

## **Fiona McCarthy: Candidate in Belfast Oldpark**

### **Short-sighted Cuts**

Fiona McCarthy of the Workers Party has condemned yet further cuts to services for young children.

“The withdrawal of funding for the ‘Book Start Baby Scheme’ is yet another short sighted and damaging attack on one of the most vulnerable groups in in our society”, Fiona said.

“The announcement by the Department of Education that it will no longer fund the scheme comes on the back of cuts to local youth services the withdrawal of the Holiday Meals service and early years counselling support.”

“The first five years of child’s life are some of the most important in its development”, Fiona said. “Access to books, reading and providing parental support should been as an investment in our children’s futures, not as a figure on a spread sheet”.

“North Belfast already suffers from poor educational attainment with over a quarter of our children leaving school with no, or low, qualifications. Cuts, withdrawal of funding and reductions in services for young people will compound those problems.”

“These are short-sighted decisions that are destined to create massive educational and social problems further down the line. They must be opposed.

“I have written to the Department of Education expressing my concerns and demanding that funding for this and other young people’s services are fully re-instated”, Fiona said.

