**Mayoral candidates reply to LCG 4th May 2017**

We sent questions yesterday (relevant partly to Longdendale issues plus wider ones) to GM mayoral candidates. Here are the replies to date (up to 4. 30 PM today).

**1. Andy Burnham (lab)**

We emailed him at his MP address and his mayoral official campaign office.

Automated reply: Thank you for your email. I receive a large number of emails, letters and phone calls every day and will reply to you as quickly as possible, but please be aware that it may take a few weeks.[Etc, etc]

We found this consistent with the prolonged response time to the questions we (with the Save GM Greenbelt Group) posed to him in February, which he took almost 2 months to answer. And this is before he’s elected!

**2. Sean Anstee (Cons)**

Responded the same day. His reply was specific to questions posed, but he didn’t realize that we as individuals were also asking specific questions in addition. We need to learn from this how to not get our specific bits overlooked, when the rest of our letter to the candidate looks like a round robin. His response:

*Dear Dr Tyler,*

*Thank you for your email and the points raised (and apologies for not joining my previous response to this – I am working through my emails!).  I have set out in my manifesto a number of policies around brownfield land, infrastructure and ensuring a protected and sustainable green belt.  They can be found here:*

[*www.seananstee.com/housing*](http://www.seananstee.com/housing)

[*www.seananstee.com/environment*](http://www.seananstee.com/environment)

*I have also tried to provide additional commentary to your questions below:*

*1.  What are your views about the above plans for Mottram and Hattersley, given that they fail to give priority to Hyde Town Centre as required by the National Planning Framework.*

*[Each individual local authority in Greater Manchester put forward sites into the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework for consideration, and so in this instance Tameside Council.  I support town centre regeneration and in my own Borough of Trafford have seen significant investment in our town centres and would like to see an approach adopted in partnership with local authorities that will adopt the same principles.]*

*2.  Why do the plans fail to incorporate any brown field sites?*

*[The GMSF identifies additional land needed to meet housing and employment need.  It is true to say there has been a difference in approach across Greater Manchester whereby there are a number of Boroughs that have submitted extensive green belt development over brownfield and I think more can be done to get brownfield sites ready for development.  I have set out plans to an infrastructure guarantee which would make land available only when new roads, schools health facilities, open spaces etc are in place and for Greater Manchester to receive its fair share of the Government's new £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund which is specifically designed to help make brownfield sites more viable.]*

*3.  Why the objections from the previous consultation of 2013-2104 have been completely ignored? This is grossly undemocratic.*

*[The GMSF is following a statutory consultation process prescribed in law.  I am not able to answer why Tameside Council have resubmitted a site that has previously been subject to what sounds like substantial opposition].*

*4.  I am concerned about the extension of power conferred upon the mayor. If you are elected, would you issue a compulsory purchase order on my home if it is on land sought by developers?*

*[CPO powers can only be used as a last resort once and the public interest must be greater than depriving somebody of their right to own land.  I do not subscribe to the view that CPO powers can be used lightly.]*

*I hope this helps.*

*Best Regards*

*Sean*

He further responded to this today:

Dear Dr Tyler

Apologies for the brevity of this reply but I wanted to get back to you today, so:

1. I support existing green belt policy in that is may only be used for development in exceptional circumstances.  The points you have raised will need to be considered as part of the next iteration of the GMSF and I would commit to working with you to achieve that.
2. I have set out an Infrastructure Guarantee policy in my manifesto that would avoid the scenario you have described in relation to transport and congestion.  I am clear that any land put forward for development can only be used as new infrastructure is in place.
3. Mayoral CPO powers can only be used in exceptional circumstances and I would want to see them used appropriately and in a way that seeks to support the wellbeing of residents if they used.

Best Regards,

Sean

**3. Jane Brophy (Lib Dem)**

Hi Sheena

Thank you for contacting me about the Greater Manchester Mayoral Campaign.

You have asked me about Longdendale Community Group and the Greenbelt.

Please see my manifesto on the link below. I have mentioned in here my alternatives to the GMSF

<http://www.janebrophy.com/manifesto>

I hope this is helpful.

Best Regards

Jane

**I replied to say that we did ask questions that went beyond her manifesto, relevant to our area. She responded to say:**

Reply: Hi Sheena

Thank you for contacting me again. I am very interested. There are 2.7 million residents that I am responding to and I do not have any staff (other than volunteers) unlike other candidates

I am receiving about 300-400 emails a day and it is very hard to offer specific and personal replies to everyone. I always do my best and if elected I will have a paid team and staff to help me respond.

Do contact me again if I can help further or provide any other information.

Best Regards

Jane

**4. Shneur Odze (UKIP)**

No response. No automated reply.

**5. Stephen Morris (English Democrats)**

No response. No automated reply.

**6. 7. Will Patterson**

No response. No automated reply.

We were unable to find contact details for mayoral candidate Marcus Farmer (Independent).

**LCG comment:** We realize we’ve not give the candidates long to respond. This was thanks to us being tied up dealing with the Housing White Paper – and we are all volunteers, so let’s not be too hard on ourselves. However, on Election Day, do they want our votes?

Sean Anstee has at least made an effort, and Jane Brophy has at least replied. All the other candidates don’t seem to think it matters what we think, and to have a dialogue with us. Perhaps we should beware of voting for “paper candidates” who have nothing whatsoever to offer us?!