

Moray Council
Scottish National Party
Manifesto **2017**



A HEALTHIER MORAY

Health and Wellbeing

- We will continue to promote positive health and wellbeing by working partnership with the NHS, Moray Health and Social Care Partnership and other organisations for the benefit of all in Moray
- A Moray SNP led Council will aim to provide the best possible care for Moray's citizens in particular the elderly, the disabled, young people with care needs and carers
- We will continue to support people to be as independent as possible in their own home
- We will examine innovative ways of delivering better mental health services for children, young people and adults. We will bring healthcare and education together to ensure faster treatment without stigma. We aim to ensure that the principle of "ask once, get help fast" is in force

Sport & Leisure

- Only 3 Councils in Scotland have not moved leisure facilities to a leisure trust. We believe that the time has come for Moray to provide all public leisure facilities through an arm's length trust to ensure they are more sustainable and make savings for Council Tax payers
- Healthier children become healthier adults. Therefore, we will continue to promote an active lifestyle to tackle childhood obesity and health inequalities
- We will develop and support walking and cycling networks within Moray's communities
- We will work very closely with organisations and community groups that seek to develop future sporting activities and facilities

Housing

Due to funding from the SNP Government 3,700 affordable houses have been built in Moray. Affordable housing provision is essential for the growth and development of social and economic sustainability, of economic regeneration, of the bolstering of our schools and of the enhancement of the diversity of our communities.

- We reaffirm our commitment to social and affordable housing
- A Moray SNP led Council will work with local developers, registered social landlords and the Scottish Government to ensure Moray gains maximum benefit from the delivery of the SNP Scottish Government's target of building 50,000 affordable houses by 2021
- We will advocate 'green energy' heating
- Encourage the voluntary downsizing incentive scheme
- We will encourage new forms of secure and affordable housing such as self-build and will work with private landlords to encourage high quality private rented accommodation

A SMARTER MORAY

Transforming Early Years and Childcare

We will work closely with the Scottish Government to deliver 30 hours of free early learning and childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds and vulnerable 2 year olds by 2021. This will save families over £3,000 per child per year.

Teacher Recruitment

Moray SNP sees this as major priority in ensuring that children in Moray receive a high quality education.

We will:

- Investigate further innovative ways of attracting teachers to Moray
- Promote and develop various teacher training opportunities with partner universities eg the training while you work DLITE scheme
- Work with the Scottish Government and General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) to attract Newly Qualified Teachers
- Use video conferencing within secondary schools to ensure Moray's young people have wider access to the curriculum

Raising Attainment

Moray schools have benefitted by receiving £1.27m directly through the Pupil Equity Fund. We will work closely with schools to support them in closing the attainment gap. Schools and the education authority need to reform in order to raise standards for all children. The local school community – especially parents, young people and teachers – should be key decision makers in the life of the school.

Developing the Young Workforce

A Moray SNP led Council will:

- Engage, inspire and shape Moray's young workforce
- Promote the development of links between schools, the wider education department and business
- Encourage foundation apprenticeships
- Continue to work in partnership with Moray College UHI and private sector to support training initiatives that will, in turn, support local industries
- Continue to recognise the need to support adult learning initiatives, as well as encouraging retraining and career shifts
- Promote vocational education which is crucial to the success of our young people and the Moray economy
- Support the implementation of the Scottish Government's STEM strategy which offers young people qualifications, knowledge and training in key economic sectors with known skills gaps like engineering, digital technology, science, life sciences and construction

School Estate

Moray Council has been able to embark on a programme of building new primary and secondary schools as well as some major refurbishments due to major funding coming from the SNP Scottish Government. We will continue to follow a programme of investment for other schools.

Rural Schools

Rural schools play a major part, not just in the education of Moray's young people, but to the viability of rural communities. We will assert a presumption against closure except on educational grounds.

A WEALTHIER MORAY

Council Tax

A Moray SNP led Council will:

- Make efforts to protect household budgets
- Promote the Council Tax benefits available for low income households

Youth Employment

- We are committed to increasing youth employment by supporting business start-ups and apprenticeship schemes
- We will work with local business and agencies to provide career opportunities for graduates and school leavers

Business

The Small Business Bonus Scheme, introduced by the SNP Government in 2008, has been of great benefit to small businesses in Moray. Thousands of businesses in Moray have paid no business rates, or had their bills reduced, due to this initiative.

A Moray SNP led Council will:

- Promote existing business relief schemes that benefit business
- Explore options for a transitional rates relief scheme to help businesses from rates increases
- Pursue the aims of the Moray Economic Strategy to support existing business and attract further inward investment to diversify the Moray economy
- Support the growth and sustainability of small and medium sized businesses
- Promote the development of high speed connectivity for Moray taking advantage of the Scottish Government's commitment to provide broadband to 100% of premises
- Continue to encourage Moray to take full advantage of the growth in the offshore renewable and decommissioning sectors
- Support traditional sectors such as fishing, farming and forestry
- Invest in industrial and start up units throughout Moray to increase the number of businesses and generate new income for the Council

Living Wage

The SNP introduced the living wage policy now followed by Moray Council. A Moray SNP Administration will work with other organisations, businesses, employers and council contractors to encourage paying their employees the living wage.

Tourism

The SNP recognises the need for more to be done to tap into Moray's tourism potential given Moray's iconic images and spectacular natural and marine environment. Tourism is vital to the Moray economy to sustain and increase employment and wages.

A Moray SNP led Council will:

- Work alongside, and support the work of, Moray-Speyside Tourism and other relevant agencies
- Ensure enhanced support for economic and tourism development
- Continue to work with and support other agencies in efforts to better promote Moray's image within and out with Scotland as a tourist destination
- Promote the attractions of Moray including footpaths, walking and cycling trails
- Reinforce efforts to ensure that visitors to Moray enjoy a quality experience

Transport & Infrastructure

Good transport services are essential for local economic prosperity.

- A Moray SNP led Council will work with the Scottish Government and other transport partners to improve on our existing infrastructure and links to key transport hubs such as our regional airports
- We will aim to maximise the benefits of the SNP Government's commitment of dualling the A96 and A9 as well as the improvements to railway infrastructure
- We recognise the importance of the A95 to the Moray economy and we will continue to press for investment to improve the route
- A Moray SNP Administration will explore the possibility of a Council run bus company to provide bus services throughout Moray
- We support, in principle, the Elgin Transport Strategy and we will ensure that implementation takes account of the dualling of the A96

Moray Growth Fund

We will continue to support the development of a Moray Growth Fund to attract funding from the UK and Scottish Governments to generate economic development.

A SAFER MORAY

Anti-social Behaviour

Moray SNP regards the tackling of anti-social behaviour as a priority and we will work closely with community planning partners to address this issue.

Dog Fouling

Irresponsible dog fouling is a blight on our communities throughout the whole of Moray and must be proactively tackled. We will introduce a more robust strategy to tackle dog fouling. We will promote schemes such as Pick Up Poo and the Green Dog Walking Scheme.

Road Safety

- We will introduce a programme to install a 20mph limit at all schools and other appropriate places in Moray where there is a risk to vulnerable road users
- A Moray SNP led Council will continue to support the “Safe Drive, Stay Alive” campaign
- We will acquire additional ‘smiley faces’ speed indicators to reduce the need for communities to queue to obtain their use

Alcohol and Drug Misuse

- Prevention is the key to tackling the unhealthy relationship with alcohol and drug misuse
- We will highlight the dangers of binge drinking and support multi agency working to tackle underage drinking
- We will support multi agency working to tackle alcohol addiction and drug misuse
- More work is needed to support the rehabilitation of addicts with quicker access to help and support which can only be tackled with a more streamlined multi agency approach

Domestic Abuse

A Moray SNP led Council will pursue a more integrated, joined up approach, with partners, to tackle domestic abuse.

A FAIRER MORAY

The UK Government’s actions on welfare have attacked some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in our society.

We will work with the Scottish Government and partners:

- To promote a ‘benefits awareness campaign’ ensuring people access the benefits they are entitled to
- Tackle fuel poverty
- Seek to put in place robust welfare policies as they are devolved to Councils
- Support organisations that help alleviate the effects on the most vulnerable people in Moray due to Tory austerity

A GREENER MORAY

Recycling

Moray SNP has supported efforts to increase recycling locally and we will continue with work to further increase recycling rates which has a positive impact on the environment.

Flooding

Moray has seen over £120,000,000 invested by the SNP Government to deliver flood schemes in Elgin, Forres, Rothes and Newmill. We will continue to investigate and explore the benefits of smaller flood schemes throughout Moray.

Carbon Reduction

- We are committed to reducing Moray's carbon footprint, particularly in Council buildings including schools
- We will promote greener transport which will deliver big carbon savings

Renewable Energy

A Moray SNP led Council will:

- Produce a clean energy policy for Moray
- Urge our local communities to forge energy partnerships and trusts to help secure clean, locally produced and affordable energy
- Promote community shares of renewables projects

Litter

We will develop a Moray Litter Free strategy in partnership with national and local agencies and community groups.

AN EMPOWERED MORAY

Community Empowerment

We believe the best people to decide the future of our communities are the people who live in those communities.

Moray SNP:

- Are committed to implementing the Community Empowerment Act
- Will work with and develop the Third Sector
- Commit to working closely with communities who wish to go through the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process
- Aim to strengthen the support available to community groups to maximise access to funding opportunities from external sources

A CREATIVE MORAY

The Creative Sector

A Moray SNP led Council will aim to:

- Promote the teaching of music, drama and art in our schools
- Encourage the talents of all children in music or art
- Foster the use of libraries
- Embrace the Year of Young People in 2018
- Explore what further support can be given to the creative sector and work alongside the industry to attract funding
- Promote Moray's rich heritage and culture and use this to encourage people to visit the area

Youth Work

The work done by the youth work sector has helped communities greatly and we will continue to promote their work. We will work with this sector to gain the views of the young people in Moray.

A CHANGING MORAY COUNCIL

Moray SNP believe:

- That a review of the Council's senior staffing structures is a high priority. We will undertake a review to ensure senior staffing structures are appropriate and affordable for future service delivery and can provide sufficient support to front line services.
- That councillors need to engage much more with Council staff and, throughout the council term, will hold a 'back to the shop floor' exercise as well as encourage staff to talk to councillors without repercussion
- The Council should not be resistant to a change of approach in the delivery of services and, therefore, we will look beyond Moray's boundaries and develop a culture of embracing best practice from other local authorities
- That Moray has lacked political leadership and direction recently and a Moray SNP Administration will ensure that those democratically elected take responsibility for driving the Council forward