

## Local Manifesto 2008

Make May 1<sup>st</sup> *Independence Day* for your local Council.

Today, local councils have no real power. They have to do what they are told by central government and the EU – looking after the interests of their local communities comes last. Only the UK Independence Party believes in true local independence from Whitehall interference. This manifesto sets out UKIP's vision of how this should be done:

**Independence for local councils, schools, police, hospitals, social care and planning.  
Independence for local people to decide local issues in referendums.  
Independence to spend local money the way local people want.  
Independence from the costs and interference of the European Union.**

### **Local taxes – Independence for local councils over finances**

Council tax has risen dramatically over the past few years, hitting pensioners in particular. Councils control just a quarter of their funding needs – the rest comes down from central government, with strings attached. A vast amount of money is wasted on bureaucracy and politically-correct jobs without the public ever being consulted.

- Slash council tax by 40%.
- Since Council Tax forms less than a quarter councils' budgets, our war on waste and bureaucracy cutting council spending by just 10% is enough to give the public a 40% reduction in Council Tax.
- Give local councils majority control over their finances by letting them keep local business rates and by replacing VAT with a simpler Local Sales Tax, with a proportion going direct to local councils.

### **Immigration – Independence for Britain to take back control**

Under European Union law, anyone from other EU countries can live in Britain. EU rules also govern how we deal with asylum seekers. The system is overwhelmed and too many newcomers are settling here – our housing, NHS, schools and services can't cope with the scale of immigration..

- Introduce proper border controls so we know who is in the country at all times.
- Freeze permanent immigration for 5 years to let the authorities catch up with the backlog of cases.
- Ensure that our own UK government determines who can stay, not the European Union.
- Deport all illegal immigrants; give work permits only for those with skills that our economy needs.
- Fair, compassionate treatment for law-abiding people who are genuinely fleeing persecution or torture.

### **Local democracy – Independence for local decision making**

Local councils rely on government funding and obey government orders rather than listening to those who pay the council tax. And more and more functions of councils including planning are being taken over by unelected EU-inspired regional bodies.

- Let local people call a binding referendum on any major local issue, such as planning schemes.
- Dismantle regional government and return powers to county and borough councils.
- Reform the 'cabinet' system of local government for greater representation and transparency.

Call Freephone **0800 587 6587** or visit [www.ukip.org](http://www.ukip.org) for more information.

## Crime – Independence for local policing

There are more police officers today than ever before but crime is getting worse. Our police are hamstrung by politically correct rules and bureaucracy, and our courts can't sentence properly because there are not enough prisons.

- Elect police chiefs and make police forces accountable to local authorities for policing priorities.
- Leave our police free to arrest criminals instead of filling in forms, and retain local police stations.
- Ensure stricter sentencing and zero tolerance of antisocial behaviour and petty crime.
- Build enough prisons urgently and make sure those who are a danger to the public stay locked up.

## Transport – Independence for local decision-makers

Public transport needs to be more attractive and responsive to local needs, and there's gridlock on the roads. Over-zealous traffic enforcement is used merely to raise funds.

- Improve local control and management of public transport – rail and bus.
- Rule out satellite vehicle pricing and oppose privatisation of parking facilities.
- Oppose new speed cameras which do not cut accidents, and use traffic calming measures instead.

## Housing – Independence for local planning

The government claims that two million homes must be built to solve the housing shortage, yet most of this demand arises from immigration. Hardworking local people find it increasingly difficult to afford decent housing.

- Genuine independence for local planning - no more overriding by remote appeal bodies.
- Restore proper controls on immigration to ease the demand for housing.
- Crack down on nuisance neighbours and repair council housing to restore civic pride.

## Education – Independence for headteachers

Continuous central government interference in schools prevents them doing their job properly. Teachers are forced to put paperwork, targets and bureaucracy ahead of pupils and 1 in 4 leave primary school unable to read and write.

- Give independence to headteachers over teaching, examinations and discipline.
- Scrap useless paperwork and trust teachers to do their jobs; oppose the closures of special schools.
- Encourage competitive school sports, playing fields and school trips.

## Health and Social Care – Independence for local providers

Our hospitals and vital health services are at real risk. Services for patients and the elderly are being tied up in too much red tape and central interference, and they are being starved of cash.

- Save hospital services, manage hospitals locally, and make decision makers responsible to local people.
- Improve services for the elderly and remove unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Create more residential home places and resist increases in home care charges.
- End the practice of forcing the elderly to sell their house to pay for a spouse's residential home care.

## Energy and the Environment - Independence for British energy supplies

Britain is increasingly dependent on energy supplies from Russia. Today's wind turbines are unreliable and unsightly, and the climate change doomsday theorists prioritise reducing CO2 emissions but ignore other environmental issues.

- Protect the Green Belt and use central brown field sites for future developments.
- Build nuclear and hydroelectric power plants to make Britain cleaner and self-sufficient in renewable energy.
- Keep recycling local - stop damaging the environment by sending waste to China for recycling.



### and *independence*

Although known for its commitment to withdrawing the UK from the European Union, UKIP is in reality a much broader nationwide party campaigning to return power and independence to the people.

UKIP already has local councillors, 2 members of the House of Lords and 9 Members of the European Parliament who do not think it right that most new UK laws now come from unelected Brussels bureaucrats.

The same principles apply at local level: only by returning power to the people from unaccountable bureaucrats and restoring representative democracy can things change.