

Influencing political party manifestos for 2016 National Assembly elections



Briefing paper - October 2014

Ahead of the last National Assembly election in 2011, WCVA published a report setting out details of the timescales and process for each of the four main political parties in Wales.

WCVA has once again invited the Conservatives, Welsh Labour, Welsh Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru to submit relevant information for the 2016 election manifesto arrangements.

We asked for specific detail on the following:

- Who is coordinating the preparation of the manifesto?
- If appropriate, leads for different policy areas?
- What to submit and word length?
- Dates by which any ideas or proposals should be submitted?
- Any consultation processes or consultation events that may be planned?

Here is the resulting report. At the end of this briefing paper you will find links to the Electoral Commission's guidance on lobbying.

Conservatives

Consultation process

Consultation will be issued in due course but key ideas can be summarised in no more than a few sheets of A4 and can be used as a basis for discussion.

What's the timescale?

Not yet confirmed.

How decisions are made

Round tables will be held with as many organisations as possible.

Who are the leads for different policy areas?

Shadow Ministers: (but please copy Emma Sands - details below - into all correspondence)

Andrew RT Davies, Leader of the Opposition
William Graham, Shadow Minister for Business, Enterprise and Technology
Byron Davies, Shadow Minister for Transport and Regeneration
Paul Davies, Shadow Minister without portfolio
Nick Ramsay, Shadow Minister for Finance
Angela Burns, Shadow Minister for Education
Janet Finch-Saunders, Shadow Minister for Local Government
Mark Isherwood, Shadow Minister for Social Justice and Housing
Russell George, Shadow Minister for Rural Affairs

Antoinette Sandbach, Shadow Minister for Environment and Energy
Darren Miller, Shadow Minister for Health and Social Services
Mohammad Asghar, Shadow Minister for Equalities and Sport
Suzy Davies, Shadow Minister for Culture and Welsh Language

Useful information and who to contact

Emma Sands, Policy Advisor 029 2089 8910 emma.sands@wales.gov.uk

Welsh Labour

Consultation process

Discussion papers ('Challenge 2020' papers) were released at the Welsh Labour conferences in 2013 and 2014 covering a broad range of topic areas. Each paper is released for debate in local parties, amongst our affiliates and for discussion with other interested stakeholders. The papers cover:

- Skills, youth unemployment and the Welsh economy
- Housing and tackling poverty
- Education
- Finance and Constitutional Reform
- Health and social care
- Wales and Europe
- Sustainable Development
- Tourism, Culture, Sport and Welsh Language
- Standing up for rural communities
- Equality, Safer Communities and support for military families

The papers remain open for discussion and submissions are welcome.

What's the timescale?

Responses to the consultation papers are considered by the Welsh Policy Forum that meets in November each year and prepares a report for the following Welsh Labour Conference.

How decisions are made

Following the General Election of May 2015 the focus will shift to a final period of consultation on the Challenge 2020 policies and a final meeting of the Welsh Policy Forum in November 2015.

Following the Policy Forum in November 2015 the manifesto for the 2016 Assembly elections will be prepared and then launched at some point in the period before the elections of May 2016.

Useful information and who to contact

Information is shared on the Welsh Labour website:

<http://www.welshlabour.org.uk/ymgyngoriad-sialens-2020/>

The work is coordinated via the Welsh Labour office at 1 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HA. Contact the Welsh Labour Policy Officer - Martin Eaglestone - to set up

meetings relating to the 2016 manifesto. martin_eaglestone@labour.org.uk 029 2087 7708.

Welsh Liberal Democrats

What to submit

We welcome any and all proposals for new policies or legislation. Please submit a proposal, preferably one and no more than two sides of A4, including a brief (two sentence) explanation of the core idea, a brief description of the 'problem' your policy would solve, a more in-depth explanation of the policy and its implications, evidence background and references, and justification. Please provide as much information as possible regarding financial cost of the proposal. Providing a fully-costed proposal greatly improves its chance of being accepted for our manifesto.

How decisions are made

The Welsh Liberal Democrat party Conference approves the broad themes of the manifesto in a vote or series of votes at our Conference. The National Policy Committee does the detailed work of writing the policies, developing the manifesto, providing costings and determining spending priorities - all according to the decisions of Conference. AMs, MPs and peers are an important part of the process in providing their ideas and knowledge.

Who is coordinating the preparation of the manifesto?

Policy Committee: Prof. Michael Woods, Chair of our National Policy Committee. The National Policy Committee is responsible for overall policy development including: oversight of the process; producing policy and consultation papers; and drafting and costing manifestos.

Assembly Group: Peter Black AM has been appointed the Assembly Group's Manifesto Coordinator, responsible for overseeing policy and manifesto development alongside Policy Committee, and will represent the Assembly Group on Policy Committee.

Staff: Morgan Griffith-David, Welsh Liberal Democrat Policy Officer, is leading on our policy and manifesto development process. His duties include leading on preparation of policy papers and manifestos (including research, drafting and external consultation), supporting Policy Committee and Party representatives, and developing a strategic policy development plan.

Dates by which any ideas or proposals should be submitted

The earlier the better. Our party makes policy through our twice-annual Conferences where our members vote on policy - as such, it is important to meet these timescales, and proposals can be worked into motions and papers already within our policy development process.

We will soon be opening Consultations into Health and Inequality policy. If you have specific proposals in these areas, please contact us by mid-November 2014.

We are aiming to have a draft pre-manifesto ready in time for our Autumn Conference 2015. As such, substantive proposals should preferably reach us by the end of August. By the end of 2015, a preliminary manifesto draft should be in place.

Consultation processes or consultation events

We welcome suggestions from voluntary sector organisations. We are aiming to hold a 'manifesto workshop' ahead of our manifesto development as an opportunity to feed in to the process. We also hold regular policy consultations and will be releasing Consultation Papers on Health and Inequality policy in the coming months. We will also be consulting online, through suggestions areas on our website and social media, over the coming months.

Who you should send it to

The main contact point for all external organisations is Morgan Griffith-David, Welsh Liberal Democrat Policy Officer. He will put you in touch with other representatives. Morgan.Griffith-David@welshlibdems.org.uk

Morgan is happy to meet for informal and confidential discussions on the process or how best to feed in - just get in touch. You can also speak directly to Assembly Members for ongoing policy work in their portfolio.

Plaid Cymru

What to submit

Up to two sides of A4 setting out your priorities for the next four years.

We have a general consultation currently open (attached), and you can use this as a guide and include any campaigns you'd like us to consider when developing the manifesto.

Please state the costs, and it would be good if you could suggest cost neutral ideas or money saving ideas. If possible, please arrange your ideas under the portfolio headings that Plaid Cymru use to develop their policies below.

There is a lead spokesperson/politician for each portfolio area, these are:

- Finance - Alun Ffred Jones
- Local Government, Public Services, Governance, EU Issues - Rhodri Glyn Thomas
- Sustainable Communities, Energy, Food - Llyr Gruffydd
- Housing, Women and Children - Jocelyn Davies
- Education, Skills, Welsh Language - Simon Thomas
- Young people, Youth unemployment, Arts, Heritage, Sports - Bethan Jenkins
- Economy and Enterprise - Rhun ap Iorwerth
- Health, Well-being - Elin Jones
- Social services, Equality, Trade Unions, the Valleys - Lindsay Whittle

Who you should send it to?

Heledd Brooks-Jones, Policy Coordinator - heleddbrosks-jones@plaidcymru.org

What's the timescale?

If you could send the information to us before the end of the year at the latest, but if you'd like to send it sooner that's also ok.

How decisions are made

Plaid's spokespeople will make the initial decisions regarding what's submitted to the party more widely, but the manifesto must be submitted to Plaid's National Executive Committee and National Council before it is approved.

Useful information

Plaid is currently meeting stakeholders on a regular basis to hear what they'd like to be prioritised. If you're attending the Plaid conference, you're invited to have a meeting to discuss your ideas as well.

Further information

The first campaigning period under the Lobbying Act has started. The regulation period runs up until the 2015 general election, scheduled to take place on 7 May.

Charities spending more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland on 'regulated activities' must register with the [Electoral Commission](#) as non-party campaigners. These activities include the production of election materials, media events and 'canvassing that can 'reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against political parties or categories of candidates'.

You can find official Electoral Commission guidance around the Lobbying Act [here](#). WCVA has prepared a paper for our Board setting out our considerations on whether or not to register with the Electoral Commission. If you would like to see a copy of this, please contact Tracey Lewis, PA to the Chief Executive: tLewis@wcva.org.uk.

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