



Minister - Department of the Environment

Alex Attwood MLA

Alex Attwood MLA took up his post as Minister of the Environment in May 2011. Alex Attwood was elected as an MLA for West Belfast. He was Minister for Social Development in the last Northern Ireland Executive.

A native of Belfast, Alex attended St Malachy's College and Queen's University and Belfast Institute of Professional Legal Studies, graduating with an LLB. Alex qualified and worked as a solicitor in the city before devoting himself to full-time politics.

Alex first got involved in student politics at university, serving as Student President of the Students' Union 1982-83 overseeing a time of change and investment at the university.

Alex represented West Belfast on the Upper Falls council since 1985 and became leader of the SDLP Belfast City Council Group. In 1997 he was instrumental in negotiations that gave Belfast its first nationalist mayor.

Appointed in 1997 by John Hume to the Dublin Forum for Peace and Reconciliation, Alex's commitment to an all-Ireland agenda is close to his heart. As a member of the SDLP Talks Team, he played a key negotiating role on policing, human rights and justice issues.

Elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly in June 1998, Alex was the SDLP spokesperson on policing and was appointed to the Northern Ireland Policing Board in September 2001 on which he served until 2007. During this time he was influential in the implementation of many of the recommendations of the Patten report.