

## **The Methodist Church in Ireland – Council on Social Responsibility (Southern Executive)**

### **Election to the 33<sup>rd</sup> Dáil – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

*While not an exhaustive list, the following is a note of some of our main concerns as a church that we think would be useful to highlight to candidates seeking election as Teachtaí Dála. Please consider the issues highlighted and maybe have this note ready if approached by someone seeking your vote.*

**Respect for our environment** We encourage the sustainable use of our resources and stand against exploitation of our environment, locally and globally. Alongside personal and societal examination of our lifestyles and livelihoods, we want any government to be committed to the reduction of carbon emissions and a just transition away from fossil fuels within Ireland and to play its part in global efforts to this end.

**Immigration & Refugees** We are concerned that all in political office, particularly TDs, would take positive steps against racial rhetoric within our public sphere. That government would deal transparently and positively in regard to the housing of asylum seekers and that the McMahon report to bring an end to Direct Provision be implemented.

**Housing** Commitment to building tens of thousands of social housing units in the coming years on public land available to the government rather than holding out for private developers.

We are concerned that adequate housing should be available for the secure home life of all - in regard to homeless families with particular concern for children, as well as travellers and other minority groups.

New housing should be carbon neutral and have public transport and cycle lanes available to basic services.

We support the call (Peter McVerry) for a change to the constitution to make the provision of housing a right.

**Health** The Mental Health Crisis in our state requires a major injection of funding to support those in need, particularly outside Dublin.

We are also concerned about the lack of investment in services for those in challenging pregnancies.

Proper investment is needed to ease the overcrowding at A&E departments & pressure on good nursing care.

**Beyond our borders** We are glad of all efforts at encouraging good relations on this island. Reconciliation of people from various backgrounds must be at the heart of support for political stability in the North, in relationships along the border and in any discussion about a potential border poll.

We commend the seeking of good relations with the rest of the European Union and the UK, in the hope that among many things, our local economy would not be undermined.

We commend the ongoing commitment to International Development and Relief and call for the government to ensure that all tax agreements with countries in the global south do not negatively impact upon them.

**Democratic engagement** We want to see that all are on the electoral register and enabled to vote and that minorities (ethnic, ability etc.) can stand for political office and be involved in public life.

That structures are in place within parties and government to prevent corruption in public life. Public confidence in government is dependent on transparency.

**Other** We are concerned that producers, particularly farmers, receive fair prices in the marketplace.

Government should assess the economy by how the poorest in society are doing, rather than the wealthiest.

Commitment to good public transport; to help access of rural communities and reduce urban car use.

That the government support victims of Domestic Violence by adequately funding local services working in the area and provision of housing needs of those in crisis.

**Being a people who listen well to our neighbour (Please take a note for your prayers and for your church.)**

We want to hear from potential TDs about their identification of needs in the community that may potentially reflect areas in which local Christians can pray and take action within our mission.

In potentially taking office as TDs, we want to ask candidates if there are concerns for which we personally and the local Methodist Church could pray for.