SNP

Manifesto:
Perth And Kinross Council Elections 2017
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Foreword
from Councillor Dave Doogan,
Deputy Leader of Perth & Kinross Council SNP Group

Over the last five years only the SNP has represented constituents in all 12 council wards within Perth and Kinross and following the 2012 election result, where we returned 18 out of 41 councillors, it fell to the SNP to form a minority administration to lead Perth and Kinross council.

We have achieved a great deal over this time and the results of our ambition and investment are apparent on the ground across Perth and Kinross. From day one the SNP has been Building for Perth and Kinross. The SNP’s unprecedented investment in new and refurbished schools is a testament to the value we place on our future generations’ potential to help deliver a more prosperous and inclusive Perth and Kinross with greater opportunities.

The SNP believes that a warm, dry and affordable home is an essential part of raising a family and that is why we have delivered over 500 new affordable homes in the last five years. Moreover, the SNP will deliver over 1,000 more affordable homes over the next five years.

The SNP recognises the vital role our local economy plays in employment, placemaking and prosperity. That is why the SNP has engaged fully with local business groups and initiatives across the counties to assist with promoting business growth. In 2016/17 Perth and Kinross SNP was the only local authority to introduce a supplementary rates relief scheme for retail businesses – on top of the SNP Government’s Small Business Bonus.

In Perth and Kinross, the SNP has been redesigning care for our elderly by developing even better models of care that will be more sustainable in the future. The SNP has integrated hospital and social care for our elderly in order to keep people out of hospital and in their own homes for longer. We have made great progress with integration and there is still much to do - this work requires the SNP’s continued leadership and vision.

The SNP is the only party in this election fielding enough candidates to form a majority administration, we are the only party campaigning to win the council. The SNP is the Party of Ambition in Perth and
**SNP - Building for Perth & Kinross**

*Kinross* and with your support on 4th May we can deploy our vision and our ambition to each and every community in this wonderful part of Scotland. We have achieved much as a minority administration, we can do so much more with an SNP majority in Perth and Kinross.

Thank you for taking the time to look at our manifesto, *Building for Perth and Kinross*. I hope you agree, that this represents the best possible prospectus for our communities.

If you do, then please vote 1 & 2 for the SNP on the 4th May.

Councillor Dave Doogan  
**SNP Deputy Group Leader in Perth and Kinross**
Meet our candidates...

Only the SNP has the ambition and is putting forward sufficient candidates to ensure that there is a stable majority led Council in Perth and Kinross.

This photo shows our strong team of candidates with Deputy First Minister John Swinney MSP, Pete Wishart MP and the retiring Leader of the Council Ian Miller.
Teacher Recruitment
In response to the nationwide challenges in recruitment of teachers, Perth and Kinross SNP will instruct officers within the Education Service to implement innovative and exceptional recruitment strategies to address the current recruitment shortfall. While there remain challenges across the board our immediate priority must be to address subject specific secondary school posts.

There is of course a nationwide context to this challenge which our local strategy will seek to address within the landscape of national agreements. Nevertheless, the SNP will require officers to examine any local arrangement which presents, or appears to present, a barrier to more sustainable recruitment and retention of teachers.

Our School Buildings
Education has always been the cornerstone of SNP policy locally and nationally and our record in this area reflects this commitment. Only the SNP has funded plans to replace Perth High School which serves a secondary school population drawn from at least 5 out of 12 wards in Perth and Kinross. The SNP will work with our partners in Scottish Government to complete the c.£50m funding package and begin building works as soon as possible.

In addition to the £multi-million investment already approved for Perth Grammar School, the SNP has committed an additional £150,000 to install a new reception area at the school’s entrance which we believe is necessary to ensure appropriate security for school staff and pupils.

The present SNP administration in Perth and Kinross is finalising plans to begin building the first new, additional (non-replacement) secondary school in Scotland for many years, Bertha Park High School. This work will bring on line yet another brand new first class educational facility within Perth and Kinross. An added benefit will be the substantial reduction in the roll at Perth High School. The SNP will ensure Bertha Park High School is delivered on time and on budget.
Early Learning and Childcare
The SNP Scottish Government will deliver, through local authorities, an increase in free Early Learning and Childcare provision to 1,140 hours per year by 2021 for three and four year olds and eligible two year olds. This exciting opportunity for our children and parents must be introduced smoothly and effectively if we are to maximise the educational and employment opportunities which will result.

An SNP led council will ensure that robust delivery plans are in place well ahead of schedule, that capacity in the public and private sectors is built in, and that families’ needs and priorities are at the centre of this new provision.

Instrumental Music Service
At the last budget in February the SNP protected funding for the Instrumental Music Service in recognition of the outstanding contribution that is made to our communities by our exceptional young musicians and their instructors. Moving forward we will consult widely with a range of stakeholders to ensure this valuable provision continues into the future.

Pupil Equity Funding
The SNP Scottish Government has made available to schools in Perth and Kinross, an additional £6.4M over four years in Pupil Equity Funding. This extra money will be awarded directly to Head Teachers in our schools so that they can most appropriately and effectively invest in the attainment of our young learners.

Whilst the Pupil Equity Fund represents a direct and additional investment from the SNP Scottish Government to close the attainment gap, the SNP in Perth and Kinross will ensure the very best possible return is made on this substantial investment of public funds in our schools.

Support for Head Teachers
The value of business managers in the secondary sector is well understood. The SNP in administration will embark on a programme to deliver similar business management support to our Primary Head Teachers. We believe this is essential to allow Head Teachers in our primary schools to apply maximum focus on raising attainment and maximising opportunities for our young learners to achieve their full potential.

Positive Destinations
Making the link between the world of school and that of further/higher education, training or work can be challenging despite the support currently available. The SNP in Perth and Kinross will further develop our business engagement relationships to maximise employability opportunities for our senior secondary pupils and refresh our links with the college sector to ensure maximum, relevant opportunity is provided within this sector.
Social Care

The Caring Profession
The role of carers in our communities is vital. As our population continues to age we need to ensure that we develop even more sustainable models of care. We recognise the pressure on supply of care hours available currently and the SNP will make an additional £50,000 available for a re-focused and innovative recruitment campaign which will attract new people into the caring profession, prioritise local recruitment for local demand and highlight routes for career progression within this growing sector.

Learning Disabilities
The SNP continues to put the person at the centre of all our care strategies and this includes our learning disabilities service here in Perth and Kinross. We will ensure our service continues to evolve consistent with the wishes of service users/carers and maximum choice.

An Integrated Care System
Integration of Adult Social Care and care of the elderly within our hospitals has been delivered by the SNP in Perth and Kinross. This integrated model of care will continue to evolve over the coming months and years to help address pressures within our hospitals caused by delayed discharges. In addition, there must be continued work to develop an increased range of alternatives to admission to hospital.

In developing this integrated care model the SNP has and will continue to engage with our partners in the voluntary sector and our public and carers' representatives to inform the decision-making processes. The SNP is committed to providing maximum care in people’s own homes and we will continue to invest in new models of care which support independent living for as long as possible.

Credit Union
We will continue to support the services provided by the Perth and Kinross Credit Union. The SNP administration has supported the Credit Union and their services which are now available in Perth City Centre, Letham, Blairgowrie, Kinross, Pitlochry, Auchterarder and Crieff. The SNP recognises the tremendous value of the financial support provided by the Credit Union across all our communities and we will continue to promote and support it.

Investing in Solutions
In the SNP we recognise the transformative effect that relatively small investments can make for individuals and communities when these are targeted strategically and effectively. That is why only the SNP will invest a total of almost £300,000 in all of the following areas: Digital Inclusion, Money Advice Service, Adult Literacy, Temporary Accommodation Support Services and Youth Homeless Prevention. Taken together these investments in our communities can transform lives and help prevent further demand pressures on the council at a later stage. The SNP will continue to fund community services and organisations.
Communities

**Safer Communities**
Perth and Kinross offers a safe and secure environment in which to live, work and visit. The **SNP** will continue working to ensure that this remains the case. We will prioritise the benefits of effective multi-agency working across our communities and, together with our partners, continually improve our service in this key area.

**Pavement Parking**
The **SNP** recognises the growing concern surrounding vehicles parking on the pavement which obstructs pedestrians especially wheelchair users and parents and carers with children in buggies. We believe that this, in the first instance, is an issue of education in so far as many drivers may not be aware of the difficulties this action causes other people.

Nevertheless, the **SNP** will commission a review of local policy in this area which will reference national legislation and work with the police, local disability groups, and the Roads Department, to develop a more effective local management regime. This will seek to drive change by education but, as a last resort, will seek to apply enforcement measures.

**Dog Fouling**
Dog fouling is a blight on all our communities and reflects extremely badly on those few remaining irresponsible dog owners who wilfully refuse to pick up after their pets. Under the **SNP** the number of dog owners caught and fined for dog fouling has risen dramatically since 2015/16. We need to continue this increased detection if we are to change behaviours and the wardens will continue to rely on advice from local residents as to which areas to target.

In a move which reflects our ambition in this area, the **SNP** will invest in an additional full time Dog Warden and at the same time commission a redesign of patrols so that these reflect peak dog walking times. This investment demonstrates the **SNP**’s continued commitment to resolving this problem and our determination to drive out this anti-social behaviour for good.
Estate Based Initiatives

In the SNP, we believe that communities are best placed to decide what their local priorities are and how these can best be met. That’s why the SNP recently introduced Estate Based Initiatives which is where tenants and residents in areas of council/former council housing in Perth and Kinross can select projects to improve the appearance and or community safety of the areas in which they live. This programme is now in its third year of operation and has delivered excellent results across Perth and Kinross. The SNP commits to funding Estate Based Initiatives for the full five years of the next administration.

Furthermore, in the SNP we plan to devolve at least one per cent of the council’s budget directly to communities for their proposals, this is one of the SNP’s five key pledges nationally for this council election.

Active Youngsters

Since 2012, the SNP in administration have invested heavily in our play parks right across Perth and Kinross. We will continue this investment in opportunities for our young people to have access to active play.

Over and above this commitment to the quality of our playparks, only the SNP are funding a £50,000 trial programme whereby under - 10s, who may find mainstream or conventional sport less appealing, can access other forms of physical recreation and activity. The council will work with our partners in Live Active Leisure to pro-actively deliver these alternative pursuits which will be designed to keep all our kids active and healthy.

Older Kids

We recognise that even the best playparks cannot entertain our young people until they become adults. The SNP will seek to improve recreational and entertainment opportunities for young teenagers between 12 and 17, by providing constructive and rewarding activities. This will not be a quick or easy process and council officers will be instructed to work with our young people, other agencies, schools and the voluntary sector to scope both the demand and opportunity in the first instance.

Thereafter, sustainable proposals will be worked up with any proposition being approved, or otherwise, by our young people. Key to this challenge will be ensuring that cost is not a barrier to participation and that any proposal demonstrably protects our young people from situations which would otherwise involve risk taking behaviours. Only the SNP are shining a light on this key area of concern in our communities. We will take forward the concerns and ambitions of young people and their parents in this matter and work with partners to develop solutions which will be funded as a priority.
Housing

Help for Self-Build Homes
The SNP will change the existing planning policy for self-build. We want to support and encourage as much self-building as possible in Perth and Kinross particularly in our rural communities. Currently, where there is a private self-build being undertaken, the prospective home owner may be liable for thousands of pounds in developer contributions to the council - the SNP will stop this.

We believe this distinct area of policy is unsustainable and that there is a clear distinction between someone building a family home, and a commercial developer. This change reflects the reality that self-builders are not commercial developers yet they still deliver a valuable service in their contribution to increasing the overall housing stock.

Affordable Homes
There is a well-documented shortage of affordable housing throughout the Perth and Kinross Council area. Scottish Government grants to Perth and Kinross Council, and our Housing Associations, have allowed over 500 affordable homes to be built in the past 5 years.

However, our ambition in this area is greater and that is why the SNP have committed to providing a further 1,000 high quality affordable homes for families all across Perth and Kinross over the coming five years. We will deliver this ambitious target by working with partners in Scottish Government and our local Housing Associations.

Fair Rents
The SNP administration has successfully introduced a new, simpler and fairer rent calculation system. This now ensures our tenants pay the same rents for the same properties and will prove far easier to understand and administer in the future. At the same time, recognising the new system affected many tenant’s rent levels, the SNP have not increased council house rents for 2017-18.

Insulating our Homes
Working with the SNP Scottish Government and energy suppliers, Perth and Kinross Council under the SNP have applied external insulation to many hundreds of council and privately owned homes at minimal or nil cost to homeowners. This work has led to a major reduction in the energy costs for these homes. In addition, further benefits are the associated carbon footprint reduction for our environment and the transformed appearance of these upgraded properties in our local communities.
Economy

Partnership Working
The economy and economic growth will remain at the heart of an SNP Administration in Perth and Kinross. We will harness the potential of the Regional City Deal to boost our economic growth, ensuring that the benefits register for all our communities.

The SNP will invest further in employability and training, breaking down the barriers to employment for those that are furthest from the labour market. An SNP council will continue to lead by example in delivering apprentice and trainee opportunities.

In awarding major contracts, we will continue to work with successful bidders to ensure they are committed to community benefit in the work they do for the council, especially apprenticeships.

We will continually refresh our economic strategy to ensure that Perth and Kinross’ key economic sectors are best served by this investment. Our food and drink, tourism, service sector and independent retail offers are all critical components of our local economy and we will continue to support and develop these.

Self-employment holds great potential for our area and the SNP will continue working with our business development partners in a focused approach to support business start-ups and ongoing small business development in Perth and across all of Perth and Kinross.

Unemployment and Wages
In Perth and Kinross we have seen a dramatic improvement in the rate of unemployment since 2012. We currently have one of the lowest rates of unemployment anywhere in Scotland at around 1%. This is undoubtedly positive but issues remain in Perth and Kinross with our rates of pay. Perth and Kinross has an enduring challenge with wage rates consistently below the Scottish average. In the SNP, we believe this variance is not inevitable however and we will continue to prioritise higher value employment and enterprise for our area.

Support for Small Businesses
Small business enterprises (SME’s) are at the heart of our communities not only in terms of employment opportunities but also the way they encourage local spend and a cycle of local investment. The SNP will continue to work in partnership with local SME’s and their representative bodies to encourage as much growth as possible in this sector. Support for our small businesses has been made much more meaningful with the SNP's Small Business Bonus Scheme which has seen thousands of small businesses in Perth and Kinross paying much reduced rates or no rates at all. The SNP in Perth and Kinross introduced a targeted supplementary rates relief scheme for our retail businesses in 2015/16 which demonstrates that the SNP stands ready to support our small businesses.
SNP - Building for Perth & Kinross

Roads and Transport

Investing In our infrastructure
The SNP will invest an additional £1.6 million to improve road safety in Perth and Kinross. This investment will deliver kerb build outs, speed activated signs, traffic calming measures, new crossings with traffic lights and further general schemes to better manage traffic flows consistent with improved safety.

In order to maximise the benefits from this extra funding, the SNP will also invest in an additional Road Safety Team within the council’s roads service to deliver these improvements as quickly as possible.

Parking
It was the SNP that introduced the free 15 minutes parking for council operated car parking in Perth and it is the SNP who are extending this to all of Perth and Kinross council’s car parking.

The SNP recognises the vital nature of high quality and convenient parking for our retail sector, that’s why only the SNP froze parking charges for 17/18. In addition, the SNP have invested over £1m in improving Canal Street carpark, introduced open ended pay on exit parking at the South Inch and Canal Street and cashless ‘Ringo’ payments for council parking.

Public Transport
Only the SNP represents every ward in Perth and Kinross, which is why we understand the essential nature of reliable, affordable public transport.

In contrast to other major parties in Perth and Kinross, the SNP have chosen to protect the c.£2.2m budget which supports public transport across the counties. In addition to this undertaking, the SNP
will invest a further £100,000 to provide very late evening services which will allow rural residents to access events outwith their locality and return home by bus without the need to leave an event early.

In a further SNP commitment to rural transport, the SNP will invest £50,000 start-up funding in community based transport solutions which seek to address gaps in provision on routes and in areas not otherwise viable for public transport.

We will closely follow developments at Scottish Government level regarding overall regulation of bus services. In the event that councils acquire increased powers for the overall management of bus routes we will explore options to deliver a more sustainable local bus network.
The Regional City Deal is a partnership bid between Perth and Kinross, Dundee City, Angus and North East Fife, which will access funding from central government. The SNP is committed to a Regional City Deal that delivers for all communities in Perth and Kinross, a deal which tackles inequalities, deprivation and delivers a step change in the rate of regional economic development.

The SNP will ensure that Perth and Kinross secures our fair share of this enormous fund running to hundreds of millions of pounds. Within Perth and Kinross, we will deliver this transformation in a way which allows the benefits of the investment to be felt throughout the whole of our area.

The Regional City Deal is an opportunity to create a virtuous cycle which will deliver growth in businesses activity and a subsequent increase in local government revenues, which can in turn be invested in our local services. Successful businesses, no matter how small, create employment and sustain communities.

This strategic investment will promote Growth, Innovation and permit an SNP led Council to deliver further infrastructure upgrades which will benefit all communities across Perthshire and Kinross-shire.

More information can be found on this exciting development can be found at http://www.taycities.co.uk
In Perth and Kinross, we enjoy one of the most spectacular environments anywhere in Scotland and it incumbent on all of us to protect that environment. The SNP has a proud record in recycling, renewable energy and insulation and we want to continue this positive work in the next council.

Recycling
Communities across Perth and Kinross contribute hugely to our council’s outstanding performance in recycling. Under the SNP’s leadership recycling of kerbside waste has risen to 56% but we still have more work to do in this area.

An SNP council will continue to work with residents locally to meet, and then exceed, the Scottish Government target of 60% recycling by 2020 and moreover, help reduce the £1m we spend sending waste, which could have been recycled, into landfill. Savings made in reducing spend on landfill will be invested in other services under the SNP.

Greenspace
It’s one thing to value the appearance of our area but that admiration needs to be supported with investment to keep Perth and Kinross looking at its best. Only the SNP intend to fund the following priorities; we will invest a total of nearly £500,000 in community greenspace capacity, targeted maintenance of greenspaces and support for our outstanding voluntary local bloom groups. This extra funding will be evident in improved maintenance across all of Perth and Kinross to the benefit of all communities.

Perth’s Lade
The Lade in Perth is an ancient asset with great potential for the present and future too. Local community groups have recently increased their activity to improve the environment along the Lade and the SNP believes that the council should boost their work with a fund which they can access. Only the SNP have made available a fund to support work to improve the Lade. This £50,000 resource will allow groups to develop even more ambitious plans to improve the Lade in the coming years and help it deliver maximum amenity for local communities.
Traffic Pollution

The CrossTay Link road holds the key to substantially relieving congestion which causes much of the traffic pollution in Perth. In the SNP we believe we cannot simply wait for this road to open and we must take additional measures to address this situation in advance of the new road.

An SNP administration will instruct the council’s environmental health department to take the lead in a transformation programme which will investigate ways to reduce the pollution felt most keenly in Atholl Street. Officers from the council’s roads service will support this work by investigating and implementing further improvements to traffic management on the city’s roads network. The SNP believes that no option should be overlooked as we seek to address this urgent public health priority for Perth’s inhabitants and commuters.
Culture and Sport

A New Sport and Leisure Complex for all Perth and Kinross

The SNP is fully committed to the replacement of Perth Leisure Pool and Dewar’s Ice Rink by a single purpose-built facility fit for the 21st Century. This will deliver huge operational savings in terms of running costs and at the same provide a much-improved experience for residents of Perth and Kinross and our essential visitor market.

An SNP council will work with Live Active Leisure and other partners to ensure delivery of the PH2o project in the coming years. This new facility will support active lifestyles for all our communities, maintain Perth’s unique position within the sport of curling, much increased access to ice skating and seek to reintroduce competitive Ice Hockey to Perth and Kinross after a thirty-year absence.

A new Recreation Centre for Blairgowrie

The SNP administration in Perth and Kinross have accelerated plans to replace the Recreation Centre in Blairgowrie from 2025 to 2020. Working with partners, these plans will deliver an £18m facility providing state of the art sport and recreation facilities for Blairgowrie and all of East Perthshire. This investment underlines the SNP’s commitment to maximising opportunities for communities to live active and healthy lives. The SNP will maintain this commitment to, and investment in, active lives in the next council.
City of Culture 2021
Perth’s bid to win City of Culture 2021 provides an unparalleled opportunity to raise the profile of Perth and Kinross at a UK-wide and indeed international level. The strategies and initiatives deployed in simply taking part in the competition will have lasting benefits to our area. The lighting of Norrie Miller walk is a case in point where for very little outlay, almost 60,000 people enjoyed the experience which has reset people’s understanding of how our city can evolve and develop. **The SNP will never sit back when it comes to building for the future of Perth and Kinross and creating new opportunities for all our communities.**

Pitlochry Festival Theatre
Pitlochry Festival Theatre is a unique asset in the cultural and tourist offering of Highland Perthshire attracting 100,000 visitors to the area every year. The current SNP led council recognises and supports the work of Pitlochry Festival Theatre and we will ensure that under the SNP, Pitlochry Festival Theatre continues to benefit from the council’s financial assistance and partnership working.

New Life for an Old Theatre
The unprecedented investment in Perth’s Grade-B listed Edwardian Theatre will transform the facility’s operational offering while protecting and restoring the unique character and charm of this jewel of Perth. Due to re-open in late 2017, the refurbished theatre will, together with the Concert Hall, form the axis of Perth’s cultural quarter. This will secure the acts and productions required to satisfy local demand and attract even more visitors to Perth and Kinross. **An SNP led council**, having worked with other funding organisations to commission this c.£17m investment in the city, would also ensure that Perth and Kinross maximises the benefits that this improved cultural offering will bring.
Perth Museum – Raising the Standard
Perth Museum and Art Gallery has a long and noteworthy history in the list of Perth attractions. Under the SNP the council has undertaken a wholesale review of this offer and has developed plans for a more up to date experience which will attract more visitors to Perth and Kinross while protecting free admission.

Perth has an enviable place in Scotland’s history and the SNP will lead the strongest case possible to repatriate the Stone of Destiny here. This will allow the development of a signature tourist attraction which the SNP-led council propose for the City Hall. This new attraction will provide an interactive visitor experience which will establish Perth’s status as a premier tourist destination, showcase the rich and sometimes turbulent role Perth has played in the history of Scotland, breathe even more life into Perth’s Café Quarter and give new purpose to our City Hall.