

Southend Confelicity Manifesto 2026

Foreword from James Miller, Party Leader

I am proud to introduce myself as Leader of the Southend Confelicity Party.

We were founded around 3 years ago with the ambition to give local residents a political voice and vote on local issues.

Our monthly meetings debate the Council's agenda on which we take our votes, and also other ideas and suggestions from Southend residents. We are not left or right, just an issue-by-vote party, which means our meetings can get intense! However, that is the point of democracy – to argue one's point in a free and respectful environment and take an informed vote on the issue.

Our manifesto has been developed fully by Southend residents through these monthly debates and this manifesto is the result of 3 years of this process.

From housing to parking to how much the council are paid, we cover a lot of ground, and we are proud to say that every pledge has been unanimously agreed by every member who attended our meetings.

You may not agree with everything in our manifesto, but we are always opening to listening and learning what residents want. And as every member of the party is local, it is very easy to contact us to put forward any changes you might wish a new vote to be taken on.

Civic pride and duty forms a large part of our whole ethos and though funding will come from a mix of private and public finances, we wish to expand upon Southend's outstanding voluntary culture as a means to help our wonderful city thrive.

I sincerely hope that you can connect with what we are trying to do and hope you can put your faith in us when or if the time comes.

Yours faithfully

James Miller BA (hons), MBA

Southend Confelicity Party Leader

Economy

"We need to build seeds of industry to grow new business and create jobs".

Southend High Street has the potential to reshape its contribution to the City. It can thrive again, we just need to address the basic fundamentals of what makes a High Street work:

- We need to **bring all the landlords together** to work alongside the Council and other stakeholders to agree on a singular vision.
- **Improving parking, cleanliness, greenery with seasonal displays, safety and the general environment** is a must, but ultimately it is the shops that people come for, so all our **efforts should be geared towards filling the empty retail units** with reputable businesses that will be assets to the shopping experience.
- In order to fill the shops we need a way to **transfer the skills and knowledge of people** who have qualified in various courses at the college and university, as well as everyone else who has talent, passion and an entrepreneurial spirit across the City, directly into the units to **create the most unique high street in the country**.
- **Potential entrepreneurs need to be reassured that they actually have a chance of making it work** by lowering all business costs, allowing them enough time to build a strong customer base, with a gradual incremental increase in rates overtime.
- We need to **make it easy for local people to set up a business** by providing expert business support who can give them the knowledge to succeed. We would raise awareness of all available start-up support.

- We will **bring back indoor/outdoor markets** to act as the hub of local entrepreneurship whilst providing a unique shopping experience in Southend High Street.
- We recognise that national brands are vital to any high street and we should continue to do everything to attract them with favourable rates. Unfortunately they have found online a far more cost-effective and efficient way of operating so this will be a challenge. **It is time to do it ourselves.**
- **Imagine a High Street full of shops selling unique products and services run by local owner/operators, making a living doing what they love** – just like it used to be!

We would embark on a journey of **planting seeds of industry** and enterprise, looking at suitable brownfield sites to develop professional infrastructure for both online and offline businesses, where in years to come we can start to see quality career opportunities in engineering, tech, arts, fashion, film, music, catering, and so on, here in Southend.

- **We will look to explore ways in which to re-open the redundant ‘Beach Club’ Southend Activity Marine Centre.** Southend should be built on the water, yet most residents have never had the opportunity to sail. We would work with community leaders who are seeking funding to make it into a viable social enterprise.
- **Southend Pier is world famous, but could be so much more.** We will put out a **public consultation to residents for their ideas** what they would like to see at the end of the Pier. We believe it should be the Eiffel Tower of the UK and

should be met with the same ambition as the people that first imagined it in the first place.

- We will **reduce the price of The Pier for local people.**
- **We will oppose the £10m of reserve money to be ‘invested’ in Seaway,** a project that Turnstone – the developers themselves – are now unwilling to invest in.
- **The Kursaal requires immediate and effective solutions as soon as possible.** However, to avoid such failings in the future we would introduce break-clauses in contracts for all council-owned assets.
- We will introduce a new **city-wide discount card** for Southend residents. We **support the use of cash and card** as a method of payment for council services.
- We would **support a City of Culture** bid.
- We will support and **facilitate a new ‘Southend Innovation’** hub that seeks to leverage the infrastructure that is already in place; bring new investment into the city; and provide quality new jobs in for residents of Southend and the local area.
- We support **opening up competition in Southend’s taxi market.**
- We **oppose the introduction of a tourist tax.**
- We will support **bringing back the iconic seafront illuminations.** These were an attraction in themselves and would enhance the experience for residence and visitors.

Environment: *"We need to protect our waters and green spaces".*

- Southend’s sea is one of our most precious assets, and yet during off-peak months water and sewage companies are allowed to pump sewage discharges from storm overflows. **Would would seek regulation to make this illegal and**

support local group Southend Against Sewage (Click [here](#) for more details). We support local groups such as Southend Against Sewage in their pursuit to clean our waters and hold the relevant authorities to account.

- We would seek **to protect all of our remaining green spaces and greenbelt from anymore development (Click [here](#) for more details).** This would include the land by Bournes green Chase, which the Labour, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group coalition want to permit a minimum 10,000 unaffordable houses to be build.
- **We are against future developments on flood plains,** such as the Bellway development in Shoebury.
- We will **oppose tree-felling** where it is possible to do so.
- **We would support a communications drive to educate and encourage Southend citizens and businesses to re-cycle their waste,** with an ambitious but very achievable aim to rapidly increase re-cycle rates from 45% to 90% by the end of 2027.
- We **support a council petition reversing the new fortnightly waste collections** in Southend.
- **We will look at re-introducing permissions to allow barbecues on the beach,** but **only** with a set of agreed guidelines that may include all or some of the following: permitted after 6pm; only re-useable BBQs allowed; must be raised above the stones; cold water must be poured over when finished; and disposal on coals in a yellow basket provided when finished.
- **We are against the taxation of older vehicles.** We believe in striving for clean air in Southend, but we do not believe in penalising those that can least afford it.
- We are **against the installation of 5G masts in residential areas (Click [here](#) for more details).**

- We are **against turning Southend into a SMART City** (Click [here](#) for more details).
- We **support dogs to be allowed** on designated sections of the beach at specified times, outside peak times of the day, all year round, however, this must be agreed with residents.

Health & Well-being: *"We need to bring back civic pride".*

We will introduce the 'Southend Civic Pride Volunteering Partnership' that would bring together people who wish to bring their talents wherever the need is greatest.

We believe that we can do it ourselves, which means serving each other above and beyond the funds of the council.

We want to link those people that are willing to give up their time to help others with those that are in need of that help through a **shared skills community website and app**. For example, a student who needs help with maths can put in their request and match with a Southend resident willing to teach them for free.

The basis of this scheme would not be to encroach on otherwise paid positions, rather fill the gaps that would never be able to be filled. We would look to utilise the skills, talent, knowledge and experience of newly qualified young people; retired seniors with still so much to give; as well as those that still work and who can spare a few hours of their expertise. Our end goal would be for every resident to volunteer one hour a week to surpass a million hours a year. Just think what Southend may look like with those extra resources!

We would look to re-establish a sense of civic pride by:

- **Improving the general environment** and the management of street signage, park fences, pavements, litter and debris.
 - **Promoting local history and telling the great stories of local people** that could inspire all generations. We would display our history across the city in celebration of our greatest people through art, architecture, monuments and literature.
 - We would **celebrate our culture with annual festivals and award ceremonies**.
 - We would **bring to the fore aspirational figures** such as outstanding nurses, doctors, teachers, police officers, fire fighters, care workers, musicians, sport people, builders, entrepreneurs, volunteers, and architects across the City.
 - We would **pro-actively support, encourage and promote Southend sports teams**, such as Southend United, in a way that would foster a greater sense of community for all the People of Southend.
 - **Re-introduce school children visiting the Civic Centre**, view Southend Council meetings and meet Councillors, and teach them how the political system works so they can take an active interest.
 - We would invest in our **Youth Outreach Programme**
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- We would significantly **increase the number of bike racks** across the city where cyclists could feel confident their bikes are safe.

- We would **invest in outdoor gyms** in all parks, where suitable to improve health and well-being.
- We will **not introduce parking charges in our parks**, as previously proposed by the Labour administration.
- We will **uphold the legal obligations and human rights for residents who are classified with special education needs and disabilities**.
- We will support local employers in becoming qualified in **mental health first aiders**.
- We will support the **continuation of the Leigh Community Centre**.
- We will **reinstate all 12 Dementia Navigators** positions. *The Dementia Navigators and family centre would be paid for by reducing the budget amendment reduction of high street parking from 11% to the required figure e.g. 2% to 5%.*
- We will **reinstate the family centre in St Luke's**.
- We will **keep all the libraries in Southend open**, ensuring they are evolving and being modernised. This includes Southchurch Library, which Labour are looking to close with the provision moved to Southend Adult College (**Click [here](#) for more details**). Sign the e-petition [here](#) to oppose it.
- We will **investigate where adult and child social care funds are going**, cut waste, and push for improved services.
- We **support a youth councillor being elected from every senior school in Southend**. Every school, including those for troubled or special needs children, should be represented on the Youth Council.
- We will **explore digital solutions to reduce translation costs**.

Protection: *"We need to bring back bobbies on the beat".*

- We will support making the teaching of criminal offences & their consequences compulsory in all schools. We back the national petition set up by Aysha Moore:
- **Make the teaching of criminal offences & their consequences compulsory in school - Petitions**
- We will support **bringing back 'bobbies on the beat'**, who would walk the same areas and get to know residents by name.
- We will support a **satellite police station in Southend High Street**.
- We will **re-ignite the Special Constabulary scheme**. It is a much under-publicised role that allows people to volunteer 16 hours of their time per month, where they are trained and have the same powers as regular Police Officers.
- We will **re-start the Community Safety scheme** where employers can fund select members of their workforce to join the wider police community.
- We will **ban electric scooters on public pavements**. We would also educate and inform residents of the legalities of electric scooters.
- We will look to **re-open youth centres** across Southend in order to reduce crime and provide a safe space where young people can occupy their time in an enjoyable and productive way, broaden their education, and gain easy access to mental health services.
- We will invest in **extra security cameras** and police resources only in known crime hotspots for anti-social behaviour.
- Whilst the detail of **drive away fines remains unclear** and insufficiently communicated the policy should be put on hold.
- We will **support the continuation of car cruises on Southend seafront by taking a light-touch approach** that balances enjoyment with responsibility. By working closely with cruise organisers and community leaders, we will ensure these events remain low-impact, safe, and a positive part of Southend's identity.

- We **oppose the use of Facial Recognition by the police.**
- We support freedom of speech and **oppose the use of the police to treat offensive but lawful online statements as criminal matters.**

Housing: *"We need to ensure our infrastructure and services can sustain new developments".*

- We **support the development of empty or derelict buildings to address housing shortages** for local people.
- We would work in partnership with Southend Homeless Action Network (SHAN) to put in place **long-term strategies to end homelessness.**
- We believe in the development of Queensway, but we will look to **re-start the process** with a more financially viable scheme.
- We support the **enforcement of the affordable housing quota on property developers.**
- It is accepted that planning applications have to be considered on their own merits, however, we would pursue planning and regulation that **whenever a new development is being considered, provision of the necessary infrastructure must be included** as part of it.
- We support **giving the council planning authority over all HMO (House of multiple occupation) conversions** regardless of the number of rooms. Currently, property owners are not required to seek this permission for any conversions for up to six rooms.
- We support the requirement of any contracts for developers to include a clause to include: ***'if you break, pay for it'***.
- Where Southend Council holds a direct interest in a development (e.g. The Kursaal), **we support a set percentage of the development to be completed,**

reviewed case-by-case, in a specified period of time. We would also ensure all developers are required to have secured 100% of the funding.

- On the **conditions an asylum seeker is bona fide** we will support and uphold existing laws on refugees and asylum seekers.
- Southend is a tourist destination and any loss of hotels would have a detrimental impact on the city. As such, Confelicity believes that any change of use of hotels in the City of Southend should be subjected to the appropriate legal channels.

Transport, Roads, Pavements and Parking: *"We will bring in parking charges support residents, business and visitors"visitors".*

- For any future plans regarding Queensway, we will be **against filling in the underpass** as it will create gridlock and cut off the businesses on Southchurch Road and Sutton Road. It is not acceptable that a scheme without any developers on board has commenced to fulfil a deadline that would require the council to repay a £15m grant to Government. We will support an investigation into the closure of the Queensway underpass with a view to keeping the it open.
- We will **oppose charging for parking along the entire seafront from 6pm (Click here to find out more)** onwards.
- We would introduce **1-hour free parking**, similar to Leigh, around Southend High Street.
- We are **against closing car parks** if it results in visitors causing congestion in residential parking nearby.
- We would **oppose the introduction of cashless-only parking meters**, and ensure they are all able to take both cash and card.
- We would **launch a review of the cycle lanes (Click here to find out more)** on the seafront to enhance their safety.
- We would support **fixing potholes** across the City.

- We would support **speed cameras in identified speeding hotspots** in order to prevent accidents before they happen.
- We would support **speed reductions in certain areas** including 20 miles per hour zones – but **only** if residents from each road have collectively agreed.
- We would be **in favour of any future expansion of London Southend City airport**. However, residents must be consulted every step of the way.
- We are **against pavements being dug** up by different companies carrying out works, then left looking in a poor state. Therefore, we would add a clause into the contracts for all companies who wish to work on our pavements to ensure all works are finished to a high quality that does not negatively impact the look of the area.
- We are **against the disruption caused by multiple road closures at the same time** due to infrastructure works, and will examine the current planning process with the objective of encouraging better coordination, including work that is carried out during the night.
- We will continue to campaign **against the closures of ticket offices at train stations** should the need arise.
- We would **expand parking for motorcycles**.
- We will **oppose introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods** in Southend.
- We will **oppose dividing the city into districts and fining people for driving through each one**.
- We will **look at how the shared space along 'City Beach' and the High Street** can be made safer for both pedestrians and cyclists.

How Southend City Council is run: *"We will put Southend residents back to the front of the queue".*

- It is not acceptable to cancel/postpone elections and we will **hold elections as scheduled**.
- We will make **taxation transparent for the public** in a format that is easily accessible, understandable and where justification for expenditure can be made.
- We will **review of the Executive team's remuneration with a view to reduce or freeze their pay (Click [here](#) for more details)**. A 10% cut would save £200K and would enable dementia services to continue as they are. It would also act as a symbolic move that may restore faith back into our leadership.
- We pledge to **support implementing voluntary remuneration reviews for all staff above £50K (Click [here](#) for more details)**. A 10% cut, for example, would save vast sums that may help to keep the libraries open.
- **We support reducing the remuneration packages of all new council employees once the post has been left vacant (Click [here](#) for more details)**.
- **We will return the councillor position to a voluntary role, which would save almost £1m (Click [here](#) for more details)**.
- We **will not support councillors receiving pensions**, which has become possible due to Labour having re-introduced the opportunity for councillors to do so.
- We support publishing a **full and detailed account of all council expenditure**. Currently items under £500 are not published and details are vague and indeterminable.
- We will **re-evaluate the partners SBC** have chosen to work with.
- We **oppose the type of devolution and local government reorganisation (Click [here](#) for more details)** that will see Southend swallowed up in a new super

council of Rochford, Castle Point and Southend that will look after almost 400,000 residents.

- **We oppose Digital ID cards: sign our e-petition to follow Cornwall Council's response to the Labour Government to reject it.**
- **Future events put on by the council, held on the Pier, should be transparent on where the proceeds go to in advance, for example, the Poppy Appeal.** On a case-by-case basis, associated charities will receive a percentage of surplus income from the event.
- We will make a **requirement that all council directors live locally.**
- We will **end Working From Home**, where is it not absolutely necessary.
- We will **retain the Civic Centre as the home of the council.**
- Where there are issues within the remit of the local council, which have a major impact on local residents, **we will hold a local referendums.** For example, building on green belt land by Bournes Green Chase.
- Confelicity support changing the constitution of Southend Council to require any communication regarding 'calls for evidence' from central government to be in the public domain and published on the Southend Council website*.
- *1. A 'call for evidence' is formal process where the government invites the council to submit information, data, research, experiences, and views to help inform policy development or legislative decisions. It is often seen as an early-stage step before drafting policy or launching a formal consultation.*
2. This motion will ensure that secret talks between selected members of Southend Council cannot take place. It further ensures that all Southend Council members are aware of communications between Southend Council and central government.