

Working For A Better Belfast

SDLP Manifesto For Belfast



May 2011



Our Vision For Belfast

Our aim is a shared Belfast which is safe, healthy and prosperous with opportunities for all our citizens.

The SDLP will be at the forefront of delivering for all the people of the City of Belfast.

The SDLP will fight to protect frontline services and stand up for the vulnerable in our community.

The SDLP will be champions for business, employment and economic regeneration.

The SDLP will promote the most efficient, transparent and accountable Council.

Leadership For Belfast

The SDLP will work to promote a vision of a shared city, where different identities are respected and people are treated equally, regardless of colour, class or creed.

The SDLP will work so that the Council takes a lead in re-establishing the Better Belfast Group, with representatives from government and statutory agencies, to ensure an effective, joined-up approach to all future developments within the City.

The SDLP will work to ensure that the Council takes a lead in developing a comprehensive partnership between statutory bodies and the community. This will ensure that there is a coordinated and integrated approach to tackling regeneration, health inequalities and community renewal across the City. The SDLP will work to ensure that the City Investment Fund benefits all areas of the City.

The SDLP will work so that the Council takes a more pro-active role in promoting investment in Belfast. We will develop a robust strategy to lobby the Executive, Ministers, and the Assembly so that Belfast gets the full level of investment to which it is entitled.

Working For A Safe, Sustainable & Clean Belfast

We will lobby for increased investment in alley-gating to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour to make our streets safer.

We will ensure that the Council continually reviews its Emergency Planning procedures so that we will be better equipped to react quickly to unforeseen emergencies.

We will work to increase the recycling rate in Belfast to 40% by 2015 and 50% by 2020.

We will set clear and ambitious targets for carbon reduction across the Council. Central to this will be a scheme of energy efficiency measures and ratings for all Council buildings.

We will support measures to promote walking and cycling as alternative sustainable forms of transport.

We will lobby for the return of appropriately resourced planning powers to local Councils in order that planning developments across the City are always sustainable and in the best interests of residents of Belfast.

We will maintain and improve the quality of our cleansing and waste collection services so that Belfast is a cleaner City.

Working To Build A Stronger Economy

The SDLP will lead on developing a capital investment strategy capable of successfully leveraging Government finance.

The SDLP will vigorously promote a strategy to develop access to new sources of finance for the Council including accessing funds from the European Investment Bank.

The SDLP will proactively promote the needs of business across Belfast and ensure that investment benefits all areas in our City.

The SDLP will lobby the Council to work closer with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, as well as other bodies, to promote Belfast as a tourist destination.

The SDLP will promote the heritage and diversity of Belfast and encourage cultural tourism.

The SDLP will promote local retail events in all parts of the City.

We will demand strong leadership on sustainability which will promote Belfast as a city of social justice and will encourage stable economic development.

We will promote employability programmes in Council to ensure the unemployed have the capacity to apply for jobs.

Working For The Community

The SDLP will fight to protect sustainable front-line services and prioritise key services to the most vulnerable.

The SDLP will work with the PSNI and encourage increased funding for, measures to tackle anti-social behaviour, with other agencies to ensure that people feel safe in their homes and on the streets.

The SDLP will ensure that the provision of Council services for older people continues through discounted schemes at our leisure centres, activities at our community centres and advice on security for seniors.

The SDLP will continue to ensure that the needs and voices of the young people of Belfast are always listened to as part of the decision-making process.

The SDLP will fight to protect rights in conjunction with promoting individual and community responsibility.

Working For A Healthier Belfast

We will work with other health agencies to ensure there is an effective strategy to tackle health inequalities across the City and we will ensure that all City Council policies are health-proofed.

We will ensure that the Council leads on the campaign for a new Women and Children's Hospital for Belfast.

We will work to protect our parks and green spaces and we will ensure that our parks have age appropriate facilities.

We will support immediate financing for the Pitches Strategy to ensure high-quality sports pitches and changing facilities are built to meet current and future need in Belfast.

We will encourage the Council to increase the number of allotments in the City through the Growing Together project.

We will work to encourage a healthier lifestyle by promoting the use of our health and wellbeing facilities.

We will actively promote the Council's anti-poverty strategy and work to inform those in the most need of the services and assistance which is available.

Working For Better Services

We will ensure that the Council operates in the most efficient, transparent, accountable manner, ensuring value for money.

We will lobby for the release of powers and responsibilities to local government so that more effective and accountable decisions can be taken locally. The SDLP will work with staff to deliver improved services, morale and reduce absenteeism.

We will seek to develop a more user-friendly approach to the provision of council services.

We will work towards a more efficient method of payment of invoices to service providers to ensure that businesses always benefit from working with the Council.

We will lobby for increased powers of scrutiny for councillors in order to ensure that all decisions which are made are in the best interests of the people of Belfast.

Through community planning, we will give people a stronger voice to help shape the places they live and the local services they use.