SCHOOL SAFETY
I strongly believe that children should be able to access their education without any risk to their health and safety. At our recent Municipal District meeting in March, I brought a deputation from Possa National School requesting that safety be improved at the school and that students and staff would have a designated place to cross the national road. On foot of this, Kerry County Council are working with school management to come up with suitable solutions to this problem.

Furthermore, I made very strong submissions to the Speed Limit Review that a 60 km speed limit would be placed in the vicinity of all schools and I am glad that this will be put in place shortly.

EMPLOYMENT
Employment is everything when it comes to sustaining people in rural counties such as Kerry. The provision of proper broadband and adequate mobile phone coverage is essential for job creation. To help people get started when they are setting up their own companies, I will continue to fight for these basic services. I will continue to campaign that the decision to increase the VAT rate is reversed as it is having a detrimental effect on businesses in the area.

AGRICULTURE
It’s very clear that suckler cow and beef farmers are in a financial crisis. The Government and Bord Bia must assist by creating more markets for live cattle and processed beef. Danny Healy-Rae has raised this repeatedly in Dáil Éireann.

INSURANCE
I recognise that commercial business owners, hauliers and taxi operators are under immense financial pressure because of escalating insurance costs. Myself and Danny Healy-Rae, TD will continue to highlight this.
HEALTH
Suicide is ravaging local families and communities. Much more needs to be provided by the HSE to help people who present themselves with emotional and mental problems.

The health system is in a disastrous state with people waiting on trolleys, waiting for simple procedures such as cataract, knee and hip replacements. I am extremely concerned about the Cervical check scandal and how women have simply been let down.

There is also a huge issue with waiting times for medical benefits to be processed. I will continue to assist people in completing these applications and securing their payments which they are entitled to.

PLANNING
I am a strong advocate of applicants being allowed to build on family owned land or on a site they could buy in the area they want to build from. Difficulties are posed in this regard due to the local area clause and the intense urban pressure clause.

I have also taken issue with the TII, who now have a policy of objecting to people who want to exit onto a National Secondary road despite there already being an existing entrance. This is the incompetence of one state body objecting to the decision of another.

ROADS
Fortunately, the Local Improvement Scheme has been reactivated. Kerry County Council received up to 400 applications. These applications are now being assessed and inspected by KCC. The challenge will be to get Government to provide committed funding for this important scheme.

Traffic congestion and parking issues are a huge concern facing the town of Killarney. The outer relief road linking Muckross to Lispigown and Lispigown to Farranfore, is critical to addressing these issues.

In relation to car parking, while the development at Rock Road is welcome, it will not solve the issue in its entirety. I have a multi storey car park in crucial to resolving this issue.

Following the Speed Limit Review, I am very disappointed with the TII and KCC for not addressing local people’s concerns in reducing the speed limits particularly at Glenflesk and Lispigown, as per their specific requests and indeed which both myself and Donnch Healy-Rae included in our submissions to the review.

FLOODING
Much progress has been achieved in cleaning the Flesk River in recent times. I am glad to have worked with Deputy Donnch Healy-Rae and the people of Glenflesk on this very important issue. Early indications suggest these works have been a success. Furthermore, the rest of the river Flesk from Gortnahoon to Killarney must now be cleared also.

ISSUES FACING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE
As the youngest candidate, I am keenly aware of the immense obstacles facing young people when they are starting out in life. They are faced with huge insurance costs as first time drivers. The ever-increasing college accommodation costs is putting huge pressure on these young people and their families.

The new restrictions regarding provisional drivers is a grave problem and seeks to target young people living in rural areas. I condemn the TDs that voted for such regulations and the TDs who abstained from this vote, the only thing they have achieved is to make criminals out of our young people.

PUBLIC LIGHTING
I have long campaigned for public lighting to be improved and upgraded to LED especially in our towns and villages. The lack of proper public lighting in built up areas is of huge concern to the elderly or vulnerable people living on their own.

I will continue to campaign for lighting at dangerous junctions, specifically at Poulgorm junction where there’s been numerous car accidents. I have also allocated to the provision of public lighting at different locations in the area.

SURFACE WATER
I condemn the local authority’s policy of raising roads and turning surface water into people’s properties.