

Council Election 2022 Hustings - Spokes public mtg webinar 28.2.22

Dave du Feu - intro

slide 1 – Intro

- Tonight we're delighted to have speakers from all main parties currently on CEC
- We the voters will help decide whether or not they'll still be there after 5 May, and tonight is to help us in making that decision
- First, some comments on Spokes priorities, Party Manifestos, Deciding how to vote
- After the meeting, please have a look at the [election article](#) which is the top article on our website – I will refer to it here a few times.

Slide 2 – Spokes manifesto

- The Spokes manifesto is linked from the website article, and hopefully will give you ideas for speaking to your local candidates.
- Not go through it in detail, but we listed 5 areas of concern...
 - **[Safety]** – working towards Vision Zero of zero deaths or serious injuries on our roads
 - **[Traffic reduction]** – actions to achieve the existing extremely tough council target to reduce car-km 30% by 2030
 - **[Cycle network]** - A comprehensive cycle network, safe and welcoming for all ages and abilities, emphasising protected infrastructure on direct main-road routes, including improved and permanent Spaces for People infrastructure
 - **[Cycle accessibility and supporting infrastructure]** A new bike hire scheme; expansion of Cyclehoop onstreet bike storage, and inclusion of bike facilities in road resurfacing schemes
 - **[Resourcing]** Maintain and increase Edinburgh's policy of allocating 10% of the transport budget to cycling infrastructure and maintenance

slide 3 – Party Manifestos

- Tonight not here to influence party manifestos; most now complete & indeed Labour's already published
- Manifestos – extremely imp, because if something +ve or -ve is in a manifesto, e.g. we will do X or we will not do Y, then, more often than not, that promise will be kept
- BUT manifesto promises are far from the whole story in deciding how to vote. Here are 3 reasons...
 - **1st, Unexpected events are likely**
 - In 2017 council election, no party promised 40km of main-road semi-segregated cyclerooutes. Yet that happened, due to covid decisions, and indeed was probably the biggest thing that has been done for cycling by the current council although not in any manifesto!
 - Similarly, government may take decisions which affect what a council can or cannot do, regardless of what was in council manifestos – for example government can drastically raise, or cut, the funding specifically allocated to active travel
 - So we need parties with a general disposition towards climate-friendly & public health policies, who feel open to innovation and will work with whatever new opportunities, or setbacks, arrive
 - **2nd, Topics omitted from manifestos**
 - Topics may be omitted from manifestos because they are taken for granted, or because the party couldn't agree on a position, or because they are considered too controversial, or for other reasons
 - If something is not mentioned in a manifesto, that leaves it open for the party to go either way as time passes, and gives us and you a great opportunity for lobbying in future. Again, does the party's general approach suggest its decisions on such things will be positive on active travel and environment?
 - For example at the 2017 election there was no mention of segregated cyclerooutes, for or against, in the SNP manifesto – and yet, with SNP as the biggest party on the Council, segregated cyclerooutes are happening

- **3rd, Individual candidates**
- Whilst manifestos are very important, individual candidates matter too
- If a councillor is very supportive of a particular issue (e.g. cycling) they may push their party to go further than the manifesto, they may take other cycling initiatives and, in really exceptional circumstances, they may even vote differently from their party, as did happen once or twice on cycling issues in the current council
- Conversely, if most councillors in a party are uninterested in a topic, then there's little chance of going beyond manifesto promises, and things can even move backwards

slide 4 – Deciding who you should vote for

- **Manifestos** clearly must be very important in your decisions, as anything in them is likely to happen. But, apart from any specific promises on cycling and transport, does the manifesto give the feeling that this party really understands what concerns you about our future and will take decisions in that light as events take their course?
- **Individual candidates** – as already mentioned, individual candidates can matter greatly. So, even if you normally vote for a particular party, is there another candidate in your ward who you think will really put their heart and soul into pushing active travel or other issues that concern you? Fortunately the voting system helps greatly in this sort of dilemma
- **Voting system** – Council elections use the single transferable vote, which in my personal view is great.
 - It means that you do not have to just vote for one candidate – instead, you number candidates in order of preference, by writing 1,2,3 etc beside each name
 - Your ballot paper may have 5-10 candidates, possibly more than one from the same party, and each ward will elect several candidates
 - To *maximise* the value of your vote, number *all* the candidates, not just those you *like* but also those you *dislike*, with your *most disliked* at the bottom. You are helping decide who is *not* elected as well as who *is* elected.
 - Some people find this advice surprising, but we have checked it with the Electoral Reform Society, who said it is exactly right. For more detail, see the explanation in our website election article

slide off

- Tonight we have 5 candidates with strong interests in active travel.
- They are keen for voters to put them at the top of the list - and desperate not to be at the bottom!
- Each candidate will have a strict 5 minutes to outline their policies on transport with particular reference to cycling
- Will speak in alphabetical order by surname

[speakers - sound/video on in turn]

- 5. Conservative – [Cllr Cameron Rose](#) Southside/Newington, former leader of Conservative group, and many years ago a Spokes member
- 4. Greens – [Cllr Claire Miller](#) City Centre, is a spokes member, Green transport spokesperson
- 1. Labour – [Cllr Scott Arthur](#) Colinton/Fairmilehead & is a spokes member
- 2. Lib Dem – [Sanne Dijkstra-Downie](#) standing in Forth ward, which covers Granton & Trinity, Scottish LibDem spokesperson for Net Zero
- 3. SNP – [Cllr Lesley Macinnes](#) Liberton/Gilmerton, Convenor of the Transport Cttee

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- **QA**, to be chaired by Ewen Maclean, a founder of the inspirational Wee Unicorns James Gillespie Primary School bike bus, and of Blackford Safe Routes, whose name is pretty self-explanatory, as well as the recently formed Friends of the Quiet Route
 - At the end of the QA, probably about 9.15 the speakers, and Ewen himself, will each give a brief summary of what they have learned and their takeaways from the meeting