

WOLVERHAMPTON LABOUR MANIFESTO 2018

Building homes and safer communities

We promised new homes – we are building them



We promised to transform Customer Services – we did and saved £1.5 million



We promised investment in Wolverhampton – we are delivering £3.8 billion worth



We promised to improve public safety – we are working hard with partners to fight crime



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Foreword by the Leader of the Labour Group



Wolverhampton, like Councils all over the country are struggling to manage their resources in the face of continued cuts from Central Government combined with rising demand for services. Despite these challenges, I am pleased to say that under Labour's control the Council has been awarded the national awards for 'Local Authority of the Year' and 'Most Improved Council' in 2017. And for the fourth year running the Labour Group has set a balanced budget without the need to use any emergency reserves.

Labour's management of the Council's resources mean that we are able to continue our successful strategy to attract investment and regenerate the city. £3.7 billion of investment is on site and planned, with good quality jobs and prosperity for local people – such as the huge Westside Scheme, new homes being built across the City, the brand new city centre market and new railway station.

Labour is having to take difficult decisions to manage the cuts to our Government grant, but wherever possible we are trying to do so without cutting essential frontline services.

Once again, the Labour Group has kept our Council Tax increase as low as possible at 3.99%, which includes the 2% precept Central Government expects councils to charge to fund adult social care.

There are continued uncertainties surrounding local government finances. Based on current forecasts, we will need to find an additional £19.5 million of cuts by 2019-2020. Cuts of this magnitude are never easy, especially as we have already made reductions of more than £200 million in the last 8 years.

Despite this, City of Wolverhampton Labour Group is determined to deliver on the priorities you have told us are important and protect essential services for our most vulnerable people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Reps Lawrence".

Leader of the City of Wolverhampton Council Labour Group



Labour's promises to you

- ✓ Build 1200 new homes both for sale and affordable rent over the next four years
- ✓ Work with our partners to fight crime and make our communities safer
- ✓ Build on the City's £3.8 billion of investments by working with the West Midlands Combined Authority to attract more investment to the region and improve our transport system
- ✓ Work with schools, colleges, the University and industry to increase the skills of local people so that they can benefit from the new jobs created
- ✓ Continue working to make the City's cultural heritage assets (e.g. the Civic Halls, Bantock House, the Art Gallery and Bilston Craft Gallery) commercially viable to avoid forced closure due to the cuts
- ✓ Competently and carefully manage Council services and finances despite Government cuts to the Council's Grant of over 50%
- ✓ Continue to improve and modernise our children and adults care services to protect the most vulnerable in our community
- ✓ Improve people's experience of dealing with the Council by the transformation of our customer service centre and the creation of an industry leading digital platform
- ✓ **Work for a fairer Wolverhampton for all**

Labour believes our city deserves a brighter future

Working on Westside – our £55 million leisure development



- ✓ Work is starting on our Westside Leisure Quarter. Westside will bring £55 million investment into the city and c. 500 jobs. Featuring a range of leisure, food and drink, outlets with a 9-screen cinema, new multi-storey car park and high-quality public square.
- ✓ We will build i9 Office accommodation opposite our successful i10 development. It will provide 50,000 square feet of stunning Grade A office space for a national or regional headquarters for a major business when completed in 2020 and will deliver around 300 jobs.
- ✓ We are developing Bilston Urban Village: The new Marston's pub/restaurant opened December 2017. Kier are on site building the first phase of residential development on the Urban Village - 78 units due to complete by April 2018, some four months ahead of original programme. In addition work is on site to implement recreational and biodiversity improvements funded by the Council and European funds.

Labour believes that jobs and skills are worth investing in

Learning the right skills for the new jobs in Wolverhampton



- ✓ Labour will continue to support access and inclusion through our Adult Education Service. 2,800 attended courses in 2016/17 academic year, of which 54% were from a BME background, 52% were from the 9 most deprived wards of Wolverhampton and 31% were unemployed and looking for work.
- ✓ Our Wolverhampton Charter sets the standard for employers seeking to do business with the Council and our partners.
- ✓ Labour supports Wolves at Work which is a joint programme with DWP to get 3000 local people into work over a 3 years period, 1000 of which will be young people. The programme is already above target with 2013 people into work in less than one year.
- ✓ Your Labour run Council launched Workbox in June 2017, as the virtual front door to skills and employment support, resulting in over 92,000 unique visits to the site and over 2200 residents have signed up online. 90 organisations now promote their offer on Workbox.

Labour believes in building great transport links



- ✓ Interchange – preparatory works for the rebuilding of our railway station have already begun to give the city a gateway it deserves and allow easy connections between train, bus and Metro.
- ✓ Labour support the introduction of bicycles for rent which are about to be introduced to Wolverhampton for the first time.
- ✓ Labour has supported a £1 flat rate bus fare before 9.30 a.m. for holders of concessionary bus passes and we are extending the 500 free city centre bus route to Sainsbury's
- ✓ We are putting measures in place to meet air quality targets and reduce vehicle pollution in the city
- ✓ We have supported the new rail link to Walsall being introduced by West Midlands Trains

Labour cares for our children and our older people



- ✓ Your Labour Council has led the way in establishing a Black Country adoption agency adoption@heart
 - ✓ It will revolutionise the way adoption services are run and speed up the adoption process.
 - ✓ We have already reduced the time taken by 30% over the last four years.
 - ✓ Our early intervention work continues to help families and children greatly .
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- ✓ Labour supports the development of our re-ablement service which helps people regain capabilities they have lost – perhaps due to an extended stay in hospital so they can get back their independence.
 - ✓ Extend further the use of telecare – emergency alarms, fall detectors, smoke and food sensors - to ensure people can live independently longer.

Labour believes in building safer communities



- ✓ Labour is working with our partners through the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership to provide early interventions to deter young people from carrying blade weapons.
 - ✓ We are supporting critical call out mediation services to reduce tensions and escalation of violence
 - ✓ We are working with partners to combat domestic abuse and hate crime
 - ✓ We are focussing too on higher incidence crimes such as vehicle crime, burglary and shop lifting
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- ✓ We continue to fund The Way Youth Zone after the Tory cuts forced us to close own much of our Youth Service – its membership is now over 2,900 young people
 - ✓ Labour is working to tackle the rising problem of genuine rough sleeping – up from just 8 in 2014 to around 20 in the City today.
 - ✓ Labour is trying to tackle illegal street activity such as begging without penalising genuine rough sleepers
 - ✓ Labour supports the establishment of the Alternative Giving Campaign to ensure that donations get to those who genuinely need it. At <http://www.wolverhamptonchange.co.uk>

Labour believes in building new homes

Working on the first WV Living homes at Danesmore Pastures



- ✓ Labour has set up WV Living to build much needed new homes. The first 52 out of 1200 have been started. The 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes are being built on the site of the former Danesmore Primary School site in Ashmore Park.
- ✓ Labour is ensuring that WV Living uses local building contractors and provides apprenticeship opportunities
- ✓ 4,500 new homes will be built in Wolverhampton by 2020/21 of which the Council will build over a quarter and private developers the rest.

- ✓ Labour's priority is to reduce the council house waiting list. Labour has ensured that 480 of the new homes we build will be for affordable rent through Wolverhampton Homes. The rest will be for sale or shared ownership to make our programme affordable

Only Labour believes in a fair deal for our City

- ✓ Your Labour Council has set a balanced budget for the 4th year running without the need to dip into emergency reserves. This was achieved by a mixture of efficiencies, income generation and financial measures.
- ✓ Wolverhampton will have one of the lowest council tax increases in the country at 1.99% and the social care charge, which Government require us to collect will go up by only 2% (compared with the new Government limits of 2.99% and 3% respectively).
- ✓ The Council still must find further budget reductions of £19.5 million by 2019/20 to balance the books on top of the £200 million found over the last 7 years to meet Tory Government grant cuts
- ✓ Under Labour Wolverhampton's finances are in good hands with a recent external review. finding "evidence of strong leadership, prudent financial management and innovation".

**Labour will continue to lobby to get
Wolverhampton fair funding from the Government**

Vote  Labour