



## Manifesto 2024 Meeting

Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup> 2023

Garon's Cricket Pavilion: 7pm to 9pm

### Present:

James Miller, Simon Jones, Melissa Aylott, Roma Patel, Jon Humphrys, Connor Bines, Kayleigh Burgess, Mark Insull, and Lee Clark

### Apologies for absence

Lee Houghton, Helen Miller, Dean Harris-Eckett and Jolene Hills

### Contents

1. Minutes of previous meeting .....	2
2. Leader update and Deputy Leader update.....	2
3. Candidate selections .....	2
4. Manifesto 2024 Debates .....	2
4.1 Do you support devolution of power from central government, in principle, to Essex, Thurrock and Southend depending on the detail and consultation? .....	3
5. Date of Next Meeting.....	5

## 1. Minutes of previous meeting

These were agreed and signed by the Chairperson.

## 2. Leader update and Deputy Leader update

The campaign meeting will be held at the Old Walnut at 6.30pm on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

Full page ads have been booked in the Echo for 12 months; ads and articles are booked in the Leigh on Sea News and the Oracle.

Candidates are welcome to start campaigning now and are free to use their social platforms to promote themselves, the party and the manifesto.

James has written an article about devolution for the Leigh-on-Sea News.

The Israel and Palestine war was spoken about. It was said that violence is not the answer and diplomacy needs to resume. Southend itself has a duty to keep people safe and therefore flying symbolic colours may serve only to provoke and divide.

We are looking for 2 to 3 more candidates to stand and for more members to join.

## 3. Candidate selections

Roma Patel confirmed that she will stand in the local elections.

## 4. Manifesto 2024 Debates

Lee Clark proposed it to be mandatory to present ID when purchasing age-restricted products to prevent abuse of staff. No vote was taken, but the discussion was mixed.

4.1 Do you support devolution of power from central government, in principle, to Essex, Thurrock and Southend depending on the detail and consultation?

#### 4.1.1 Comments

- Level 2 devolution – whatever powers Southend Council has remains.
- There would be a Combined Authority that would have economic, education and skills and transport powers from central govt.
- Currently finding a deal which is almost finalised
- Public transport between southend and London is simple but to other places in Essex it is difficult
- Potential positives – but dependent on specific powers
- In principle in favour but should maintain careful scrutiny when going forward
- We would listen to the consultation and depending on the majority we would respect their views
- What would benefit Southend within this structure?
- Who holds the balance of power?
- What is the composition of this new body
- Will this include more people?
- Will bureaucracy increase?
- Who is running it and how can they apply? – potential conflict of interest especially if already members of central government?
- Details and balance of power – make sure that one doesn't get a higher percentage of power and resources.
- Smaller issues would have a larger weighting in the combined assembly.
- Louder combined voice
- Devolved power – successful in Manchester
- What's the motivation for devolution – shifting the blame?
- Who do you trust - the central government – more astute politicians – or being passionate about local issues
- Sharing Thurrock's bankruptcy between Essex and Southend?

- Once the body is set up it's easier to make changes further down the line than not having the body in the first place
- How much is spent in the area anyway

#### *4.1.2 Voting*

- Simon – 100
- Melissa – 50
- Jon – 87
- Conor – 73
- Roma – 80
- Kayleigh – 50
- Lee – 75
- James – 100
- Mark – 100

#### *4.1.3 Result*

100% of members voted in support of the motion with a 79% mean average indicating fairly strong support. Unlike other voting where the policy will go into the manifesto, another vote will be taken on the final deal.

#### *4.2 Jon's challenge to previously agreed motions:*

Jon Humphrys, who could not attend the previous meeting, wanted to challenge 3 policies that did pass. All policies can be challenged in this way, however, it requires a 100% voting from members.

James said that despite being in favour of the policies, he was happy to remove them as each member is free to voice their opinions as they wish anyway. We do not operate a whip

within the party, which means if any members were to become Councillors, they could also vote as they wished.

Whilst many members were still in favour of the below policies, all agreed to take them out with the caveat that they are debated in the future.

- Do you support fines for drivers who leave their cars on idle outside schools? – take this out of the policy
- Do you support building cycle lanes through the middle of the boulevards? – remove from manifesto
- Do you support the rollout of ‘Quiet Streets’?

#### 5. Date of Next Meeting

21<sup>st</sup> November, 2023. Venue TBC.