

Labour Manifesto 2007

A Cleaner, Safer, Fairer Leicester

Ending 4 years of Lib Dem/Conservative failure

7 Labour Pledges for 2007

7-4-7

1. Zero tolerance on crime and grime

We will show zero tolerance on crime and anti-social behaviour, on grime, litter, graffiti, and empty housing. We will employ new *City Wardens* to be the eyes, ears and hands of the Council in achieving this.

2. A greener city

We will plant 10,000 trees, improve our parks, invest in clean energy & reduce pollution. We want to protect the planet for all our futures, & make Leicester the most sustainable city in Britain.

3. The Pensioners Passport

We will give pensioners free travel on the buses, a discount to the DeMontfort Hall, the new Performing Arts Centre, and all Leicester City Council leisure centres.

4. A working city

Create *City Development Company* to regenerate the City and local neighbourhoods and create more jobs in Leicester.

5. A connected city

We will improve the bus station. Introduce **3 further Park 'n' Ride** schemes introduce greener electric buses, single ticketing- the *Leicester Card* which can be used on all city buses.

6. A Leicester for children and culture

We will make Leicester a child friendly city, by building a new *Children's Hub* in the city centre, and making new and well maintained play areas a priority. We will improve our leisure centres, museums & libraries, by extending their opening hours. We will build on the good race relations in the city ensuring we have one city working together for all communities.

7. A Laptop for all Primary school children

We will give access to a laptop for every primary school child: providing informal learning through the internet. We will improve the achievement of all our children, to equal that of the best in comparable cities. We will put schools at the heart of our communities and make school facilities available out of hours to local people.

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Its time for a Change!

Lib-Dem Tory run Leicester means one disaster after another wasting your money. Remember the £4million cuts to community organisations, followed by the High Court decision that forced the Lib Dems and Tories to reverse some of them. The transport review which was supposed to save £1m but instead cost £500,000. The review of community centres and education which cost £3.5million resulting in poor quality services.

Are these the people we can trust to run our city?

The Lib Dems and Tories have lost their way. They are riven with infighting, their administration collapsed in 2004 and Labour stepped in for 6 months to pick up the pieces and save the regeneration plans for the city. Since then 7 Lib Dems have left their Party in disgust with their party's failure to deliver its promises. The Tory Leader has played 'fast and loose' by crossing the floor to the Libs then back to the Tories. And he has now gone altogether in disgrace.

Are these the people we can trust to run our city?

Now we face the sight of more chaos in the city centre as the streets are dug up, yet again with no apparent plan. £millions is spent on granite from China, when it is quarried in our own County! And we are no nearer to seeing the promised park and ride schemes to ease congestion than we were 4 years ago! Did you know that they gave back £5million of European funding that could have given greener energy to Leicester.

Are these the people we can trust to run our city?

Did you vote Lib Dem in the last elections? If you did we don't think you would have wanted to end up seeing the Council run by Conservatives. That is what has happened. Don't let it happen again.

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Our Priorities

This Manifesto sets out Labour's policies and priorities. They are based on our belief in social justice, and our knowledge of Leicester and its communities, and what you, the people of Leicester, have been telling us.

Labour Can win: our track record

On local issues Labour is the only party with a track record of low Council tax and good services for a successful city. It was Labour who brought to the city the Shires shopping Development, the Performing Arts Centre, and Braunstone Leisure Centre.

- You can trust Labour to run the City we kept our promise on council tax when we had power for 6 months we introduced the lowest ever tax rise.
- We are combating crime and making the city safer, *the Lib Dems are weak on crime and have consistently opposed, in Parliament, measures to combat Anti-social Behaviour.*
- Schools are improving faster than anywhere else in the region thanks to investment from a Labour Government. £230million will be invested in 15 secondary schools. Many completely rebuilt.
- Thousands of jobs are being created because of Labour's work on regeneration. It was Labour who kick started the regeneration of our City with the Regeneration Company, the Shires expansion, The Cultural Quarter, The conversion of Charles St Police Station, and the developments on the waterfront.
- Labour started and delivered improvements to Council housing: 58,000 new windows and 4000 new doors - tenants are safe with Labour. We stopped plans to sell off the council housing
- The elderly and young people get the best deal under Labour: eg Sure Start and concessionary fares, *the Lib Dems & Tories have blocked concessionary fares.*

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- Labour created a city that is at ease with itself. Our reputation for community cohesion and good race relations was built on Labour's support for community Groups. No like the Tories and Lib Dems who axed dozens of groups and £4 million from community organisations in their first year in office.
- Labour has built new Health Centres, in St Peter's, Braunstone, Westcotes, Highfields, Rowley Fields and work is starting in Belgrave.
- Labour invested in and improved Leicester Market
- We reduced the time to remove abandoned cars from 21 days to 24 hours, introduced the clean up campaign
- Rushey Mead Green Academy has been opened with an investment of £3million replacing many of the mobile classrooms
- We have opened the first new customer service centres in New Parks
- Leicester was leading the way on climate change until the Lib Dem Troy regime. Labour will regain that lead.

Our Vision for a Shared Future

Labour will make Leicester a Green, Clean, Safe and fair City for everyone. A city with a prosperous future, with regeneration at the centre of what we do, with better schools, housing, transport, more jobs, and better leisure centres, libraries, and museums. We will reduce pollution and improve recycling to protect our health and our children's future. Labour will harness the strength of our diverse communities creating a shared future for all. We will set out a 25 year plan for the City of Leicester to make it the most sustainable city in Britain, built on economic success, environmental quality and social justice.

The Principles that will underpin our service delivery

A Labour Council will deliver services based on the following principles:

Services that are accessible

- Services provided as close as possible to where people live through the use of one-stop shops and relevant technologies at times when people want them, rather than at times that are convenient to the council or other organization.
- Advice and information about all Council services available from a single contact point
- Services designed so that financial disadvantage and social exclusion are not a barrier to access.

High quality services

- Services will be customer focused – designed to meet the needs of individuals and to provide the quality that service users expect
- Services will empower rather than devalue individuals, giving the maximum degree of choice and control to the user of the service
- Service users will be trusted to be involved in identifying, shaping and monitoring the performance of services
- The Council will set out clearly what services it will provide and the levels of service people are entitled to receive with procedures for fair redress where the levels of service are not achieved
- Key performance indicators will be monitored monthly and areas of poor performance tackled
- A high standard of customer care will be expected from all staff employed by the Council and by employees of other bodies that deliver services on behalf of the Council

Services that meet individual needs

- Services will respect cultural and community diversity and be anti-discriminatory
- Charging and subsidy policies will be designed to ensure that groups are not excluded, disadvantaged or discriminated against and have full access to services
- Services will be designed to achieve environmental, economic and social sustainability.

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Services that meet the needs of specific areas

In a Labour run council, Ward Committees will be trusted with a real job to do, with decision-making and service provision devolved to local level. There will be a substantial devolution of budgets and new ways of working to **22 ward Committees**. We will delegate greater powers to Ward Committees in:

- Environmental services, such as road and pavement repairs, litter and street cleansing, grass cutting and ground maintenance, parks and playing fields.
- Road safety and local traffic and transport issues.
- Leisure services
- Play and youth services

Our pledges in more detail

1. Zero tolerance on:

- **on crime and Grime dealing with anti-social behaviour**, through introducing **City Wardens** Combining litter/parking/street wardens, dealing with abandoned cars, illegal street trading, street drinking. Working closely with the police. Each warden would act in many ways to deal with problems as and when they occur, improved street lighting, CCTV, Improve, dramatically pavement repairs.
- **grime, litter and graffiti**; keeping Leicester clean, Eliminate all Graffiti Grot-spots and , fly-tipping and fly-posting, look at introducing do-it-yourself graffiti removal kits with advice and support to clean private properties.
- **on empty housing**, bring back into occupation every home possible through the powers the council has. Stop the break up of family housing into bedsits Develop affordable family homes to tackle over crowding. Use Council land to help build homes to rent and to buy. Make use of Brownfield land including empty garages and back land sites to regenerate our estates. Create mixed tenure. Homes that help young families and people who want to get a home of their own get on the property ladder. Explore the use of Community Land Trusts, Mutual Home Ownership and self build initiatives to help provide affordable homes. Produce, with partners, Estate Development Plans. Speed up the time people get aids and adaptations to their homes. Reduce repair appointment times and need for return visits. Offer handyperson service free for first 2 hours then charge. Ensure all gardens are kept to a good standard. We will keep Council housing in council control, and achieve decent homes standard by 2010, can you trust other parties to do this?
- **on waste**: sorting out the mess left by Lib Dems & Tories root out waste and inefficiency, sort out the financial mess left by the Lib Dems/Tories and use these gains to **keep the Council Tax down**
- **on poor health**, helping people live longer, using leisure centres to encourage exercise, healthy eating in schools, support to give up smoking. It is totally unacceptable that if

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you live in some parts of the city your life expectancy is up to 5 years less than in other parts of the city. We will work closely with Leicester City PCT to do all we can improve the health of Leicester's citizens.

2. The Pensioners Passport

Delivering free travel on the buses, and discounted access to DeMontfort Hall, the new Performing Arts Centre, Leisure centres. Ensure that advice and help is provided. Explore getting the Citizens Advice Bureau back in Leicester. Ensuring older people can stay in their own homes when they want to through, adaptations, help and support. Protect the meals on wheels service. Ensure that there is sufficient sheltered accommodation to meet future need. Look at introducing a city-wide **Care and Repair** scheme for pensioners homes. Work with elderly and disabled people to ensure they can get Digital TV when it replaces the analogue system. We will ensure that carers both young and older are supported.

3. Greening the city

Making **Leicester the most sustainable city in Britain** through delivering on our **Climate Change Strategy**: Planting 10,000 trees, improving parks, more plants and flowers, reducing pollution, using clean energy and protecting the planet for all our futures, Increase recycling and energy efficiency, set up an **Energy Company**. Ensuring renewable energy is used in all council buildings. Pilot *Eco Streets* programme increasing pedestrianisation through secure off road parking sites in residential areas. Expand the *Hot-Lofts* scheme and look at increased grant schemes to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty. Improve the quality and appearance of shopping precincts on estates. Use planning powers to increase sustainable development, and carbon neutral buildings. Re-organise the council structure to reduce carbon emissions, helping to create low energy homes and businesses. We will work to ensure that the regeneration of the city increases the amount of green public space.

4. A working city

Creating a **City Development Company** to drive forward the regeneration of Leicester creating jobs for all our communities, both in

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the inner city and the outer estates. In the meantime we will continue our support the regeneration Masterplan and will continue to drive this forward making Leicester a prosperous city, with the Science Park, the Office Quarter, the Waterfront, Retail and New Community zones. Work with business and developers to get high quality development, setting a benchmark standard for all future developments with what is built now. Protecting and enhancing our built heritage and providing the infrastructure and quality urban design to encourage inward investment. Supporting the creation of apprenticeships and training, improving the skills of our workforce. We will work closely with both Universities who are investing millions of pounds in Leicester ensuring that we do all that we can to ensure they move from strength to strength. We will ensure that the gateways into the city are improved and that the remaining run down areas are regenerated. Labour will be ambitious for Leicester and drive forward the regeneration that we started recognising that it is as much about people, skills and quality of life as bricks and mortar.

5. A connected city

Affordable comfortable and clean public transport is essential for Leicester to have a successful future. Improving buses and re-organising and integrating St Margarets Bus station and Charles St. Introduce electric buses and Council vehicles, to improve air quality; single ticketing:- the **Leicester Card**, similar to the 'Oyster Card' in London. Relieve congestion through the Introduction of **Park and Ride** schemes in the Fosse Park area, Birstall and Glenfield. Improve bus lanes and cycle routes. We will look at how we can improve the way the ring road works making the city more accessible. We will make our roads and pavements safer, with 20mph zones at schools, pedestrian crossings and improved repairs to pavements. We pledge to work effectively with the County and District Councils to ensure transport improvements are implemented. We will encourage car-sharing schemes.

We will ensure that people with disabilities have access to services and facilities and that their needs are taken into account when we plan.

6. A Leicester for Children Communities and Culture

Make Leicester a child friendly city, A new **Children's Hub** in the city centre, which will be new purpose built centre for children & Young people in the city centre, planned with and by

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young people. – combining internet café, with social & leisure facilities, and nursery and crèche facilities for younger children. We will invest in new and improved play areas, with more green space and a variety of equipment for different age groups.

Our approach to diversity and community cohesion will be: **One city with many faces**: a Leicester for all communities living together. We will concentrate on bringing people together and creating an understanding of difference. Celebrating the many cultural and religious traditions in the city plays an important part in encouraging cohesion and we will continue to support the many festivals. We will never take for granted the good race relations that Leicester enjoys and continue to work to improve understanding and respect. We will promote a sense of civic pride so that all citizens are proud to belong to our City. We consult properly with communities and not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

Festivals play an important part in the City's cultural life. We will bring back the **Caribbean Carnival** and invest in other festivals. Lets see if we can bring back the **Abbey Park Music Festival**. We will support LeicesterHer day and look at how new festivals and events might benefit communities that do not have their own at present. We will end the rising cost of the Performing Arts centre with better management bringing in projects on budget and on time, as we did with the Braunstone Leisure Centre. Continue with the replacement for the Phoenix, and the rest of the Cultural Quarter. Consult properly on Public art. Review twinning arrangements to ensure we get the best out of them and they are funded properly.

We will improve our leisure facilities, Museums & Libraries, with increased opening hours, reinstating the cuts made by the Lib Dems and Tories. Access to our museums will remain free.

With The Olympics approaching we will use this opportunity to promote all forms of sports for a healthy, inclusive and fun city.

We will ensure that we have a constructive relationship with the voluntary sector. We recognise the important role voluntary organisations play in our city. We will not set about the

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wholesale demolition of voluntary organisations as did the Lib Dems & Tories when they took office in 2003.

We will establish an understanding based on a written agreement and ensure that funding is fair and transparent.

7. A Laptop for every 7 year old at school

Providing access to a world of knowledge, and informal learning. Improving the achievement of all our children. Standards of education are still too low in Leicester. We will work with schools, parents and children to ensure that our education standards are equal to the best in comparable cities, through better learning and teaching. Extending access to school buildings for community use, with every school at the heart of the community. We will continue the secondary school rebuilding programme with £230 million of Labour Government investment rebuilding 15 secondary schools, and seek to extend this to include primary schools. We will make adult learning available across the city. We will invest in and improve the youth service.

More detailed plans for the implementation of our manifesto will be developed once we are in office.

“Plan without fear or compromise”

I.K. Brunel