# Lilian Seenoi-Barr Becomes First Black Mayor of Northern Ireland Council



Lilian Seenoi-Barr made history on Monday by becoming the first black mayor of a council in Northern Ireland when she accepted the mayoral chain of Derry City and Strabane District Council. Originally from Kenya, the 42-year-old SDLP councillor expressed pride in her Maasai heritage and her journey from a Maasai village to becoming a "Derry girl" in 2010.

Addressing the council, Seenoi-Barr thanked her supporters from Kenya and acknowledged the challenges she faced, including racist abuse and death threats, while emphasizing the support she received from community organizations and politicians. Seenoi-Barr promised to be a mayor for everyone and highlighted the inclusivity and changing demographics of Northern Ireland.

In Belfast, Micky Murray, an Alliance councillor, became the city’s first openly gay Lord Mayor, emphasizing his vision for an inclusive and welcoming city. Meanwhile, Pete Byrne from the SDLP became the first openly LGBT+ chairman of Newry, Mourne, and Down Council.

The new deputy mayor of Derry City and Strabane is Ulster Unionist Party councillor Darren Guy. In Belfast, DUP councillor Andrew McCormick assumed the role of Deputy Lord Mayor.