

Open Letter to the Electorate of Sheffield Hallam

April 2010

Dear Voters of Sheffield Hallam,

As your Independent Candidate for Sheffield Hallam I will not be trying to seduce you to vote for me with promises of tax cuts, increased Government spending or a miraculous trick to pay off the national debt. I will however be asking for your vote and support to act as your Member of Parliament in a fundamentally different way.

I believe that whatever plans or promises any political party make in the run up to a General Election, these plans can never be guaranteed to the Electorate. Manifesto plans are written on paper, but the real world is not made of paper and when circumstances change any future Government will have to react to this and such external influences will have an impact on their ability to deliver their pre election promises.

Take for example the financial crisis. This has had a quite profound effect on all of our lives over the past couple of years, yet I do not recall a single Politician campaigning at the last General Election that they would “Introduce Stability into the World Financial Markets !!”, they just simply couldn’t see this coming.

As such even the most truthful candidates are in reality only giving you an indication of their intentions and a list of their priorities. If any manifesto was ever brave enough to add the small print I believe it should say something like - “*Promises subject to change at any time dependent upon prevailing conditions*”.

If we accept that all Parties will inherit this same restriction then we are really voting for candidates based upon our *trust* that they will make the best decisions on our behalf.

The reason I have felt compelled to stand as an Independent Candidate is that I believe that this trust is all too often broken when MP’s vote on issues based upon what’s best for their party *not* what is best for their electorate. The Expenses Scandal was an extreme abuse of this trust but routinely MP’s will vote along clear Party Political guide lines without even considering what we the public want them to do.

My cast iron guarantee to you the Electorate is that I will consult with you continuously to ensure that I am voting and acting on your behalf at all times. 100% of my time and efforts will be to the benefit of you the Electorate not a higher authority Political Party. I will speak openly without fear of party censorship and I will make sure your voice is heard by a Parliament, who has appeared deaf to it for some time.

My methods for consulting continuously with you will be via an electronic forum and what I hope will be the most pro-active Constituency office in the country.

I have of course my own strong opinions and values and I would like to share a selection of these with you now so that you may determine I am the Candidate that you can trust with your vote.

On the **Economy**, I am a big believer in the statement that we can never tax ourselves to prosperity. The economic growth patterns of the last decade that were built upon foundations of asking each of us to take on more debt and keep shopping cannot be repeated.

The country needs real and sustained economic growth to put our finances in order and to increase the living standards of every citizen. I believe the long under valued sector of manufacturing can provide the answer.

If we look at the astonishing economic growth that China and India have had over the last 10 years we need to understand that the strong backbone of their economies is still manufacturing.

The UK has always proven to be a nation of innovators and if we can support manufacturing industries we can once again become a world force in this sector too. I know for certain that this is possible as in Sheffield I help run a manufacturing business where 25% of our production is exported to over 20 countries across the globe. I stand at our factory gates with pride each day as I see products built with Sheffield Steel leave our premises for markets as far afield as Australia and South Africa. We are creating real wealth and jobs for our city.

I would propose Government incentives to attract global manufacturers to the UK, which would bring jobs and tax revenue for the Exchequer.

I would lobby for Government grants and support for companies to develop green energy solutions as I believe we have the opportunity to become a world leader in this field.

To help manufacturing industry I would push to remove un-necessary bureaucracy and at those banks where the Government is the largest stakeholder I would force through water tight measures to ensure finance is available where and when business need it.

On **Taxation & Government Spending**, I would be extremely vocal in ensuring that the next Government take real and quantifiable steps to ensure that every tax payer pound delivers maximum value. Front line services and jobs in Health and Education must be defended at all costs.

I believe University fees should stay but be held at current levels for 5 years.

Our taxation system should be *fair* and place an equal burden on us all and it must be simple and transparent, tax loopholes must be closed quickly.

On the question of **Immigration** I will support a review of our non EU immigration system and if a cap on annual immigration is proven to be beneficial to our economy then I would support this.

On **Defence**, I want to ensure that our brave service people have the very best equipment, housing and health care possible. I find it abhorrent that we can ask our service people to potentially make the ultimate sacrifice in our name whilst not providing them with the maximum protection.

That said I would fight vigorously to stop our involvement in unjust wars now and at any potential future date. The first duty of any Government is to defend its Citizens and in doing this we must ensure that we do not cross the line of pre-emptive aggression.

For 16-18 year olds who are not in full time Education or Employment I would propose compulsory Military Service with the guarantee that they would never see active combat. The Military Service would combine education with work experience such as vehicle maintenance, engineering or communications.

For the **Environment** I would support continued moves to increase taxation on polluting activities and subsidise or support Green Initiatives such as an increase in cycle lanes. Having worked in Holland on several occasions I can see how effective pedal power is.

On the subject of **Criminal Justice** I will push for tougher sentencing and the removal of reductions in sentencing for “good behaviour”. Life should mean Life. I will be highly vocal for an immediate end to any early release programmes and to increase the rights of citizens to defend their property and themselves.

In **Foreign Policy** I would push for a decoupling of our automatic stance in following the United States as it seeks to push its global dominance and I would strengthen our position at the UN.

I will not pretend for a moment that I have all the answers to the issues that currently dominant our day to day lives, but I am certain that the people of Sheffield Hallam can be encouraged & motivated to have a greater say in how their country is run and I would be honoured to represent you at Westminster and to make sure that your valuable views and heartfelt opinions are heard and acted upon.

Please use your Vote on May 6th, think Independently, act Independently and Vote Fitzpatrick.

Yours sincerely

Martin Fitzpatrick
Independent for Hallam