

**TOWARDS A NEW REPUBLIC – STRONG LOCAL LEADERSHIP**  
**I DTREO POBLAHT NUA – CEANNAIREAGHT ÁITIÚIL LÁIDIR**

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

**REAL DELIVERY FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**GROWING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**UNITING IRELAND**





# A MESSAGE FROM GERRY ADAMS TD, PRESIDENT OF SINN FÉIN

A Chairde,

This election offers citizens across this state the opportunity to join with voters in the North and vote for real change at local government level.

Sinn Féin will have almost 350 candidates standing across the island of Ireland in every one of the 32 counties.

Citizens here have become justifiably disillusioned with a political system that has failed them and which is far removed from their everyday lives and incapable of resolving current difficulties or delivering for ordinary citizens.

The Fine Gael/Labour government have broken their commitment to a new way of doing things and reforming our political system. They have used so-called "local government reform" as a smoke screen to further undermine local democracy and centralise power within government.

There is an urgent need for fundamental political reform of both our political culture and the entire political system. Sinn Féin has robustly opposed the cynical and minimalist approach to reform by Fine Gael and Labour, and in the past by Fianna Fáil, and we will continue to do so.

Sinn Féin is firmly committed to providing strong representation and the highest quality of leadership at both local government level and within communities in order to achieve the best delivery of services which meet local need.

We consider local government to be one of the most important pillars of our democracy. We also believe that local government must be fit for purpose in the 21st century. Citizens must come first, not the political elites.

Our approach to local government reform and delivery is based on the following key principles;

- 1. Democracy.** Democracy is about more than elections. The public have a right to hold local authorities and the services they deliver to account.
- 2. Devolution.** Maximum devolution of power from central government to local government.
- 3. Community.** People have a right to live in their community, safe and secure in their home.
- 4. Economic Renewal.** Key to economic recovery will be regenerating the local economy.
- 5. Waste Management.** Towards a zero waste strategy.

**6. Environment.** Development and planning must be transparent, ethical and sustainable and not a threat to our environment.

**7. Accountability.** Local authorities must be held to account for their actions by the public.

Sinn Féin is a republican party. We want an end to partition and the development of a citizen centred rights based society. Empowered local communities should be the cornerstone of this. Our core political values are based on equality and fairness for everyone. Our commitment is to serve in the best interests of citizens first and deliver for the local community through strong representation and leadership on Councils.

**On May 23rd I am asking you to vote for Sinn Féin. Let us make change together.**

Le meas,

**Gerry Adams TD**  
President of Sinn Féin



# TEACHTAIREACHT Ó GERRY ADAMS TD, UACHTARÁN SHINN FÉIN

A Chairde,

Tugann an toghchán seo deis do shaoránaigh ar fud an stáit seo dul le vótálaithe sa Tuaisceart agus vóta a chaitheamh i bhfabhar fíorathraithe ar leibhéal an rialtais áitiúil.

Beidh 350 iarrthóir ó Shinn Féin ag seasamh i dtoghcháin ar fud oileán na hÉireann i ngach ceann de na 32 contae.

Tá údar leis an d'fómá atá ar shaoránaigh sa tír seo le córas polaitiúil a lig siad síos, atá i bhfad ar shiúl óna ngnáthshaol agus nach bhfuil in ann na deacrachtaí atá ann faoi láthair a réiteach ná torthaí dearfacha a bhaint amach do ghnáthshaoránaigh.

Bhris rialtas Fine Gael/Pháirtí an Lucht Oibre an gealltanais a thug siad go ndéanfaidís rudaí ar bhealach nua agus go n-athchóireodís an córas polaitiúil. Bhain siad leas as “athchóiriú an rialtais áitiúil” mar bhealach chun an bonn a bhaint arís eile ón daonlathas áitiúil agus chun cumhacht a lárú laistigh den rialtas.

Tá géarghá le hathchóiriú bunúsach polaitiúil a dhéanamh ar ár gcultúr polaitiúil agus ar an gcóras polaitiúil ar fad araon. Chuir Sinn Féin in aghaidh an chuir chuige chiniciúil íosta lenar ghlac Fine Gael agus Páirtí an Lucht Oibre, agus lenar ghlac Fianna Fáil roimhe sin, i leith athchóiriú agus leanfaidh sé le cur ina aghaidh go láidir.

Tá rún daingean ag Sinn Féin ionadaíocht láidir agus an caighdeán is airde ceannaireachta a thabhairt ar leibhéal an rialtais áitiúil agus laistigh de phobail araon d'fhonn an soláthar seirbhísí is fearr agus is féidir a bhaint amach, seirbhísí a fhreastalóidh ar an riachtanas áitiúil.

Creidimid go bhfuil an rialtas áitiúil ar cheann de na gnéithe is tábhachtaí dár ndaonlathas. Creidimid freisin nach mór don rialtas áitiúil bheith oiriúnach don fheidhm san 21ú haois. Ní mór tús áite a thabhairt do shaoránaigh, agus ní do scothaicmí polaitiúla.

Is ar na príomhphrionsabail seo a leanas a bhfuil ár gcur chuige i leith athchóiriú agus sholáthar an rialtais áitiúil bunaithe;

**1. Daonlathas.** Tá níos mó i gceist le daonlathas ná toghcháin amháin. Tá sé de cheart ag an bpobal údarás áitiúla agus na seirbhísí a sholáthraíonn siad a choimeád cuntasach.

**2. Dílárú.** An oiread cumhachta agus is féidir a dhílárú ón rialtas láir go dtí an rialtas áitiúil.

**3. An Pobal.** Tá sé de cheart ag daoine cónaí ina bpobal féin agus bheith slán sábháilte ina dteach féin.

**4. Athnuachan Gheilleagrach.** Cuid ríthábhachtach de théarnamh geilleagrach a bheidh sa gheilleagar áitiúil a athnuachan.

**5. Bainistíocht Dramhaíola.** I dtreo straitéis dramhaíola nialasaí.

**6. An Comhshaol.** Ní mór do phróisis forbartha agus phleanála bheith trédhearcach, eiticíúil agus inbhuanaithe – ní mór dóibh gan a bheith ina mbagairt don chomhshaol.

**7. Cuntasacht.** Ní mór don phobal bheith in ann údarás áitiúla a choimeád cuntasach as a gcuid gníomhartha.

Is páirtí poblachtach é Sinn Féin. Ba mhaith linn deireadh a chur le críochdheighilt agus sochaí atá dírithe ar an saoránach agus bunaithe ar chearta a fhorbairt. Ba cheart do phobail áitiúla chumhachtaithe bheith mar bhunchloch don tsochaí sin. Tá ár gcroiluchanna polaitiúla bunaithe ar chomhionannas agus ar chthroime do chách. Táimid tiomanta do thús áite a thabhairt do leasanna na saoránach agus torthaí dearfacha a bhaint amach don phobal áitiúil trí ionadaíocht agus trí cheannaireacht láidir ar Chomhairlí.

**On May 23rd I am asking you to vote for Sinn Féin. Let us make change together.**

Le meas,

**Gerry Adams TD**  
Uachtarán Shinn Féin



# SINN FÉIN COMMITMENTS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

- » Local government reform which is responsible for efficient and cost effective delivery of high quality public services, is democratically accountable, drives economic recovery and has a sustainable funding model.
- » An enhanced system of 8 Regional Authorities for the island of Ireland with responsibility for spatial planning, environmental protection and transport.
- » Strong city, county and municipal district councils that are democratically accountable and deliver local services in an efficient cost effective way.
- » Maximum power devolved from central government to local authorities including waste and water, housing, local economic development, school transport
- » Directly elected Chairs and Mayors who would assume many aspects of the council management oversight role and legislation to remove power from City and County Managers.
- » Use of the D'Hondt system for allocating positions in elected bodies on a fair and proportionate basis.

## DELIVERING FOR COMMUNITIES

### Local Government Funding

- » Abolish the local property tax.
- » Maintain central government funding of Local Government.
- » Introduce/ring-fence a number of small secure and environmental friendly funding sources at local level.
- » Develop a fairer, revenue neutral, system of commercial rates that benefits small and medium enterprises.
- » Develop a general government loans fund for future local government developments.

## GROWING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

### Economic Development

- » Remove barriers to micro businesses and SMEs tendering for public contracts.
- » Seek the inclusion of local authorities as priority creditors of those companies now in NAMA.
- » Identify areas of high social need and development potential that may be designated as redevelopment zones with incentives to promote economic development.
- » Support the inclusion of social clauses in public contracts.
- » Support need for major investment in broadband infrastructure.
- » Every home in the state should have access to broadband speeds of at least 30Mbps.



## PROTECTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### Transparent and Ethical Planning

- » Councillors to take an ethics pledge linked to an Elected Representatives Code of Conduct.
- » Exercise vigilance against malpractice and corruption in planning in every council area, rigorously pursue any evidence of same, and advocate on behalf of Whistleblowers that may come forward to defend the public interest.
- » Ensure that there is real community involvement in drawing up local development plans.
- » Hold developers accountable by systematically imposing substantial, index-linked bonds (refundable in the event of full compliance with planning conditions).
- » Oppose the use of Public Private Partnerships.
- » Ensure strict guidelines for the construction of wind farms with minimum setback distances from dwellings.
- » Oppose Eirgrid's current plans for high voltage overhead power lines until an independent cost-benefit analysis on the undergrounding of these power lines is carried out.

### Housing

- » Build and renovate 7,500 additional publicly owned social housing units in 18 months using 1 billion euro from the Strategic Investment Fund.
- » Fast track the delivery of NAMA properties for social housing.
- » Seek the power for local authorities to access independent sources of income by for instance examining the establishment of public Housing Trusts to access funding from the European Investment Bank to complete building programmes and regeneration projects.
- » Address the issue of private landlords illegally demanding top-ups from rent supplement recipients.
- » Protect homeless funding and commit to ending long term homelessness and rough sleeping.

### Environment

- » Oppose the introduction of water charges.
- » Retain the delivery of water services under the democratic control of Local Authorities.
- » Local authorities to adopt climate change strategies and action plans.
- » Campaign for local authorities to be established as the regulator for waste collection services.



## PROVIDING RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

### Transportation

- » Promote the development and expansion of affordable, accessible public transport.
- » Oppose Fine Gael and Labour Party attempts to privatise bus routes by allowing private operators to cherry pick profitable routes
- » Work to expand the rural transport scheme and support community-based rural transport initiatives
- » Expand Dublin's bike rental scheme through-out Dublin and other local authorities.
- » Initiate local road network accident black spot audits and ensure that councils take appropriate measures.

### Recreational Services and Amenities

- » Advocate devolution of responsibility relating to Local Sports Partnerships by supporting clubs, increasing local participation, building partnerships across clubs and agencies.
- » Ensure that better use is made of existing civic buildings to deliver access to the arts.
- » Ensure adequate resources for the upkeep of parks and open spaces.

### Fire and Ambulance Services

- » Demand the removal of the call out charge.
- » Propose regular regional fire risk assessments involving the local Fire Brigades, fire fighters' representatives, local elected representatives, the HSE and other stakeholders.
- » Propose local equipment audits against need for both fire and ambulance services.
- » Support a single ambulance command and control system for Fire Brigade and HSE ambulance deployment.
- » Support full North-South cooperation in emergency service provision in border areas.



## IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR COMMUNITIES

### Community Safety

- » Continue to promote the expansion of local community restorative justice options and greater availability of community mediation services.
- » Campaign for a coherent strategy to maximise Garda visibility in rural areas.
- » Demand that all drug related monies seized by Gardaí or by CAB are channelled into community development initiatives.
- » Campaign for a standardised council approach to antisocial behaviour
- » Seek additional Powers for Joint Policing Committees to give local representatives direct input in the development of Local Policing Plans and ensure implementation.

### Mental Health

- » Demand improved community-based mental health services locally for children and adults, and the implementation of the current mental health policy A Vision for Change.
- » Commit to funding for local community mental health groups that support recovery from mental health difficulties.
- » Ensure that there is an effective local authority-led Housing and Disability Steering Group, to liaise between community mental health teams and the local housing office, in order to prevent homelessness.

### Addiction Services

- » Our representatives will continue to campaign for the delivery of the necessary supports required by local communities in reducing harm and confronting the causes and consequences of addiction.

### Postal Services

- » Campaign for a national plan to protect rural post offices.
- » Such a plan should include the retention of social welfare payments, and the expansion of the services provided to include motor tax renewal, other state payments, and banking.

### Childcare

- » Stand with parents and childcare workers to ensure that any review of the Community Childcare Subvention and the Childcare Education and Training Support schemes is focused on providing supports for low-income families and on keeping local community crèches open.
- » Support provision or restoration of core funding to all local community-based crèches.
- » Propose that all councils adopt a Local Authority Childcare Policy.
- » Campaign for high quality training for childcare workers and an adequate inspection regime to ensure childcare is of high quality and high standards.

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## UNITING IRELAND

- » Promoting a Border Development zone to tackle barriers to trade and investment and promote co-operation in public service provision.
- » Greater access to EU funding and supports such as Intereg and other European cross border funding.
- » Increasing cross-border co-operation at local government in relation to for the provision of joint services and economic development.
- » Building the capacity of private sector firms to access funding for joint ventures or cross-border marketing support.
- » Support community, voluntary and economic organisations to develop cross-border projects.



## STRENGTHENING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

### Irish Language and Gaeltacht Regions

- » Sinn Féin would task each local authority that has a Gaeltacht region in its remit to develop a local area plan for the Gaeltacht in that county.
- » Irish language and culture to be central to the overall development of the area.
- » Údarás na Gaeltachta's role as the prime instigator and facilitator of Community Development be supported and facilitated.
- » Support to be given to the development of the regions indigenous resources and to the employment opportunities arising there from.

### Women

- » Support the adoption and ensure the monitoring of affirmative action policies in council employment, the awarding of council contracts and in tackling gender imbalance on councils, committees and boards.
- » Ensure each council adopts official policies and guidelines on domestic violence, in consultation with local women's support services.
- » Use positions on the newly establish Local Community Development Companies to support initiatives promoting women's entrepreneurship.

### Children and Young People

- » Support emerging leadership among young people through the establishment of and provision of supports for Youth Councils.
- » Ensure that all development plans for towns with a population of 1,000 or more include the provision of one-stop recreational centres.
- » Use membership of Joint Policing Committees with a view to ensuring sufficient support for high risk children and children from high risk areas and increasing the number of juvenile liaison officers and local diversion programmes.

### Older People

- » Ensure local authorities age-proof mainstream services (such as Assisted Bin Collection schemes) and adapt or provide specific services for older peoples' needs.
- » Lobby the Minister for the Environment, Housing and Local Government to demand that funding for housing adaptations is restored and keeps pace with local need.
- » Campaign with local communities to end the closure of post offices throughout the country, to ensure older people can access their pensions without difficulty and to combat social isolation.

### People with Disabilities

- » Ensure each council has a Disability Access Officer to inspect planning applications and ensure provision for independent living within mixed tenure estates.
- » Ensure new builds meet universal design standards and require planning applications.
- » Lobby the Minister for the Environment, Housing and Local Government to demand that a scheme is put in place to replace the Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Grant schemes.

### New Communities

- » Promote the inclusion of New Communities in local consultation and planning processes, ensuring the representation of these communities on local bodies and inclusion in decision-making.
- » Ensure all council contractors comply with labour laws and treat all workers equally regardless of status or country of origin.
- » Campaign to end the unjust Direct Provision System.
- » Promote the implementation of Anti-Racism and Integration Development Plans at local level.

### Travellers

- » Ensure full and timely delivery of local Traveller Accommodation Plans.
- » Support funding of local community projects either representing or specifically outreaching to Travellers.
- » Promote ongoing and constructive dialogue between local Traveller and settled communities on matters of shared concern.
- » Use our positions on Joint Policing Committees to open dialogue between local Traveller and Garda leadership, to ensure that racist attacks and other incidents are taken seriously and investigated.



# GEALLTANAIS SHINN FÉIN DON RIALTAS ÁITIÚIL

## ATHCHÓIRIÚ AN RIALTAIS ÁITIÚIL

- » Athchóiriú an rialtais áitiúil atá freagrach as seirbhísí poiblí ar ardchaighdeán a sholáthar ar bhealach atá éifeachtach agus éifeachtúil ó thaobh costais de, a bhfuil struchtúir atá oiriúnach don fheidhm aige, atá cuntasach ó thaobh cúrsaí daonlathacha de, a bhrúntáir téarnamh gheilleagrach chun cinn agus a bhfuil múnla inbhuanaithe maoiniúcháin aige.
- » Córas feabhsaithe ina bhfuil 8 nÚdarás Réigiúnacha d'oileán na hÉireann atá freagrach as spásphleanáil, as cosaint chomhshaoil agus as iompar.
- » Comhairlí cathrach, comhairlí contae agus comhairlí ceantair áitiúil atá láidir, atá cuntasach ó thaobh cúrsaí daonlathacha de agus a sholáthraíonn seirbhísí áitiúla ar bhealach atá éifeachtúil ó thaobh costais de.
- » An oiread cumhachta agus is féidir a dhílárú ón rialtas áitiúil go húdarás áitiúla, lena n-áirítear dramhaíl agus uisce, tithíocht, forbairt gheilleagrach áitiúil, iompar scoile
- » Cathaoirligh agus Méaraí atá tofa go díreach, daoine a ghlacfaid le cuid mhór gnéithe de ról maoirseachta bainistíochta na comhairle agus reachtaíocht lena mbainfí cumhacht ó Bhainisteoirí Cathrach agus Contae.
- » Leas a bhaint as córas D'Hondt chun ról i gcomhlachtaí tofa a leithdháileadh ar bhonn comhréireach cothrom.

## TORTHAÍ DEARFACHA A BHAINTEAMACH DO PHOBAIL

### Maoiniú don Rialtas Áitiúil

- » Deireadh a chur leis an gcáin mhaoine áitiúil.
- » Maoiniú ón rialtas láir don Rialtas Áitiúil a choimeád ar bun.
- » Foinsí maoiniúcháin atá beag, slán agus neamhdhíobhálach don chomhshaoil a thabhairt isteach/a imfháil ar leibhéal áitiúil.
- » Córas rátaí tráchtála atá níos cothroime, atá neodrach ó thaobh ioncain de agus atá chun tairbhe frontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide a fhorbairt.
- » Ciste iasachtaí rialtais mhóir a fhorbairt le haghaidh forbairtí rialtais áitiúil sa toadhcháil.

## AN GEILLEAGAR ÁITIÚIL A FHÁS

### Forbairt Gheilleagrach

- » Bacainní roimh mhicreaghnóthais agus roimh fhiontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide a bhaint agus iad ag cur tairisceana isteach le haghaidh conarthaí poiblí.
- » Iarracht a dhéanamh go bhféachfar ar údarás áitiúla mar chreidiúnaithe tosaíochta do na cuideachtaí sin atá faoi réir na Gníomhaireachta Náisiúnta um Bainistíocht Sócmhainní (GNBS) san am i láthair.
- » Ceantair ina bhfuil ardriachtanas sóisialta agus ardacmhainn forbartha a shainaithint chun go bhféadfaí iad a shainiú mar chriosanna athfhorbartha lena ngabhadh dreasachtaí chun forbairt gheilleagrach a chur chun cinn.
- » Tacú le cláisail shóisialta a chur ar áireamh i gconarthaí poiblí.
- » Tacú leis an riachtanas atá le mórinfheistíocht a dhéanamh i mbonneagar leathanbhanda.
- » Ba cheart do gach teach sa stát rochtain a bheith acu ar luasanna leathanbhanda de 30Mbps ar a laghad.

## POBAIL A CHOSAINT TRÍ FHORBAIRT INBHUANAITHE

### Maoiniú don Rialtas Áitiúil

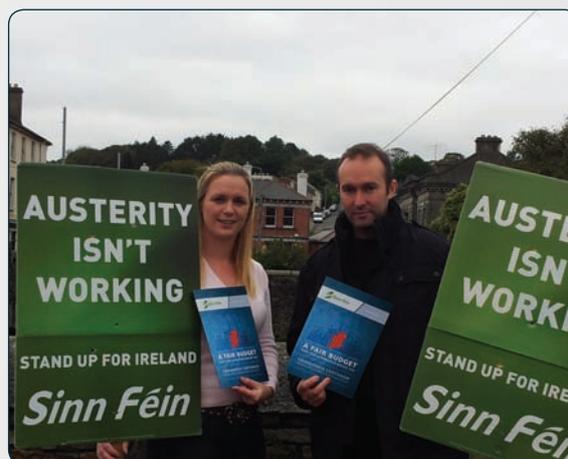
- » lallach a chur ar chomhairleoirí gealladh eitice a ghlacadh, rud a bheidh nasctha le Cód Iompair d'Ionadaithe Tofa.
- » Bheith san airdeall ar mhíchleachtas agus ar éilliú i ngach limistéar comhairle, fianaise ar mhíchleachtas agus ar éilliú a shaothrú go dian agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do Sceithirí a d'fhéadfadh teacht chun cinn chun leas an phobail a chosaint.
- » A chinntiú go mbeidh fíor-rannpháirtíocht ar thaobh an phobail agus pleananna forbartha áitiúla á gcur le chéile.
- » Forbróirí a choimeád cuntasach trí mhórbhannaí atá nasctha le hinnéacs a fhorchur go córasach (in-aisíochta sa chás go gcomhlíontar coinníollacha pleanála ina n-íomláine).
- » Cur in aghaidh Comhpháirtíochtaí Príobháideacha Poiblí a úsáid.
- » A chinntiú go mbeidh treoirlínte diana i bhfeidhm maidir le feirmeacha gaoithe a thógáil agus go mbeidh íosachair shlánachair ó áitribh ann.
- » Cur in aghaidh na bpleananna atá ag EirGrid faoi láthair línte cumhachta ardvoltais lasnairde a thógáil go dtí go ndéanfar anailís costais is tairbhe ar leagan faoin talamh na línte cumhachta sin.

### An Comhshaoil

- » Cur in aghaidh muirir uisce a thabhairt isteach.
- » Soláthar seirbhísí uisce a choinneáil faoi smacht daonlathach na nÚdarás Áitiúil.
- » lallach a chur ar údarás áitiúla straitéisí agus pleananna gníomhaíochta um athrú aeráide a ghlacadh.
- » A éileamh go mbunófar údarás áitiúla mar rialálaí le haghaidh seirbhísí bailiú dramháiola a dhéanamh d'údarás áitiúla.

### Tithíocht

- » 7,500 aonad breise tithíochta sóisialta a bheidh faoi úinéireacht phoiblí a thógáil agus a athchóiriú sna 18 mí atá le teacht trí 1 billiún euro a úsáid ón gCiste Infheistíochta Straitéisí.
- » Ionaid mhaoine GNBS a thabhairt chun tosaigh lena soláthar mar thithíocht shóisialta.
- » larracht a dhéanamh go dtabharfar cumhacht d'údarás áitiúla foinsí neamhspleácha ioncaim a rochtain, mar shampla, trí scrúdú a dhéanamh ar lontaobhais Tithíochta phoiblí a bhunú chun maoiniú a fháil ón mBanc Eorpach Infheistíochta ar mhaithe le cláir agus le tionscadal athnuachana a chur i gcrích.
- » Dul i ngleic leis an bhfadhb a bhaineann le tiarnaí talún príobháideacha a bheith ag éileamh breisithe neamhdhleathacha ó dhaoine a fhaigheann an forlíonadh cíosa.
- » Maoiniú do dhaoine gan dídean a chosaint agus a ghealladh go gcuirfear deireadh le heaspa dídean fhadtéarmach agus le codladh amuigh.



## ÉIRE A AONTÚ

- » Crios Forbartha Teorann a chur chun cinn, rud arb é is aidhm dó dul i ngleic le bacainní ar thrádáil agus ar infheistíocht agus comhoibriú a chothú i soláthar seirbhíse poiblí.
- » Rochtain níos fearr ar mhaoiniú agus ar thacaí ón AE – Interreg, mar shampla – agus ar mhaoiniú eile trasteorann ón Eoraip.
- » Comhoibriú trasteorann a mhéadú ar leibhéal an rialtais áitiúil maidir le comhsheirbhísí a sholáthar agus maidir le forbairt gheilleagrach.
- » Acmhainn gnólachtaí san earnáil phríobháideach a fhorbairt chun gur féidir leo teacht ar mhaoiniú do chomhfhiontair nó ar thacaíocht mhargaíochta trasteorann.
- » Tacú le heagraíochtaí pobail, deonacha agus eacnamaíocha tionscadail trasteorann a fhorbairt.

## SEIRBHÍSÍ POIBLÍ SOFHREAGRACHA A CHUR AR FÁIL

### Iompar

- » Forbairt agus leathnú iompair phoiblí atá inacmhainne agus inrochtana a chur chun cinn.
- » Cur in aghaidh iarrachtaí Fhine Gael agus Pháirtí an Lucht Oibre bealaí bus a phríobháidiú trí chead a thabhairt d'óibreoírí príobháideacha bealaí brabúsacha a choinneáil dóibh féin.
- » An scéim iompair thuithe a chur chun cinn agus a leathnú agus tacú le tionscnaimh phobalbhunaithe iompair thuithe.
- » An scéim um chíos rothar i mBaile Átha Cliath a leathnú ar fud na cathrach ar fad agus in údarás áitiúla eile.
- » Tús a chur le hiniúchtaí ar bhaill dhubha timpiste ar an ngréasán bóithre áitiúla agus a chinntiú go ndéanfaidh comhairlí bearta cuí ina leith.

### Seirbhísí Dóiteáin agus Otharcharranna

- » A éileamh go mbainfear an táille gaoch amach.
- » Measúnuithe rialta réigiúnacha riosca dóiteáin a mholadh, rudaí a mbeidh na Briogáidí Dóiteáin áitiúla, ionadaithe do chomhtraiceoirí dóiteáin, ionadaithe tofa áitiúla, Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte (FSS) agus páirtithe leasmhara eile páirteach iontu.
- » Iniúchtaí trealaimh áitiúil a mholadh ar an riachtanas atá le seirbhísí dóiteáin agus le seirbhísí otharcharranna araon.
- » Tacú le córas aonair ceannais agus rialaithe le haghaidh an Bhriogáid Dóiteáin agus otharcharranna FSS a imscaradh.
- » Tacú le lán-chomhoibriú Thuaidh-Theas i seirbhísí éigeandála a sholáthar i gceantair theorann.

### Seirbhísí Áineasa agus Taitneamhachtaí

- » Tacú le freagracht as Comhpháirtíochtaí Spóirt Áitiúla a dhílárú trí thacaíocht a thabhairt do chlubanna, trí rannpháirtíocht áitiúil a mhéadú agus trí chomhpháirtíochtaí a fhorbairt ar fud clubanna agus gníomhaireachtaí.
- » A chinntiú go mbainfear úsáid níos fearr as foirgnimh chathartha atá ann cheana féin ar mhaithe le rochtain a sholáthar ar na healaíona.
- » A chinntiú go gcuirfear dóthain acmhainní ar fáil le haghaidh páirceanna agus spásanna oscailte a chothabháil.



## CÁILÍOCHT NA BEATHA A FHEABHSÚ DO PHOBAIL

### Sábháilteacht Phobail

- » Leanúint le leathnú roghanna ceartais aisíoch sa phobal áitiúil agus le hinfhaighteacht mhéadaithe seirbhísí idirghabhála pobail a chur chun cinn.
- » Dul i mbun feachtais le haghaidh straitéis chomhleanúnach d'fhonn láithreach an Gharda Síochána i bpobail tuaithe a uasmhéadú.
- » A éileamh gur ar thionscnaimh forbartha pobail a dhíreofar an t-airgead ar fad a urghabhann na Gardaí nó an Biúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla de bharr gníomhaíochtaí a bhaineann le drugaí.
- » Dul i mbun feachtais le haghaidh cur chuige caighdeánaithe ón gcomhairle maidir le hiompar frithshóisialta
- » Iarracht a dhéanamh go dtabharfar Cumhachtaí breise do Choistí Comhphóilíneachta chun go mbeidh ionchur díreach ag ionadaithe áitiúla i bPleananna Póilíneachta Áitiúla a fhorbairt agus i gcur chun feidhme na bPleananna sin a áirithiú.

### Seirbhísí Andúile

- » Leanfaidh ár n-ionadaithe le dul i mbun feachtais le haghaidh sholáthar na dtacaí riachtanacha a theastaíonn ó phobail áitiúla chun díobháil a laghdú agus chun dul i ngleic leis na cúiseanna le handúil agus lena hiarmhairtí.

### Seirbhísí Poist

- » Dul i mbun feachtais le haghaidh plean náisiúnta chun oifigí poist faoin tuath a chosaint.
- » Is é a bheadh i gceist le plean den sórt sin ná íocaíochtaí leasa shóisialaigh a choinneáil agus na seirbhísí a chuirtear ar fáil a mhéadú chun go gcuimseofaí athnuachan mhótarchánach, íocaíochtaí eile stáit agus baincéireacht iontu.

### Meabhairshláinte

- » A éileamh go bhfeabhsófar seirbhísí áitiúla pobalbhunaithe meabhairshláinte do leanaí agus do dhaoine fásta agus go gcuirfead Fís don Athrú - an beartas reatha meabhairshláinte - chun feidhme.
- » Maoiniú a ghealladh do ghrúpaí meabhairshláinte sa phobal áitiúil a thacaíonn le téarnamh ó fhadhbanna meabhairshláinte.
- » A chinntiú gurb ann do Ghrúpa Stiúrtha éifeachtach um Thithíocht agus Míchumas a bheidh á threorú ag an údarás áitiúil, rud a dhéanfaidh idirchaidreamh le foirne meabhairshláinte pobail agus an oifig thithíochta áitiúil ar mhaithe le heaspa dídine a chosc.

### Cúram leanaí

- » Seasamh le tuismitheoirí agus le hoibríthe cúram leanaí chun a chinntiú go ndíreofar ar thacaí a thabhairt do theaghlach ísealioncaim agus ar naíolanna sa phobal áitiúil a choinneáil oscailte in aon athbhreithniú ar Scéim an Fhóirdheontais Chúraim Leanaí sa Phobal agus ar an Scéim um Thacaíocht Oideachais agus Oiliúna Cúram Leanaí.
- » Tacú le croímhaoiniú a sholáthar nó a thabhairt ar ais do gach naíolann áitiúil phobalbhunaithe.
- » A mholadh go nglacfaidh gach comhairle le Polasaí Údarás Áitiúil um Chúram Leanaí.
- » Dul i mbun feachtais le haghaidh oiliúint ar ardchaighdeán a chur ar oibríthe cúram leanaí agus le haghaidh córas leordhóthanach cigireachta a bheidh ann chun a chinntiú gur ar ardchaighdeán a bheidh an soláthar cúram leanaí.
- » Brú a chur ar an Aire gach bacainn a bhaineann le cúram leanaí atá ar thuismitheoirí a bhaint agus iad ag teacht ar an Scéim Deiseanna Oiliúna Gairmoideachais agus ar an Scéim Filleadh ar an Oideachas.



## COMHIONANNAS AGUS ILCHINEÁLACHT A NEARTÚ

### An Ghaeilge agus Réigiúin Ghaeltachta

- » Chuirfeadh Sinn Féin dualgas ar gach údarás áitiúil a bhfuil réigiún Gaeltachta faoina shainchúram plean limistéar áitiúil a fhorbairt don Ghaeltacht sa chontae sin.
- » An Ghaeilge agus an cultúr gaelach le bheith ríthábhachtach maidir le forbairt fhoriomlán an limistéir.
- » Tacú leis an ról atá ag Údarás na Gaeltachta mar phríomhchóthaitheoir agus mar príomhéascaitheoir Forbartha Pobail agus an ról sin a éascú.
- » Tacú le hacmhainní dúchasacha na réigiún a fhorbairt agus leis na deiseanna fostaíochta a chruthaíonn na hacmhainní sin.

### Mná

- » Tacú leis an nglacadh le beartais idirdhealaithe dhearfaigh i bhfostaíocht comhairle, sa bhronnadh conarthaí comhairle agus i ndul i ngleic le héagothroidhe inscne ar chomhairlí, ar choistí agus ar bhoird agus a chinntiú go ndéanfar monatóireacht orthu.
- » A chinntiú go nglacfaidh gach comhairle le beartais agus treoirlínte oifigiúla maidir le foréigean teaghlaigh, i gcomhairle le seirbhísí tacaíochta áitiúla do mhná.
- » Úsáid a bhaint as poist ar na Cuideachtaí nuabhunaithe Forbartha Pobail Áitiúil chun tacú le tionscnaimh a chuireann fiontraíocht na mban chun cinn.

### Leanaí agus Daoine Óga

- » Tacú le ceannaireacht éiritheach i measc daoine óga trí Chomhairlí Óige a bhunú agus tacaí a sholáthar dóibh.
- » A chinntiú go gcuirfean an soláthar ionad caitheamh aimsire ilfhreastail san áireamh i ngach plean forbartha le haghaidh bailte a bhfuil daonra de 1,000 duine nó níos mó acu.
- » Úsáid a bhaint as Coistí Comhphóilíneachta d'fhonn tacaíocht imleor a chinntiú do leanaí ardíosca agus do leanaí ó limistéir ardíosca agus méadú a dhéanamh ar líon na n-oifigeach idirchaidrimh don óige agus na gclár athstúirthe áitiúil.

### Daoine Scothaosta

- » A chinntiú go ndéanfaidh údarais áitiúla seirbhísí príomhshrutha (amhail scéimeanna um Bailiú Cuidithe Boscaí Bruscair) aoisdíonach agus go ndéanfaidh siad seirbhísí ar leith a oiriúnú nó a chur ar fáil do riachtanais daoine scothaosta.
- » Brú a chur ar an Aire Comhshaoil, Tithíochta agus Rialtais Áitiúil chun a éileamh go n-athbhunaítear maoiniú le haghaidh oiriúnú tithe agus go n-oireann a luas don riachtanas áitiúil.
- » Dul i mbun feachtais le pobail áitiúla chun deireadh a chur le dúnadh na n-oifigí poist ar fud na tíre, chun a chinntiú go bhféadann daoine scothaosta rochtain ar a bpinsean agus chun dul i ngleic le haonrú sóisialta.

### Daoine faoi Mhíchumas

- » A chinntiú go mbeidh Oifigeach Rochtana do Dhaoine faoi Mhíchumas ag gach comhairle d'fhonn iarratais phleanála a iniúchadh agus soláthar do mhaireachtáil neamhspleách a chinntiú laistigh d'éastáit tionachta measctha.
- » A chinntiú go gcomhlíonfaigh foirgnimh nuathógála caighdeáin uilíocha deartha agus iarratais phleanála a éileamh.
- » Brú a chur ar an Aire Comhshaoil, Tithíochta agus Rialtais Áitiúil chun a éileamh go gcuirtear scéim i bhfeidhm chun dul in ionad na scéimeanna um an Liúntas So-aistrítheachta agus an Deontas Mótariompair.

### Pobail Nua

- » Cuimsiú na bPobal Nua a chur chun cinn i bpróisis áitiúla chomhairliúcháin agus phleanála, rud a chinntíonn go ndéantar ionadaíocht do na pobail sin ar chomhlachtaí áitiúla agus a chinntíonn cuimsiú i gcinnteoireacht.
- » A chinntiú go gcloifidh gach conraitheoir comhairle le dlíthe saothair agus go gcaithfidh siad go cothrom le gach oibrí, beag beann ar stádas nó ar thír thionscnaimh.
- » Dul i mbun feachtais chun deireadh a chur leis an gCóras Soláthair Dhírigh atá éagórach.
- » Cur chun feidhme Pleananna Frithchiníochais agus Forbartha Comhtháthaithe a chur chun cinn ag leibhéal áitiúil.

### Taistealaithe

- » Soláthar iomlán agus tráthúil Pleananna Cóiríochta do Thaistealaithe a chinntiú.
- » Tacú le maoiniú do thionscadal pobail áitiúil a dhéanann ionadaíocht do Thaistealaithe nó a fhreastalaíonn go sonrach ar Thaistealaithe.
- » Idirphlé leanúnach agus dearfach idir pobail áitiúla Taistealaithe agus pobail áitiúla shocraithe ar chúrsaí chúraim choitinn a chur chun cinn.
- » Úsáid a bhaint as ár ról ar Choistí Comhphóilíneachta chun tús a chur le hidirphlé idir ceannaireacht áitiúil na d'Taistealaithe agus na nGardaí, d'fhonn a chinntiú go dtabharfar aird chuí ar ionsaithe ciníochas agus ar theagmhais eile agus go n-imscrúdófar iad.



# SINN FEIN ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2009

## - CASE STUDY, SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Following the local election in 2009 Sinn Féin councillors in South Dublin County Council agreed to enter a pact to run the Council for the next five years. In setting out the agenda for change on South Dublin County Council (SDCC), councillors agreed to pledge their annual €4,700 conference and education expenses towards the delivery of South Dublin County Council's first Homeless accommodation. This fund amounted to over €300k over the five budgets of the Council. In the summer of 2013 the Council Mayor, Sinn Féin Cllr. Cathal King officially opened the 16 bed transitional Homeless facility.

Sinn Féin has delivered for the people of South and West Dublin since 2009.

- » Despite the Fine Gael/Labour Government cuts to the funding for windows and doors in council homes, €1M was allocated in each council budget for this purpose resulting in a better quality of life for hundreds of our council tenants.
- » Following the delivery of the homeless accommodation in 2013, conference money this year went towards the Housing adaption grants that the Government slashed by more than 50%. €64K will go towards improving the lives of elderly citizens.
- » Since 2009 Sinn Féin have secured a reduction in commercial rates of over 5% in an effort to ease pressure on local businesses and protect local employment. In addition to this, in the Councils 2014 Budget a scheme was introduced to support small businesses who pay less than €10k annually by means of cash back if rates are paid by July 2014. This will protect those very small businesses that generally employ local people.
- » Sinn Féin have ensured that the rents of council tenants have not increased one cent over the five year period despite efforts by others to do so. SDCC has the lowest rent scheme of any Local Authority in the State at 10% of income.
- » Sinn Féin ensured that the 2014 Council budget absorbed the cost of the property tax on council homes. SDCC has more than 10,000 social housing units and not one tenant has had to pay any portion of the Local Property Tax as set by the Fine Gael/Labour Government.
- » As Mayor, Cllr. Cathal King has proposed a competition through the Library and Arts office for a sculpture of a piece of street art to be developed to commemorate the women and men of 1916 to be unveiled Easter week 2016 in Tallaght Village.
- » SDCC has become the second Local Authority in the State to pledge full support for full marriage equality for the LGBT community and their children.
- » Following a surge in youth suicides in the locality SDCC working in partnership with Comhairle na nÓg and the South Dublin County Youth Council launched a mental health smart phone app that maps all of the various mental health services in the SDCC area. The app is called MindMindR and can be downloaded from the App Store and Android for free.
- » A new local playground scheme is being introduced this year with a €500k budget that will increase in the coming years.
- » Sinn Féin has secured an increase in the Housing, Roads and Community, and Recreation budgets this year.



# ÉACHTAÍ SHINN FÉIN ÓN MBLIAIN 2009

## - CÁS-STAIDEÁR, COMHAIRLE CONTAE BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS

Tar éis an toghcháin áitiúil in 2009, réitigh Comhairleoirí Shinn Féin i gComhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas dul isteach i gcomhaontú chun bheith i mbun na Comhairle do na cúig bliana le teacht. Agus an clár oibre le haghaidh athrú ar Chomhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas (SDCC) á leagan amach acu, chomhaontaigh Comhairleoirí a speansais bhliantúla chomhdhála agus oideachais €4,700 a ghealladh ar mhaithe leis an gcéad chóiríocht do Dhaoine gan Dídean de chuid Chomhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas a sholáthar. B'ionann an ciste sin agus breis agus €300 míle thar na cúig bhuiséad de chuid na Comhairle. I samhradh na bliana 2013, d'oscail an Comhairleoir Cathal King de chuid Shinn Féin, ar Méara na Comhairle é, an tsaoiréid thrasdultach 16 leaba do Dhaoine gan Dídean go hoifigiúil.

Sholáthair Sinn Féin torthaí dearfacha do mhuintir Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas agus Thiar ón mbliain 2009 i leith.

- » In ainneoin na gcorruithe a rinne Rialtas Fhine Gael/Pháirtí an Lucht Oibre ar an maoiniú le haghaidh fuinneog agus doirse i mbaile Comhairle, leithdháileadh €1M i ngach buiséad de chuid na Comhairle chun na críche sin, rud a bhí ina chúis le cáilíocht beatha níos fearr do na céadta duine dár dtionóntaí Comhairle.
- » Tar éis an chóiríocht do Dhaoine gan Dídean a sholáthar in 2013, úsáideadh airgead comhdhála i mbliana ar mhaithe leis na deontais um oiriúnú Tithe a ndearna an Rialtas ciorrú de níos mó ná 50% orthu. Úsáidfear €64 míle i gcomhair saol na saoránach scothaosta a fheabhsú.
- » Ó 2009 ar aghaidh, bhain Sinn Féin laghdú de níos mó ná 5% amach ar rátaí gnó d'fhonn roinnt brú a bhaint de ghnóthais áitiúla agus fostaíocht áitiúil a chosaint. De bhreis air sin, tugadh scéim isteach i mBuiséad na Comhairle do 2014 d'fhonn tacú le gnóthais bheaga a íocann níos lú ná €10 míle sa bhliain trí bhíthin aisairgid má íoctar rátaí faoi mhí Iúil 2014. Cosnóidh sé sin na gnóthais an-bheag a fhostaíonn muintir na háite de ghnáth.
- » Chinntigh Sinn Féin nár tháinig méadú cent amháin ar chíosanna tionónta Comhairle le cúig bliana anuas in ainneoin iarrachtaí a rinne daoine eile iad a ardú. Is íse scéim chíos Chomhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas ná aon Údarás Áitiúil sa Stát ag 10% d'ioncam.
- » Chinntigh Sinn Féin gur ionsúigh buiséad na Comhairle do 2014 costas na cánach maoinne ar Thithe Comhairle. Tá breis agus 10,000 aonad sóisialta ag Comhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas agus ní raibh ar aon tionónta amháin íoc as cuid ar bith den cháin mhaoine a shocraigh Rialtas Fhine Gael/Pháirtí an Lucht Oibre.
- » Mhol an Comh. Cathal King mar Mhéara comórtas tríd an Leabharlann agus tríd an oifig Ealaíon le haghaidh deilbhe nó píosa d'ealaín sráide a fhorbrófar d'fhonn mná agus fir 1916 a chomóradh. Nochtfar é i seachtain na Cásca, 2016, i Sráidbhaile Thamhlachta.
- » D'éirigh Comhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas ar an dara hÚdarás Áitiúil sa Stát a gheall tacaíocht iomlán do chomhionannas iomlán pósta don phobal LGBT agus dá leanaí.
- » Tar éis borradh teacht ar fhéinmharuithe óige sa dúiche, sheol Comhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas, agus í ag obair i gcomhar le Comhairle na nÓg agus le Comhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas don Óige, aip fóin chliste maidir le meabhairshláinte a léarscáilíonn na seirbhísí éagsúla meabhairshláinte go léir i gceantar Chomhairle Contae Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas. Tugtar MindMindR ar an aip agus is féidir í a íoslódáil ón siopa aipeanna agus ó Android saor in aisce.
- » Tá scéim nua um chlóis súgartha áitiúla á tabhairt isteach i mbliana. Tá buiséad €500 míle aici a mhéadófar sna blianta le teacht.
- » D'éirigh le Sinn Féin méadú ar na buiséid Tithíochta, Bhóithre agus Phobail agus chaitheamh aimsire a bhaint amach i mbliana



# 1. REAL DELIVERY FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The lack of appropriate levels of local government funding is one of the main barriers to building stronger relationships between local government, local representatives and the communities whom they serve.

Local government should have greater economic autonomy with the ability to leverage loans from central government and other sources against future revenue raising.

Sinn Féin believes local government should play a greater role in Ireland's recovery through improved efficiencies in spending, but this cannot be achieved through the sacrifice of frontline services. In addition, to aiding recovery, we need local government focusing on social and economic development.

### **Sinn Féin's goal in funding local government is:**

- » To ease the burden of austerity measures on the population, especially the most vulnerable.
- » To invest resources to revive and grow the economy, create jobs and improve the wellbeing of our communities.
- » To ensure greater fairness in the sourcing and use of scarce resources.

### **Our five key Local Government funding commitments include:**

1. Abolishing the local property tax.
2. Maintaining central government funding of local government. We will halt the cuts from central government funding because taxpayers should not have to pay twice for local government – once through central taxation and again through local taxes.
3. Introducing/ring-fencing a number of small secure and environmental friendly funding sources at local level.
4. Developing a fairer, revenue neutral, system of commercial rates that benefits small and medium enterprises.
5. Developing a general government loans fund for future local government developments.

## THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND

The Local Government fund was set up in 1999 to provide additional funding to local authorities for general discretionary funding and initiatives. It was financed by way of the full proceeds of motor tax and an Exchequer contribution. In 2013 the Government made the decision to take €150m out of the Motor Tax Fund for the central deficit, attacking the very heart of local government finance. Sinn Féin in Government would restore the full proceeds of motor tax to the Local Government fund.

In 2012 the Fine Gael/Labour Government introduced the household charge followed by the Local Property Tax (LPT) in 2013. They claimed the revenue raised by this would be used to fund Local Government. In 2013, local authorities did not see one cent of the LPT.

More often than not individual cash strapped local authorities are forced into increasing commercial rates and charges simply to pay their day-to-day running costs. This has put a considerable burden on communities and small businesses who then carry the burden. A report by the Irish Small & Medium Enterprises Association (ISME) in 2011 stated that commercial rates threatened the survival of 40% of small businesses.

### **Best Use of Public Spending – Social Procurement**

- » Local authorities should aim to help support local businesses by 'best contract practice', including providing long-term contracts where feasible and no late payments.
- » Local Authorities should strengthen the ability of small and medium businesses to bid for local authority contracts. Local authorities together could develop a shared national online portal for easy-to-use submissions for contract work. In addition, each authority could undertake to host an annual event to showcase the best of local businesses for promotional purposes. They could take the opportunity to hear the views of local businesses and learn how they could support them through regular meetings or annual business summits.
- » There are a number of EU schemes to support reduced household energy usage in Ireland. Unfortunately, these tend to be under-utilised for a number of reasons, including lack of publicity and the fact that the householder has to bear 70% of the cost of insulation/energy efficiency. Local authorities could centralise the publicity and promotion of these savings through their public offices and material.

- » In addition, following the liberalisation of the energy market in the EU it may be possible to establish energy co-ops with the local authorities at their centre, as already occurs elsewhere in Europe . If not now, it will certainly be an option in the near future. The local authority would be a bulk purchaser of energy supply from the wholesale market at much reduced cost and would invite willing households and businesses to join the co-op and avail of reduced energy costs.

## PROPERTY TAX

- » Sinn Féin is committed to the abolition of the Local Property Tax. The property tax is a totally unjust tax which should be removed. This would save 1.8 million homeowners an average of €278 per year. This is the type of assistance that struggling families need and the type of initiative which will keep jobs in local communities.

## COMMERCIAL RATES

Commercial Rates are an important source of finance for local government. The current valuation system however is unfair and inequitable. Rates are paid whether the business is profitable or not, threatening in many cases the survival of small businesses. They are often the third highest cost after wages, and they particularly affect the devastated retail sector. Even the smallest businesses can pay as much as €5,500 per annum in rates (example taken from a small florist, Ballymun, Dublin). According to a report conducted by ISME in 2011 commercial rates have increased by a massive 47% over the last ten years. This is as a result of successive governments' failure to adequately fund local government. Commercial rates have become a stopgap for funding day-to-day running costs of local authorities.

As can be seen from the illustration below Commercial rates as a percentage of total local government funding has increased since the economic crisis began.

Sinn Féin is calling for the introduction of a revenue neutral, progressive commercial rates system based on the profits of a business.

The Council would decide what total yield from commercial rates they need to receive. Rate bands will be established and each business will fall into band one or another depending on their profits. Given the complexities involved in the Revenue Commissioners sharing this information with local authorities, the onus will be on the businesses to apply for the reduction in the rate providing they provide evidence through their annual revenue return and profits.

Businesses will be invited annually to make their application to the council based on proven profit levels, and designated to the varying profit bands accordingly. A statistical calculation is applied to ensure the councils requiring funding from commercial rates is met by analysing the number of businesses in each profit band and the level of rate they must pay for that year.

The result will be to shift some of the burden from smaller and medium enterprises to those that can afford to pay more.



	2008	2009	2010	2011
Commercial Rates (CR)	1,358,374,584	1,408,720,936	1,430,177,414	1,449,665,579
Total Local Government Income	10,828,977,510	8,948,235,609	7,651,934,964	7,162,644,191
CR as a % of Local Government Funding	12.54%	15.74%	18.69%	20.24%

2011 is the latest year for which audited local authority Annual Financial Statement data is available

## 2. GROWING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Councils are well placed to develop skills and employment hubs. Councils should take the lead in networking of local business, the semi-state sector, schools, colleges and training services to ensure that those seeking employment have the skills to match employment and skills needs in local authority areas. Clusters can generate key economic benefits in terms of innovation, energy and productivity. Local authorities should develop economic, educational and cultural clusters to generate employment and attract investment.

Sinn Féin councillors will work to introduce measures to stimulate the local economy such as the setting aside of a component of rates against an investment to enhance premises and in particular shop frontage. We will ensure that rates are not passed onto start-up businesses that have been accumulated during periods of a premises being vacant. Sinn Féin will also give small business a break by legislating to end the practise of 'upwardly only rent reviews'.

### COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Currently Ireland has one of the lowest levels of high-speed broadband access in the European Union. This is totally unacceptable if we are to build a sustainable economic recovery. There are areas of rural Ireland that still do not have access to broadband.

High-speed access to broadband must be made a priority for our local businesses, communities and schools. Major investment is needed in terms of broadband and infrastructure. This State not only lags far behind the EU average in broadband rollout, it also has some of the highest costs and lowest speeds in the EU.

Sinn Féin believes that every home in the country should have access to broadband speeds of at least 30Mbps.



# 3. PROTECTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## TRANSPARENT AND ETHICAL PLANNING

Planning affects many aspects of our lives. It effects where and how we live. It effects where we work, socialise and how we travel. There is a need for strong local input into the planning of roads, transport, infrastructure, homes and recreational amenities.

The Mahon Tribunal issued damning findings on corrupt payments for land rezoning and planning permissions in Dublin. Findings of corruption were made against councillors from Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour. A former Chair of Dublin County Council and an Assistant Dublin City and County Manager served time in prison. Judge Mahon concluded that planning corruption had become entrenched because no one was prepared to stop it.

Sinn Fein elected representatives will do whatever it takes to root out malpractice and corruption in planning once and for all – whether among elected representatives or council officials.

The inclusion of communities in the process of planning is critical to ensure successful outcomes. There should be independent checks at various stages of the City & County Development Plans process to ensure Community Involvement up to that point. Failure to achieve this independent accreditation should see the reversal of that stage of the plan's development with that part of the process having to be undertaken again in order to achieve proper community involvement objectives.

Years of planning scandals and corruption have allowed the planning process to be brought into disrepute. However rather than reform the planning process and make it more accountable, consecutive governments have simply stripped powers away from elected councillors. As a result of legislation such as the Strategic Infrastructure Bill and Regional Waste management plans more and more decisions are being made by unaccountable bureaucrats in local authority management, an Bord Pleanála and in the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. The planning process is structured so as to alienate local commutes and benefit the developer and speculator. Poor planning has been a contributory factor

in the current economic crisis and to many of the social problems experience in deprived areas of urban Ireland. This includes unfinished estates, estates without essential services and in some cases houses or apartments so shoddily constructed that they were in fact a danger to their occupants.

The planning process must be accountable, democratic, open and transparent. Sinn Féin aims to create a more meaningful role for communities in planning and decision making processes.

## PYLONS AND WIND TURBINES

Sinn Féin believes the Government needs to take seriously the concerns of citizens who are opposed to the construction by EirGrid of high voltage overhead power lines and associated pylons. There are genuine concerns held by residents who are expected to live along the routes of these power-lines about the possible impact on land values, agriculture, tourism and the potential consequences on human health.<sup>1</sup>

## HOUSING

At present there are 89,872 households on waiting lists for local authority housing in this state.

These people are living in cramped unsuitable conditions and in the current system will be waiting a very long time to be housed appropriately.

Local authorities have increasingly moved away from the provision of public housing in recent years in favour of what is known as housing support. This model puts the onus for housing provision on the voluntary and community sector as well as through subsidising private landlords. While the voluntary and community housing bodies provide great service and are an essential part of our Housing system they are not capable of providing the level of housing needed.

There are 78,000 people receiving Rent Supplement and 23,000 in the Rental Accommodation Scheme. These cost the state nearly half a billion euro a year but bring us no closer to a long-term sustainable provision of housing.

<sup>1</sup> A 2005 study conducted by Oxford Professor Draper found that living within 200 metres of high-voltage power-lines increases a child's chance of getting cancer by 69%. Draper G, Vincent T, Knoll ME, Swanson J (2005) Childhood cancer in relation to distance from high voltage power lines in England and Wales: a case-control study. *BMJ* 330: 1290-1293.



In more recent times it has become almost impossible in some parts of the country to acquire private rented accommodation within the maximum rent supplements. The maximum rent limits applicable to the Rent Supplement Scheme should be reviewed and adjusted to reflect real rental prices and to ensure that the payment can act as an effective barrier to homelessness.

Before the onset of the economic crisis the State was building 4,000-5,000 social housing units a year. However in 2013 the State built just 546 homes at a time when housing need is much more severe. Over 1 billion euro has been cut from the housing budget since 2008 but the number of those in need of social housing has more than doubled. Numbers experiencing homelessness or who are at threat of homelessness have risen starkly since the economic downturn.

The government's only proposal has been to pass responsibility for social housing onto the private market and give greater workload to the overburdened voluntary sector. They have hailed social leasing from NAMA as a great solution but it will cost the state considerably and has only delivered 512 homes in three years.

## PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Private Public Partnerships have proven to be a financial and social disaster. PPPs must never be solely relied upon as a means to provide homes or regeneration for local authorities. They have left communities in Dublin and Limerick decimated through the collapse of redevelopment plans. Sinn Féin believes the redevelopment plans in Limerick and Dublin need to be prioritised and completed.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Sinn Féin councillors will work to ensure that residents live, work and play in communities that are clean, safe and sustainable. Sinn Féin believes that essential services, such as domestic waste collection should remain under local government control. Pending this service being taken back into public ownership we propose that the local authorities should have maximum control over those currently providing the service.

Sinn Féin believes that local authorities should be the regulators for domestic waste collection in their areas. This would allow them to ensure that any commercial waste company that is successful in tendering for a waste collection contract would:

1. Be answerable to the local authority.
2. Provide a service that is affordable, accountable and accessible.
3. Provide a waiver scheme.
4. Provide follow up services such as cleansing and clearing up spillages.
5. Have their commercial contracts reviewed on an annual basis.

Sinn Féin councillors believe that local authorities should review contracts with companies collecting recyclables to negotiate new contracts whereby companies pay councils to collect this waste, as is the case in the six counties.

Sinn Féin believes that councillors should have a more hands on role in the development and implementation of Waste Management Plans. The current situation whereby City and County Managers have the power to impose incinerators and landfill dumps is simply unacceptable and undemocratic. The adoption of a waste management plan should become the reserve function of councillors.



## ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Estate management and maintenance is a traditional area of local authority competency which has been neglected. The appearance of communities adds to people's quality of life, so this is an area we would like to see more resources directed to.

Environmental Protection and Waste Management  
Local authorities will draft and implement climate change action plans. The plans will be based on a Climate Change Bill. They will set specific local targets, based on national and international targets, for the reduction of emissions in relation to energy use, transport, housing and waste management. These targets will be developed following a consultation process with relevant experts and stakeholders.

## INCINERATION

Sinn Féin opposes incineration and believes that current plans for incinerators should be abandoned. Sinn Féin councillors will advocate a Zero Waste Strategy for managing our waste crisis. This strategy aims to reduce waste to zero based on the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle.

Towards Zero Waste means designing and managing products and production processes to systematically avoid and eliminate the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them.

## WATER CHARGES

Water is a right. It is a resource that everyone needs to live and as such we believe it is a basic right.

Sinn Féin is opposed to the Government's plan to install domestic water meters and to introduce water charges. We believe water services need to be kept under the democratic control of local authorities.

Sinn Féin is opposed to the introduction of water charges, which we believe is just another tax being heaped upon already struggling households. Fresh, free running water is a basic right for our people, and just as we have prevented the introduction of water charges in the North, Sinn Féin are opposed to the introduction of water charges in this jurisdiction also.

The establishment of Irish Water - Uisce Eireann will do nothing to improve the distribution or quality of water.

We have already seen the spiralling costs of Irish Water, with €50 million spent on consultant costs, staffing costs are expected to account for up to €2 billion over a seven year period while 29 of the senior employees of Irish Water are on salaries of €100,000 and above.

Sinn Féin opposed the establishment of Irish Water. We believe the money currently being spent on installing water meters should be re-directed into improving the Victorian era water infrastructure, which is losing up to 40% of water as a result of leaks.

Sinn Féin believes this money could be better used to install district meters, upgrade the mains system and stop the leaks.

District metering would allow for local authorities to monitor water usage and leakage at neighbourhood level. We are opposed to household charging and therefore metering as a means to measure usage on this basis.

Water conservation must be incentive driven.

A number of simple planning regulations can greatly reduce the amount of water consumption. These include promotion of water harvesting with the introduction of water butts, use of grey water and making dual flush systems mandatory.



# 4. PROVIDING RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

## TRANSPORTATION

Sinn Féin believes transport policy needs to focus on delivering the most efficient movement of people and goods. This means increasing the availability and use of public transport through planning and design policies, especially at local level, which make public transport economically viable and desirable.

Large portions of a formerly comprehensive rail network were closed down. Many local and secondary road networks are crumbling and the countryside in particular is beset by accident black spots that regularly claim lives. Most cities and towns also lack adequate provision for pedestrians making it dangerous to even cross a road, particularly for the elderly, people with disabilities and those with prams or small children.

Resources and consideration at local authority level can contribute to improving our transport needs.

## FIRE AND AMBULANCE

Sinn Féin want to see local authorities continuing to deliver publicly owned, world-class fire services including emergency, rescue, prevention and enforcement with national standards and coordination free at the point of delivery.

However we do want to see reform of the fire service. Sinn Féin proposes to limit Assistant Fire Chiefs to 2 per local authority. To ensure co-ordination takes place Sinn Féin advocate the establishment of a single Strategic Fire Services body to coordinate and regulate the fire service state-wide and later island-wide, in line with international best practice. This body would standardise training and service delivery on an all-Ireland basis with councils still providing the service. The authority would continue to be answerable directly to councils through the Fire Chiefs and the SPCs.

Sinn Féin will ensure that the fire brigade service and its 3,300 staff are fully supported in the 216 fire stations so that we can have a service to meet modern demands. We believe that there is an urgent need for a state-wide co-ordinating body for the 37 local fire authorities in the 26 Counties. At present there are differences in training, equipment, policy and methodology across local fire services. The lack of a co-ordinating body also explains the lack of emphasis put by successive government on the fire services in contrast to that of the other emergency services.

## RECREATIONAL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Local authorities have worked successfully with Local Sports Partnerships to promote participation in sport at all levels through the promotion of mass participation events such as cyclo-sportives and fun runs.

In recent years there have been cuts to the funding provided for local amenities such as parks, swimming pools and libraries, Sinn Féin councillors have been to the fore in working with local communities to oppose these cuts.

Sinn Féin will advocate the full exercise of all local powers and use our collective strength to lobby for additional resources to ensure that each community has equal access to basic public arts, sports, cultural and recreational services and amenities as a right.



# 5. IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR COMMUNITIES

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

People have the right to feel safe in their homes and communities. Local authorities and communities themselves have a hugely important role to play in cooperation with the Gardaí in preventing criminal, anti-social and nuisance behaviour.

Local councillors are represented on Joint Policing Committees (JPCs), which provide a mechanism to provide for increased Garda accountability at a local level.

Sinn Féin wants additional powers for Joint Policing Committees to give local representatives direct input in the development of Local Policing Plans. Joint Policing Committees also need to be given a more effective role in ensuring that Local Policing Plans are fully implemented.

Sinn Féin are also committed to the development of approaches which have as a long term goal the reduction of crime such as Community Restorative Justice (CRJ), Community Mediation and Community Courts.

Community Restorative Justice (CRJ) involves victims and communities directly and ensures that the offender actually confronts their behaviour and its causes and takes steps to make up for the harm they have done. This 'restorative' dimension often leads to much higher levels of victim satisfaction with the process.

Community Mediation Schemes (CMS) can be employed to respond to non-criminal nuisance type behaviour and neighbour disputes and can help avoid the delays and high costs that a court based process involves. Community Courts have been pioneered in other countries such as the USA, most notably in New York City.

Community Courts involve a community centred approach which deals with relatively minor offences, such as public order offences, in a swift manner which attempts to understand the background to the offence and the offender and putting in place mechanism to avoid reoffending such as education, treatment programmes and community engagement. In 2007, the National Crime Commission recommended their introduction, starting with a Dublin pilot however this recommendation was never acted upon. The issue has recently been considered positively by the Oireachtas Justice committee.

## CHILDCARE

Sinn Féin have long advocated for state-led provision of regulated comprehensive childcare to be made available to all, equally and as of right and funded by general, direct and progressive taxation. This would include universal early childhood education and care, universal preschool for children aged from three to five years old and an after-school childcare system.

Unfortunately this has yet to become the reality for families in Ireland. The lack of quality, affordable childcare prevents many women who wish to do so from working outside the home. Irish childcare is in crisis. It is notoriously expensive and simply out of reach for many low-income families. Many low-income parents now face fees that have increased or even doubled. Indeed a recent report commissioned by the Donegal Childcare Committee indicated that a two child family faces an annual bill of €16,500 for full-time child care, with the average full-time cost over a ten month period estimated at €9,150 for one child and €16,470 for two children. This places Ireland at the second highest point in the scale in terms of costs across all OECD member countries.

In September of last year, Sinn Féin launched Bright Start, which is the Northern Assembly's programme for affordable and integrated childcare. The programme aims to address the need for a programme of affordable and integrated childcare.

While local government does not have direct powers or control over childcare provision at present, councillors can ensure that developers provide childcare facilities as part of their planning permission. All local communities and economies have a vested interest in making sure that childcare is available to all who need it. Sinn Féin councillors will stand with parents and providers in making this demand and will use their influence to ensure that local childcare needs are fully met.



## MENTAL HEALTH

Sinn Féin believes that improving mental health services is an essential part of social and political reform in Ireland. Mental health difficulties affect communities right across Ireland and these elections represent an important opportunity to highlight what can and should be done at local level to improve people's mental health and well-being.

Sinn Féin supports the Mental Health Reform groups "Four Key Local Actions". Local elected representatives can promote good mental health and ensure the social inclusion of those with mental health difficulties.

One in seven adults in Ireland will have experienced a mental health difficulty in the last year, while recent research shows that children and young people in Ireland have a higher rate of mental disorder than elsewhere in Europe or the US.

'A Vision for Change' is the 26 County current mental health policy and has cross party support. Published in 2006, the policy was due to be implemented in full by 2016. However, progress has been slow, causing the Inspector for Mental Health Services to remark last year that mental health services were 'stagnant and perhaps have slipped backwards in 2012'. Sinn Féin is committed to addressing these issues at local and national level.

## ADDICTION SERVICES

Amidst the discourse on the economic crisis the focus on the drugs crisis has been lost. However recent statistics indicate that there were 607 drug related deaths in 2011, the most recent year for which statistics are available. This is a stark reminder of how serious Ireland's drug problem is and shows the horrific consequences of the failure of successive governments to make sufficient funding available.

These statistics clearly demonstrate the need to afford greater resources to drug use prevention, treatment and rehabilitation projects rather than reducing them. Chronic under funding has historically been a feature of the State's response to the drugs crisis. Despite this, drugs services have already been subject to disproportionate cuts since the beginning of the recession.

While effective interventions are available to assist people to overcome addiction, or at least to minimise its most harmful effects, many of these crucial services are not available in our local communities. This means people who desperately need help sit on waiting lists, or must travel long distances for treatment, or in some cases never get access at all. This is wrong. When appropriate addiction services are not available it makes these people even more vulnerable to the predatory alcohol and drugs industries, locking them, their families and communities into addiction related harm.

Sinn Féin has a long history of confronting the causes and consequences of addiction. Local authorities can play an important role in supporting the provision of addiction and other harm reduction services. Our councillors will continue to use all their influence as public representatives – including their positions on Local/Regional/Rural Drugs Task Forces – to fight for delivery of these necessary supports to local communities.

## POSTAL SERVICES

Sinn Féin believes that the local post office is central to many local communities, especially in rural Ireland and we believe that is necessary to ensure that the service is protected.

In many rural communities the post office is a focal point for social interaction and closures are regarded as increasing the level of isolation and loneliness.

The recently published Grant Thornton report suggests that up to 557 post offices out of 1,150, face possible closure over the coming years with devastating effects for the communities they serve. The reality for many communities is that if the post office network goes, then many other businesses may go with them.

Sinn Féin believes that local post offices need to be at the centre of the rejuvenation of local communities and the local economy.

# 6. STRENGTHENING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

## IRISH LANGUAGE AND GAELTACHT REGIONS

Sinn Féin would task each local authority that has a Gaeltacht region in its remit to develop a local area plan for the Gaeltacht in that county. That would include Galway, Mayo, Donegal, Meath, Cork, Kerry and Waterford county councils. The plan would seek to ensure that Muintir na Gaeltachta can continue to exist and thrive as a distinctive cultural community with access to quality infrastructure and sustainable jobs and services.

This means ensuring that:

- » The indigenous resources of the Gaeltacht are developed in a way that will benefit all of the community and have respect for the natural environment.
- » Districts which have suffered population decline are assisted in encouraging new permanent residential growth.
- » The unique community on Gaeltacht islands are assisted in preserving their island culture, having regard to the disadvantage of their location and to the challenge of mass tourism.
- » That statutory and voluntary bodies are supported in serving the community in an inclusive and holistic manner.

Fundamental to this strategy would be to recognize that various districts of the Gaeltacht have substantial variations in Irish language use, in population levels and in infrastructure provision, and to form a vision of development for the various districts together with policies and objectives which will support their social, economic and cultural sustainability.



## EQUALITY

As Irish republicans, equality is at the core of what Sinn Féin believes in. We believe in a new republic, one in which all citizens are equal regardless of the colour of their skin, their religious beliefs, their sexual orientation, where they live or what they do.

Sinn Féin are calling for the equality proofing at a state wide and local level, through impact assessments, of Government policy and budgets as well as those of local authorities and other public bodies. This is to ensure that, in exercising their functions, local authorities, Government and public bodies do so in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome that result from socio-economic disadvantage.

Sinn Féin councillors have been to the fore of the campaign for Marriage Equality with motions being passed in Councils across the island with the support of Sinn Féin.

We want to ensure that minority and vulnerable groups such as those in from new communities, travellers, elderly people and people with disabilities have equal status in our communities and our State and local government policies can lead the way for this.



## 7. UNITING IRELAND

Sinn Féin is an Irish republican party. We are a United Ireland party. We are an all-Ireland Party. We believe in sovereignty, independence and equality.

Partition separated townlands, communities and regions. It undermined economic development and imposed additional costs for public services across Ireland. Partition never did and never will make sense. We are the only party with a strategy and policies for achieving Irish unity and independence. We are the only party bringing a distinctly republican and socialist analysis into the heart of Irish politics.

All Sinn Féin elected representatives will continue to pursue Equality, Change and Irish Unity at local government.

### **Sinn Féin is committed to:**

- » Achieving Irish Unity through peaceful and democratic means.
- » To securing a Border Poll to allow the people to have their say on the future.
- » To addressing the legacy of partition and promoting national reconciliation.

## BUILDING ALL-IRELAND AND CROSS BORDER CO-OPERATION

Partition fractured the economy of Ireland and in particular the border counties. With vision and determination we can build a sustainable and equal economy across Ireland. Realising that vision requires the full and active participation of elected representatives at local government level, in the Assembly and the Oireachtas.

Harmonising structures across the island will deliver benefits for all communities, workers and business. The communities along the border continue to pay the cost of partition with reduced investment, high unemployed and emigration and disjointed public services.

Councils along the border provide back to back services that could be provided in a more efficient an effective manner through cross border working between councils. Sinn Féin is contesting and will win seats in all councils in the border region. We are the only party that can deliver greater co-operation and integration along the border.





SINN FÉIN, 44 PARNELL SQUARE, DUBLIN 1.  
SINN FÉIN, 44 CEARNÓG PHARNELL, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 1.

*Bealtaine 2014*

[WWW.SINNFEIN.IE](http://WWW.SINNFEIN.IE)