

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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