

A Manifesto For Salford

By Wendy Olsen and Joe Hickman

March 2016 *This manifesto is the Salford Greens' speech for the May 2016 Council and Mayoral elections*

We represent all voters in the Salford area – not only Greens, but everybody. Greens believe in real democratic voice for people. In the City of Salford we need a fresh Mayor, and Wendy Olsen has both the experience and the vision to represent you at this level. She is 55, works fulltime, has been a governor and played roles of Treasurer, President, Secretary in Unions. The Greens can improve the City of Salford. We offer precisely to play a minority role that creates real scrutiny and can avoid bad practices.

We especially want to see Salford support shoppers and small businesses, rather than large businesses, in Salford. We need more groceries and cafes in most of Salford.

Basic Commitments

We have fought for a Living Wage of £10 per hour. We want to see the end of Tax Havens. We favour a citizens' income so that means testing of benefits and unfair sanctions will end.

The Greens' have a democratic way to vote among ourselves on our agreed Policies.

We disagree with austerity cuts. Our diagnosis is that this is a continuing recession with

workers are suffering on a low income

70% of housing benefit families are working families

lots of shut-up shops, and excess capacity in factories.

We want to see public investment during this terrible recession. Our policy is a 'STIMULUS', also called a fiscal injection. Our specific proposal is for a Renewable Energy Jobs Program.



Problem of Trustworthiness of Council

Wendy Olsen says:

As your candidate in Irwell Riverside ward, and for Mayor, I will sit on Salford City Council once I win against the current Labour

councillor. Councillor Stephen Ord is a former Lib Dem who got elected as a Labour councillor in 2011. I struggle to trust people who were Liberal Democrats before. The LibDems were in the conservative coalition! In my past, I was a Labour Party member for some years being active in Kersal Ward when I lived in a tower block at Lower Broughton.

(Photo: Wendy Olsen)

Our Plans For Sitting on Council

I am happy to sit on the committees of council – the growth scrutiny panel, the corporate complaints panel, and the Overview and Scrutiny Board. We need stronger oversight of the Labour-dominated council. Our survey of Salford residents showed great mistrust of the Council. At the



moment, each Scrutiny panel is dominated by Labour. We need a separate voice. I am prepared to be that voice of honesty.

Don't Vote for Conservatives

The Tory Party has taken planning decisions out of local hands in order to make sure fracking happens. Don't vote Tory!

Accountability of Salford Council

The Council has a shortage of accountability. It seems to disregard the wishes of the electorate. Often they favour the Mayor's corporate friends such as Salix Housing. The Council gave housing to a value of perhaps £1 BILLION POUNDS to Salix! We did not agree with this.

We want good public sector management.

The Mayor is a political leader who sets the strategy for the Council Management.

The Council has implemented vast cuts in services for the most vulnerable people. The council, in particular the City Mayor and his Cabinet of Deputies, believe that they can cut vital services whilst at the same time employing more and more directors. These Directors and the Deputy Mayors get inflated wage levels. This tendency needs to be checked. Whilst we would take the Mayor's salary, we would not take the Deputy Mayors' salaries as they are now constituted. We favour having a referendum to check whether Salford should have an elected Mayor at all.

The national Green Manifesto is based on the agreed policies of Greens in England and Wales. My manifesto is consistent with these policies.



Photo: Wendy Olsen Out Campaigning in Cromwell Road

Devo-Manc is Quite Worrying: Getting Rid of Salford?

I am very worried about Devo MANC which was done far too fast with too much money changing hands.

Devo MANC created a new combined authority over TEN CITIES like Wigan, Trafford, Salford, and Manchester itself.

Devo MANC threatens the very existence of Salford City. Devolving power means the City has less power.

We lost our local Newspaper. We nearly lost our local baby ward at Salford Royal.

My son was born here, & so were your kids. Let's keep Salford's reputation alive as a city!

We hope the Manifesto For Salford stimulates you to vote Green, not Labour, and certainly not UKIP. Comments to email: wendyolseninsalford@Gmail.com

Devo MANC is likely to have many repercussions so please don't vote Labour or Tory in 2015. These two parties have pushed the Devo MANC through with just one mayor for all the cities in Greater Manchester! They devolved the NHS to subcontracting here in Greater Manchester far too quickly.

Plan the City's Appearance & Services

I favour careful city planning. You may not be surprised to hear of our healthy Green planning policies:

- use more of the barren and brown areas
- avoid cutting up green areas
- improve conditions for cyclists
- have a more careful parking policy so that Salford isn't a car park for the rest of the city
- remove all charges for hospital parking and Gateway centres

I favour planning for jobs to be created within the city. We have to plan for an industrial park within our city – not just burning waste dumps and recycling plants.

Good Small Business Encouragement

I favour ensuring that businesses are encouraged to site themselves in Salford. I believe we need an economic development manifesto for the Northwest that is consistent with Green thinking, too. Our Green position on this is: **we must have a constitutional convention to ensure we get the level of decentralisation right** for each sector.

Power distribution and rail should never be decentralised. Benefits, citizens' income and tax should be kept centrally managed.

Don't Tax the Poor/Middle Too Much



The 'Poll Tax' (Council Tax) needs a reform.

It is presently a tax on poor people and students, who do not own their homes. The tax bears too heavily on low income earners. We want to raise this tax at the high end.

Sports Policies

We have some problems with sport under the Labour-run Council. The city mayor Ian Stewart was implicated in a secret deal in 2014 to subsidise Salford City Reds rugby league club to the tune of £164,000.

Loans have also been given to the club but this goes beyond the current remit because the PRIORITY should be essential services to disabled people and social care.

If I set out a policy for sport in Salford it would:

- Make the most of the playing fields taken over by the United football team in Kersal
- Be an inclusive sports policy that encourages participation
- Free sports for people in the older age groups
- Encourage everyone in swimming and dance, not just men in rugby & cricket



- See the sports centres as a place for socialising once a week – swimming and free dancing
- Ensure that facilities allow for all our local cultures, including traditional cultures that want separate women’s facilities

Corrupt Subsidy to Big Capital

But instead, a corrupt subsidy on selected well-networked rugby capitalists is seen as acceptable among the top brass of Salford Council. Martin Vickers, the former Director for Customer and Support Services, represented the council’s interests as joint owners, with Peel Holdings, of the City of Salford Community Stadium. Apparently, Vickers negotiated an agreement with the owner of the rugby club, Mr. Marwan Koukash, that all match-day costs for the first two years would be subsidised up to a limit of £164,000 – a straight gift. Peel didn't agree to this subsidy, and as the company that handled administration of the stadium they withheld



Photo: Wendy Olsen, Natalie Bennett, Emma Van Dyke, and Dave Jones, 2015

£150,000 worth of costs before handing over the gate receipts. (It sounds as if Peel competes with Koukash’s companies.) We read that Vickers and the mayor made several attempts to change Peel's stance, eventually resulting in a letter to Peel on 3/7/2013 signed by Vickers, who said that if Peel refunded the money to the Rugby Club, Salford Council would refund Peel.

Just weeks after agreeing these deals, Vickers took voluntary severance from the Council and walked straight into a job at Salford City Reds rugby league club. Voluntary severance means you get a payoff to leave. He became the Chief Executive of the Rugby Club – a clear case of planned redundancy based on a **conflict of interest**. (When a council officer gains personally from the deals that he makes and Council makes, it is a conflict of interest and this situation isn't legal.)

Wendy Olsen’s Past Experience

I have plenty of experience knowing how to spot a conflict of interest. My past experience includes:

- School governor in a Salford High School
- Trade union branch treasurer & president
- Sport coach and health & safety
- Clerk of Eccles Society of Friends Quakers
- Auditor of a number of sports clubs
- Secretary of Salford Women’s Centre.

Several things stand out from the rugby episode: Vickers had no authority to make decisions involving finance above £100,000. The entire decision was hidden. The icing on the cake in this matter is that Vickers, at the time, was the council monitoring officer responsible for ensuring lawfulness and fairness in decision making.

Find Out More

Details of the whitewash of this case by the council's internal inquiry can be found on the Salford Star website. (<http://www.salfordstar.com/>)

Some people read about Salford's corruption in Private Eye.

Our councillors should not bring our city into disrepute.

The Green Party runs on an agenda of openness and accountability to the electorate.

Even with just one councillor elected we can begin to break the Labour stranglehold on Salford council whilst offering a genuine voice of reason and openly questioning some of the decisions made as well as hopefully making some attempts to stop the closed and secretive nature of the current administration.



Photo: Chris Bertenshaw and Wendy Olsen
Campaigning Near Salford's Biosphere

We Oppose the Future Devo-Manc Cuts to Local Representatives

I oppose losing Salford's identity as a city. I will strongly oppose cutting the number of Councillors by two-thirds. I plan to be closely involved in East Salford Community Committee once I am elected.

Salford Royal Hospital

I strongly support having a birthing centre and maternity care in Salford Royal hospital.

Litter At Duchy/ Whit Lane / Langley Road

The tips charge business for entry. Some vans turn away and do fly tipping nearby. This creates a health hazard. Why does the Council not clear up Whit Lane?

Why are there fly tipping areas in Ordsall?

Wages Too High For Some People

I do not favour paying super high wages for Council staff. I propose a Review of Wage Inequality in the Council. For example:

The current Chief Financial Officer is going to go onto a salary over £100,000, an increase of £12,000, with the title of Director of Finance and Corporate Business. An Assistant Director for Specialist Services is also being sought (around £80,000) to implement the cuts to services for disabled people. The council have also paid £78,000 to consultants Price Waterhouse Coopers for consulting on how and where to make the cuts to services required, described by a





Photo: Wendy Olsen and Pat Cleary – A Liverpool Green Councillor

council insider as "nothing we didn't already know".

The current City Mayor stifles any protest. He blocked protestors coming to the public meeting announcing the cuts late in 2014/5. He tried to create a ticket-only policy.

He personally implored Salford's Labour Party members to reserve tickets and come along, thereby preventing protesters from gaining access to limited seating space.

Council Home Sell-off Must Stop

I did not favour the selling of council houses to Salix Homes. I was worried because rents will go up. First VAT is going on these rents; then the costs of upkeep will be added on. Salix got the homes too cheaply, too.

The severe housing shortage in Salford has also led to low quality housing.

Most rented houses are not well kept up.

Another worrying issue is the lack of affordable houses being built. The council is

happy to allow many "regeneration" developments to proceed in the area. But they keep waiving the section 106 fees on many of these developments. This means ***they don't charge the usual fees for the development of the site on which the housing is placed!*** This policy of subsidy to private companies has cost the council, at a rough estimate on available figures, £20 million. What a waste at a time when the city is making massive cuts to vital services.

I do not favour rampant capitalism. Greens want to focus on the human economy first. Then market activity can take place once our decent lives are assured.

We can manage markets through a mixture of encouraging local business, regulating wages, ensuring the health & safety of employees, and incentivising cooperatives.

We favour staying in the E.U. to share these high standards of human wellbeing with our neighbours. The EU helps to keep us safe, too. It's also a great place for a holiday.

Too Much Outsourcing

Instead, what is Salford City Council doing? Outsourcing to expensive, profit-making large corporations. Here's an example.

In March 2015, Salford Council confirmed the hiving off of £10.5 million worth of adult social care services to a new 'mutual' company called Aspire.¹ The idea behind this

¹ Beware wolves in sheep's clothing. This 'social enterprise' type company is a large profit making firm. One has to know the difference between genuine social orientated firms and large firms masquerading under Britain's newly liberalised charity laws.

is to save money for the council by transferring its social care services into this 'mutual'. This means that somehow Aspire will have to generate its own revenue streams, probably by selling its services to other councils in the Greater Manchester area to stay afloat. They have to provide social care to the people of Salford. It's chaotic.

Previously social care was a responsibility the Council took on its own shoulders. It gets funds from Central Government to do it.

Elderly people and adults and children with learning and physical disabilities will now become 'income opportunities' to create a profit or 'surplus' from the 'market', according to a current 2015 council report.

Examples of social care are day services; specialist respite care; and supported-tenancy management.

This is an appalling shrinkage of our local government. We can't let it become permanent. It causes job losses.

What You Can Do

There is hope. There is a way forward. First vote with your feet, walk down to the polling station. Second, keep aware of events, of lies, of corruption. Third, set out to create a local government that is well informed and demonstrates good governance.

We have to ELECT WENDY OLSEN FOR COUNCIL NOW as the first step toward a HUNG SALFORD COUNCIL so they have to BARGAIN WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVES.

Greens also have candidates in every Ward of Salford, so wherever you live, vote Green!

Also, vote for Wendy Olsen for MAYOR and make sure you put the number 1 by her name for Mayor. If you want to put a number 2, she'll get the vote on the second round. This is known as alternative voting.

Vote Green in 2016

You Will Find Council Candidates in All 20 Wards of Salford

Salford Green Party

Both authors in a personal capacity.

Wendy Olsen - Candidate for Riverside Irwell Ward, Salford

Please see our candidates' Facebook page for green chat and news--

www.facebook.com/groups/268666871564/

or Wendy Olsen's twitter @Sandhyamma at www.twitter.com/Sandhyamma

And also note how to join the Green Party, found here: <http://salford.greenparty.org.uk/>

and here

www.facebook.com/SalfordGreenParty

Phone Wendy Olsen on 07891-266635

About your Green Mayoral Candidate

Wendy Olsen is an economist. She has lived in Salford since 1988, moving into a tower block first, and now living at Claremont. Wendy Olsen worked at Salford University for two years, and has worked at Manchester University since 2002. Wendy has held many jobs – printer, computer advisor, teacher, and 25 years as an economist. She has a fulltime job specialising in advising the UK government on the economics of women in the labour market and especially Indian rural economic policy.



Wendy Olsen is an experienced social leader. She has held the role of trustee here in Salford, as well as director and Salford women's centre secretary. She was also on Governors for Moorside High, and is experienced at committee chair and treasurer roles. She has experience with TV and press interviews, debating, law, and campaigning. She's a trade unionist from an American Democrat background. She is naturalised British.

Salford Greens welcome new members. Our aim is campaigning for the common good over the long run. Using internet you can find all our policies which are democratically decided through national meetings every six months. Or ring/text 07891 266635