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## CaSE Analysis of Core Commitments – Scottish Elections 2011

CaSE wrote to each of the main political leaders in Scotland, asking them to set out their policies on science and engineering ahead of the 2011 elections. All of the parties responded. We have analysed the responses, and taken further detail from the party manifestos, to set out what we think their key commitments on science and engineering are.

We do not claim that this analysis is definitive, and we have focused on policies affecting science and engineering, rather than their use – this excludes details on transport, energy, and health infrastructure, for instance. We would therefore recommend that you read the party manifestos and letters for a comprehensive policy overview.

### Science, Engineering & Policy-Making

1. What commitments will your party make to ensure that science and engineering advice is at the heart of evidence-based policy making within government?

Scottish Conservative Party – no details

Scottish Green Party – no details

Scottish Labour Party

- I am determined that evidence is at the heart of all government decision-making. (Letter to CaSE)
- Scottish Labour will also support research into the causes and treatments of healthcare associated infections, such as C.Diff and MRSA, and will establish a properly resourced reference laboratory to ensure we look ahead to proactively identify and quickly deal with new infections. (Manifesto, page 40)

Scottish Liberal Democrats

- Ensure decisions about the management of fisheries are based on the best available science, supporting efforts to promote greater collaboration between industry and scientists so that the data gathered is as up to date as possible. (Manifesto, page 39)

Scottish National Party – no details

2. What are your plans for setting out a long-term strategy for science and engineering in Scotland?

Scottish Conservative Party – no details

Scottish Green Party – no details

#### Scottish Labour Party

- I have set out Labour's plans to create a single body, Energy Scotland, to streamline and provide strategic leadership for developing our potential in that area. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish Liberal Democrats

- Our ambitious Science Nation Action Plan details our proposals to realise the full potential of science in Scotland's economic recovery. It lays out plans for sustained action on the many interlinked issues that affect our growth as a science nation. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish National Party

- Our manifesto commits us to developing a long-term strategy for science and engineering in Scotland, led by the Chief Scientific Adviser, and this will be taken forward after the election. (Letter to CaSE)

3. Will you commit to appointing a dedicated Science Minister, and recommit to a Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA)?

#### Scottish Conservative Party – no details

#### Scottish Green Party

- We can certainly commit to the continuation of the role of Chief Scientific Advisor. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish Labour Party

- I will ensure that there is clarity in responsibility and strategic direction for science policy, and will look carefully at the arguments for a Chief Scientific Adviser, noting the important role that the chief medical adviser plays. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish Liberal Democrats

- A Minister for Science, Innovation and Digital Economy will be responsible for driving our ambitious goals. (Letter to CaSE)
- Review the functions of Marine Scotland to establish whether there is a conflict in the functions of scientific adviser to government, fisheries enforcement and management of fisheries regulation. (Manifesto, page 39)

#### Scottish National Party

- As for 2 above [Our manifesto commits us to developing a long-term strategy for science and engineering in Scotland, led by the Chief Scientific Adviser, and this will be taken forward after the election. (Letter to CaSE)]

#### **Education and Skills**

1. How will your party make sure that all children in Scotland have access to a stimulating education in science and mathematics taught by appropriately qualified teachers?

#### Scottish Conservative Party

- We cannot accept a situation where individuals are leaving formal education not equipped with a fundamental grasp of literacy and numeracy and we most certainly cannot promote science and engineering without a more robust education in the 3R's. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish Green Party

- We also agree strongly with your emphasis on the need to ensure that children can expect a stimulating and engaging education in science. (Letter to CaSE)
- The Scottish Green Party believes it is necessary to tackle the problem of recruiting science specialists into school teaching, and the declining interest in some science areas at university entry. (Letter to CaSE)
- The CfE [Curriculum for Excellence] itself, while offering opportunities for improvement in many areas, must be adequately resourced. (Manifesto, page 17)

#### Scottish Labour Party

- I am also determined to ensure that teachers are suitably qualified in the subjects they are teaching, and want to work closely with teachers to encourage greater take-up of science subjects, particularly amongst young women. (Letter to CaSE)
- We will develop a strategy to encourage school pupils who have an interest in the skills that will drive future innovation and economic prosperity – science, technology, engineering and maths. To tackle gendered career segregation later on, it is particularly important to encourage girls and young women to choose these pathways. (Manifesto, page 28)

#### Scottish Liberal Democrats

- Curriculum for Excellence is uniquely placed to develop an appreciation of science in our young people. We'll work with schools, colleges and universities to supply a workforce with the 21st century skills needed in a knowledge based economy. (Letter to CaSE)
- Encourage more links between primary schools and secondary schools and universities on science and languages, where the skills exist in depth. Our Science Nation Action Plan will dovetail and provide new energy to this area. (Manifesto, page 53)

#### Scottish National Party

- We have already taken forward plans for a Science Baccalaureate. And the Curriculum for Excellence will provide the framework for the development of the skills young Scots need to flourish in maths and science. (Letter to CaSE)
- We are also taking forward new Graduate Apprenticeships and Technical Apprenticeships to enable students to gain vital work experience while they are undertaking higher or further education courses. This will be of particular value in science and engineering. (Letter to CaSE)

- We will also look to develop Scottish Science and Engineering Bursaries, with government match funding contributions from the private sector to enable us to create fifty £5,000 bursaries for young Scots looking to advance in science and engineering. (Manifesto, page 25)
- We will also ensure that science, technology, engineering and mathematics are promoted by means of skills training and that the “internship culture” is developed to ensure better links between enterprise and further and higher education. (Manifesto, page 12)

## 2. How will you sustainably fund science and engineering courses in Scottish universities?

### Scottish Conservative Party

- Scottish Conservatives believe it is essential to have a graduate contribution in Scotland so that additional funds can complement state spending on universities and ensure there is no squeeze on research; because if we lose our top class research then we would lose so much that is precious within our university system. (Letter to CaSE)

### Scottish Green Party

- ...our educational institutions must not see important courses reduced or lost during this period of unnecessary cuts to public services...The Scottish Green Party opposes the cuts to public services, and commits to funding universities and colleges properly and fairly from general taxation, rather than turning education into a market commodity. (Letter to CaSE)
- We'll commit to keeping education free at the point of use, and we'll oppose tuition fees and additional graduate taxes. The Westminster cuts will mean a funding gap – Greens will raise revenue to fill it. We'll reverse the revenue cuts to further and higher education budgets, including the SNP's cut to the funding council. (Manifesto, page 16)

### Scottish Labour Party

- I will refuse to withdraw public funding from universities as has been the case in England, and will not charge our students tuition fees. (Letter to CaSE)

### Scottish Liberal Democrats

- Keep education free, with no tuition fees and no graduate contribution. (Manifesto, page 57)
- Start reforms with a £250 million Science Nation Fund from the Investing in Scotland's Future Fund to boost science facilities. The objective will be to use this as a match fund that can secure considerably more investment opportunity for the sector. (Manifesto, page 57)
- Work to increase donations and philanthropic giving to universities, as well as private sector involvement in our Science Nation Fund. (Manifesto, page 57)

### Scottish National Party

- We are ruling out tuition fees or a graduate contribution for Higher Education – Scottish education will remain free. (Manifesto, page 3)

- ...a new management fee to be paid by EU students, greater efficiencies by universities, increased commercial activity and increased philanthropy. What remains will be filled by government funds, ensuring that our Higher Education sector remains internationally competitive and truly excellent in world terms. (Manifesto, page 25)

### 3. Other

#### Scottish Liberal Democrats

- ...establishing a Ministerial Task Group on Women in Science and supporting the work of the Scottish Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology. And we'll create a special programme for young women potentially interested in a career in science using inspiring women scientists from around the world. We will establish bursaries to pay for them to make visits abroad. (Letter to CaSE)

#### **Research Base**

1. What will your party do to ensure that excellent researchers from around the world see Scottish universities and research institutes as the most attractive place to base their work?

#### Scottish Conservative Party

- We believe that there is much scope for greater cooperation between universities in Scotland in terms of research funding and administration on a regional basis. (Manifesto, page 15)
- We will support greater private sector cooperation and investment in the university sector. (Manifesto, page 15)

#### Scottish Green Party

- Scotland's strong research base and research institutions must be supported...We must also protect public funding for research and development. (Letter to CaSE)
- We will redirect research programmes in Scotland toward sustainable food production with a focus on organic and biodynamic systems. (Manifesto, page 14)
- we will place a priority on funding education and research (Manifesto, page 16)
- We'll establish an immediate moratorium on the cloning and genetic engineering of all animals pending a wide-ranging investigation into their ethical, moral, scientific and animal welfare impacts. (Manifesto, page 15)

#### Scottish Labour Party

- Government cannot pick winners, but can work with universities and researchers and to ensure our universities are among the best in the world. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish Liberal Democrats

- We know that Scotland’s future depends on a vibrant research base and the ability of innovators to exploit the country’s intellectual capital to generate new home-grown, high tech industries. That’s why our plan is supported by £250 million of investment from our Investing in Scotland’s Future Fund. Part of this will be used as a challenge fund for universities to demonstrate joint working with the private sector on global level research, science and commercialisation. Complementary to the excellence achieved through the UK-wide Research Assessment Exercise, our additional support will allow Scottish universities to gain and maintain a global lead. (Letter to CaSE)
- We also propose to establish an annual Scottish Enlightenment Prize for Science to recognise world leading examples of science research or industrial development taking place in Scotland, and a Life Science Venture Fund to help develop and secure a world-beating industry from Scotland’s leading position in life sciences research. (Letter to CaSE)

#### Scottish National Party

- And in our energy sector we are also actively supporting initiatives including the International Technology and Renewable Energy Zone in Glasgow and the development of our world-leading research in areas such as smart-grids. (Letter to CaSE)
- Our plans also include ongoing support for the Centre for Climate Change Research and the international activity of research institutes, for example, Moredun on the vitally important issue of food technology. (Letter to CaSE)
- SNP ministers will continue to actively support Scottish universities and companies develop commercial and research links internationally. (Letter to CaSE)
- ...we are also funding world-leading wave and tidal research and research facilities. (Letter to CaSE)

#### **Innovation and Growth**

1. What will your party do to provide an environment that encourages industries based on science and engineering to locate in Scotland, and that encourages higher levels of private-sector investment in research and development?

Scottish Conservative Party – no details

Scottish Green Party – no details

Scottish Labour Party

- Scottish Labour will therefore ask every Scottish Government department to develop innovative and small business procurement plans, which will reward innovation by ensuring new businesses are able to take advantage of public contracts. We will set a new target so that five per cent of each department’s procurement budget is set aside for innovation. (Manifesto, page 13)

Scottish Liberal Democrats

[See comments under Research]

- We will continue to fund research and development into renewable energy technology, particularly wave and tidal power, in addition to the Saltire Prize, and we'll continue successful programmes to help small and medium sized businesses get help and collaboration from expert scientists and researchers at Scotland's universities. (Letter to CaSE)
- We'll develop further the links between the Scottish life sciences industries and NHS Scotland to ensure that there are appropriate opportunities for the development and introduction of new products in Scotland, supported and informed by the clinical and service needs of the NHS. (Letter to CaSE)
- Continue to fund successful programmes to help small and medium sized businesses get help and collaboration from expert scientists and researchers at Scotland's universities. (Manifesto, page 20)
- Our Better Procurement Action Plan will help Scottish business, create jobs and champion innovation. (Manifesto, page 29)

#### Scottish National Party

- We are directing Scottish Enterprise and public sector bodies including the NHS to engage fully with our universities and potential investors to attract new research and development facilities in Scotland. (Letter to CaSE)
- And we are promoting collaboration between Scotland's universities across a range of other areas. This will allow us to maximise the skills and research advantages we have here in Scotland and draw in new investment. (Letter to CaSE)
- We are also taking forward plans for Low Carbon Enterprise Zones specifically designed to attract low-carbon industries to Scotland and propose a new Future Transport Fund that will support initiatives designed to deliver modal shift in Scotland, supporting, for example, Scottish companies and researchers at the cutting edge of battery technology. (Letter to CaSE)
- We will also work through our Government-Industry Life-Sciences Advisory Board (LiSAB) to draw in new venture capital support and take forward the strategy that is being developed in conjunction with the sector. (Letter to CaSE)
- ...we will provide £17 million, specifically to stimulate growth in the key industries set to drive the global economy, like life-sciences, digital and energy. (Manifesto, page 11)
- We will continue to encourage and support Scottish innovation and – just as importantly – work to insure more of the economic benefit of our inventiveness is retained in Scotland. The NHS has a big part to play in this as a major public procurer. We will also examine different approaches to incentivise research within the NHS, building on the work of NHS Research Scotland so that Scotland becomes an even more attractive location for investment by international pharmaceutical companies. (Manifesto, page 11)
- We've recently supported the new Scottish Energy Laboratory (SEL) to strengthen collaboration across 50 energy research, test and demonstration facilities and underpin Scotland's leading position in low-carbon energy development. We will continue to support

this initiative and look for ways of further enhancing Scotland's energy research base. We will also work to attract new international R&D investment to Scotland. (Manifesto, page 34)

- We were also providing funding for Strathclyde University's new Technology and Innovation Centre and the ITREZ project, which will create 700 new research jobs in Glasgow. We will continue to support this important project. (Manifesto, page 36)
- In partnership with the industry we will look to restore the identity and status of fishing as an occupation of choice and continue to support research in fishing to help map out the most profitable future for the industry. (Manifesto, page 39)