



## **Ron Davies to play a Significant Role in Forward Wales Assembly Election Campaign**

Forward Wales' strategy for next year's election was discussed yesterday at the National Council meeting in Rhayader and Ron Davies, Policy Director of Forward Wales confirmed he plans to play a significant role in next year's National Assembly election.

Ron said "I believe it is a realistic objective for Forward Wales to aim to hold the balance of power after next year's Assembly election. We do not have the resources to mount a full nationwide campaign - we don't have businessmen queuing up to lend us millions of pounds in the expectation of a peerage. Therefore we will be concentrating our efforts in a few winnable seats.

"I intend to play a significant role in the election. I shall be writing the manifesto, and the theme running through all the policy areas will be the call for equality. In our call for a proper legislative Parliament, we will be calling for equality with Scotland and Ireland. On the question of how the Assembly is funded, we will be calling for equality between the regions of Britain in terms of spending power.

"I believe there needs to be an entirely new way of operating at the Assembly. There must be a drive for much swifter decision-making, and that will mean a war on bureaucracy. As most people who have had personal dealings with the Assembly as a citizen will know - whether over planning matters, health issues, agricultural subsidies, investment decisions or other issues - there are invariably unacceptable delays. I'm not advocating job cuts, but I believe there is scope to make a 20% cut in bureaucracy. The Civil Service should be reorganised to allow people to work more creatively."

Mr Davies said his vision of an inclusive democracy in Wales, getting away from the yah-boo politics of Westminster, had not been realised.

"There is a desperate need to change the workings of the Assembly, so much more information is shared both with the public and with ordinary AMs," he said "Currently there is little openness, with the Government keeping a lot of information back, making it impossible for ministers to be properly scrutinised. This is an appalling way to run a country."