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26th May 2019

Dear Sir,

“The ultimate salvation”

I refer to the letter you published from Mr Graham Guille on 25th May, strangely headed “The ultimate betrayal”, and write on behalf of the 2020 Association.

Firstly your correspondent infers that the removal of population controls is a part of our manifesto “objectives”. This is incorrect as the 2020 Association has not yet formulated a manifesto and indeed with the election a year away it would be premature to do so. This particular issue was one of many raised and discussed at our recent public meeting in an open forum. The purpose of the meeting was to gain input from the public so that we can formulate policies which benefit the island as a whole.

Secondly Mr Guille also infers that we are motivated by business interests and not the well-being of islanders. This is completely false. Our Association has a wide and diverse membership reflecting all sectors of our society.

The Association wishes to promote change and to avoid a stagnating economy born out of prevarication and indecision. Population controls are one of many relevant factors. Mr Guille says – I quote – “No thought appears to have been given to the longer term consequences to the island’s wider sustainability”. Again this is wrong. According to the Guernsey Annual Electronic Census Report issued on 31st January 2019 the population aged 1 to 64 was static and the age group 65 to 84 showed the largest annual increase of 2.2%. As demographic predictions all show, our island population is aging. Who will pay the taxes and pensions in the future? Who will sustain the island’s economy? The 2020 Association will consider this as one of several pertinent issues in its deliberations.

There is no evidence that there are a large number of people endeavouring to migrate to the island. The hospitality industry cannot find the staff it needs. This is seriously detrimental to our tourist industry. Even the Guernsey Financial Services Commission

has had to introduce more flexible working hours for its staff due to pressures within the financial services sector. This is a trend which the island would be unwise to ignore.

The 2020 Association does not wish to be diverted from its desire to effect change by entrenched views, naysayers and doom-mongers but rather to encourage healthy debate prior to our next election.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Collings', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

James Collings
Chairman The 2020 Association

cc. Bailiwick Express, BBC Radio Guernsey, Island FM