

July 2011

Review of **the Labour Party** in **Scotland**

Labour's Scottish Parliament election defeat on 5 May was the party's worst election result in Scotland since devolution and arguably since 1931. It is widely agreed that the campaign was a disaster, though that was not the only factor in the scale of the defeat. The Scottish Executive Committee (SEC) has set up a review of the party in Scotland, to learn the lessons and to develop a new political and organizational strategy. As one of the largest affiliates UNISON needs to play its part in that review.

UNISON Labour Link Scotland believes there are some key issues to be considered:

- Developing a new political vision and reforming the policy process.
- Fostering a stronger sense of Team Labour from the current disparate groupings.
- The level of autonomy of the Scottish Labour Party on all aspects of party organisation.
- Election process and role of the Scottish Labour Leader.
- Building stronger party organisations and membership.
- Developing and selecting candidates at all levels.
- Strengthening campaign capacity.

The review panel – co-chaired by Jim Murphy MP and Sarah Boyack MSP – has explicit terms of reference set out by the SEC and summarised here (along with the relevant questions). The review will report in late September. Any rule changes will go to Labour's Scottish Conference in Feb/March.

UNISON's view – from you

Labour Link wants the views of as many of our members as possible so we can make a powerful UNISON case for a better Scottish Labour Party as part of this vital review. And that means we want to hear your views. The closing date for our submission to the Labour Party will be Friday 9 September. **We would like to have submissions from Labour Link branches by Friday 26 August 2011.** If you have something you wish to contribute please get in touch with your local Labour Link Officer (via your UNISON branch) or contact us directly at UNISON House in Glasgow (details below).

Get involved in Labour Link – contact us now

Do you have views about the Review of the Labour Party in Scotland? Would you be prepared to help your local Labour Link in your UNISON branch? Do you want to join the Labour Party? Would you be a delegate from your UNISON branch to your local Labour Party and help forge a stronger, better link? If the answer to any of these is "yes", we need to hear from you. **Contact: Dave Watson d.watson@unison.co.uk or Malcolm Burns m.burns@unison.co.uk. Website: www.unison-scotland.org.uk/labourlink/**

Labour's Scottish Review – issues and questions to consider

Working together: We need to consider how each level of the Scottish party – local government, Members of the European Parliament, Members of the UK Parliament, Members of the Scottish Parliament and our affiliated organisations – can best work together to achieve the Party's objectives in Scotland.

- How do we need to change and develop our structures so all parts of the Party in Scotland are involved, and to ensure our governance processes foster collaborative and effective working?
- How should the role of the Scottish Labour Party within the wider UK Labour Party be refined and supported?
- How should the role of the Scottish Labour Leader develop and change; including how the election process might be amended?
- The review should also consider the selection principles, procedures and practices used for every level of representation. The continuing work of the SEC Constitutional Working Group is the relevant Working Group for this element of the Review.

Labour's Vision for the Future: Labour needs to articulate a vision for Scotland based on our core progressive values, which meets the needs and aspirations of a modern Scotland. Scottish Labour therefore needs to deliver a policy programme rooted in people's experiences, which addresses the challenges of the decades to come. The review needs to re-examine the Scottish policy-making process and how we communicate our policies and vision more effectively.

- How should we deliver meaningful engagement with members, local people, affiliates and external stakeholders in our policy-making process?
- How can we deepen Labour's interaction with 'civic Scotland' and business?
- How do we communicate Labour's message?

Building capacity: The Review needs to address how we make membership of the Party more attractive to our supporters and how we generate more active members. It also needs to look at the resources available to the Scottish Party to support engagement with the public and campaigning.

- Local and national strategies for membership recruitment, retention and communication?
- How do we build a pool of trained activists in every Scottish community and ensure the full involvement of our members at every level?
- How can we secure the sources and scale of resources required?

Building the Next Generation: Our candidates and elected representatives are critical to our success are; they are the leaders working to change our local communities.

- How will Scottish Labour identify the new generation of talented members able to be future candidates from all walks of Scottish life including women and members of black, Asian, and ethnic minority (BAME) communities and other under-represented groups?
- How can we address the barriers to selection?
- How should we support and develop the skills of existing candidates and elected representatives?

Building our Campaigning Strategy: We need strong local parties, able to campaign all year round, and an effective national campaign capacity. These are necessary pre-requisites of electoral success.

- What improvements are required to strengthen the party organisationally at all levels as an effective campaigning unit?
- What lessons about how to prepare for and campaign during elections can be learnt from the result on 5 May and past Scottish Labour electoral performance?
- What lessons can we learn from experiences at home and abroad to ensure that Scottish Labour is at the forefront of campaigning techniques?
- How can we deliver the cultural change that will underpin a revitalised engagement of local parties with their communities?

More details of the review on the Scottish Labour website: www.scottishlabour.org.uk/review