

#SP6 – Scottish Labour call for Holyrood clean up

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar has called for a commission to Clean Up Holyrood, suggesting that ideas are needed to offer the country a parliament which will hold the government to account and win back people's trust.

As part of a plan to restore faith and trust in the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Labour's consultation will explore:

- The establishment of an independent ethics commission to oversee the Scottish Government.
- Reforming Freedom of Information legislation to increase transparency in government by creating a presumption in favour of proactive publication of the public information held by authorities, subject only to limited exceptions.
- Introducing parliamentary privilege at Holyrood to give MSPs raising issues the same protection as MPs.
- The election of committee conveners by the whole Scottish Parliament.
- Strengthening the power of committees to compel witnesses to appear and give evidence or submit evidence.
- Introducing a right to recall MSPs in exceptional circumstances.
- Splitting the dual role of the Lord Advocate.



Anas Sarwar. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam
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Mr Sarwar said: “We are rightly proud of our role in establishing a devolved parliament, but we have to accept that trust and faith in parliament has been lost in recent years.

“We need to rebuild that because only when people believe that Holyrood works for them will we be able to unite Scotland.

“We cannot allow the circus that has defined the start of this campaign or the institutional failures that defined the Salmond inquiry to run over into the Parliament of the next five years.

“The pandemic doesn’t end when lockdown ends – and Scotland’s recovery requires a government focused on solutions – and MSPs who have the tools to make sure they are getting it right.

“Scotland deserves so much better than a parliament where egos, agenda and grudges are allowed to run rampant.

“And that is what is at stake in this election – we have a choice to put people, their families and our national recovery first.

“The pandemic has changed Scotland – it’s time to ditch the old politics of division and focus instead on working together on the things we can do.”