

Green Mayors Show Another Way of Doing Politics

8 June 2018

Following the recent council elections, new Lord Mayors have taken office in local authorities across England and Wales.

Among those who have had the honour of being “First Citizen” of their city are Green Party Councillors Cleo Lake of Bristol and Magid Magid in Sheffield.



Cleo Lake

Cleo Lake has been a Councillor in Bristol since topping the poll in Cotham in 2016.

Cleo is a dancer, actor and activist who has been a vocal advocate for migrants’ rights, harm-reduction drug policies and changing the name of Colston Hall – Bristol’s prestigious music venue – in her time as a Councillor.

In her acceptance speech for her new role on the council, Cleo pledged to make inclusion and representation the foundation of her time as Lord Mayor.

She also drew a clear line between herself and previous holders of the position, saying “I am bringing some changes to this position” she said. “I am different from my predecessors. I am a dancer. For the last 10 years I have been a dance leader for the most incredible group of people – the Malcolm X elders’ forum – many of them are here today.”

Magid Magid

Another Green Party Councillor shaking up a role which has traditionally been overwhelmingly white, male and stuffy is Magid Magid.

Magid was also first elected in 2016, in the Broomhill and Sharrow Vale ward of Sheffield City Council. He moved to the UK from Somalia in 1995 as a refugee at the age of 5 and has now become the youngest Lord Mayor in Sheffield’s history.

Magid has been making headlines not only for his refreshing approach to his new position, but also for speaking out about the failures of government. From his mayoral portrait wearing Doc Martens and squatting atop a balustrade

to [taking on Jacob Rees-Mogg on The Daily Politics](#), Magid has shown that Greens do politics differently.

Like Cleo Lake, Magid Magid has pledged to use the office of Lord Mayor to encourage participation from all parts of Sheffield and has even invited members of the public to be his consort on his numerous public duties over the next year.

The more the mayor-ier

Cleo and Magid weren't the only Greens to take on the role of Mayor last month. Linda Baxter is the first Green Party Mayor of Stowmarket Town Council; Dilys Cluer is the new Deputy Mayor of Scarborough and Alex Phillips holds the same role on Brighton City Council; and Susan Murray in Lewes, Martin Schmeirer in Norwich, Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw in Beccles and Ron Gaffney in Knowsley all take on the Mayoral roles this year.

Although these are often largely ceremonial roles, it shows the importance of having Green voices in the room and the progress that has been made to get as many Green Party Councillors in a wide array of areas across England and Wales.

And with a record number of Councillors returned in 2018, the Green Party are sure to continue to disrupt the staid political establishment.

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[Womack: Welsh Labour rolling back on energy pledges "utterly shameful"](#)



8 June 2018

Green Party of England and Wales Deputy Leader Amelia Womack this week reacted to Welsh Labour's decision to vote against Plaid Cymru's motion for a nationally owned energy company for Wales, despite nationalising energy being part of the 2017 Labour manifesto. [1]

Womack said:

“Carwyn Jones said that the tidal lagoon decision was a kick in the teeth, yet he has the gall to go against his own party’s manifesto pledges on a national energy company. This is utterly shameless.

“Wales should be able to produce its own energy and to do so we need a national energy company who will put public and environmental interests over the need to generate profit for shareholders. It’s deeply disappointing to see that Labour don’t stand by that when push comes to shove.”

[1]

<https://seneddhome.com/2018/06/labour-sidesteps-2017-manifesto-pledge-favouring-publicly-owned-energy/>

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[Green Party responds to suspended sentences for Sheffield tree campaigners](#)



7 June 2018

The Green Party has responded to news tree campaigners in Sheffield have been given suspended sentences [1] for breaching protest injunctions [2].

Simon Crump and Benoit Compin were each given sentences of two months, suspended for one year.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“To see a local authority pursue action which could have resulted in jail terms for its residents for peacefully protesting the destruction of their local environment is beyond belief. This is the sharp end of a nationwide rollout of injunctions which seek to stamp out peaceful dissent wherever it is found. I stand in full solidarity with the brave greens campaigners putting their bodies on the line in the fight for Sheffield’s trees.”

Alison Teal, Green councillor in Sheffield, said:

“We will not be deterred by these bullying tactics. The residents of

Sheffield have made clear they do not want their healthy street trees destroyed under an expensive, secretive and unaccountable Private Finance Initiative. To see the local authority attempt to throw them in jail is deeply worrying, but sadly not surprising. But the strength of the campaign to save Sheffield's trees is growing by the day and we will not give in."

Notes:

1. https://twitter.com/ChrisBurn_Post/status/1004743730006581248
2. <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/three-sheffield-tree-campaigners-face-potential-jail-sentences-after-breaching-protest-injunctions-1-9197693>

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[Greens: House of Fraser job losses "devastating to workers and their families"](#)



7 June 2018

The Green Party today expressed its dismay at the news that thirty-one House of Fraser stores are to close, leading to two thousand jobs lost right across the country. [1]

Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack is in Cardiff and made special note to how it will impact on the Welsh capital in particular.

Womack said: "These closures will put two thousand people out of work and will be devastating to them and their families. Here in Cardiff, three hundred and forty two people will now have to seek new work, as will the House of Fraser staff in Cwmbran."

"For this city, these closures have an ever bigger effect. House of Fraser, or Howells as it is known locally, has been at the iconic heart of trade in Cardiff for over one hundred and fifty years. It's a double blow, Cardiff is losing a piece of history as well the jobs of today. That's a blow that will be felt in many communities around the country today."

[1] <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/house-of-fraser-store-closures-job-losses-oxford-street-latest-a8387096.html>

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[Greens: ECJ ruling a “momentous day” for Europe’s LGBT+ community](#)



5 June 2018

The Green Party today celebrated the momentous news that the European Court of Justice has ruled that a same-sex marriage concluded in one EU member state must be recognised by all the others, even where same sex marriage is not recognised. [1]

LGBTQIA+ Spokesperson Aimee Challenor noted that the ruling will now allow same-sex couples from Northern Ireland who marry in other parts of the EU to have the same rights as their fellow Northern Irish. Challenor argues that this ruling makes a further case for a People’s Vote on the final Brexit deal.

Challenor said: “This is a momentous day for people all across Europe. From a UK perspective this is especially a momentous day for marriage equality in Northern Ireland, as LGBT+ people can now get married in Ireland or the rest of the UK and be recognised as equals in their own home.

“However, the sad reality is that this is not to last. Just as the ECJ delivers marriage equality to Northern Ireland, Brexit will take it away. It is vitally important that we get a People’s Vote on the final deal to give people a chance to protect the newfound equality.”

[1]

<https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2018-06/cp180080en.pdf>

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