

Making Anglesey Proud Again

YNYS MÔN COUNTY COUNCIL

PLAID CYMRU'S POLICY PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNING THE COUNCIL

1. Plaid Cymru's vision is to create a society on Anglesey which gives every citizen the opportunity to develop to their optimum potential; to protect the vulnerable within their community; to protect the environment; to promote a healthy society; to develop a prosperous economy for the island; to improve the quality and the effectiveness of the transport system; and to respect, safeguard and promote the Welsh language, its culture and heritage.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

Plaid Cymru believes that Ynys Môn is a special place to live in and the Council therefore should act in order to try and create a variety of employment opportunities so that everyone has the opportunity to live on the island for the rest of their lives, if they choose to do so.

The main priority of a Council lead by Plaid Cymru will be to promote policies that will create a variety of employment opportunities for our young people, and to attract back to Anglesey, those young people who have reluctantly had to leave the island. By doing this our objective is to improve the island's GVA.

- 2.1 In order to achieve this objective, Plaid Cymru will ensure that a broad 'multi-focussed' strategy will be put in place, with policies dealing with the short, the medium and the long term.
- 2.2 Plaid Cymru will be looking at various and alternative strategies for promoting and developing the economy in order to create employment for our people, and the links with Bangor University, the proposed science Park and Coleg Menai should be strengthened, in order to use new skills and knowledge to encourage and promote new small industries on the island.
- 2.3 Plaid Cymru strongly believes in creating opportunities to develop skills for green energy industries, as part of our Energy Island strategy. If Wylfa B is built we would maximise the number of jobs that would be available to local people, and ensure that local firms are given priority in securing contracts for construction and maintenance work.
 - 2.3.1 In order to achieve this objective Plaid Cymru will call upon the Construction Industry to begin to recruit and to train local apprentices (with placements in other locations if necessary) at the earliest possible opportunity for the construction phase.
 - 2.3.2 Plaid Cymru will also call for a partnership between the public and the private sectors to maintain the Unit at Coleg Menai in order to train power station operatives that have been recruited locally, by developing the Energy and Construction Centre..
 - 2.3.3 Plaid Cymru will further call for a commitment that ensure that all local workers who wish to find employment at Wylfa will have the opportunity to do that, on condition that they have they possess the appropriate skills.
- 2.4 **Renewable Energy.** Plaid Cymru will oppose erecting a row of new pylons across the island and will promote the option of electricity connections underground or under the sea. We support offshore wind energy but we oppose industrial wind turbines higher than 12 metres on land. We support individual domestic turbines.

- 2.5 Plaid Cymru will support small businesses by enabling them to compete for County Council service contracts, either by securing smaller contracts by size or by co-operating with the local business sector, Coleg Menai, Bangor University and the Welsh Government to encourage, train, and promote small local businesses to win contracts in the public sector.
- 2.6 Plaid Cymru will work to attract European funding in order to promote regeneration projects and will co-operate with Gwynedd and other North Wales councils to bring inward investment to the North West.
- 2.7 Plaid Cymru will support job creation enterprises by utilising grant schemes of up to £5,000 to help small businesses locate on the Island. The money will be used as match funding in order to secure other grants.
- 2.8 Plaid Cymru will promote Ynys Môn as a suitable destination for tourists and will lobby on behalf of local hotels and bed and breakfast establishments in order to provide a higher standard of service. We will work along side Menter Môn on occasions such as the Ynys Môn Marathon Môn and will work with the Môn - Menai programme to promote the increased use of the Port at Holyhead as a stop-over point for cruise vessels. It will be necessary to co-operate with the Ynys Môn tourism partnership, The North Wales Tourist Board and Croeso Cymru in order to ensure that Ynys Môn is marketed to a world-wide market.
- 2.9 Plaid Cymru will promote contacts with Ireland in order to entice visitors from that country to visit Ynys Môn.
- 2.10 Plaid Cymru will ensure that the Economic and Tourism Department links and co-operates with the Welsh Governments Events Wales unit in order to promote major events on Anglesey.

3. EDUCATION AND LEISURE

Plaid Cymru recognises that every child has the right to be provided with services of the highest degree.

- 3.1 Consequently, Plaid Cymru will develop an education service that ensures that every child will be able to develop to its full potential and we confirm our support for the foundation phase. We also realise that every child should be offered as wide a choice as possible in order to become rounded citizens, and we will further promote the unique co-operation that occurs in schools on Ynys Môn and across North Wales to ensure that this happens.
- 3.2 Plaid Cymru recognises that the education budget, as with other Council service budgets, is under great pressure at present, and we will face the long-term financial crisis on the basis that we will safeguard as much as is possible of the money that goes directly into the primary and secondary schools. On top of that, we promise that any decision taken by the Welsh Government to safeguard school budgets, will be respected, and our school budgets will benefit from this course of action.
- 3.3 Plaid Cymru is aware of the need to modernise the education service on Ynys Môn and we shall base any rationalisation decisions upon sound educational criteria. Plaid Cymru will ensure that we maximise the Welsh Government's schools budget in the 21st Century.

- 3.4 Plaid Cymru recognises the increased contribution made by Ynys Môn schools to providing Welsh medium education, and sees this as an important provision. Consequently, we believe that any rationalisation scheme should be based upon the premise that there will not be any reduction in Welsh medium education. It is also expected that schools will increase Welsh medium education in co-operation with the Education Department of the County Council.
- 3.5 Plaid Cymru will support vocational education in order to meet the requirements of the future workforce.
- 3.6 Plaid Cymru will support our schools to continue to prepare students for gaining high grades in the vocational courses as well as in the A Level, GCSEs and Welsh Bac exams.
- 3.7 Plaid Cymru will encourage our schools to ensure that our students with special needs receive the best support to succeed in their studies.
- 3.9 Plaid Cymru welcome the opening of the modern, green primary school in Llangefni and look forward to similar developments in other parts of the island.
- 3.10 Plaid Cymru believe that our schools make a substantial contribution to our communities and therefore it is expected that the schools' facilities and resources will be available for the community during the evenings.
- 3.11 Plaid Cymru will look again at the provision of leisure centres in the face of opposition to close some centres in 2012/13.

4. SOCIAL SERVICES

- 4.1 Plaid Cymru will prioritise services and promote the interests of our communities' most vulnerable.
- 4.2 Plaid Cymru will look at different ways to develop a range of services for older people to enable them to keep their independence and to promote their wellbeing.
- 4.3 Plaid Cymru, through partnership will give encouragement to develop preventive services in the community.
- 4.4 Plaid Cymru will continue to support services to keep the low level of transferring care as is happening presently.
- 4.5 Plaid Cymru will promote, wherever that is financially possible and appropriate. The development of extra care housing to include "base and cluster" service sites.
- 4.6 Plaid Cymru will encourage the Social Services and their partners to avoid duplication whilst providing front line services.
- 4.7 Plaid Cymru recognises the need for a safe and high quality children's care service and will work with providers to develop this.

5. HOUSING

- 5.1 Plaid Cymru will take steps to encourage empty homes owners to bring those houses into the renting market.

- 5.2 Plaid Cymru believe that the Council should suspend the right to buy Council houses in specific areas where there is a lack of houses to rent.
- 5.3 Plaid Cymru will release land belonging to the Council for self-build affordable housing.
- 5.4 Plaid Cymru will press on the Welsh Government to release resources for affordable housing that will help Anglesey to create jobs and to create green and affordable homes.
- 5.5 Plaid Cymru will review social housing to meet local needs.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES

- 6.1 Plaid Cymru recognises that the authority's most important assets are the people who work for it. Plaid Cymru also recognises that our staff's commitment is the most important factor with providing quality services for the Council.
- 6.2 Plaid Cymru will expect the managers to inspire our staff to welcome change through team work and cooperative and innovative working arrangements to improve the quality and efficiency of the provision of service.
- 6.3 All major changes will be implemented in consultation with the unions.

7. TRANSPORT

- 7.1 Plaid Cymru will look into the possibility of "prudent borrowing" to repair our roads.
- 7.2 Plaid Cymru will review the policy regarding road gritting during cold weather in cooperation with the Welsh Government to ensure that essential services such as public transport and the emergency services get priority.
- 7.3 Plaid Cymru will lobby the Welsh Government to improve connections on Britannia Bridge and the entrance to Holyhead Port and Railway Depot.
- 7.4 Plaid Cymru will work with RAF Valley and the Welsh Government to develop Anglesey airport as an important hub with additional flight paths.

8. THE ENVIRONMENT

Plaid Cymru believes in greener communities and will:

- 8.1 Set a target that 70% of our waste is recycled by 2025.
- 8.2 Aim to collect food waste from every home on the island.
- 8.3 Seek to keep our roads clean.
- 8.4 Consider waste as a valuable raw material, and will support working with other councils and agencies to make good use of waste instead of using landfill sites. We will support cooperation across north Wales to make the most of the savings that one waste disposal unit would produce rather than a number of smaller units.
- 8.5 Plaid Cymru will work to protect the environment, our rural areas, our beaches and our coast for the sake of the people of Anglesey and to promote tourism.

9. PROPERTY

- 9.1 Plaid Cymru believes that property that is no longer used in full for council business should be sold, but we're not willing to sell the property cheaply, unless the land is used for affordable housing. Money raised from selling property should be used to improve and modernise council property.
- 9.2 Plaid Cymru will rationalise the use of buildings where possible.
- 9.3 Plaid Cymru will follow a green programme by doing research into the possibility of placing solar panels etc on council property to lower energy and heating costs.
- 9.4 Plaid Cymru adopts the principle that our small holdings should be available for those who cannot afford to buy their own farms, but that some aspects of the policy should be reviewed to reflect the current climate of the 21st century, in consultation with the farming industry.
- 9.5 Plaid Cymru will seek to make the best possible use of our small holdings. We will consider selling some with a few acres to fund improvements to the others.
- 9.6 Plaid Cymru will seek, where possible, to support applications for land in order to create more allotments.
- 9.7 Plaid Cymru will introduce a asset transfer plan to make the best use possible of public buildings and amenities for the benefit of local communities.

10. FINANCE

- 10.1 The proposed developments for the new Wylfa is likely to create substantial needs in terms of the island's infrastructure. Plaid Cymru will lobby the industry to fund any addition to the infrastructure, including any additional costs to maintain the current infrastructure.
- 10.2 Plaid Cymru will open negotiations with the Welsh Government and with the UK Government regarding funding public services in Anglesey in advance in order to provide suitable services for the workforce. Therefore, we should receive a copy of the critical path for developing Wylfa as soon as possible in order to predict what additional services will be needed.
- 10.3 Plaid Cymru will support calls to review the Barnett formula to ensure better funding for public service users in Wales.
- 10.4 Plaid Cymru will also lobby for and will support changes in the distribution system within Wales to help small rural councils in disadvantaged areas like Anglesey.

11. CUSTOMER SERVICE

- 11.1 Plaid Cymru will expect every Council department to review their working practices to develop teamwork and to note which two staff members would deputise for any member of staff that would be absent for any reason in order to ensure that we have a first class customer service.
- 11.2 Plaid Cymru will give priority for giving attention to sickness levels to help the staff and the council to maintain services.

- 11.3 Plaid Cymru appreciates its officials and staff and will consult with them and work with them and their union representatives to improve the way services are provided.

12. PLANNING

- 12.1 Plaid Cymru will move forward to create a local development plan in partnership with Gwynedd County Council that will explain and modernise planning policies.
- 12.2 Plaid Cymru will change planning policy on the basis of technical advice notes provided by the Welsh Government in order to permit the building of affordable housing in rural areas.
- 12.3 Plaid Cymru will develop a clear Planning Advantage Policy that will allow the local community and/or the island to benefit from the development.
- 12.4 Plaid Cymru will work with the Welsh Government to prepare suitable sites for industry.

13. LAW AND ORDER

Plaid Cymru believes in strong communities and we will therefore work in partnership with the Police and Community Councils to ensure safer communities. Plaid Cymru will work together with and meet regularly with the Police Commissioner and work to ensure that the provision of Magistrates Courts is adequate.

14. CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Plaid Cymru believes in open government and strong governance that is committed to continuous improvement and winning the confidence of the electorate and the Welsh Government and will therefore:

- 14.1 Support the Corporate Business Plan (2012) that ensures that each Department turns their priorities into actions, and that quarterly targets and risk management arrangements are all an essential part of every plan.
- 14.2 Continue with the "Question Time" sessions and an open dialogue between the council leaders and the public, with dates to be decided and advertised beforehand in the council's annual calendar.
- 14.3 We will ensure that a service improvement strategy is set up in each Department by April 2014. These strategies will include "Kaizen centres", Quality Circles, benchmarking activities and Right First Time strategies to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services.
- 14.4 Give the opportunity for each Councillor to receive training on how to improve performance to prepare for the changes that have taken place. We will do this in order to improve the standard of service of every Councillor.
- 14.5 Recognise that there are financial storms and expects that each department will be more cost effective to ensure that we can maintain the provision of services internally.
- 14.6 If the Council needs to buy external services, each provider will be expected to provide their front line services bilingually.

14.7 Aim to increasingly govern and administrate bilingually.

14.8 As this authority is one of the smallest in Wales it will increasingly cooperate with other authorities, voluntary groups, public and private sector organisations to take bold steps to improve services and find efficiency savings. Each department will be expected therefore to seek opportunities to communicate and cooperate with other authorities, and with other internal departments, and to remodel how services are provided.