

# Ged Nash TD

Autumn 2020

**LABOUR** THE PARTY OF WORK



Dear Resident

**I want to take this opportunity to thank the people of Drogheda for their support in the 2020 General Election.**

You can be assured that I will always promote our city on the national stage and campaign for more investment, jobs and resources for our area.

I have taken on the senior role of the **Labour Party's spokesperson on Finance & Public Expenditure.**

Even before Covid-19, too many families were struggling to make ends meet and too many parents were worried about the economic future for their children

**There can be no going back to this broken system.**

In my new role I am developing policies that will build a better post-Covid Ireland, with a **New Social Contract that puts ordinary workers and their families first.**

Every worker should be assured of access to affordable housing and quality public services such as childcare, healthcare and transport.

We also need balanced regional investment and remote working opportunities in **Louth & East Meath** to create decent jobs locally, cut our commute and support our indigenous Irish business sector.

**Together we can work to make this New Social Contract a reality!**

My office on Palace Street is open **9.30am-5pm** each weekday and we are always available to assist and support you in any way we can.

You can contact me by email, phone or on Facebook (Ged Nash TD) with any query.

Best wishes

*Ged*



**Ged Nash TD**

**Labour Party**

spokesperson  
on Finance & Public  
Expenditure  
Tel: 041 9810811

## JULY STIMULUS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO THINK BIG



**After COVID-19, there can be no going back to a broken economy – one of low-pay, high cost of living and under-funded public services.**

The July Stimulus package announced by this new chaotic Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Green government represented a missed opportunity to think big, transform our economic model and chart a new course for Ireland.

As Finance Spokesperson, I launched **Labour's fully costed Alternative July Stimulus plan** to kick-start and reshape a new post-COVID economy.

Labour's plan set out our proposals to not just counter the impact of COVID-19 but also the upcoming threat of a **no-deal BREXIT** which would hit border counties such as Louth hard.

Consequently, we proposed a cash injection into the economy of **€10 billion (including a 2% VAT cut)** - the Government delivered just over HALF THAT (little over €5 billion)!

Although the new Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS) is in principle welcome, but as it stands it will be wholly inadequate for the needs of workers and businesses.

In contrast, Labour called for a **New Wage Subsidy Scheme** based on the renowned German model.

This would fully support jobs, wages and local businesses, also provide additional training and reskilling opportunities, especially for those young workers across the county have been badly hit by job losses.

I have been calling for a **New Deal for a New Generation to support these workers, including a new Youth Guarantee scheme to secure a decent job or skilled training to all U-25s.**

Labour's plan also included much needed investment and funding for additional places in higher education institutions such as **Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT).**

We cannot afford to leave another generation behind – and the upcoming Budget will be the final shot for this failing Government to restart and reshape our economy.

## A NEW WAGE SUBSIDY SCHEME – PROTECTING WAGES & PUTTING WORKERS FIRST

From day one of this outbreak, Labour has been banging the drum for a German-style Wage Subsidy Scheme that supports jobs and helps our local businesses to survive.

**But big profitable firms CANNOT be allowed to draw down our public money without any strings attached.**

Taxpayer support should be used to protect jobs, workers and their wages, as well as our local communities and natural environment.

This could be achieved by **attaching social and environmental criteria to business supports** – for example, the payment of a living wage and investment in sustainable business practices.

In addition, there can be **No Bailout Cash Without Conditions!**

That is why Labour successfully campaigned to make sure the **new Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS) has a 'clawback' mechanism** to protect taxpayers against big firms who attempt to abuse the scheme.

We have also called for companies availing of the EWSS **to pay the full top-up of wages (so workers don't loose out!) and for a ban on workers being laid-off from these firms.**

In addition, I have been actively **campaigning to STOP mortgage approval being wrongfully withdrawn by banks** for those availing of the wage subsidy scheme.

This particularly affected young **First Time-Buyers** who have worked hard to save up for their own home, only to have this denied through no fault of their own!

What's worse, many risked losing their deposit on their new home – **upwards of €20,000 for a house in the Drogheda area.**

I recently **proposed an amendment to finally put a stop to this unfair practice** which is punishing people on the TWSS trying to obtain a home – but this was **BLOCKED** by Government! **We will continue this campaign in the coming months.**

## MY NEW LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THE PAY OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

**I recently introduced the new Dáil's first piece of legislation.**

This was designed to **protect the wages and conditions of our construction workers**, plumbers and electricians after a recent High Court decision put their current pay scale at risk

For example, this court ruling meant that **skilled construction workers such as electricians could lose their current wages and drop to just over €10 per hour**, while our local construction firms could be undercut by companies from abroad.



Labour's new legislation will also play an important role in **our fight for a living wage for other professionals, such as childcare workers** who are chronically underpaid despite their skills and the investment they have made in their education.

Sign-up to my **Facebook (Ged Nash TD)** to stay posted on this Bills progress.

## SCHOOLS NEED TO SAFELY REOPEN

**Getting children back to school should have been the Government's Number One priority**, but the announcement in late July has left little time for schools and parents to prepare.

**For example, the latest Government U-turn on school transport has left many parents stranded.**

In addition, **some primary schools in Louth look set to lose teachers as they plan to reopen.**

I have been making this case to the Minister for Education since early July when parents from **St. Patrick's in Harestown, Monasterboice** first contacted me and her response has been disappointing.

Our children's health and education must come first – and failure to manage a safe return to school will be another damning indictment of this shambolic Government!

## PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO DEALGAN HOUSE NURSING HOME URGENTLY NEEDED

The tragic Covid-19 related deaths of 22 residents of Dealgan Nursing home in Dundalk should never have happened.

**I have persistently called for a Public Inquiry into these COVID-19 related deaths at Dealgan House and recently raised this issue directly with the Minister for Health in the Dáil.**

This is the only way to ensure that bereaved families can get answers to the many unanswered questions they have – and the Minister must now heed their call.



## D4 & D5 BUS SERVICE TO START THIS YEAR



I have secured a commitment from the National Transport Authority that **a new D4 & D5 bus services – linking Aston Village and Ballymakenny College to Southgate – will be up and running before the end of this year.**

Funding has finally been made available for the service that will link the Grange Rath and Dublin Road estates and the Ballymakenny Road and Aston Village/Termon Abbey/Newfoundwell Road areas with the train station, for example.

In addition, my colleague Cllr. Michelle Hall and I have pushed hard for a similar commitment **for the 189 Bus Éireann service (servicing Drogheda, Termonfeckin & Clogherhead).**

## VARADKAR SAYS 'NO' TO IDA DEVELOPMENT FOR DROGHEDA

**Drogheda is an ideal location for Foreign Direct Investment** – yet there has been a chronic lack of investment in recent years which has stunted the growth of jobs in the city.

For example, **there is currently NO state owned (IDA) space left to attract potential companies to our city!**

I recently challenged the new Business Minister Leo Varadkar directly on this issue, and **he admitted the IDA has no plans to develop new facilities in Drogheda.**

Unless the government pledges to urgently make the buildings and the sites available – like they have done in Dundalk – our town will never achieve its full FDI potential.

Working with the local business community, **I have sought a meeting with IDA to again make the case for investment in Drogheda.**

We have a vision for an **IDA business park in north Drogheda along the route of the proposed Northern Port Access Route.**

The Government must seriously consider our proposal for the city as part of its forthcoming National Economic Plan (alongside the Budget) in October.

## DELIVERING ON A CRIME TASKFORCE FOR DROGHEDA

I recently called for the extension of the **Special Criminal Court** to get tough on crime and tackle the drug trade in Drogheda.

But we also need a Crime Taskforce for Drogheda to get tough on the causes of crime – poverty, addiction and lack of investment in community services.

**In late 2018, Labour Cllr. Pio Smith and I proposed a multi-agency, holistic approach to dealing with the causes and impact of gang crime in Drogheda.**

This May I met with Department of Justice officials to secure a commitment for a starting date and I am glad to announce that **this essential work has now begun.**

I am optimistic this investment in education, housing and addiction services will provide **alternative pathways and stop our young people falling prey to gangland criminals.**

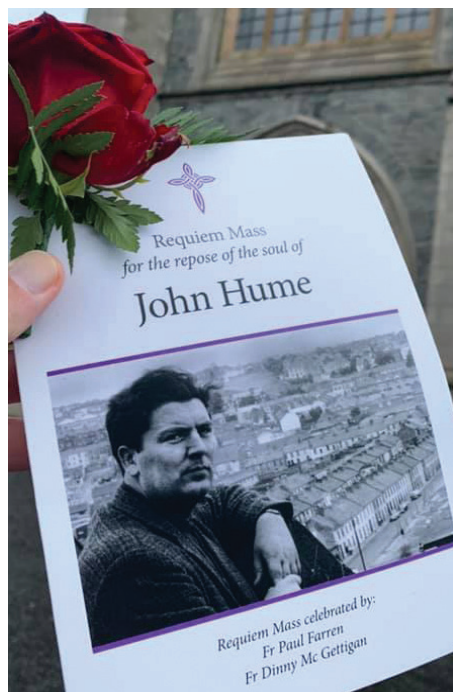
## PORT ACCESS ROUTE DECISION LATER THIS YEAR



The new Minister for Housing & Planning, Darragh O'Brien TD has confirmed that a decision will be made later this year on **funding for the Northern Port Access Route.**

This project is badly needed to alleviate congestion in Drogheda and open-up zoned land for sports & recreation and housing and job creation and I will continue to campaign for this vital project for Drogheda.

# PASSING OF JOHN HUME



I was honoured to be among small invited group of attendees at the funeral of Nobel Laureate, John Hume.

He was a truly remarkable man, devoted to peace and genuine reconciliation on the island of Ireland.

In the challenging times that lie ahead, we must strive to live by John's example and build a shared, agreed Ireland that works for all and that leaves nobody behind.



As the lockdown continues to ease our local shops and businesses need our support more than ever!

Please at this time spend locally and if shopping online please use local online suppliers.

**We are in this together!**

## THANK YOU TO OUR FRONTLINE & ESSENTIAL WORKERS

**A big thank you to our frontline and essential workers such as our health and emergency services workers and volunteers,** our local authority and government department workers, and those who continued to work hard in retail, security, transport and logistics during the recent Covid19 national lockdown.

You have all made a **remarkable contribution to our community and to our country and you continue to do so.**

From the local Labour Party team, we want to extend our sincere gratitude.

## STAY SAFE, STAY CONNECTED

Now more than ever it is crucial to follow the stated public health advice to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. We all have a part to play in protecting ourselves and others.

What to hear more? **You can read my latest news and sign-up to my new online Newsletter at [www.GedNash.ie](http://www.GedNash.ie).**



## Working with GED NASH TD: Our new LABOUR TEAM for LOUTH & EAST MEATH



**Cllr. Fiachra MacRaghnaill**

**Phone:** 041 9810811

[fiachra.macraghnaill@louthcoco.ie](mailto:fiachra.macraghnaill@louthcoco.ie)



**Cllr. Elaine McGinty**

**Phone:** 086 8369649

[elaine.mcginty@members.meathcoco.ie](mailto:elaine.mcginty@members.meathcoco.ie)



**Cllr. Pio Smith**

**Phone:** 087 9460673

[pio.smith@hotmail.com](mailto:pio.smith@hotmail.com)



**Cllr. Michelle Hall**




**Phone:** 086 1437079

[michelle.e.hall@gmail.com](mailto:michelle.e.hall@gmail.com)



## Ged Nash TD

**Constituency office open:**  
Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12.30am and 2pm to 5pm

**Constituency Office:**  
Connolly Hall, Palace Street,  
Drogheda, A92 YV70  
Phone: **041 9810811** Fax: **01 618 4397**  
Email: [gerald.nash@oir.ie](mailto:gerald.nash@oir.ie)    
 [www.gednash.ie](http://www.gednash.ie)

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