



**One Nation
Labour**
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Campaigning for
**One Cambridge
Fair for All**

Labour's 2014 Manifesto
for Cambridge

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If you want to raise an issue with us or ask a question, email us at labour@cambridgelabour.org.uk or ring us on **01223 500515**.

See our website for more information about Labour in Cambridge:
www.cambridgelabour.org.uk

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Introduction

**‘It was the best of times,
it was the worst of times.’**

Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

Cambridge’s story is a tale of two cities. For those who have a well-paid job, own their own home, and live in a prosperous and pleasant part of Cambridge, it is the best of times. Cambridge’s population is one of best educated and most highly skilled in the country. It has the highest level of patents granted in the country, reflecting its position as a leading centre of science and innovation. Many sectors of the local economy are growing fast and unemployment is relatively low.

However, there is another story. House prices and rents are the highest of any city in the UK outside London. Many of those who work in the city do not earn enough to live here comfortably, or indeed at all. Those who do manage to find somewhere to live in Cambridge often find themselves at the mercy of letting-agents, insecure tenancies and extortionate rents. For young people wanting to start a family in the city, high living costs make it impossible. Cambridge has recently suffered the biggest drop in real wages of any city in the country. Much of King’s Hedges and Abbey, and parts of Arbury and East Chesterton, register among the most deprived areas in Cambridgeshire, and suffer higher levels of environmental degradation and anti-social behaviour than the rest of the city. Some 2,500 people annually are forced to resort to using Cambridge’s food bank. The policies of the current Tory-Liberal Democrat government have exacerbated many of these problems, especially their cuts to welfare; the bedroom tax; and their huge cuts to council funding. For some of our residents, it is the worst of times.

Because of this, complacency simply won’t do. Although Cambridge is in many ways a success story, it is not equally so for all. Many feel that they are missing out on the opportunities and wealth that others take for granted. Cambridge Labour understands that many in this city are facing huge challenges, and need the council to take a proactive role in sharing our prosperity more fairly. We will not tolerate a two-tier Cambridge – we want one Cambridge, fair for all.

We also believe that those who are successful in Cambridge are concerned for the fate of all of the city’s residents. They understand that the proper measure of the prosperity and civilization of any community is the comfort and dignity of its poorest member.

This manifesto is an attempt to outline where we would pragmatically start to tackle these issues, how we would fund our programme in times of financial austerity, and what we would change.



Labour City Councillors 2013

In order to share prosperity better, we also have to support the continued sustainable economic development of the city. We will work with business interests, the Universities and other partners in order to maximise growth, encourage socially responsible businesses, and ensure that expansion is supported by the requisite infrastructure, particularly in terms of housing and transport provision. Our aim is to ensure that Cambridge gets the benefits of growth while working to ensure that we do not compromise our quality of life or social solidarity in the process.

We have to be realistic. A Labour administration cannot dramatically transform the city's fortunes overnight. Many of the wider problems require a long-term, strategic approach seen in the context of national policy and the country's economic fortunes. Partnerships with other organisations, such as South Cambridgeshire District Council, the County Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, and the Cambridge Business Improvement District will be crucial to such an approach, as will the successful implementation of the Local Plan and Greater Cambridge City Deal. In order to respond to the key challenges Cambridge faces, all of us must work together, with a particular focus on the provision of affordable housing.

However, although these issues are crucial, we do not take the view, as the Liberal Democrats do, that the council can sit on its laurels, leaving people to sink or swim in the short term. There are a number of important and effective decisions that can be taken now to make Cambridge into a city characterised not just by economic dynamism, scientific advance and prosperity, but also solidarity and equality.

The Liberal Democrats have been in charge for 14 years, and their administration is tired and complacent, with nothing new to offer the people of Cambridge. We ask the residents of Cambridge to place their trust in us to change this city by voting for us on May 22nd. It's time for a change.

1. Protecting Essential Services

‘Our priority will be to safeguard initiatives and policies that are there to help those who are struggling to make ends meet’

Cambridge City Council is facing a tough economic climate. Cambridge City Council’s central government grant has been slashed by 13% between 2013/14 and 2014/15, and a similar cut is likely next year. This is in the context of cuts amounting to over 30% since 2010. Eric Pickles’s diktat requiring councils to hold local expensive referendums on council tax increases of more than 2% effectively rules out the option of council tax rises above this level. Although there are new sources of funding, like the New Homes Bonus, they are precarious and one-off. Savings have to be found in the long-term base budgets of the council to make it sustainable for the future. In this context, a Labour administration will be pragmatic, and, in order to protect key services, will attempt to squeeze as much value as possible out of every pound.

We will do that with the intention of protecting those crucial services that local residents rely on. Our priority will be to safeguard initiatives and policies that are there to help those who are struggling to make ends meet, that are important to the basic dignity and living standards of the poorest and those who most need a hand up.

A Labour council will:

- **Reverse the Lib Dem cut to the pest control service.** It is a crucial public service that ensures that low-income families can treat rat and bed-bug infestations for free. It also allows us to keep our own land, parks and buildings pest-free at a low cost. Cutting it is a false economy that puts public health at risk.
- **Protect community development grants to crucial organisations** that help those who are really struggling, such as the Citizens’ Advice Bureau, Centre 33 and the Women’s Aid Refuge.
- **Conduct a social audit** of all council spending to ensure that we direct scarce resources to the policies and services which do most to help families and individuals who are struggling economically, and the most vulnerable.
- **Refine criteria on discretionary grants and funding support to ensure that it prioritises the most disadvantaged.** We do not want to reduce any grants where they fund activities or projects that have a positive impact on the community, but grants to organisations directly helping those struggling with the essentials must take priority.
- **Prioritise the crucial services that the public values most**, especially street-cleaning, waste collection and recycling, public realm enforcement, benefit and welfare advice, community development and anti-poverty policies, private and council housing, and community safety.

2. Sharing the City's Prosperity

Labour's top priority is to share Cambridge's prosperity in order to ensure that the benefits of growth are enjoyed by all, including those who clean and staff Cambridge's shops, offices and restaurants, those who work in low-paid jobs at Addenbrookes or in the colleges, and those young workers and professionals starting out in life who are struggling with high rents.

That is why we are proposing to re-direct £500k from the Lib Dems £1.5m 'Keep Cambridge Moving Fund' to set up a 'Sharing Prosperity Fund', which will underpin the funding for a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy. New Homes Bonus, higher retained levels of business rates, and ongoing savings will be looked at for future funding sources if more resources are required to fully implement the strategy.

A Labour council will:

- **Work to make Cambridge a Living Wage City** – If we want Cambridge to become more equal, we need to make it a genuine Living Wage City. Labour supports making the council itself a living wage employer, and will look to ensure that our contractors agree to pay it, but this is only the first step. The living wage also needs to become a reality in the wider Cambridge economy, especially in the education, retail and catering sectors. Labour will employ a part-time officer who can assist the Cambridge Living Wage Campaign in its research and advocacy. We will also look at introducing a local 'Living Wage Kitemark' scheme to give accreditation to businesses that pay the living wage.
- **Set up an Apprenticeship Programme** – Although unemployment is low in Cambridge, in certain areas youth unemployment in particular is still an issue. We will work in conjunction with Cambridge Regional College to open up as many apprenticeship opportunities in the council as possible, with a target of 20 by year three, focussed on young people from poorer parts of the city.
- **Assist Credit Unions** – Those who struggle with living costs in Cambridge often have to resort to pay-day loan companies who charge extortionate interest rates. Building on a previous Labour motion to council, we will work with Cambridge credit unions to ensure that residents are helped to use credit unions, democratic organisations run to provide affordable credit to those in need. We will look into using European or other funds to ensure that the credit unions get a city centre shop-front, are better integrated into services and advice offered by our own welfare team and the Citizens' Advice Bureau, and are given all other necessary support.
- **Promote Energy-saving Schemes** – The County Council's Collective Energy Switching scheme will seek to use the collective bargaining power of Cambridgeshire residents to negotiate cheaper energy prices for residents. The more who take it up, the more it will save. We will significantly bolster promotion by paying for greater publicity and marketing in the city. We will also provide an extra project budget for the private sector energy officer aimed at enhancing information, publicity and uptake of existing/new energy efficiency and other insulation schemes, such as the Green Deal and the Energy Companies Obligation, which will work in conjunction with the newly announced county-wide funding.

A Labour council will:

- **Help with water bills** - There are many households in Cambridge still paying over-the-odds for their water based on rateable values, where no meter has been fitted. Water companies offer many free services, but uptake is low and many are unaware of the savings they could make. Labour would introduce a scheme to assist residents review their water bill and establish if they would benefit from changing to a meter, moving to the assessed charge basis, or taking up other water efficiency schemes, together with information and help to make any changes identified. It will focus on areas of the city where people are having a tough time paying the bills.
- **Set up a Chesterton Co-ordinator** – Sharing prosperity is also a case of helping out small and independent traders. Some areas of the City with a lot of shops and other businesses are not covered by the BID area, but also need help in the current climate – an obvious example being Chesterton. Labour will fund a two-year trial post for a part-time small business/community group/trader co-ordinator post on the model of the current successful Mill Road Co-ordinator, but for shops and businesses, especially independent ones, in the Chesterton area. This would include Chesterton High Street, the area around Mitcham's Corner/Chesterton Road (up to Elizabeth Way Roundabout), Milton Road, Victoria Road and other businesses (final area subject to consultation). The co-ordinator would work with local traders, the council and community groups to identify and capitalise on opportunities and bid for extra funds for the area.
- **Set up an official Cambridge Community Fair** - Cambridge has a rich civil society, full of volunteer organisations. Cambridge also has many public-minded citizens, including thousands of students, who want an opportunity to get involved in the community and help out those less fortunate than them. A community fair, facilitated by the city council, will give voluntary and charitable organisations an opportunity to recruit like-minded citizens.
- **Negotiate with Cambridge University and the colleges to open up sports facilities and playing fields** – There are a wide range of such facilities that are under-used by residents, and should be open, when possible, to all. We will negotiate with Cambridge University and the colleges with a view to opening up access.
- **Improve welfare advice** – We will review and, where possible, enhance the provision of advice services provided by the City Council's own staff, the Citizens' Advice Bureau, and other agencies, to ensure that in the face of the Government's cuts in benefits, the prevalence of low pay, and the high cost of living in Cambridge, our residents can easily access the best advice possible.

3. Tackling the Housing Crisis

‘Labour believes that we need to do everything we can to build more new affordable homes.’

Cambridge faces a housing crisis. This crisis will not be resolved by the new Local Plan alone. The inadequate housing supply and lack of affordable provision means that some, hit hard by housing benefit cuts, are being put up in unsatisfactory bed and breakfast accommodation as far away as Peterborough; others are paying ever higher percentages of their income in rent and housing costs. Labour believes that we need to do everything we can to build new homes, in particular more new affordable homes. The council also needs to do more to look after existing council tenants, who have been hit by years of high rent rises and a lack of investment in crucial areas, such as fencing and estate maintenance.

The housing crisis also manifests itself in terms of a dysfunctional private market. The market is orientated in favour of landlords and wealthy owner-occupiers. As a result, house prices and rents are the highest in the country, and some letting agents profiteer, charging people unnecessary and exploitative hidden fees. Tenancies are often very insecure and short-term.

Building for the Future

Labour will:

- **Maximise new council and affordable house building** – Building new council properties and maximising the supply of social and affordable housing overall is one of our top priorities. We will thoroughly investigate all potential council-owned housing development sites. For example, we will look carefully at housing-owned garage sites and underused land which can appropriately be built on and conduct proper feasibility studies to establish the suitability of such sites for further council housing. We will also consider the possibility of setting up a new council ‘housing development company’ to lead in delivering quality, new social housing for Cambridge residents, both social rented and intermediate, with the council continuing as the social landlord when new housing is delivered.
- **Expand partnerships to deliver** and fund a greater supply of social housing - Key partners will be South Cambridgeshire District Council, developers who want to partner with the Council as their affordable housing provider, Housing Associations, and other stakeholders, including housing co-operatives. The heart of this partnership will be to investigate the possibility of forming a joint venture,

Labour will:

and add expertise in development, planning and project delivery. Any projects with partners will address:

- The potential to jointly develop land with ready access to the city.
 - A fair allocations policy, including the 'choice' element for tenants.
 - Cost effective delivery, and quality housing management arrangements.
 - Limiting, where possible, social rent levels to 60% or less of market level.
 - Funding options, including external sources.
- **In redeveloping current social housing, 'demolish and rebuild' existing sites only as a last resort.** In such cases, we will also ensure that existing council tenants (and leaseholders) are properly consulted and genuinely given the opportunity to return if they wish to. Demolition schemes currently under consideration that the council is not contractually committed to – that is, the unconfirmed proposals for Lichfield Road and Campkin Road - will not proceed.
- **Not accept commuted sums in lieu of affordable house-building** in new private sector housing developments of more than 10 dwellings, and commit to a target of at least 40% affordable housing in new developments in Cambridge, except where undeliverable, with a determination to obtain 75% of these for affordable rents. In redeveloping current social housing, 'demolish and rebuild' existing sites only as a last resort. In such cases, we will also ensure that existing council tenants (and leaseholders) are properly consulted and genuinely given the opportunity to return if they wish to. Demolition schemes currently under consideration that the council is not contractually committed to – that is, the unconfirmed proposals for Lichfield Road and Campkin Road - will not proceed.

Improving how the Council manages its housing

Labour will:

- **Review the ring-fenced housing budget** (the Housing Revenue Account or HRA) to ensure all funds are effectively allocated and identify if there is an opportunity for a lower rate of rent increase in the 2015 year than the government formula recommends, as we proposed in 2014 but the Liberal Democrats blocked.
- **Adopt a target of ensuring that council owned housing land remains in council ownership for social rented homes** – Labour will not do any deals with developers that maximise private profit at the expense of our residents.
- **Double the fencing repairs budget to £200,000 per year**, making a start on tackling the estimated £1million backlog of works, giving people pride in where they live.
- **Begin a thorough review of the Council's external capital spend on homes and estates, investing funds to set up a new City Homes Improvement Programme** to focus on fixing the external environment, such as broken footpaths, repainting doors, refitting communal stairwells, and reallocate underspent budgets to best effect.
- **Investigate the possibility of setting up a 'small repairs service'** to enable tenants on low incomes, or who are registered disabled or suffering from long-term ill health, to receive help with minor repair work, such as fitting a smoke alarm, grab rails or rewiring, for a modest fee to cover labour and equipment costs.
- **Increase the number of repair apprentices**, giving employment to local young people and giving them skills that will benefit them and the council, and encourage our contractors to do the same.
- **Ensure no City Homes tenant will be evicted solely because of the 'bedroom tax'**, and review relevant council properties to see if it is possible in some cases to alter the designation of bedrooms to mitigate the impact of the policy.
- **Commit to delivering a better way of decision-making and service provision**, by creating a strong, single housing committee, and integrating housing delivery within the Council. The new arrangement will carry over the rights of elected tenant representatives on council stock management decisions.

Building a Fair Private Rental Sector

Labour will:

- **Review the council's policies towards the regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**, with a view to recognising the crucial role HMOs provide in allowing people to afford to live in the city and balancing this with the need to improve the quality and safety of HMOs.
- **Implement the policies in respect to HMOs once the new local plan is adopted**, which includes the power to refuse any planning application for new HMOs unless they have in place a proper management plan to monitor and minimise anti-social behaviour and the impact on local residents.
- **Enhanced the Landlord Accreditation scheme**, with targets set for each property's safety and minimum standards put in place, ensuring tenants can live in safe and high quality accommodation.
- **Investigate the possibility of forming a social lettings agency**, to serve the intermediate market (those struggling with rents but not at risk of homelessness) with the intention of increasing and improving the choice of private rented accommodation in the city for those in housing need. We will also support existing and new tenants in tackling the small minority of rogue landlords involved in problems such as unjust registration fees and unfair deposit arrangements.

Supporting the Homeless

Labour will:

- **Review Council policies on tackling homelessness**, focussing on prevention, mitigating its impact on the individual and families, and enabling reintegration back into permanent and secure housing.
- **Work with the County Council with the aim of boosting the supply of short-term lodging places available within the city and surrounding area for young homeless people.**
- **Improve and strengthen the council's partnership with the voluntary sector, neighbouring councils, and public authorities who work in homelessness outreach and support.**

Labour will:

- **Review the Emergency Cold Weather Protocol, which gives shelter to rough sleepers in freezing temperatures.** This review will include whether to widen the definition and terms of the protocol to cover other severe weather conditions. We will also give greater support and assistance to voluntary services that provide emergency respite to homeless people under the protocol.
- **Review and reform, where necessary, the Council's Housing Options and Advice service with the aim of improving the level of support and assistance to those at threat of homelessness or in need of emergency housing.** In addition we will accelerate preparations for the introduction of Universal Credit, enabling the council to be in a position to effectively deliver support for those private sector tenants negatively impacted by it.
- **Improve the dialogue and partnership working with private sector landlords and housing associations, by re-launching the City Council's Landlord Forum.** This will aid the City Council's preparations for Universal Credit and its impact on tenants in the private sector, prevent eviction, and help with the aim of reintegrating as many long-term homeless back into secure and permanent accommodation as possible.

4. Safety and Quality of Life

‘Labour recognises the need to balance an educative and caring approach with stronger action on the side of local residents’

Cambridge is a beautiful, historic city, a wonderful place to live. However, some find that they cannot enjoy it as much as they would like. Congestion often brings gridlock, which will need to be addressed by greater emphasis on public transport, cycling and walking. The elderly and disabled struggle to get around, particularly in the city centre, due to poor pavements, obstructions such as advertising boards, and ‘pavement-grabbing’ by businesses.

In some areas, residents feel ill-at-ease or unsafe, especially due to the behaviour of some street drinkers, who can be threatening. The Lib Dems claim to share these concerns, but have barely lifted a finger to tackle the issue. Labour recognises the need to balance an educative and caring approach with ‘tough love’ and stronger action on the side of local residents who have to live with the problem.

Making Cambridge Safer

Labour will:

- **Introduce targeted Designated Public Places Orders (DPPOs)** in areas where problem drinking and the behaviour of street drinkers is proving to be a public nuisance, subject to consultation. They will give police the powers to confiscate alcohol when necessary. If the national legislation governing DPPOs changes, we will assess the suitability of any new legal powers available.
- **Introduce a ‘Reduce the Strength’ campaign.** High-strength, low-cost lagers and ciders are legal but lethal. They steadily kill street drinkers and lead to unacceptable disorder. Labour will introduce a voluntary code of conduct, on the model of that in Ipswich, which aims to persuade retailers to stop stocking high-strength beers, lagers and ciders. This will be done within existing staffing resources.
- **Work with the police to proactively use Licence Reviews** – Stopping the supply of alcohol to the already-drunk and the underage is crucial to preventing further problems. Labour will work with the police to ensure more licence reviews occur on premises that sell irresponsibly, with a view to altering or even suspending their licences if necessary.

Labour will:

- **Value and defend diversity** - Cambridge is one of the most diverse, integrated and relaxed cities in Britain. However, both the council and community have more work to do, and Labour is committed to further measures to increase equality and promote diversity. Residents and visitors need to be free to live their lives in our city whatever their race, religion beliefs or sexuality and without fear of intimidation from groups like the English Defence League. We will work to defend any sections of our communities who are threatened by organisations preaching racism or discrimination, and work to promote mutual understanding and integration. We will also ensure our consultations reach all significant communities in Cambridge.
- **Investigate options for tackling domestic violence** – Domestic violence and abuse are horrific crimes that still largely go undetected. Building on our work to get domestic violence included as a priority in the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership's 2014-17 plan, we will review policy options available to the council to develop further initiatives to tackle this issue. This will be with a view towards gaining 'White Ribbon' status, in line with more than 50 other UK cities seeking to address the issue. As part of this, we will continue to ensure that the council supports the Women's Aid Refuge.
- **Work to take robust action against punt touts** – Punt touts can be intimidating and annoying. Labour will review current action against punt touts and strengthen it if necessary, as well as pressing Cam Conservators to take effective action.

Investing in Transport and Our Quality of Life

Labour will:

- **Support transport investment via the City Deal** – Labour supports the ‘City Deal’, which will allow us, in partnership with other local authorities, to use the proceeds of growth to invest in infrastructure, particularly transport infrastructure, in conjunction with the County transport strategy. The bid, which should secure up to £500,000,000 in funding, is essential to shift incoming and outgoing car traffic in new growth areas to non-car alternatives given that growth, not the A14 upgrade, is likely to be the major future traffic generator that threatens the city’s quality of life, if not managed properly. It will involve joint decision making with South Cambridgeshire District Council, the County Council and other partners, and a single delivery plan to integrate two Local Plans and county transport strategy. In the long term Cambridge Labour supports a single unitary authority for Cambridge. Our emphasis will be on innovative public transport solutions as well as improving cycling facilities. This will help to alleviate congestion and make the city more accessible for all. If the promised City Deal is significantly cut or delayed, we will have to examine a new strategy for filling the city’s infrastructure gap.
- **Support the A14 upgrade and keep £700,000 in the Keep Cambridge Moving Fund** – The A14 upgrade has been supported by Labour both locally and nationally despite years of delays by the Liberal Democrats and the Coalition. We will press for the early delivery of the upgrade by the next Government. However, the Lib Dems have not justified putting all the council’s spare money (£1.5m) into the Keep Cambridge Moving Fund, which is designed to ameliorate the impact of the upgrade, all in one go – they have no firm plans for it and it is meant to be a long-term commitment. However, congestion is a big issue, and, although growth is likely to be the bigger issue with regards to traffic generation, the effect of the A14 upgrade will need to be monitored. Labour will retain a substantial amount in the fund, with the option of adding more in the future, if one-off or fixed term monies are available and the need is identified.
- **Support 20mph for residential Streets** - Labour supports citywide 20mph speed limits, where residents approve of them in consultation. We will continue to raise our concerns about the lack of Lib Dem implementation planning, including our concerns that:
 - - the County Council should have been asked to contribute
 - - inadequate provision has been included for re-engineering some unsafe roads, and
 - - a clearer police commitment is needed to enforce the new speed limits from the start.

Labour will:

- **Conduct a City Centre Accessibility review** – Labour has been highlighting the difficulties of navigating the city centre for several years now. Our review will consider issues such as advertising boards and street cafes blocking pavements, poor and uneven pavements, the location and availability of disabled parking bays, and particular issues faced by some groups such as the deaf and blind. It will require partnership working with the planning department, the county council, the Cambridge BID, the city centre management team and local business to identify the problems and suggest or negotiate solutions. We will also look to ensure that the city council's own buildings are made fully accessible, where possible.
- **Introduce improvements for cyclists and pedestrians** – Labour looks forward to working with the County and the City Deal to direct new national and 'Gainshare' funding towards improving cycling safety and towards strategic infrastructural projects such as the Chisholm Trail, providing it does not have an unacceptable environmental impact, and proves deliverable. We will support increasing secure cycle parking spaces in the city centre, and implement measures to increase the removal of derelict bikes. We will also prioritise additional public secure cycle parking at community facilities, pubs and other cycling destinations, looking to ensure that the County contributes, in addition to work to ensure that hosting the Tour de France has a positive impact on cycling rates in the city. In addition, we will look to give higher priority to the protection of the rights and interests of pedestrians.
- **Support Community and Council-run events** - We will continue to support a high quality and diverse range of cultural events including the Big Weekend, the Arbury and Chesterton carnivals, the Cambridge Folk Festival (which will shortly celebrate its 50th anniversary), and other local community events.
- **Review Community centre provision** - We have some great local community centres. However, some areas of south Cambridge don't have enough, and this will be one of our future priorities for capital funding. We will also continue to look for efficiencies and savings in the operation of existing community centres where they will not detrimentally impact on service.

5. Making Cambridge Greener and Cleaner

‘We believe in helping people to do the right thing... but there has to be a stick as well as a carrot’

One of the most important functions of the council is to keep Cambridge clean and collect the bins. However, parts of Cambridge are too dirty. Neglect is felt in outlying residential areas, but parts of the city centre are a disgrace. The Liberal Democrat policy of zero enforcement against litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling has meant that a small anti-social minority has been able to act with impunity. Labour believes in educating people and helping them do the right thing, but there will always be a hard-core of people who will respond only to sanctions; unlike the Liberal Democrats, we believe that there has to be a stick as well as a carrot.

We also believe that action needs to be taken on the environment. Part of this is through reducing consumption by encouraging re-use, repair and recycling, but tackling climate change through reducing carbon emissions and mitigation also needs to be at the forefront of the agenda.

Labour will:

- **Double the Public Realm Enforcement team** – Currently, the public realm enforcement team has just three officers, which is simply inadequate. More enforcement officers are needed to conduct visible patrols, and if necessary warn, educate or fine those who drop litter, fly-tip, drop cigarette ends or fail to pick up after their dogs. Labour will double the team to six.
- **Conduct a review of Enforcement Policy** – Enforcement policy also needs to be reviewed to ensure that it is more proactive and to ensure that officers can engage robustly with those who create problems.
- **Carry out a ‘Clean it Up’ anti-dog fouling campaign** – In some parts of Cambridge dog mess is a real hazard, creating a danger for children and degrading the environment. The council currently has an overstretched part-time dog warden. Labour will make that post full-time, and conduct an extensive publicity campaign against dog-fouling, in conjunction with our tougher enforcement approach.
- **Double the programme of ‘Community Clear Out Days’** – Many residents struggle with bulky waste disposal charges. The existing ‘Clear Out’ days, involving skips to dispose of large items and community activities to clean up areas, are successful. Labour would double the number of these days, focussing on City Homes and mixed-tenancy areas.

Labour will:

- **Implement a Cleaner Cambridge blitzes campaign** – Labour will use the City Rangers, the Rapid Response Team, the Public Realm Enforcement team and the Street Cleaning team to co-ordinate ward-based 'blitzes', tackling one ward every month in rotation, working within existing budgets. This will involve focussing on wards in a concentrated fashion, conducting high-visibility enforcement sweeps on littering and dog fouling, gum removal, leaf collection, graffiti removal in certain areas, deep cleans, and educational visits.
- **Tackle cigarette litter** – In some parts of Cambridge, cigarette ends are a real issue, especially outside pubs and in the city centre. Labour will work to ensure that the public realm enforcement team, working with BID ambassadors, proactively distribute portable ashtrays. Labour will also work to encourage pubs to provide ashtrays and clear up cigarette ends from outside their premises.
- **Work with Cambridge BID to clean up the City Centre** – We will look to forge closer links with the BID, review the demarcation of responsibilities with regard to cleanliness, and look to clarify and integrate the service we offer the public, lending our support and expertise to any projects to clean up the city centre.
- **Improve maintenance and cleanliness standards in public places/parks** – At the moment, this is not good enough. Certain areas such as Jesus Green are a disgrace in summer. 'Summer bins' in parks and open spaces are not sufficient, and need to be increased in number and emptied more regularly, especially at weekends.
- **Implement a review of grass verges** – Many grass verges in the city are churned up by irresponsible parking. We will review the city's grass verges street by street, and make a systematic attempt to review how to fix the problem on a situation-by-situation basis, taking into account all possible solutions and examining integration with existing sources of funding.
- **Expand Green Fingers** – Green Fingers is an important service which helps those who are too elderly, infirm or disabled to continue working on their garden to keep it up to scratch. However, it has not been open to new customers for a while. Labour will review the service to see if it can be revitalised and opened up to new customers through partnership working.
- **Expand the range of recyclable material in blue bins** – The contract for blue bin commingled recycling expires soon, and negotiations for a new contract are ongoing. Labour will look to ensure that the new contract expands the range of recyclable material, possibly to include items such as small electrical devices, textiles, and shoes. We will also examine the viability of a separate food waste collection.
- **Review our Climate Change Strategy** – We need to ensure that tackling climate change and reducing carbon emissions are integrated into every department's routine way of thinking, because it makes not only environmental sense, but very often saves money by reducing bills and saving energy. We will work with Transition Cambridge, local residents, and local employers, including in the private and public sectors, to comprehensively review our strategy, with an aim of becoming more outward-facing on the issue.

6. Transforming the Council

‘We will have to be imaginative and innovative in finding new methods of delivering the same, or better, for less.’

Labour wants the council to interact more directly with its citizens. Area committees can be a useful tool for public engagement, but they are currently dominated by planning applications, which are of very limited interest to most people.

We also appreciate that in order to maintain our levels of service and respond to the challenges that Cambridge faces, we will have to find new savings, change the way we deliver services, and be imaginative and innovative in finding new methods of delivering the same, or better, for less.

Labour will:

- **Consultation** – We will actively engage with social media but are aware that many residents prefer traditional methods of communication. Labour will conduct a more extensive budget consultation in our first year in order to get a better view of what residents want in the context of reduced resources. This will involve both the use of more sophisticated online methods, such as the ‘Youchoose’ software, and more traditional ones, such as meetings or exhibitions.
- **Improve Area Committees** – We want area committees to be focussed upon the issues that the public wants to talk about, not what we impose on them. We want to give the public forum more prominence, and focus area committees around issues of public concern, more on the model of single-issue public meetings when necessary, though also including current items such as police priorities. We will return planning to a single central committee, while keeping the scheme of delegation the same so that residents will retain their current ability to have their say on planning applications. This will allow ward councillors to be advocates for their residents rather than being stifled by the risk of predetermination. We will review the possibility of webcasting planning meetings so that more residents will be able to easily view them.
- **Service transformation** – In order to continue to provide the best services possible with fewer resources, we have to look at new ways of delivering services. These will include sharing services with other district councils or the County (e.g. a joint operational waste centre with South Cambs), trusts (e.g. a cultural trust to reduce the cost of running the Corn Exchange), and using co-operative methods. We will focus on non-profit or social methods of transformation rather than contracting out or privatisation.

Labour will:

- **Review Public Art** – There is public concern about expenditure on public art projects that are based upon an undemocratic and opaque process. Labour will review the use of S106 monies to fund public art projects to ensure that the process is transparent, and the public get value for money.
- **Income generation** – The council needs to ensure that, when it is consistent with our wider social goals, we fully utilise the value of our skills and services, become more entrepreneurial, and maximise income generation.
- **Commercial property** – The council needs a successful and well managed commercial property portfolio to raise the income needed to support crucial services like street-cleaning and waste disposal. Labour will invest at least £2m from the capital balance of the repair and renewal fund in commercial property to create a significant additional income stream for the council.
- **Savings** – Labour identified a wide range of savings to help fund its immediate policies and priorities in its recent budget amendment. They focus on changes that will not impact on frontline services and focus on back-office savings and underspends. These include:
 - Redirecting £500k of New Homes Bonus money to the Sharing Prosperity Fund, and a further £300k to a new 'Fixed-term Project Priority Fund'.
 - Cutting at least £75k per year from the training, conferences and seminar budget, which is currently just over £300k per year and is routinely underspent.
 - Extra commercial property income from the R & R capital balance investment of £87k per year.
 - A range of other smaller savings detailed in our 2014/15 budget amendment.

The council faces some massive challenges, and it is only by working with our hardworking and talented staff that we will be able to continue to deliver the services residents need in the context of massive funding reductions. Continuing change in the way we operate is inevitable in order to allow the council to deliver more for less, but Labour will ensure that this never compromises our principles of public service and fairness. Labour is determined to deliver for all residents while prioritising projects and policies that will make a real difference to those who need our help the most.

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