

Liverpool

# **Liberal Democrat Manifesto**

Our plan to clean up Liverpool

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# Foreword

## To the People, Organisations, and businesses of Liverpool

Dear Friend,

On the 4<sup>th</sup> May this year we have the opportunity to begin working on the transformation of our great city. As Liberal Democrats, we have a long and proud tradition of serving the people of Liverpool.

We are the only party who can oust Labour from power.

Elections in Liverpool now take place every 4 years. The following manifesto outlines our plans to take our city to 2027.

You may have seen our 'six to fix' already – our immediate priorities to kickstart the regeneration and clean up of Liverpool.

If you want change in Liverpool, there is only one way to do it – vote for your Liberal Democrat candidates on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

We hope that we can count on your support.

Kind regards,



CLlr Richard Kemp

Liverpool Liberal Democrats Leader



Lord Mike Storey

Liverpool Liberal Democrats Chair

# Our Six to Fix

The Liberal Democrats are the party of local government and believe the most important issues are the ones that affect people on a daily basis. Residents in the city want good services at a good price. When the Liberal Democrats ran Liverpool City Council, we ensured that residents got a great service and paid low council tax. Our six to fix are...

## 1. Getting the basics right

Bins emptied regularly, pot holes mended, trees pruned, working street lights and pavements swept.

## 2. Delivering value for money

Make sure the council spends your money wisely & collects what is owed - Not just expecting Council Tax Payers to pay more.

## 3. Caring for our environment

Make our city attractive for walking, cycling & public transport. Car charging points, better recycling of plastic, food & garden waste.

## 4. Protecting our communities

We will work for our city, not for developers. Protecting our Green Spaces & not afraid to say NO to poor quality developments.

## 5. Attracting jobs and investment

Restore Liverpool's reputation. We will deal with businesses & investors honestly & transparently - No more backroom deals with the chosen few.

## 6. Honesty and transparency

Open, accountable and free of corruption. We will ensure the council consults with communities and genuinely listens to you.

# Why is Liverpool in this position?

Liverpool's Labour Party have cost Liverpool taxpayers up to £500,000,000

**This year will see Liverpool face its biggest set of local elections for a generation. All wards will be up for election with new ward boundaries. The City has found itself in this position due to the recommendation of the Caller Report and the failings of its Labour Council.**

It is widely recognised that the Labour Party has cost the people of Liverpool the staggering sum of **£500,000,000** which they have lost, failed to collect, wasted, or written off as bad debts since 2010.

On 1<sup>st</sup> March this year, Labour councillors voted to write off

**£228,000,000** of bad debts but there could be another **£50,000,000** on top of this. Labour have already written off almost **£100,000,000** in recent years.

Liverpool has the worst council tax collection rate in the Country as it failed to understand the difference between can't pay and won't pay. Last year we discovered that the council had been treating older private landlords as "vulnerable" bill payers, failing to collect millions as a result.

Liverpool Labour overspent **£13,500,000** on the Lime Street

road remodelling which will incur **£6,500,000** of interest payments.

It failed to collect **£4,500,000** of cash from developers and did not even issue invoices for up to **£7,000,000** that they could have collected.

A failure to fix electricity charges last year which we now know cost at least **£7,500,000**.

**On top of this waste we have also seen a staggering disregard for the rules, with Labour Councillors using the 'back door' to get out of parking fines. It is one rule for them and another for the people of this City.**

# Our priorities

- ✓ **Fixing the corruption, cronyism, and waste of the Labour years**
- ✓ **Fixing the environment**
- ✓ **Fixing the gap between the Council and its residents**
- ✓ **Fixing our education system**
- ✓ **Fixing employment opportunities**
- ✓ **Caring for those in most need**



# Fixing the Corruption and waste of the Labour years

## Background

Liverpool is a city of firsts – the first city to have a Director of Public Health in Doctor Duncan. Now we have hit the headlines for being the first council to warrant 2 major police investigations.

## Our Solution

On taking office, Liberal Democrats would immediately make sure that money owing to the council is collected – £230 million is currently owed to the council from uncollected debts. This will never happen again under our watch.

## What Residents Say

*'Liverpool is now the capital of corruption and Councillors seem more concerned about lining their own pockets than serving our great City.'*

# Fixing the environment

## Background

Liverpool has low recycling rates, poor air quality and badly thought out traffic schemes.

## Our Solution

We will ensure more recycling and active travel. We must also monitor and improve our air quality in our City.

## What Residents Say

*"I am disgusted that the Council only recycles twenty six percent of the Blue Bin rubbish and now they are charging us for our Green Bin collection"*







# Fixing the gap between the Council and its residents

## Background

Liverpool's greatest asset is its people - who are routinely ignored by Labour.

## Our Solution

We would ensure that decisions are made openly, after genuine consultation. Above all, the people of Liverpool will be listened to.

## What Residents Say

*"I don't feel like the Council listens to my concerns. I took part in the Mayoral consultation and the Council ignored our views anyway."*

# Fixing our education system

## Background

Educational attainment in our City has been in decline since 2010.

## Our Solution

We will work with parents, teachers and teaching unions to ensure that educational excellence is a byword in our City. Above all, we will listen and work with pupils themselves.

## What Residents Say

*'Our children are the future and I want to live in a City where we have schools we can be proud of.'*



# Fixing employment opportunities

## Background

Liverpool had a huge boost in employment opportunities when it was Capital of Culture.

## Our Solution

We will work again to ensure high quality opportunities are available for all, including quality apprenticeships.

We will work with our three universities and the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine to fast track business development based on the research.

## What Residents Say

*'So many young people leave the City for better jobs. I want my son to stay in Liverpool but I also want him to have the job he deserves'*

# Caring for those most in need

## Background

Liverpool is above all a caring city and the Council must reflect this.

## Our Solution

We will work with the NHS to ensure that everyone can access help, whether in their own home or in good quality respite or long-term care. We will promote active policies to keep all of us safe a healthy.

## What Residents Say

*I feel like the Council and health services don't communicate and I get so frustrated trying to care for my sick husband.*



# Meet some of our candidates



## Rebecca Turner

Candidate for Waterfront South

I am a Physics student in the University of Liverpool. I believe the City Council should utilise the university sector to develop good skills and jobs. Liverpool needs to be a city for the future which holds onto talented graduates.

## Carl Cashman

Candidate for Church Ward

As a young professional working in finance it's important to me that the City Council can balance its books. This hasn't happened for several years and we have seen terrible mismanagement of the City's money.



## Dr Shiv Pande

Candidate for Edge Hill Ward

As a GP in Edge Hill for 40 years I want to look at the crisis in health and social care and make sure that there are options for everyone, from respite care, rehabilitation and long-term care.

## Karen Afford

Candidate for Walton Ward

As a former primary school teacher assistant, I understand the vital importance of getting education right in our city. We need to prioritise good school attainment in Liverpool, and make sure children get the education they deserve.



## Josie Mullen

Candidate for Broadgreen Ward

As a councillor I worked to ensure that environmental issues were at the top of the agenda. I want to put the green agenda at the heart of the council again because it is vital for our health, our economy and our planet's future.

## Howard Winik

Candidate for Waterfront North

As a former independent chair of the Standards Committee of Liverpool Council I am appalled at the way that standards have slipped hugely under Labour control. The liberal democrats will work from day one to ensure integrity, honesty and transparency.







Liverpool

# **Liberal Democrat Manifesto Appendices**

Our plan to clean up Liverpool



# Getting the money right

We will ensure that never again does £228 million in council tax go uncollected.

If in power, we would have a monthly report on any outstanding debt. It will be a priority to ensure that it is collected in a efficient and timely manner.

## **Making our Council financially effective:**

- We will collect the monies owed to us in council tax
- We will publish honest annual financial reports
- We will make the minutes of the Audit Committee public for full transparency
- We will create a culture of accountability
- We will make committees open for public viewing
- We will provide regular and detailed reports on shareholdings, contracts and partnerships to ensure rigour and honesty

# Creating a city of villages led by its citizens

## A unique and sustainable approach to the development and management of our City

Liverpool is not just one place. It is an interlocking set of communities, neighbourhoods, villages, and districts. People live in Walton and Woolton, Allerton and Aigburth, Kirkdale and Everton.

We will support local communities in bringing together the public sector, voluntary organisations, community groups and local businesses to enhance, energise and invigorate our communities.

Develop integrated community-based housing strategies focussing on ensuring each area has housing stock suitable for:

- First time Buyers
- Families
- Retirees
- Special needs accommodation
- Social housing

We need to empower communities to make decisions about their local area. To do this, we would set up community forums where decisions can be made and where the council can be challenged and ideas exchanged.



# Caring for those in most need

We will focus on improving the longer term health of our community, including ways to promote lifelong good health. Promoting school breakfast clubs, walking groups and community activities will feature among the strategies.

We will also ensure that those who need care, whether young or old can access quality care easily and quickly.

Too many children enter a 'care system' which takes them away from their family and communities. Often this has meant far away placements with children being moved to outside private sector providers outside the City Region Boundaries.

## Adult Social Care

All community facilities such as parks, community centres, and libraries will be examined to see whether they could do more at relatively little extra cost.

A strategy for residential, home based and hub and spoke drop-in centres aligned to existing hospitals will be created to reduce so-called bed blocking and get people back to health.

Develop a wider range of respite care options for older people.

## Children Social Care

We will use the recently announced increase in childcare cash to develop and roll out a nursery creche system.

From the outset we will start setting in place measures, including council run children's homes, so that, except in exceptional circumstances, the placement of children into private sector residential accommodation will be dramatically reduced to give children a better experience and spend the budget more wisely.

We will work with families to develop individualised strategies for them and their family which can attend holistically to a child's needs utilising not only social care staff but other public services.

We will also develop a wider range of respite care options to enable parents at the end of their tether some relief from the ongoing tiredness they have caring for an ill or troubled child.

# Empowering the people of Liverpool in their communities

## **We will recognise the importance of councillors as champions of the community.**

- Councillors will be supported in arranging regular open-to-all forums in their ward attended by representatives from the Local GP Surgery group, Police Officer, Local Businesses, volunteer groups, charities and schools.

## **Diversity will be at the Heart of our City:**

- Liberal Democrats are uniquely placed to ensure that this diverse and welcoming City brings all interests to the heart of government. We have diversity in our DNA.
- We will actively look to ensure that Groups representing the entire spectrum of this wonderful city are invited and brought into the heart of government and ensure that everyone has a voice through these groups.
- We will actively look to empower individuals who want to get involved by publishing a list of organisations and activities in each ward allowing people access to useful ways of getting involved in local life without having to worry about being “Political.”

## **Citizens Advisory Assemblies:**

- On an annual basis the council will invite stakeholders from across the city to meet in the Council Chamber for a ‘State of the City’ debate and debate and recommend a group of actions based on a series of themes developed on the back of Ward Forums.
- The council will undertake to look at ways in which recommendations can be adopted in a sustainable financially responsible manner and report progress on the previous years recommendations at each forum.

# Creating an educational base of excellence

The education picture in Liverpool is good in parts. There is tremendous amounts of hard work from teachers and assisting staff, an increase of 6.5% achieving a standard pass in English and maths at GCSE, and some progress on looking at children's mental health. In addition, 33% of Secondary Schools are rated below good. Attendance remains an issue as does teacher recruitment and retention.

## Liverpool's key education challenges

### Early Years Education

378 fewer pupils are achieving a good level of development compared to national levels.

### Children's Centres

Cutbacks in the amount of centres, and the range of provision

### Key stage Two

The standards are falling. Liverpool fell thirteen places in percentile rankings for English, maths and writing between 2018 – 2022 from 80<sup>th</sup> to 93<sup>rd</sup>.

### OFSTED

33% of secondary schools are rated below good

### Poor attendance

This remains a problem, particularly at secondary school level.

# Creating an educational base of excellence

Our key ideas and solutions for schools

## Develop early numeracy and literacy skills

Enhance the existing pre and post school 'Kids Clubs' with recently announced money from the Government to provide more fun reading and maths activities.

## Child friendly Liverpool

Liberal Democrats would prioritise making Liverpool a UNICEF Child Friendly City with the rights of and support for children at the heart of every policy.

Create a council partnership with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library so that every child in the city owns their own books and has the opportunity to develop a love of reading.

## Provide strong pastoral care in all our schools

Pupil well-being is just as important as academic success and they complement each other. We will ensure all schools have designated people that pupils can turn to if they need help and that they are publicised in school. We will promote well-being hubs in schools.

## Breakfast clubs

A hungry child cannot learn. All children should have simple breakfasts available to them before starting school and reading materials to promote literacy in a relaxed and fun way.

## Utilise the cultural capital of Liverpool

Liverpool has huge cultural facilities from its galleries to its museums from its theatres to its art galleries. We will give every child a 'culture passport' to carry throughout their school career.

# A City with high quality, well-paid and sustainable jobs

**We will create a new city plan, working with communities, voluntary organisations, universities, schools and businesses.**

We will capitalise on the Eurovision Song Contest to raise the city profile and attract inward investment. We will co-ordinate with industries in the renewable, maritime, engineering, healthcare and knowledge sectors.

## **From Free Ports to Sustainable Jobs and Industries:**

We are concerned about the Freeport and the recently announced Enterprise Zone. Past experience in the city shows that Enterprise Zones mostly move employment around to tax favourable areas rather than creating new and sustainable jobs. The Freeport runs the great risk of bringing dodgy practices, tax evasion

and poor employment practices into the city.

We will within 12 months:

1. Establish a Free Port Council Coordination Committee led by all councils in our Freeport to coordinate crime prevention, best practice adoption and 'Lessons Learnt' driven policies.
2. Create a Free Port Strategy ensuring that its works meets all Council development targets and infrastructure proposals in aiding these economic zones.

## **Assisting with the creation of new startup businesses:**

We will establish a startup strategy with particular emphasis on the creation of links with the intellectual and research activities of our three Universities and the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

In partnership with the private sector develop a start-up zone involving well connected Category A office space, regular networking, and' Commercial Partnership Forums.

We will appoint a Start-up Czar to coordinate and report on the progress and implementation, lessons learnt and updating of the Start-up strategy.

