

COUNTING WOMEN IN: BRISTOL MAYORAL ELECTION CANDIDATES 2012

WHAT HAVE THE CANDIDATES SAID ABOUT WOMEN'S INTERESTS & SUPPORTING WOMEN'S EQUALITY?

Previously, the Counting Women In campaign in Bristol suggested there were 4 priority issues that the Mayoral Candidates needed to address in the run-up to election day to represent women's interests effectively and demonstrate they would take action on women's equality. These were based on previous survey work with women and women's organisations in Bristol as outlined [here](#). The issues are:

1. Disproportionate impact on women of cuts to public services, within addressing the economy more generally
2. Representation of women in politics, decision-making and public life
3. Women's safety, violence and abuse against women and girls
4. Childcare and caring responsibilities

Now we are offering some thoughts on what some of the candidates have said about these issues – if these issues matter to you in how you use your votes (remember you have 2!) in Bristol's Mayoral Election then you may find this useful.

What we have done.....

Obviously, this summary is no substitute for learning more about the candidates' policies and commitments through their manifestos and events (and we have included links to all the candidates' web pages as far as we can find them). Neither is this a comprehensive report on everything the candidates have said on all issues affecting women, or about women's equality. We have compiled some brief comments on what some of the candidates have said in relation to each of the issues above. This has been done on the following basis:

1. Only the candidates for the 4 political parties with seats in the current City Council and the leading independent (as recognised by local media and by bookmakers) have been covered – sadly with 15 we didn't have time to do them all. However, we have included some comments in recognition of the other 3 candidates who attended the excellent Women's Question Time event organised by Bristol Women's Voice. We have listed the candidates alphabetically by surname.
2. 'What they have said' is based on their public manifestos or vision statements, responses made to the questions asked by Bristol Women's Voice and responses given at the Women's Question Time event. We will not have heard everything they have said – but we have focused in terms of policy or spending commitments on candidates' published manifestos.
3. The ratings were agreed with full consensus by 5 members of the Bristol Counting Women In group – none of these members have a party political affiliation and none are active in any candidates' campaigns.
4. These comments and ratings are based on the information and manifestos as in place on 4th November 2012 – we are happy to update for any candidates who wish to make further commitments after this date!

The ratings.....

*	Not aware of any specific response by the candidate on this issue.
**	Has demonstrated some awareness of the issue.
***	Has engaged with and appears familiar with the issue but we have not noted any specific commitments.
****	Good understanding of the issue and has made a specific policy / spend commitment.
*****	A clear and strong policy / spend commitment - that would make a significant impact - has been made, appears in the candidates manifesto and is based on a clear assessment of viability.

The candidates.....

Candidate:		George Ferguson http://www.bristol1st.com/	
Party:		Independent	
	What the candidate has said.....	Our comments.....	Rating
Impact of cuts to public services on women	No budgetary / spend commitments made. Has committed to review the impact of cuts on women and to take decisions 'consciously'.	Commitment to analysis of impact but no specific action outlined to address disproportionate impact of current cuts on women.	**
Representation of women in politics, decision-making and public life	Approves of all women shortlists for the political parties and will encourage women to stand for elected office. Commitment to work with the Local Enterprise Partnership to improve representativeness.	Strong commitments to using Mayoral influence and working with others if followed through and prioritised in office.	***
Women's safety, violence and abuse against women and girls	Has taken the White Ribbon Pledge and wants Bristol to be a White Ribbon city. Would use licensing powers to change the culture of the city and close SEVs ⁱ that are damaging. Will work with the PCC ⁱⁱ to tackle violence, and emphasises the need for prevention.	Borderline rating – some understanding of the issues but no clear strategic approach to the breadth of tackling violence and abuse and no specific policies.	***
Childcare and caring responsibilities	No revenue commitment but clear understanding of the complexity of childcare supply, need to work with business, communities and the public sector and commitment to strong coordination. Also commitment to community based care for older people.	If championing of childcare and care for older people was a real priority could have significant impact – but no specific commitments to childcare in manifesto.	***

Candidate:		Geoff Gollop http://www.geoffgollop.org.uk/	
Party:		Conservative	
	What the candidate has said.....	Our comments.....	Rating
Impact of cuts to public services on women	Is clear that the Council cannot spend what it has not got and cuts would continue. Would relook at impact and actively use EqIAs ⁱⁱⁱ .	No specific commitments to address disproportionate impact and would continue with significant austerity programme.	**
Representation of women in politics, decision-making and public life	Recognises a need to change the image and culture of local politics to encourage women to stand for office. Is opposed to any kind of quotas.	Limited understanding of the barriers for women's engagement including the part played by sexism.	**
Women's safety, violence and abuse against women and girls	Violence in all forms is unacceptable and should be tackled. Has clear stance on licensing led by interests of the community not licensees.	Borderline – some understanding of specific violence issues but not the breadth and complexity.	***
Childcare and caring responsibilities	Some understanding of the issues around delivery of affordable childcare but no spending commitments.	No specific commitments and no indication that will be a priority.	**

Candidate:		Daniella Radice http://www.bristolgreenparty.org.uk	
Party:		Green	
	What the candidate has said.....	Our comments.....	Rating
Impact of cuts to public services on women	Will raise Council Tax to increase revenue and will invest in services for vulnerable including childcare. Committed to reassessing the impact of cuts on the vulnerable to ensure they are protected.	Council Tax commitments and commitment to addressing disproportionate impact on women appear in manifesto.	****
Representation of women in politics, decision-making and public life	Be a woman who is elected! Reorganise Council and remove barriers, champion women on boards of businesses in Bristol and encourage women through locally elected neighbourhood partnerships.	Issues of representation are well understood and there are clear commitments.	****
Women's safety, violence and abuse against women and girls	Dedicated section within manifesto includes taking an active and public stance, continue funding current strategy, working with all agencies and ensuring Bristol is a White Ribbon City.	Clear policy and spend commitments across a wide range of violence issues.	*****
Childcare and caring responsibilities	Good understanding of issues and relationship with work and the economy. Would clearly champion and raise revenues to fund affordable childcare.	Strong understanding and recognition of importance could make significant impact – no firm policy commitments in manifesto of plan for investment/achieving.	***

Candidate:		Marvin Rees http://www.marvin4bristol.com/	
Party:		Labour	
	What the candidate has said.....	Our comments.....	Rating
Impact of cuts to public services on women	Strong recognition and understanding of the disproportionate impact of the cuts and the need to reassess impact.	Will do the assessment but there are no specific commitments about addressing impact.	***
Representation of women in politics, decision-making and public life	Would have strong representation of women within the 'mayoral office' and is committed in manifesto to broadening the pool of decision-makers. Labour party is strongly committed to all women shortlists.	Strong commitments around women in the mayoral office. While there are no specifics on women's representation in the manifesto the representative nature of decision-making in the city is a clear priority.	****
Women's safety, violence and abuse against women and girls	Good understanding of the breadth of issues, the global scale and need for cultural change. Will put support of the Mayor behind women's organisations and would not licence SEVs that cause violence or anti-social behaviour.	While there is a strong understanding there are no policy or spend commitments made.	***
Childcare and caring responsibilities	States a clear vision for universal childcare while recognising not achievable at a local level alone but would make Bristol, "leading childcare city in the UK" through children's centres, central register and improving coordination of supply, quality and affordability.	Specific manifesto priority and commitment to childcare.	*****

Candidate:		Jon Rogers http://jonrogers.org.uk/	
Party:		Liberal Democrats	
	What the candidate has said.....	Our comments.....	Rating
Impact of cuts to public services on women	No specific information re: impact on women.	No specific commitments around addressing disproportionate impact on women.	*
Representation of women in politics, decision-making and public life	Acknowledged need to figure out what puts women off engaging in politics.	No commitments to action – there is lots of evidence on the barriers already....	**
Women's safety, violence and abuse against women and girls	Identified the need to tackle the root causes of violence and to work with the PCC and other agencies, including the VCS. Has discussed limiting SEVs and looking at licensing of massage parlours.	Broad brush understanding of the issues but no specific policy or spend commitments.	***
Childcare and caring responsibilities	Has demonstrated interest in Scandinavian models, committed to keeping Children's Centres thriving and mapping need.	No specific manifesto commitments to demonstrate this is a priority for policy or spend.	***

Some comments on responses by other candidates who attended the Women's Question Time event.....

- **Tom Baldwin** (Trade Unionist & Socialist Coalition) – a clear anti-cuts candidate, believes in universal childcare and the only candidate who evidenced feminist campaigning as part of the [Rape is No Joke](http://www.tusc.org.uk/) campaign. <http://www.tusc.org.uk/>
- **Tim Collins** (Independent) – committed 3 women in Cabinet as Deputy Mayor, other Cabinet positions and a Cabinet member specifically for women. @TimCollins5 (Twitter)
- **Neil Maggs** (Respect) – an anti-cuts candidate who highlighted the high levels of representation of women within the Respect Party. <http://www.maggsformayor.com/>

Full list of candidates..... in the 2012 Bristol Mayoral Election

Is available here: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/council-and-democracy/bristol-elected-mayor>

If you have any responses/ questions please comment on our blog at wearstheshoes.wordpress.com or email us at wearstheshoes@gmail.com

ⁱ Sex Entertainment Venues

ⁱⁱ Police & Crime Commissioner

ⁱⁱⁱ Equality Impact Assessment