

New candidate for Greater Manchester Metro Mayor contest



26 January 2017

Following the tragic and untimely death of Deyika Nzeribe earlier this month, the Greater Manchester Green Parties have selected Will Patterson [1], chair of the Wigan & Leigh Green Party, to contest the Metro Mayor election in Greater Manchester. The vote, due to be held on 4 May, will give more than two million voters across the City Region the opportunity to vote for Green policies.

Will, a Wigan resident who has lived in Springfield for the last three years, joined the Green Party in 2014, and stood as the Green Party Parliamentary Candidate for Wigan in 2015. He has been an active campaigner for more public engagement in the devolution process.

He is a member of Frack Free Wigan, Leigh and Makerfield, and helped establish Wigan People's Assembly Against Austerity. Last year, he supported Wigan Together, an event designed to promote and celebrate the diversity of the local community, and defend it against far right groups who were planning to march through the town. He was also delighted to sit on the organising committee of the inaugural Wigan Pride, which was held last August.

Will said: "These are tough circumstances to run in, but Deyika worked tirelessly to offer Greater Manchester the Green voice that the region desperately needs. I'm honoured to have been called upon to continue the amazing work that Deyika started, and together with party members from across the region, I'm looking forward to working for a fairer, more democratic and greener Greater Manchester.

Setting out his approach for the campaign, Will said: "This isn't the devolution I would have hoped for: it's been dropped on the people following closed-door back-room negotiations between Councils and the Government. If devolution is to work for the people of Greater Manchester, it needs to be owned by the people of Greater Manchester and deliver real solutions to the problems we face. We need a combined authority that will prioritise the real need for social and affordable homes; we need to do more to tackle the chaos of climate change that's hitting the region right now; and we need to open the doors of our new institutions so that the people of Greater Manchester can see and share in the decisions being taken in our name.

"Successive Westminster governments have left Greater Manchester behind – if we're to tackle their legacy of poverty and inequality, we need to do devolution differently. I'll empower not just our cities, but our citizens."

Notes:

1. Will Patterson

Will is 33. Over the last few years, he has been a contract worker in Manchester, working in IT Project Management until his last contract expired just before Christmas. And as a renter, Will is part of a generation that faces uncertain prospects with permanent jobs and affordable housing seemingly out of reach for many working people under 35. He feels his experiences dealing with the job market and the Government's new benefits system give him a good understanding of what life is like for many people across Greater Manchester.

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