back of property and debt. Then, when the crash came and they destroyed 300,000 jobs, they made it worse by putting taxes on work, which made recovery more difficult.

Fianna Fáil closed more than 1,245 hospital beds, closed Templemore Garda Training College and gave nursing graduates no option but to emigrate. FF in Government brought pay

increases without reform, welfare increases without any attempt to move people off the dole into employment, decentralisation, PPARs - they cannot be trusted to spend the resources generated by economic recovery. The spectacular collapse of the property fuelled bubble driven by Fianna Fáil led to a moratorium on recruitment that stunted our public services' capacity and punished the most vulnerable. We, quite simply, can't go back.

Opinion

A Just Society

A strong economy that supports people at work, can pay for the services needed for the type of just society we want. A Long Term Economic Plan needs smart public service investment with reform, to ensure new and better services. The Long Term Economic Plan launched this week will create the resources to fund more than 10,000 extra doctors, nurses, teachers and Gardaí. These additional frontline staff will improve people's lives and protect the most vulnerable in Kildare and all over the country. This approach will combine reform with smart investment in public services so we can provide better services and produce better outcomes. This will mean more care in the community from nurses, doctors and therapists, and more Gardaí on the beat as we free up 300 Gardaí from desk work, as well as 600 new Garda recruits a year. We will focus on prevention and early intervention to improve life outcomes for everyone – for our children and their futures, for our older people and their quality of life. The people who rely on public services need to be assured they are sustainable. By keeping spending increases at 1% below the long term growth rate of the economy to ensure there is no boom and bust approach to investing in public services. It is only with a strong economy that we can provide these services.

‘The stronger the plan, the stronger the recovery, the stronger the service, the stronger and more just our society will be.’

3,224 **1,800**
TEACHERS GARDÁI

2,800 **217**
NURSES SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS

600 **500**
HSE CONSULTANTS, DOCTORS AND DENTISTS SOCIAL WORKERS

1,000 **42**
OTHER HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONALS NEPS PSYCHOLOGISTS

10,183 **EXTRA FRONTLINE STAFF**

National Positive Ageing

Older Citizens

According to the census, 532,000 people aged 65 and over were living in Ireland in 2011. This will rise to 1.4 million in 2046. The number of people over 80 is set to nearly quadruple, from 128,000 in 2011 to 470,000 in 2046. The issues which are being raised by the ‘Earn Our Vote’ campaign are ones which will impact on everyone in society in the coming years.

“
Ireland’s older citizens must see a reversal to the harsh cuts they suffered during the economic downturn.

Cllr McLoughlin Healy has endorsed the ‘EarnOurVote’ Campaign in calling for:

The appointment of a Cabinet-level Minister for Older People to implement the National Positive Ageing Strategy. Support for older people to remain healthy and engaged within their communities for longer, through interventions and investment in primary care and care in the community. An increase in the State Pension and reversal to cuts to the Household Benefits Package.

In conjunction with this, there are five key elements to the Governments plan to support Kildare’s ageing population: State entitlements will be safeguarded and improved as the economic recovery continues. This includes their medical card; free travel; an increase of €25 in the State Pension by 2021; an extra €5 for the Living Alone Allowance by 2021; and a cap on the prescription charge at €17.50, which represents a 30% reduction. 2.2 million more home help hours and increases in housing adaption grants and senior alert grants.

“
More care will be provided in the community which will benefit older people.

This includes building more primary care centres; providing additional front line staff in the health system; and ensuring that chronic conditions can be cared for closer to home.



The Fair Deal Scheme waiting list will be kept to four weeks for those who need residential care. A Citizens’ Assembly will be established to discuss and plan for the needs of our ageing population.

Think Ahead

Over 145,000 people will die in Ireland during the course of the next Government and 1.4 million will be bereaved. Most people won’t die where they want to... If you believe that everyone deserves the best care at end of life and bereavement then Think Ahead is for you.

“I had a fantastic opportunity to chat with the Think Ahead team again recently. Think Ahead is the flagship project of the Forum on End of Life in Ireland which was launched in March 2009 by President McAleese. It is a public awareness initiative which encourages and empowers people to think about and pre-record their wishes in the event of serious illness or death, and something I have highlighted on Middy and elsewhere since its launch,” stated Fiona McLoughlin Healy about her recent Public Meeting.

“
Thinking about dying is challenging, and talking meaningfully with those who are

close to us about matters such as serious illness, dying and death can be difficult.

Thinking and planning ahead, however, can help to ease the sadness and pain of those that you will inevitably leave behind. It is the wish of most of us to be able to die peacefully, conscious and capable of communicating with our loved ones to the very end. Unfortunately, death does not always occur in this way.

In addition, the economic argument for state support of the THINK AHEAD initiative is compelling. 60-80% of the €14billion spent on our healthcare system is spent in the last year of life, effectively medicalising death. “Research shows the more affluent, enfranchised people are far more likely to die, as most people wish to, at home. The poorer, the disenfranchised are more likely to die on trolleys, in hospital” Dr Brendan O Shea - Lecturer in Public Health at Trinity College.

“
Take back your power - document your wishes with Think Ahead.

Opinion

Fiona for Families

Food Rebels Ireland reaches Phase 3

Parents and childcare workers are rebelling against the onslaught of childhood obesity. The message is clear - the earlier we tackle it, the better chance we have of beating it. What is healthy food and what is an appropriate food portion isn't always so obvious. Indeed billions are spent yearly to persuade us that foods that may NOT be healthy are good for us. Food Rebels Ireland cuts through the plethora of confusing messages to educate childcare workers, parents and children about healthier food choices.

Food Rebels Ireland is the brain child of Fiona McLoughlin Healy. Food Rebels is asking preschool and crèches to sign up to 4 simple principles of healthy eating designed to fight against the upper trend of childhood obesity.

Food Rebels Ireland was the second phase of a crèche healthy eating programme initiated over 4 years ago by Fiona McLoughlin Healy across 3 Newbridge crèches. In developing the programme Fiona's goal was to address the issue of childhood obesity through the crèche structure. After 2 years of implementation and feedback the most successful and workable parts of the programme form the second phase of the roll-out to crèches nationwide. This newly devised programme, Food Rebels, asks crèches and parents to adhere to 4 main principles in a battle against childhood obesity. In conjunction with this, an online #readthelabel campaign was launched to aid the identification of healthy snacks, treats and drinks.

Phase Three has since taken Kildare by storm. FunFamilyFitness was launched by Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, in January and has added an Operation Transformation inspired element to the programme. Families and sports clubs have been flocking in their droves to the Sunday events with the campaign growing momentum each week.

Why not get your childcare provider to sign up to the Food Rebels Ireland programme to ensure your child's health and wellbeing is promoted and encouraged from a young age! The four principles which form the Food Rebels pledge are pictured. For more information call 045430046. Or join us for our next #FunFamilyFitness event with details on the Food Rebels Ireland Facebook page.



We commit to:

- 1. White to brown:** We offer whole-grain pasta and rice for dinner with whole-grain cereals for breakfast and whole-grain bread where practical; nine times out of ten.
- 2. Prioritise a wholesome breakfast:** We prioritize a varied and wholesome breakfast. Include such options as porridge; wheat biscuits with chopped banana; boiled egg and whole-wheat toast soldiers; cereal flakes with yoghurt and berries.
- 3. Step it up:** We add five minutes of movement to every hour. The goal is to achieve no less than five thousand steps per child per day.
- 4. Size it down:** We ensure that we offer the correct portion size to our children ensuring vegetables make up half the dinner plate. We offer fruit twice daily, at snack time.

Together we will fight childhood obesity and give our children a better chance in life.

Follow us on Facebook and help stop childhood obesity:

www.facebook.com/FoodRebels2014

Creating a Better Future Together



Ireland's first National Maternity Strategy

Ireland's first National Maternity Strategy – Creating a Better Future Together, a roadmap for the improvement of services over the next ten years was revealed in January. The Strategy sets out to build on the maternity services we already have in Ireland and restore confidence in them by raising quality and making them as safe as possible across all units, and by creating a partnership approach with expectant mothers. Considerable investment has been made in our maternity services in recent years and the Strategy sets out a vision of maternity services that is about safety, quality and choice, and that places women very firmly at the centre of the service.

The Strategy identifies four priorities:

A Health & Wellbeing approach should be adopted to ensure that babies get the best start in life. Mothers and families should be supported and empowered to improve their own health and wellbeing;

Women should have access to safe, high-quality, nationally consistent, woman-centred maternity care;

Pregnancy and birth should be recognised as a normal physiological process, and insofar as it is safe to do so, a woman's choice in pregnancy and childbirth should be facilitated;

Maternity services should be appropriately resourced, underpinned by strong and effective leadership, management and governance arrangements, and delivered by a skilled and competent workforce, in partnership with women.

The Strategy will be delivered through a new National Women & Infants' Health Programme, and care in each case will be offered by multi-disciplinary teams. A new community midwifery service will be developed. Expectant mothers will be offered choices about their care during pregnancy and birth, ranging from home birth to specialised assistance, depending on the level of risk involved in each



"We need more programmes like Fiona's" urged Leo Varadkar as he launched Food Rebels

case. All pregnant women should have appropriate and informed choices, and access to the right level of care and support.

Following this, we must continue to support working families by investing in affordable and accessible childcare. Among the other measures announced in Budget 2016, aimed at helping hard working parents are an extension of the free pre-school year and a €5 increase in child benefit.

"The new statutory paternity leave, which was being brought to Cabinet in January will be paid at a rate of €230 a week, the same as maternity benefit and based on the same PRSI contribution requirements.

“

As well as the obvious financial support, I very much welcome the fact that this new legislation values the contribution to child-rearing which men make, as well as women” concluded Fiona McLoughlin Healy





FAMILY FUN FITNESS



Food Rebels is a campaign for childcare providers and parents to help prevent childhood obesity in Ireland

WIN

Get Fit & Have Fun!

**You could WIN €1000
for your group or club**

**Check out Food Rebels Ireland on facebook
for recipes and family fitness ideas.**

Proudly sponsored by Berney's Pharmacy, Kilcullen

#MakeltHappen #FionaForFamilies

FIONA McLOUGHLIN HEALY

 **Fiona@fmcloughlinhealy.ie**  **045 430046 / 086 781 1012**

National News - Drawing the Red Line

Career Pathways in Healthcare

Dear Fiona,

I am writing to you on behalf of the student nurse interns of 2016, a group who have been continuously let down by administration since December 23rd, who in less than 8 months time will be qualified and working in the nation's healthcare system, who are completely and totally disheartened and exhausted from being continuously let down with regard to the changes to the rise in Intern pay.

When we were made aware that talks were in place with regard to increasing our intern pay from €6.49, many of us became hopeful. When we were aware that we would be working for 9 months for significantly below minimum wage, many of us resigned ourselves that we would have to make sacrifices and live on a very limited budget for those 9 months. For this reason, when we were told that there was the probability we would be earning at least minimum wage, the morale of the students increased as we felt we were getting respect and recognition for the hard work and dedication we put in.

As nursing interns we share the responsibilities of a staff nurse and work a 39 hour week of long shifts, making it extremely demanding to maintain a part time job to substitute some of our finances. Throughout our work as interns we balance between long and strenuous working days, and completing assignments and assessments in order to be as highly qualified as possible come September. I am not writing to complain about the work of an intern nurse, as frankly I love what I do. What is concerning for me and my colleagues is that many of us have to try balance mortgage, childcare, insurance, bills, fuel etc, etc, on €6.49 and hour, significantly below minimum wage.

I am writing to you because there is huge support nationally for nurses to earn a livable wage, and I am certain that if need be, there would be significant support for us interns to simply be made aware of what our wage will be, and therefore be paid adequately. With the general election looming, I would hope that as a prospective candidate you would take matters such as this seriously and be aware of the significance it has on how it will effect potential voters. All we ask, is that we can find out what our fair wage will be, instead of being left in the lurch any longer and living on hopes and false promises.

Kind regards,
Laura

Dear Laura,

As the daughter of two nurses, as a sister of two nurses and as a former nurse myself, I can testify from experience that nurses are the last people ever to complain unless out of absolute necessity. I can tell from the above that you absolutely love your job regardless of the harrowing situation and uncertainty that you find yourself in financially. Overcrowding and consultant take home pay regularly feature in national media but I am committed and focussed on delivering on the very issues you detail here.

This is about better career paths, and especially about helping young professionals feel proud about the care they can deliver to their patients. The bigger answer is to fix the hospital system. This is best done by 1. Proper use of IT so we can see immediately whats working and what isn't. 2. More certainty, and quicker decision making, and that means fewer junior doctors and more specialists. 3. Bring HR in the health system into line with the good practice elsewhere - end temporary contracts, have better definition in terms of career pathways and develop better means of having senior nursing staff who want to have a greater say in management, actually GET a better say in management.

So while 200 beds have been made available by the end of the month and that is to be welcomed, we need these other issues to be addressed if we are serious about attracting and retaining the dedicated nurses like you Laura, and maintaining the nursing specialists that we need for an efficient health service. I agree with Liam Doran, General Secretary of the INMO, when he says that nurses are the most patient group of public servants ever known to mankind. But even nurses have their limits. As a GE16 candidate for South Kildare Laura, I am proposing that it is high time that we improve career pathways for nurses while also improving the environment in which they are currently working. Let's support some of hardest working public servants - our nurses. I'm for nurses. I will continue to advocate on your behalf and act as the informed representative if given the opportunity as the next South Kildare TD.

Thank your taking the time to get in contact. Please be assured that I am listening.

From Fiona

Innovative Health



The economic arguments for Early Intervention in matters of Health and Education are compelling. L-R Karen Leigh (Founder and CEO of Sensational Kids), Tracy Piggott, Fiona McLoughlin Healy

Health Innovation Hub

A pioneering partnership between private sector companies and the health service to develop groundbreaking Irish healthcare products and research and use them to benefit of Irish patients has been set up.

Leo Varadkar have announced €5 million in funding over five years for the Health Innovation Hub. Innovative

Irish healthcare companies will for the first time be able to easily access the health service to test their products and services, increasing the chances of developing commercial ideas and creating jobs.

The initiative has massive potential for Ireland's burgeoning healthtech sector, and for improving healthcare services and outcomes for patients.

Crime - the sad reality

South Kildare as a whole has an exceptionally and unacceptably low number of Garda Stations. It has the ninth highest rate of crime nationally among the 21 Garda Divisions and Kildare has higher than the national average rate of theft related offences as a percentage of overall crimes. Athy alone had 177 burglar related offences in 2013. This is unacceptable and an issue which Fiona McLoughlin Healy intends to champion at a national level.

Cllr. McLoughlin Healy was the talk of the county following her appearance on Vincent Brown's People's Debate on TV3. "It is an absolute hypocrisy to have anyone from Fianna Fail on here talking about crime and rural crime or being safe in our homes. Fianna Fail closed Templemore, we have reopened it. We are currently recruiting 1,150 people with a commitment to 600 new guards every year. Fianna Fail have only recommended 500 in the last budget and none before that. On top of this, Frances Fitzgerald just recently announced €215million



to go into the IT system for the Gardai which is a huge investment, and €34million into new vehicles for Gardai - more that three times the amount that Fianna Fail put in, in three previous Governments. This is about creating a mobile responsive task force that can respond appropriately to the levels of crime we are now seeing. Fianna Fail would still have our Gardai in the same cars right now if they had their way. We must create a future here."

These levels of crime can't continue - vote for a TD who has the skills to legislate effectively and #makeithappen

How my business background informs the work I do as a public representative

Fiona McLoughlin Healy

1. I founded a Busk and Food Festival in Newbridge to launch the Dubai Duty Free 150th Derby at the Curragh with the specific goal of generating business for the town. As part of the project, in conjunction with Dulux I got an entire street, an old market street, painted in time for the festival. Dubai Duty Free came on board as sponsors and not only was the day itself a huge success but business on this street is up 40%. Dubai Duty Free was so delighted with the event they are doubling sponsorship of the event next year.

2. I attended (at my own expense) a Revive and Thrive event in Birmingham focused on reviving town centers that have been decimated by large out of town shopping centres. I am in talks to bring this event to Kildare to teach business people, planners etc what can be done and what the UK has learned, in terms of how to help revive their town centres.

3. As a member of the Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (former VECs and one of the largest training providers in the state to employers) I have asked the Chairperson of the KWETB and the CEO of Kildare County Council to work together to map the skill sets and training required to help close the gap in employment opportunities between North and South Kildare. To put the role of the KWETB into context, Kildare County Council has a budget of a38m while the KWETB has a budget of a120m. Bringing these 2 organisations together with a focus on creating employment has the potential to significantly close the gap between employment opportunities created in North and South of Kildare.

Unemployment has now dropped to 8.8%

In total, over 135,000 new jobs have been added to the economy since the launch of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs. Unemployment has now dropped to 8.8%. The EI results also confirm that this is not just a Dublin based recovery. Almost two thirds of the new jobs created were outside Dublin. All of the regions recorded increases in full-time employment in 2015. The Regional Action Plans for Jobs are designed to increase employment in every region by 10-15% between now and 2020.

A new programme that aims to create a massive 25,000 new jobs in the Mid East region in the next two years has been announced by the government. The Mid East Action Plan for Jobs is a €250 million job strategy that aims to increase employment in the region by around 10-15% over the coming years. The jobs will be based in all sectors such as industrial, education and the agrifood sector. Kildare, Meath and Wicklow are the counties that will be targeted in the strategy due to the counties location and the industry that already exists in each of those counties. As more jobs are created, we will ensure that work pays more than welfare, and that hard work and entrepreneurship are better rewarded. By the end of 2020, we will abolish the USC as part of our Long Term Economic Plan to keep the recovery going.

Ending the Discrimination of the Self Employed



Showcasing Local Businesses with Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald

The latest Long Term Economic Plan wishes to abolish the USC by 2020 as part of Fine Gael's ambition to keep the recovery going. This time five years ago, people were feeling for the first time the shock of seeing the Universal Social Charge deducted from their pay checks. The introduction of the USC by Fianna Fail was the last act of a failed Government

and their economic mismanagement that ruined the country.

Fine Gael has already started to abolish the USC – the USC rates were cut this year and have completely removed over 400,000 low-paid workers over the last four years. Fine Gael plans to complete the abolition of the USC over the next five years. As part the wider tax reforms, this is the core part of Fine

Gael's Long Term Economic Plan aimed at making work pay. We must make work pay more than welfare and to reward hard work. It is the hard work of Irish families and small business that is generating economic recovery. To keep the recovery going, hard work must be encouraged and rewarded.

Since the introduction of the USC by Fianna Fail, Ireland's personal tax system has discouraged work and is a barrier to the economic recovery. More than 80% of the tax increases implemented by Fianna Fail were imposed on workers and took money out of their pockets. Like all penal taxes on work, Fianna Fail's USC killed jobs – 300,000 of them. Fine Gael has now started reducing taxes on workers and putting money back in people's pockets. Over 135,000 more people are at work since the Action Plan for Jobs was launched in 2012. Much progress has been made but to finish the job by implementing the three steps of our Long Term Economic Plan to keep the recovery going: more and better jobs; making work pay; and sensible investments in public services.

The abolition of the USC is at the centre of this. We must end the discrimination against the self-employed under the tax system by 2018. If the marginal rate of tax is reduced to 44% for middle income earners and under 50% for everyone else to make work pay.

Speaking about the plans for a €4 billion Jobs Fund

Minister Bruton said:

"Over the last five years Fine Gael has shown that it has the right pro-enterprise policies that can help our economy to grow and to create more jobs. When we first set a target of creating 100,000 additional jobs within five years, we were scoffed at. Our political opponents criticised our plans and voted against the Budgets that underpinned our plans.

"Today we are committing to an even bolder, more ambitious plan for jobs: 200,000 extra jobs by 2020 and every region to benefit and be within 1% of the national unemployment rate. To achieve

this bold ambition we need the right policy mix to help our enterprises grow their businesses and create more jobs. That is what the Action Plan for Jobs has done and that Action Plan for Jobs process will continue to be at the heart of our plans. We will fund an additional €4 billion in total capital investment over the five year period 2017-2021. The funds will be ring-fenced for a new 'Future Jobs Investment Fund' to future-proof the economy and our jobs plan against rising global risks and challenges."



Discussing job creation and employment opportunities with Simon Harris

Comment

Testimonials

I know from your own track record that you're not just the typical politician. That you have a particular interest in the real issues that bother people. You're not, as they say, a stroke politician. And if you are elected, I have full faith that you will ask the awkward questions on different committees and I can certainly see you driving forward issues of national importance if we are smart enough to put you in.

- Dr. Brendan O'Shea, Bridge Medical Centre

Fiona is exactly the calibre of candidate that I would be proud to have representing me in the Dail. She encompasses everything we need to carry our society forward into an era of increased transparency and accountability.

She is fearless, hardworking, genuine, honest and her integrity is her most admirable quality.

Undoubtedly, my number 1 choice with every other candidate piling into insignificance in comparison. Best wishes Fiona

- Jenny Kavanagh, Teacher

Fiona is a superb candidate. She is one of the most hardworking people I have ever met but on top of that, she listens. It is not unusual for her to still be working at 11.30pm at night, yet be up bright and early the next morning ready to tackle the next day. Her energy and enthusiasm to represent her constituents is second to none. I am proud to say that she is getting my number 1 on Feb. 26th.

- Martina Hannigan, Businesswoman

I knew when I met Fiona that she was a woman of substance. She has the skills to work on your behalf at the very highest levels and legislate effectively

- Minister for Justice, Frances Fitzgerald

Fiona can make it happen for the people of South Kildare. In fact, she is already making it happen. We are out every Sunday in Athy, Newbridge and Kildare Town with her Food Rebels programme inspiring families to improve their health. Fiona is a brilliant person. It is a pleasure to know her and I wish her the very best in the election. She certainly has my vote

- Fracas Foran, Personal Trainer

Exercising your vote

**Your vote is your voice
- make sure it's heard**

For too long our Oireachtas has been mainly made up of a single demographic of older men that drastically fail to represent the diversity of Irish society, and in particular, the women of Ireland. We have a greater opportunity than ever before to have a more representative Dail and it is vital that we take this opportunity. When our government is more representative of the different groups of our society everyone will benefit. Your vote is your voice and by using it in protest you are not giving it its full power. Elect people who have the power to create change, not just the power to be an opposition TD. The responsibility lies with us to ensure that the next government is a successful one, so that the pain of the last few years

can stay in the past and not be relived. We must consider all the candidates on the basis of how they represent themselves and the power that they will have if elected.

Find someone you can connect with. Who you feel understands the issues in society that are affecting you and your family. You have to look at what they have to say for themselves and the experiences they have had in their lives. A candidate who has experienced the same struggles as local people and is dealing with the problems that average Irish people are dealing with it is in a far better place to represent the people of Kildare South than a candidate who is a career politician or who has no experience working in the real world. - Etain Hobson

**Cllr. FIONA
McLOUGHLIN
HEALY #MakeltHappen**

"Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen"

- Michael Jordan

'A law and politics graduate from NUIG, she also qualified as a nurse... a regular panellist on TV3's Midday... the mother of three also established a healthy eating programme for crèches'

- One of 6 candidates to watch in the general Election, Irish Independent

*'Star Councillor award
- The one new councillor who impressed us here in the Leinster Leader'*

- Star Councillor Award, Leinster Leader

FINE GAEL 



IF YOU CARE ABOUT...




- More efficient healthcare
- Choice in primary and second level education
- Early intervention for children with special needs
- Tax equalisation and fairer treatment of the self employed
- Affordable and quality childcare
- Safer communities
- Reviving and thriving our small villages and towns

#FionaForFamilies #MakeltHappen

Check out details of Fiona's other campaigns including
FUN FAMILY FITNESS with FOOD REBELS  FoodRebelsIreland

**VOTE NO. 1
FIONA McLOUGHLIN HEALY**

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FINE GAEL 

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