

News release from Scottish Labour Party

New candidate Mike Robb slams local building job losses

IT-business owner Mike Robb has been chosen as the Scottish Labour Party candidate for the Westminster seat of Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey at the next General Election.

Edinburgh based Mike –whose wife Gwen is from Sutherland -- has marked his selection by launching an attack on the SNP for building jobs being lost locally through Alex Salmond's inaction .

"Scores of construction jobs have been shed in recent weeks, mainly in Inverness but also elsewhere in the constituency and these payoffs can bleed a community economically and socially. Yet the Scottish Government, which killed off PPP; stopped Labour's programme of new schools and hospitals and cut housing association grants -- work which is meat and drink to local builders -- continues to twiddle its thumbs about coming up with the public building programme we need."

"The longer they dither, the more local tradesmen will lose their jobs – whilst our kids have to learn in old schools with out of date facilities. That's too high a price to pay for the First Minister turning off the contracts tap. To do so in a recession is even more damaging."

Mr Robb added: "The Nationalists talked the talk on the Inverness link road but have been a feeble failure in refusing to commit to it in the Scottish Government transport budget", he said. "The city needs this route and I'll press hard for a change of heart."

Mr Robb, 52, who gained a degree in physics at Edinburgh University, has worked in the computer industry throughout the UK, Europe and the United States. He now runs his own IT consultancy company, working mainly with small businesses.

Mike is married to Gwen – a full time NHS nurse – who is from Helmsdale and the daughter of a former local councillor for the area. Over the years Mike has developed strong family and personal connections in the Highlands. He and Gwen have two sons.

Mike also has hard words for his other opponents. "The Lib Dems are extremely ineffective in the House of Commons. They carry no weight. And when it comes to the economy, they are in favour of the same cuts in public spending as the Tories, which will have a devastating effect in this constituency. The area needs much more dynamic representation from someone who shares the values of ordinary working people."

"The next General Election will be a straight fight between Labour and the Tories, neither the SNP nor the Liberals will form the UK government and a vote for either of them will simply give the Tories a helping hand into government. Few Scots want that and I want to make sure we don't get that outcome."

Labour won the equivalent Westminster seat in 1997 and held it until 2005. Former MP David Stewart, the constituency chairman, said: "We're delighted to secure someone of Mike's calibre. He won the candidacy in a competitive election and has certainly enthused our membership as we begin the battle to retake the seat at the next Election."