

Mayoral Area: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Party: Labour and Cooperative

Candidate name: Dr Nik Johnson

Twitter: @CambridgeMagpie

Thank you to the British Association of Social workers for contacting me as the Labour and Cooperative party Mayoral candidate for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. At the present time, within this Combined Authority the Mayor does not have a direct responsibility for the health and social care budget. However, it is something that may be considered in the future and assuming I am the successful candidate in the forthcoming local elections I would whole heartedly embrace the opportunity to work closely with social care professionals, like I have done for the last 25 years in my role as a NHS Children's doctor.

Recognising the importance of cross organisational work, I would be a proud champion for all social workers in my local area and across the United Kingdom. Over many years I have seen how - indeed I am indebted to- many social workers for their support and dedication to get the very best outcomes for my patients and their families. Such important work, undertaken on a daily basis, week in week out, 365 days a year helping, supporting and advocating for some of those the most vulnerable in our communities is often without the recognition it deserves, and I am keen to see that unfairness corrected.

We need to value our social workers and make the necessary investment in social work recruitment, education, and retention initiatives.

The issues of poverty, homelessness, equality, and diversity and how to make the societal change to tackle these problems is at the heart of everything I have done in my professional life. I see no reason to change in that ambition and it will be the focus of how I as a Mayor would want to work across organisations to help all within in our communities to live healthier, happier and productive lives.

300 words on what you would like our members to know about your candidacy.

I want every single social worker and every single resident of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to know that their Mayor puts the 3 Cs of compassion, cooperation and community at the heart of every single policy decision made by the Combined Authority.

With a surgical focus in all areas of policy to deliver value for money and reduce waste, I want to take on the challenge of a Post CoVid , post Brexit economy by harnessing the unique qualities of the area.

Cambridgeshire represents a microcosm of the United Kingdom. The Greater Peterborough manufacturing North, a more affluent Greater Cambridgeshire and an area of "Middle England" stretching from St Neots to Wisbech, all with variable fortunes to boot.

We need to build a Northern Cambridgeshire Powerhouse, we need to harness a Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership that innovates and delivers, without forgetting hidden gems from Fenland to Huntingdonshire with their untapped potential of specialized local economies associated with market towns and villages.

All areas have to be linked practically by a truly integrated transport system and a recovering equitable economy which delivers the ambition of doubling growth but distributes it fairly across all areas whilst developing a sense of place, common purpose and pride.

From toddlers in nurseries to senior residents of long-term care facilities, from Peterborough city streets to March Fens to the Magog hills, my greatest achievement will be to have convinced our shared communities that the Devolution deal is working for us all and we can embrace more collaboration in the future.

I hope the social work community in the county will recognise that we have much in common and will be willing to support me in my campaign to be your next Mayor.