

# CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL LABOUR ANNUAL STATEMENT 2019

## FIVE COMMITMENTS TO DELIVER *ONE CAMBRIDGE, FAIR FOR ALL*

This Annual Statement sets out the Council's ambitions for the year 2019/20 and five core commitments.

### COMMITMENT ONE - WE WILL TACKLE INEQUALITY AND SHARE THE CITY'S PROSPERITY

#### **In 2019/20 the City Council will:**

Help Cambridge residents who need us the most with targeted projects to tackle inequality, and fund and support voluntary organisations helping disadvantaged people.

#### Cambridge - A Tale of Two Cities

Our city remains one of the most unequal in the country. Data from the think tank Centre for Cities suggests that, in 2018, 6% of earners took 19% of the total income generated by the city, with the bottom fifth of earners making up just 2% of Cambridge's income last year. There is a ten-year difference in life expectancy between the most prosperous and more deprived neighbourhoods of the city.

Cambridge is the fifth-worst city in the UK for social mobility outcomes, particularly for children from lower income families, despite a fast-growing economy and two-thirds of our residents possessing a degree.

These differences have been hugely worsened by the cruel austerity agenda of successive governments over the last nine years, which has decimated our public services, starving them of funds and – together with swingeing cuts to welfare benefits – have made many people's lives more insecure and challenging.

#### Creating One City Fair for All

The Council will, as our central priority, continue efforts to build one city that is fair for all. It believes the levels of inequality experienced, as described above, is simply not acceptable. We will continue into the 2020s our vital work over the last five years, through our Anti-Poverty Strategy, to help improve the standard of living and daily lives of Cambridge households on the lowest incomes.

We have invested over £1.6 million since 2014 in targeted initiatives including:

- Helping people get online and develop their digital skills;
- Promoting financial inclusion, supporting credit unions, allowing residents to avoid loan sharks and payday lenders;
- Outreach advice for people with mental health issues as a result of low income and debt, and

- Addressing fuel and water poverty through the promotion of smart meters, collective energy switching and other efficiency measures.

This is in addition to funding of over £4.5 million to community groups targeting help and advice to Cambridge people in need, and over £3 million for groups helping the homeless since Labour took control of the Council in 2014.

### Campaigning for All Employers to Pay a Real Living Wage

Payment by Cambridge employers of at least the Real Living Wage is a central Council priority. The administration proposed, when in opposition in early 2012, that the Council pay the Real Living Wage rate to its employees, to staff employed by its contractors and subcontractors, and to promote it widely amongst local businesses. The Council completed the Living Wage Foundation's formal accreditation process in 2014, and we will continue to fund a member of staff to lead work on persuading wider city employers to do the same.

Since 2014, the number of Cambridge businesses becoming accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as paying the Real Living Wage has so far increased from 16 to 68. The Council has directly supported roughly half of these employers through their accreditation process. However, the cost of living in Cambridge continues to increase, particularly the cost of housing (both buying and renting), whilst wages have not kept pace for the majority of employees. In acknowledging this fact, we introduced in 2018 a minimum wage rate of £10 per hour to our directly employed staff.

We will continue encouraging local businesses, and major employers like all the colleges of the University of Cambridge - taking the lead of the University itself in 2018 - to pay their employees the Real Living Wage rate of £9 per hour. In promoting the Real Living Wage, the Council believes this rate ought to be the absolute minimum when setting rates of pay.

### Supporting our Essential Voluntary and Community Sector

In the coming year, the Council will invest approximately £1 million in the voluntary and community sector through our Community Grants programme, focused on tackling inequality. In the most recent round of awards, over sixty organisations were awarded funding for their work in tackling inequality and sharing prosperity in our city. We will also organise another successful 'Volunteer for Cambridge' fair at the Guildhall. In 2018, more than 80 groups participated in the event, with over 800 members of the public attending, and many recruited as new volunteers.

### Helping People Impacted by Welfare Cuts and Universal Credit

Universal Credit is now being fully rolled out in Cambridge. Like the benefit cap and Bedroom Tax before, it is clear that this latest round of social security "reforms" is making life difficult for many claimants, especially the most vulnerable. The Council will proceed with plans to expand the level of support on offer for those affected by these benefit changes, including specific support for council tenants who may be at risk of going into rent arrears.

We have funded a Financial Inclusion Officer to provide advice to residents. We also arranged for council officers to be on site at Cambridge Jobcentre during the initial rollout, working

collaboratively with Department for Work and Pensions officials to help them understand the intricacies of renting in Cambridge. We have also increased our funding of the Cambridge Citizens' Advice Bureau to assist them in their work helping people navigate the tricky terrain of the system.

### Financial Support for People on Low Incomes

The Council made sure in its recent budget that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme supported vulnerable households – we are now one of very few councils in the country who preserve levels of support within its Local Scheme. We also provide Discretionary Housing Payments which protect many recipients from increased rent arrears and help prevent many households from becoming homeless. Our Housing Benefit Plus scheme also tops-up local housing allowance rates to those assessed to be most in urgent need, to allow them to meet the cost of renting privately.

### Ensuring Wider Access to Leisure and Culture

The Council will continue to provide swimming, sports facilities and leisure services that are accessible to all, with discounted entry to centres for city residents on low incomes, and specific initiatives to encourage active lifestyles like providing 3000 free swims a year for children and families. The Council will also continue to place a special focus on addressing health inequalities through specific and targeted initiatives like our recently expanded Exercise Referral programme.

We will continue to use the power of the arts in promoting equality of opportunity, learning new skills, building confidence and enhancing wellbeing, through initiatives like the 'My Cambridge' education partnership which gives young people from low incomes access to culture.

The Council is proud of its Children's and Young People's Participation Service and services it provides to young people in the city, and we remain committed to supporting them especially those experiencing disadvantage. We will continue our work in involving young people in the Council's decision-making processes, engaging them in forums so they have a role in the future of the Council and Cambridge as a city.

We will support a partnership with Cambridge Junction to redevelop and extend its existing site (owned by the Council). These plans will leverage external funding and grants, providing additional space for the arts, education and creative industries, taking advantage of Cambridge's location and prestige.

### Bringing Our Communities Together

The Council will continue to implement its Building Stronger Communities strategy, investing in community centres and community development initiatives that are focused on helping communities thrive and develop, bringing people together. The Council is involved, with partners, in the running of the recently-opened Clay Farm and Storey's Field centres, based in the growth sites in Trumpington and the Eddington development in North West Cambridge respectively.

As part of our council house building programme, the Akeman Street centre in Arbury will be redeveloped, and there are proposals to create a new community hub at the Meadows centre site,

integrating current facilities there and at Buchan Street. We will also provide community facilities at the Mill Road and Cromwell Road developments (subject to planning permission).

Our recent Council budget also underwrote funding towards the redevelopment of Cherry Hinton Library, creating additional space to meet community needs following the closure of the Royal British Legion hall there.

In the late 1990s, the Council created several Neighbourhood Community Partnerships (NCPs), with financial support, to help communities to deliver projects and to address local issues and concerns in their neighbourhood. We will continue to support the NCPs in King's Hedges/Arbury (NCCP) and Abbey (Abbey People) to fully realise their potential as independent charities, to operate on a sustainable basis in the long term.

The Council will continue to ensure there is a focus in delivering our services on the needs of people who are isolated due to significant mental health issues, and remain committed to implementing the Mental Health Concordat in partnership with other organisations.

We will look at ways to encourage the development of befriending schemes and resident associations in areas of high need, plus promote initiatives like 'community wardrobes' and 'community fridges' which could help to encourage community cohesion, and overcome isolation and loneliness.

A recent survey showed that one in ten in the UK have had found it hard to afford basic sanitary products. We will develop a scheme to alleviate period poverty in our city, working with the County Council and community groups.

### Cutting Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The Council will continue to work closely with the police, partners and residents in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in our city. We are deeply concerned about the impact Government funding cuts are having on police resources and their ability to fight crime, especially knife crime, drug dealing and 'County Lines' criminal activity. We will continue to challenge the effect these cuts are having on community policing initiatives in our neighbourhoods.

In the face of these challenges, we believe the proposal to deprive Cambridge of a direct police presence in the city centre by the Police and Crime Commissioner is wrong. We will make the argument for the need for a station in a central location whether the proposed closure of Parkside Police Station occurs, or preferably does not, in several years' time.

We will use our influence on the Police and Crime Panel, the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership, and other forums, to ensure residents' views on what should be local priorities for the police are taken on board and implemented.

The Council will continue to prioritise work in tackling and preventing domestic violence and sexual exploitation. We are proud that, in recognition of the Council's activity in this area since 2015, this year we have had its accreditation status confirmed for the third time in a row by the White Ribbon Campaign.

The introduction of the Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) on Punt Touting in the city centre, dog control on council land, and the open drinking of alcohol at Petersfield Green, Mill Road cemetery and the front garden at Ditchburn Place, have actively assisted in improving the quality of these spaces for the law-abiding majority. We will not hesitate to use our powers in proposing PSPOs when there is evidence to suggest it is in the public interest to do so and it can assist with tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Council will also continue to invest in infrastructure to assist with the fight against crime. Despite this being a County Council responsibility, we have funded brighter overnight street lighting across our city which otherwise would be dimmed or lost completely. And, last year, we commenced a £600,000 upgrade of our city's CCTV cameras, replacing cameras no longer operating and providing enhanced pictures. This new equipment is already assisting our anti-social behaviour team, car park staff and the police follow up on crimes in and near the city centre.

### Making Cambridge an Inclusive City

We are proud of Cambridge's status as a welcoming, inclusive city that recognises and celebrates diversity, and stand full square against any attempt to divide our communities through racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, homophobic or transphobic actions.

The Council will continue to lead on important events that highlight this diversity, including LGBTQ+ History Month, Black History Month, Disability History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day and Mental Health Awareness Week.

We have met our commitment to help resettle in Cambridge an additional 100 refugees from Syria and other war-torn countries. We will investigate opportunities to extend this scheme and we will continue to support our new residents to live peaceful and fulfilling lives, given that the conflicts that drove them from their homes may not be resolved for several years yet. We will continue to support a wider advice service, in partnership with the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum and Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign, to assist other refugees and asylum seekers in our city or arriving here.

The Council will proceed with a 'Making Space for People' supplementary planning document. Working with the Greater Cambridge Partnership and County Council, this document will set out, amongst other things, how to improve access to transport for pedestrians and cyclists, and give particular attention to improving and enhancing accessibility for the disabled and less mobile. We will continue to work with Cambridge taxi licence holders to improve disabled access and ensure customers who possess a wheelchair have a reliable service. We will continue to provide equality and accessibility training to taxi operators.

We have met our pledge to include intelligence from the Street Charter to identify a range of funding opportunities for environmental improvements that support accessibility for people with disabilities, and we commit to adding another 'Changing Places' toilet in the city centre. We will fully fund a free Shopmobility service in the city, following the County Council's decision to withdraw its share of the budget.

## **COMMITMENT TWO - WE WILL BUILD MORE COUNCIL HOMES AND TACKLE HOMELESSNESS**

### **In 2019/20 the City Council will:**

Build over 500 badly needed new homes at council rents, ensuring all 500 have started on site by 2022. In 2019/20, we will invest over £700,000 in organisations who work with the homeless, and boost the supply of affordable homes in the city.

### Building More New Council Homes

Providing adequate, affordable and comfortable housing is an important and key priority for the Council. We have now identified sites for all the new council homes to be built with the £70 million devolution funding provided by Government, and are likely to now exceed the target of 500 homes we pledged to deliver as a result of this funding.

536 new council homes are proposed to be built across the city, with the largest sites being at Mill Road (116 new council homes) and Cromwell Road (118 new council homes). Roughly one quarter of these new homes are currently being constructed, or have been completed, with the remainder subject to planning permission. The figure of 536 is in addition to the 242 which have been completed since Labour took office in 2014, meaning we will have built nearly 800 new council homes by 2022. Most of these new council homes will be built via the Cambridge Investment Partnership, a joint venture involving the council and Hill Residential.

The Mill Road depot and Cromwell Road sites being developed will have a mix of council housing and homes for sale on the open market.

We will consider, subject to market conditions and if it is prudent to do so, the possibility of acquiring several of these open market properties for the Cambridge City Housing Company, with a view to these being let for 'intermediate' rent (a form of tenure for people not likely to obtain social housing, but find it hard to rent at market rent levels).

Building these new homes - whilst making a huge difference to those who are on the housing needs register, and helping to offset the additional loss of council homes following Government reforms to Right-to-Buy - should only be the first step of a renaissance in council house building in Cambridge. We want to continue being bold and ambitious, providing the homes our city desperately needs and taking full advantage of the newly-acquired freedom the council now has to borrow, unrestricted against our Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Council will bring forward a plan in 2019 setting how we will deliver further new council homes after 2022 using new powers for borrowing against the HRA, Right-to-Buy receipts and other sources of funding and land. This will be central in achieving the administration's goal to build and/or acquire an additional 1,000 new council homes by 2030.

In addition to investing in building new homes, we want to improve existing ones. We will invest £5 million over the next few years in schemes to enhance the environment of our council estates for the benefit of current and future tenants and leaseholders.

Projects will include, for example, new LED lighting, increased security measures for bin stores to prevent fly-tipping, more planting, and bike racks. Need will be evidenced through local engagement with housing officers, residents and councillors.

### Boosting the Supply of Affordable Homes

The Council created the Cambridge City Housing Company (CCHC) three years ago as a means of providing additional homes at 'intermediate' rents. Any return on investment is pumped back into the company and providing council services. These properties are let out via our social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings. It is our intention to continue to develop CCHC and add to its existing homes as market conditions allow.

We will work closely with housing associations and others in maximising opportunities to boost the numbers of homes let for social and affordable rent. We will also lobby Government to reform the calculation of local housing allowance (LHA) rates to better and more accurately reflect the rental market in expensive towns and cities, like Cambridge. The current Broad Market Rental Area calculation for Cambridge takes into account the market rent levels for not just the city itself, but those areas which surround it, pushing down the LHA rate payable. This mechanism prices people out of the city on low incomes.

In addition, we will work in partnership with neighbouring councils, registered providers and developers to build affordable homes across all types of tenure in accordance with our new joint Local Plan with South Cambridgeshire.

In realising this aim, we will continue to develop a framework, using national planning policy as a starting point, to ensure viability assessments (provided by developers in requesting to deviate from providing 40 per cent affordable housing on relevant sites) are properly and fully scrutinised.

### Bringing Empty Homes Back into Use

The Council will continue with efforts to reduce the number of homes in the city that lie empty. Over the last four years, we have helped bring around 130 empty homes back into use. We will review how we can ~~continue to~~ bring even more empty homes back into use each year.

We will make full use of new powers to charge double council tax on existing empty homes, and continue to offer other incentives to homeowners, like loans to help with renovations to make a property habitable. Where incentives fail, we will pursue enforcement action including Compulsory Purchase Orders.

### Making Renting Fairer for Private Sector Tenants

Nearly one-third of the city's households are privately rented out to tenants. We have recently implemented the extension of mandatory licensing for Homes in Multiple Occupation which came into effect last year, and will continue to encourage landlords in the private rental sector to deliver

safe, well-managed energy-efficient homes that are of a good standard, and tackle those who do not. We will consult on the expansion of property licensing to cover more privately rented homes in the city.

### Tackling Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Homelessness has long been a significant issue in Cambridge but, as is the case nationally, it has become more acute over the last couple of years. A combination of rising rent levels fuelled by high demand, together with Government welfare reforms, have contributed towards a rise in homelessness in Cambridge and across the country.

No-one should have to sleep rough or be homeless in our city, and we are strongly committed to helping prevent and alleviate it wherever it occurs. The Council has a dedicated team in its Housing Advice and Support section that works closely with highly-valued and important organisations like Jimmy's and Wintercomfort, among others, providing a joined-up approach in tackling homelessness. In 2019/20 the Council will provide grant funding of £720,000 per year to these organisations to aid their work.

We also have delivered initiatives such as:

- The creation of a new "Housing First" programme for the benefit of long-term rough sleepers, a scheme we will look to expand including with additional offers of accommodation;
- A dedicated street-life partnership group with agencies set up to help rough sleepers into accommodation;
- Creating Street Aid, a charitable fund that has raised over £50,000 since it was created, helping vulnerable people get off or stay off the streets with small grants;
- A dedicated homelessness prevention officer with a specific remit towards prison and hospital leavers;
- Continuing using the Council's social lettings agency (Town Hall Lettings), set up to provide shared accommodation for single homeless people;
- A Single Homelessness Service that has housed over 450 local people since its inception, and
- Providing a 'Housing Benefit Plus' scheme which tops-up local housing allowance rates to those assessed to be most in urgent need, allowing them to meet the cost of renting privately.

The Council will take stock of our work to-date and commit to undertake a review of its strategic response to rough sleeping. Our review should consider how best to achieve the twin objectives of ensuring a bed is available every night for every rough sleeper, and to end street homelessness in Cambridge by, at the very latest 2025, two years before the Government's own target.

### Planning for Sustainable Homes, Jobs and Infrastructure

We will implement the approved joint Local Plan with South Cambridgeshire which sets out how to best accommodate the needs of a growing city and Greater Cambridge area to 2031 whilst keeping intact what makes our city special. We will engage with the community on options for the next Joint Plan.

The Council led efforts in a successful joint bid for £227million of Government funding to help develop the north-east fringe of Cambridge, situated at the current wastewater recycling works near Cambridge North rail station. This project will unlock over seven thousand new homes of varying tenures – with our planning policies seeking that at least 40 percent of these will be affordable. It will also provide thousands of new jobs in a sustainable location that will be well connected by public transport. We are committed to building a significant number of council housing units on city land included in the project.

We will continue to ensure that new council housing meets rigorous and tough design, low carbon and sustainability standards as set out in the Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide. All new council homes will be adaptable and accessible for people with limited mobility. And, as a minimum, 2 percent of new council housing developments will conform to wheelchair accessible standards, rising to a minimum of 5 percent in developments of over 20 homes. We will continue to persuade Cambridge developers to adopt these standards, standards which goes beyond national requirements. We restate our previous commitment to requiring biodiversity and long-term sustainability plans for all larger development sites. We will also adopt the improved planning “Quality Charter” being developed by the Combined Authority.

We reaffirm our commitment to putting forward formal planning guidance on strategically-important new residential and commercial sites, setting out how they can be developed to appropriate parameters. This includes land north of Cherry Hinton, the Grafton Centre area and area plans for Mitcham’s Corner and other parts of the city. We will continue our policy in not allowing speculative student developments with no identified end users, by tying student accommodation proposals to established and existing educational institutions.

### **COMMITMENT THREE - WE WILL MAKE CAMBRIDGE GREENER AND INCREASE JOINT WORK TO BECOME A ZERO CARBON CITY**

#### **In 2019/20 the City Council will:**

Strengthen action on climate change and biodiversity, cut the city’s carbon emissions faster, reduce use of herbicides, plant more trees and create more wildflower gardens.

#### Declaring a Climate Emergency

The Council recently declared a Climate Emergency because we believe action is needed now to ensure the current crisis does not become a catastrophe.

We will use our position in speaking for the city by lobbying Government, the County Council, Cambridge companies, industry and regulators to take seriously the need for immediate decisive action so that real progress can be made for Cambridge - and the UK - to reduce our carbon emissions.

We will establish a Cambridge Climate Charter, which will set out how Cambridge can become a zero-carbon city by 2030. It will call on all organisations, businesses and individuals to establish

their own Carbon Management Plans and commit to reducing their carbon emissions which will combine in delivering the city's net zero carbon target.

The Charter will also detail what else is required for Cambridge to become zero carbon. It will include the changes that city and the Council would need to make, the obstacles Government has to remove, and extra national policies and incentives that are essential to enable cities like Cambridge to achieve this ambitious but essential carbon reduction target.

We will also declare a Biodiversity Emergency, and pledge to update and reassess our Biodiversity Strategy as a first step.

Building on the Council's work with local partners on sustainable food, detailed below, we will undertake further work to increase Cambridge food sustainability and seek Sustainable Food Cities silver status in November 2019.

### Becoming a Greener Council

The Council has reduced its own carbon emissions by 15 per cent since 2016, and is on track to reduce it by one-fifth by next year. We will continue to cut emissions produced by the Council's buildings and fleet through developing and investing in carbon reduction projects, such as the completed installation of solar panels at Parkside Pools, and a biomass boiler at King's Hedges Learner Pool, and a Combined Heat and Power plant in the Guildhall.

As stated above, our Climate Charter will set out the further steps the Council need to take in helping Cambridge and the UK become zero carbon by 2030. This will include investigating and researching opportunities to invest in renewable energy initiatives inside and outside of the city, with a view to making a financial return that can be reinvested in providing front line services, while boosting the National Grid's supply of green energy. We will target reductions in fuel costs, as well as supporting the city economy, by procuring local goods and services wherever it is possible and reasonable to do so.

### Keeping our City's Environment Special

Our vision includes making our green spaces even greener, so present and future generations can continue to enjoy Cambridge's unique and special natural environment. We will increase the overall percentage of the city's parks and open spaces that are actively designated and managed for biodiversity purposes. We will continue to work with the police to identify the small number responsible for repeat graffiti around the city and tackle this and other antisocial acts that damage our precious environment.

The Council will continue to reduce our use of herbicides and trial a 'zero chemical' approach to the upkeep of two of our parks. We restate our commitment to boosting the number, and quality, of trees in the city, as set out in the Council's 2016 tree strategy, with an aspiration to add 16,000 trees so that for one-fifth of the city will be covered with tree canopy by 2030 through new initiatives, as well as existing ones like our 'Trees for Babies' scheme. We commit to adding to our thirteen city wildflower gardens.

We will pursue a “Your Cambridge” focus in Council public realm management, emphasising what all residents can do to help their city and their rights and responsibilities, working with residents and local groups and volunteers. We will assess how effective the increased fine levels for littering have been and consider further measures to reduce littering, dog fouling and anti-social behaviour.

We recognise the importance and significance of the River Cam in our city. In the last year, a local artist has been appointed to work with the local community as part of an art commission to celebrate its importance to Cambridge. We will undertake an assessment on making the River Cam corridor more accessible, while protecting its fragile environment.

### Cambridge as a Place to be Enjoyed

The Council recognises the importance of our city centre for our residents and as a location that people all over the world visit. As well as looking to improve the quality of air, we will proceed with efforts to improve the built environment. We will consult on proposals to renovate the historic Market Square, the goal being to improve cleanliness, accessibility, and to enhance the use of the space for community use during the non-market hours. We will proceed with plans to redevelop the toilets at Silver Street, bringing them up to a modern and high-quality standard to be expected of such a highly-visited location.

We will work and collaborate with the County Council, local businesses and retailers, Cambridge BID and Visit Cambridge and Beyond on business and tourism-related issues so our city continues to be an important, accessible and attractive place to visit. We will lobby Government, working with the Local Government Association and other councils, for the implementation of a tourist tax, the proceeds of which would be invested in local services and city infrastructure. We will continue work with the County Council to reduce the impact of coaches, including at Queen’s Road.

### Becoming a Sustainable City

We will ensure that sustainable growth of the city, growth that balances economic success with the quality of life and place (including in the design of new buildings) as set out in the new Local Plan, is supported. We will engage, in a variety of formats, with residents, developers and stakeholders how best to deliver this on an ongoing basis.

We continue to be committed to Cambridge being recognised nationally as a leading sustainable food city with easy access to locally-sourced produce and seek to promote a vibrant and sustainable local food system from field to fork. We are committed to understanding the ecological footprint of Cambridge and seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by supporting food processing and production that protects natural resources and ecosystems. We support Cambridge Sustainable Food and other like-minded organisations in promoting such practices.

We will build on our work over the last twelve months in encouraging people to take part in water refill schemes in the city. We will explore the possibility of further water fountains in public spaces, following the recent installation of one at Parker’s Piece.

### Cleaning our Air and Cleaning our City

To enable a green and zero-carbon city, Cambridge has to find sustainable solutions to existing and future transport problems. Our city remains congested, and our air, especially in the city centre, is of unacceptable quality.

As well as taking a lead on reducing carbon emissions, we will proceed with a new Air Quality Action Plan, with proposals for a Clean Air Zone in the city centre to improve the quality of the air that we breathe. We recently signed up to the Charter for Cleaner Air, backed by Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and other councils, to signal our intent to maintain pressure on Government to take steps to reduce illegal levels of air pollution.

These commitments will complement existing work in reducing diesel and petrol vehicle movements into the city centre. The Council will add to initiatives like the recent investment of more than 20 electric taxi charging points, and support residents and businesses who wish to pursue the option with the County Council of 'car-free days' in areas of congestion like Mill Road.

We remain fully committed to ensuring all Cambridge-licensed taxis are zero or ultra-low emission by 2028 and, where possible, our fleet of council vans is being replaced with electric vehicles on renewal. We will continue the peak-time parking tariff at Council multi-storey car parks, following its introduction last April, to assist with reducing peak-time congestion and increase the number of non-car journeys into the city centre.

We will continue to find ways to make recycling easier and more efficient across the city and South Cambridgeshire through the Shared Waste Service, encouraging residents and businesses to do more in recycling their waste. We've successfully installed new recycling bins alongside litter bins throughout the city, and we've reorganised every bin round, saving 20,000 lorry miles. We commit to keeping a free pest control service for residents. This valuable service used by over a thousand households each year.

### Investing More in Sustainable Transport for Cambridge

The Council will continue working with partners to deliver a new Cambridge South rail station near Addenbrooke's by the Government's target of 2025, or sooner if possible, and help to secure increased rail services including those serving Cambridge North station. We support initiatives that will deliver improvements to the central rail station, and we will continue to lobby for additional wider investments in the rail network benefitting our city and county, including the planned East-West rail route from the East Coast main line to Cambridge.

We will continue to use our position on the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) to assist with the delivery of infrastructure schemes to increase non-car journeys in Cambridge. We want to ensure the future growth of the city is properly and sustainably managed, reducing traffic on our roads and encouraging, instead, the use of cycling, pedestrian and public transport options. Over £20million in extra cycling investment has been committed since 2014, including the important Chisholm Trail cycleway - construction now underway - that will link up the north, east and south employment hubs of the city. We will continue to pursue, with the Combined Authority and GCP, innovative solutions on bus transport, and support the Combined Authority in seeking the funding necessary to deliver the proposed CAM Metro.

We reaffirm our commitment to increase secure cycle parking in locations across the city to encourage more people to cycle, including taking opportunities in 2019/20 to add secure parking and cycling connectivity at community centres and within major new developments.

Cambridge is a place where bus usage rates lag behind the national average, with its current services deemed by the Government to be some of the least reliable or punctual in the whole country. We will support the GCP in leading on plans to substantially increase funding for local bus services and to cut congestion, subject to consultation input from residents and travellers. We will continue to press the Combined Authority to introduce bus franchising, under the powers at their disposal to do this, and to bring about other improvements like community transport, smart ticketing and the extension of Park and Ride usage and services. These initiatives will make a real and tangible difference to passenger numbers and reduce the traffic on our roads.

## **COMMITMENT FOUR - WE WILL PROTECT VITAL SERVICES OUR COMMUNITY RELIES ON**

### **In 2019/20 the City Council will:**

Protect vital services despite receiving zero core grant from Government by transforming how the Council operates, assisted by its dedicated staff.

### Striving to Protect Vital Services Despite Government Cuts

Since coming into office in 2014, the Labour-led City Council has protected the vital services Cambridge residents rely on, despite the loss of all of the core Government grant the council received to assist with providing these services. Only five years ago the Council received £5.6 million in that grant. Since 2010, the Government has incrementally cut the Council's core funding, money which previously made up over half of our net budget. *There is a risk that the Government could decide to radically change the funding regime for district councils. If this occurs, protecting services into the future will become more challenging and we will focus on protecting those services that matter most to local residents, and services that make the greatest difference for those in real need.*

To minimise as much as possible the impact of cuts on the Council, we have found new ways to generate income by releasing over £40 million in previously idle and unused bank balances, making strategic investments in commercial property and housing to make a return that is above available interest rates. This increased income works out to over £2million a year which supports essential services, as well as raising ongoing income to continue supporting those services in future years. We will explore additional investment opportunities for the further generation of income following completion of a comprehensive review of the Council's assets.

### Investing in our City's Future

Investment in capital adds value to our city and benefits our residents. As well as generating income for the Council, our £6 million investment in Lion Yard will help improve that shopping centre, and our proposed investment in a new community centre at the Meadows in King's Hedges ward will not only provide enhanced facilities but will release land for up to 100 badly

needed new council homes.

We will take forward proposals to redevelop the Park Street Car Park site, and consider options for the regeneration of other car park sites following the aforementioned review of assets.

The Council will strive to provide services to maximise the value of taxpayers' money. For example, we have created a new depot site for our cleaning and maintenance teams at Council-owned land at Cowley Road, freeing up the previous depot at the Mill Road for new social and market housing.

We will invest in facilities at the city crematorium and cemetery to ensure the Council's bereavement services are efficiently-run but, most importantly, continue to improve the service and focus on the needs of the bereaved.

### Sharing Services and Working Smarter

We have successfully established shared waste and internal audit services with South Cambridgeshire, and information technology, building control and legal services with South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire councils. We will continue to develop our new shared planning service with South Cambridgeshire, which will assist with the delivery of the joint Local Plan with that authority.

In addition, we will proceed with our planned £2million investment in IT software and associated digital infrastructure to improve customer response and service accessibility, reliability and efficiency for residents and council staff alike.

### Our Continued Commitment to Cultural Services

Given the problems at the Cambridge Live charitable trust, we acted decisively to return its services back in-house, saving jobs. We will undertake an independent review so the Council can learn from what happened. We will this year continue work formerly undertaken by the Cambridge Live trust, including delivering the Corn Exchange event programme, the internationally-regarded Cambridge Folk Festival, and the highly popular Big Weekend and other open space events.

### Making Devolution Work for Cambridge

We will work with the Combined Authority Mayor and neighbouring authorities, particularly South Cambridgeshire, to deliver maximum benefit for our city, achieving progress in the devolution deal areas of affordable housing, transport infrastructure and skills. We will continue to lobby Government for the devolution of business rates so investment in our area be brought forward. To enable adequate delivery to occur, however, the CA and Mayor need to work constructively with us and partners and operate transparently.

We will continue on the Combined Authority to ensure the interests of Cambridge are represented effectively, including proper scrutiny of proposals and decisions made by the Mayor and Authority, and to achieve real benefits for Cambridge.