
Darren Williams for Labour's NEC

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Dear Comrade

Elections to Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) will be taking place later in the year. Your CLP has the opportunity, before 24th June, to make up to six nominations for places on the NEC's constituency section and I am asking you to consider nominating me. This is a crucial period for Labour, under a new leader with a mandate for change. The party has an opportunity to rejuvenate itself in order to rebuild public support and win back office. I believe I can offer the right combination of experience, commitment and ideas to represent members through the exciting and challenging times ahead.

My record in the labour movement

I have been an active Labour party member for twenty-seven years, working in every election for the return of Labour candidates. For most of my time in the party, I have been a branch officer and a member of the GMC. I have been a constituency delegate to numerous conferences and represented Welsh CLPs on the National Policy Forum for five years. I have also recently been elected to the Welsh Executive Committee, having previously served on that body in 1997-98. For three years, I worked at the National Assembly for Wales as a researcher and press officer for Carwyn Jones AM and John Griffiths AM. And since December 2013, I have been a Cardiff councillor.

I have been an active trade unionist throughout my working life and, since 2005 I have worked full-time for the civil service union, PCS, which has been at the forefront of the battle with the Tory government and its coalition predecessor over their attacks on public services, jobs, conditions and union rights. In 2013-14, I was the union's acting Wales Secretary and, in that capacity, sat on the Wales TUC General Council. I am a member of the GMB.

What I stand for

As a committed socialist all my adult life, I was delighted by the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader and am proud to say that I was actively involved in his campaign. I first joined Labour in order to work for the creation of a more equal, democratic and sustainable society. At a minimum, I want to see public services provided by the public sector, a more progressive taxation system and government intervention to create jobs and get the economy back on its feet. I want reform of the irresponsible financial sector and the reversal of attacks on our social security system. I believe that most Labour members, supporters and voters share similar aspirations. Yet the last Labour government, despite many positive achievements, strayed too far from authentic Labour values and beliefs – placing undue faith in markets and the private

sector, neglecting our historic commitment to equality and embroiling us in two disastrous wars. We lost the confidence of many of our long-standing supporters and the consequence has been electoral defeat and almost six years of the deepest cuts in living memory, undermining the foundations of our welfare state and increasing economic inequality.

Jeremy Corbyn's election reflects the widespread feeling among Labour supporters that the party needs to present a clear political alternative, which could win the confidence and support of all those who oppose Tory 'austerity'. His campaign offered real hope that a Labour government could make a tangible difference to people's lives once more, with bold policy solutions in areas like jobs, housing and energy. He has also been clear about the need to make Labour much more democratic and inclusive in the way that we organise and make policy. The result has been a massive upsurge in enthusiasm for progressive politics and a doubling of Labour party membership.

As secretary of Welsh Labour Grassroots, the network of left and centre-left party members in Wales, I was at the heart of Jeremy's campaign in Wales. I now want to play my part in ensuring that Labour undergoes the kind of political, organisational and cultural change that Jeremy has argued for. I am seeking to stand in this NEC election as part of the slate put together by the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance, alongside like-minded candidates: Ann Black, Ken Livingstone, Christine Shawcroft, Claudia Webbe and Pete Willsman.

Learning from devolution

Since the current method of electing the NEC was introduced in the late 1990s, there has never been a CLP representative from Wales and Scotland has had only intermittent representation. Until I stood for the first time in 2012, there had never even been a Welsh candidate on the ballot-paper. Yet, after seventeen years of democratic devolution, there is much that the wider party could learn from the experience in Scotland and Wales.

In particular: Welsh Labour has remained in office in the National Assembly since 1999 by pursuing its own 'clear red water' agenda, rather than following the market-based policies implemented in England. It has maintained an integrated, publicly-run NHS and a cohesive, comprehensive education system and introduced free prescriptions, free school breakfasts and free bus travel for pensioners and the disabled. If elected, I would promote these policies as a model for the national party to follow.

A voice for ordinary members

I advocate, and would practise, greater openness and accountability in the party. If elected, I would circulate written reports to all CLPs on NEC meetings and other relevant developments. I would be happy to address any GMC or similar body to which I may be invited, as I have done in my time on the National Policy Forum. I would also take up issues that CLPs may want to raise with the NEC.

Thank you for taking the time to read this – I hope you will give me your support.

Yours fraternally

Darren Williams.