

LGA Labour Group

Annual Conference 2018



LGA LABOUR GROUP – KEY MESSAGES

Labour in local government is:

- **Defending our communities:** Year on year, Labour councils shield our communities from the worst of the government austerity agenda. 31 million people across England and Wales (55% of the population) have either a Labour council or a Labour Mayor, with 118 Labour-led councils and Labour Metro Mayors in London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Sheffield fighting at the frontline of Tory austerity, and delivering vital public services.
- **Delivering Labour values:** The Tory government have systematically stripped our communities of assets, hit the poorest in society with welfare cuts, and are continuing their assault on local authorities with relentless cuts to council budgets and public services. Despite this, Labour councils are finding radical and innovative ways to build more council housing, protect vulnerable children, provide skills and learning opportunities for young people, and to keep our streets clean, as set out in LGA Labour's '[100 Innovations](#)' publication.
- **Democratic and accountable:** Labour's 7000 councillors are the most accountable elected representatives in our party, and are fighting on the frontline of austerity every day to protect communities from the destructive policies of successive Tory governments. The legal and financial frameworks that councillors have to operate within should be recognised, and the contribution of Labour councillors should be celebrated. Their voices must be valued at every level, with higher level of representation in all formal party structures.
- **Setting out a radical manifesto for the next Labour government:** Labour councils and leaders are coming up with the radical policy solutions we need to reverse austerity and transform public services. The LGA Labour Group's 2018 publication '[On Day One](#)' set out Labour in local government's priorities for the next Labour Government, serving as a radical manifesto for how a Jeremy Corbyn-led administration could work with local government to deliver for the many, not the few.
- **Our path back to power in Westminster:** History shows that Labour's route back to Government lies through winning elections in town halls across the UK, and that victories are achieved when activists and councillors work together. There may be three sets of local elections before the next General Election – and Labour and its supporters should put just as much energy into each of them as it will at the next General Election. Local elections must be given the highest priority, with proper resources and a real say on campaigning for councillors at a national level.

Looking for further information? Contact Pete Robbins, Head of the Labour Group Office:
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LGA LABOUR GROUP

The national voice for Labour in local government

The Local Government Association (LGA) Labour Group exists to fight the corner for Labour councillors and Labour councils at a national level, both within the cross-party LGA, in the corridors of Westminster, and in the Labour Party. Led by Cllr Nick Forbes, the Group provides a strong voice for Labour local government and acts as a platform for ideas and argument for all those committed to an effective localist element to Labour politics and policies.

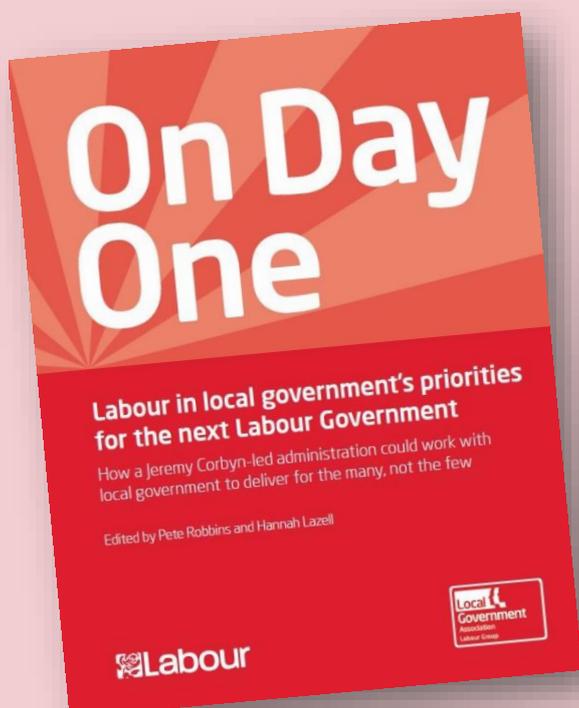
The Labour Group has good working relationships with the front bench, Parliament, and the Labour Party, and seeks to influence policy and political decisions through frequent individual and group meetings between leading councillors and shadow ministers

COUNCIL FUNDING IN CRISIS – Tory austerity to blame

Tory austerity has caused huge damage to communities up and down the UK with council budgets cut more than any other area of government. Tory-run Northamptonshire has already gone bust, and other councils are in crisis mode. Austerity is having a devastating effect on key public services that provide protection to the most vulnerable members of our society – children at risk, disabled adults and older people who require support, and the many families who are barely getting by despite being in work.

- By 2020, local authorities will have faced cuts to core funding of nearly £16 billion over the preceding decade. These Tory cuts mean councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 that the last Labour Government was spending on local government in 2010.
- These cuts have been strikingly uneven in their distribution - the poorest local authorities (which tend to be Labour-run) have had their spending cut by £228 per person since 2010, but the richest councils have had their spending cut by only £44.
- Councils face an additional funding gap of £7.8 billion by 2025 – but meeting this gap would only keep local authority services ‘standing still’ and meet additional demand and inflation. Filling the gap would not reverse cuts made by the Tories since 2010, or include funding to improve services.

It must be an immediate priority of the next Labour government to reverse the damage wrought by austerity – council budgets are now so tight that there is no room to cope with the extra pressures which we know are coming. Labour must urgently commit to meeting this desperately-needed investment, but it is also vital that we also give councils the freedom to implement the right solutions for their areas.



ON DAY ONE

LGA Labour's radical local government manifesto for the next Labour government

Leading Labour councillors set out what a Labour government's priorities for local government should be, and how a Jeremy Corbyn-led administration should work with local government to deliver for the many, not the few. With a foreword from Shadow Communities Secretary Andrew Gwynne MP.

Eleven essays cover important issues such as housing, welfare support, education, devolution, and local government finance, as well as the important role that local councillors play in campaigning and in the Labour Party, particularly in light of the Labour Party Democracy Review.