

# **Call for an end to “quango culture”**

**Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar says Scotland can end the culture of wasting public money and using quangos to cover up governmental failure.**

Speaking before making a New Year speech, Mr Sarwar said that Scotland must take a new direction, and claimed that the SNP had “abandoned responsibility and wrecked public services”.

He said that at the next election “we face a choice: more decline managed by the SNP, or a new direction for Scotland”.

The speech, which will be delivered on Monday at Glasgow University where Mr Sarwar studied to be a dentist, will promise an end to a culture of “jobs for the boys” where politicians evade responsibility, and tough decisions are dodged.

Highlighting the need for public sector reform to deliver value for money and better public services Mr Sarwar will highlight the explosion of quangos under the SNP.

Scotland has 131 quangos which results in a bill of more than £6.6 billion annually – and is two more than the number of MSPs in The Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Labour leader said the party would commit to slashing their number and cost in government, putting control of public cash and delivery of key services back in politicians’ hands.

Mr Sarwar said: "Scotland needs a new direction.

"Every public service is straining under almost two decades of governmental neglect, and Scots are paying more for less.

"In short, our country is stuck and it doesn't need to be like this.

"The SNP came to power in 2007 promising to improve lives, but instead, we've seen services crumble, institutions weaken, and communities left behind.

"We must squeeze value out of every penny of taxpayers' money to deliver public services that work.

"More importantly politicians must stop making excuses and passing the buck – they must take responsibility.

"At the heart of both issues is a growing bureaucratic monster – a sprawling network of unelected public bodies that drain public money and deliver little in return.

"These so-called quangos were created to manage everything from healthcare to education, but far too often they've done more to complicate and obstruct than to improve services.

"Scotland spends a jaw-dropping £6.6 billion on these bodies each year. That's money that could be better spent on improving services for the people of Scotland.

"It has created a culture that means when something goes wrong, the SNP government tries to dodge responsibility by blaming someone you've never heard of.

"It creates a culture where the government serves itself, not the people.

"We need a government that's focused on delivering for the people, not a self-serving political class focused on creating jobs for the boys.

“That’s why a Scottish Labour Government will end Scotland’s quango culture and better spend your money.

“As First Minister, I would commit to cutting the red tape, reducing the number of health boards, and streamlining public bodies and pushing power and resources out to your community.

“The buck would stop with me.

“It’s time to take Scotland in a new direction. A direction where government serves the people, not the other way around.”



23/5/2024 Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar on the campaign trail to support Scottish Labour candidate for Edinburgh North and Leith, Tracy Gilbert. PHOTO Alan Simpson