

## Rugby Labour's vision for a decade of renewal

To make our town and villages the best that they can be for residents, businesses and visitors, Rugby Borough needs a council with a progressive vision for change. **'Love Rugby'** is that progressive vision.

**'Love Rugby'** is informed by evidence, costed, and supported by priorities and plans for the first two years of a Labour-led council.

**'Love Rugby'** will create a more positive future for our children that builds on all that is good about Rugby's sporting, arts, music, engineering, market-town, and multi-cultural heritage.

**'Love Rugby'** will make Rugby **Better, Greener** and **Fairer**.

**'Love Rugby'** is supported by five manifesto pledges that a Labour-led council will work towards in the next two years:

- Increase health services.
- Invest in the town centre.
- Work with volunteer groups.
- Green policies to make a difference.
- Fight to reduce poverty levels.

## A Message from Rugby's Labour Councillors



*"Local Government makes decisions that affect the daily experience of residents and fortunes of businesses. The Labour group of councillors feel privileged to serve Rugby and excited by what we can achieve from May 2024 if we gain the seats needed for a Labour-led Council.*

***This is our only focus...** that's why this manifesto is so important and why we have set out specific plans for 2024 to 2026 towards the 2035 vision. Put simply, we **'Love Rugby'** and are determined to help our borough flourish."*

## Better

**By 2035 a Labour-led council would ensure that health services meet population needs and that Rugby and the villages have thriving commercial centres where key buildings and venues, such as St Andrews Church and Brandon Stadium, are maintained with pride.**



### **'Better' pledges for 2024-26:**

- Increase health services.
- Invest in the town centre.

### **Priorities and plans for health:**

- ➔ Immediately use the council's influence to help secure a doctor-led Urgent Care Centre at St Cross Hospital, giving voice to resident concerns and highlighting the current risks to patient safety from long waiting times at University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire A&E.
- ➔ Strengthen the council's contribution in meetings with local health providers and commissioners, to influence improvement in access to primary care, such as GPs.
- ➔ Meet with NHS decision-makers (Integrated Care System, Integrated Care Board) and the local Primary Care Network (GPs, dentists, pharmacists, optometrists) to align their plans for service development with the council's Local Plan for developing the borough, so health services grow with our population.
- ➔ Ensure Homes England provides an appropriate site for a GP surgery service in the South West Rugby Development and look for more opportunities to provide space for primary care to grow.

### **Priorities and plans for town centre renewal:**

- ➔ Develop an ambitious economic strategy for the whole borough, including the town centre.
- ➔ Work with building owners to fill empty buildings, for example, by creating opportunities for local businesses to use vacant spaces.
- ➔ Create a thriving hub of activity in the town, by overhauling the current town centre market to attract several new market stalls that change



on a regular basis. This will include not charging a stall fee for existing retail, food, and beverage businesses in the borough.

- ➔ Engage the music community and invest in improving access to rehearsal and entertainment spaces to nurture our performing arts and the night-time economy.
- ➔ Work with St Andrews Church to restore the building to its original state, adding environmentally friendly lighting so the building and gardens become an iconic focal point for the town centre in the evenings.
- ➔ Make discretionary grants to support new businesses coming into the town centre and to existing businesses to help them expand and improve, offering necessary support as the town centre evolves.
- ➔ Host an annual week-long festival of grassroots sport with a complementary festival of entertainment and culture “off the pitch”.
- ➔ Build a public transport hub.
- ➔ Immediately review the town centre parking policy and improve parking arrangements for times when the town is busy.
- ➔ Improve the council’s contract management with Rugby First.

## Greener

**By 2035 a Labour-led council would ensure the council has improved biodiversity, reduced pollution, reduced the Borough’s impact on climate change and is reducing the negative impacts of climate change.**



### **‘Greener’ pledge for 2024–26:**

- Green policies to make a difference.

### **Priorities and plans:**

- ➔ Learn from the best ‘high impact’ and ‘value for money’ green policies from across the world and apply them to Council decision-making.
- ➔ Clean up the countryside, by removing litter from fly-tipping and removing non-degradable plastic covers from small trees.



- Improve council contracting to ensure that contractors minimise waste and environmental harms from their work on behalf of the council.
- Overhaul the council's environmental waste policies and make them fit for purpose.
- Develop and implement a flood prevention strategy that takes account of climate change.
- Review how council policy affects resident recycling and waste disposal behaviours and ensure that the council encourages good practice. To include reviewing the green bin charging policy to increase use.
- Review recent flood patterns to understand where new flood risks are appearing and deliver better flood defences in known hotspots.
- Support local implementation of Labour's national plan to clean up our rivers.
- Work with Warwickshire County Council to ensure our public transport system and plan to improve active travel (cycling, walking) is fit for purpose.



## Fairer

**By 2035 a Labour-led council would ensure Rugby residents of all ages, backgrounds and abilities feel more included when they use the services that the council provides and in public spaces. By 2035 a Labour-led council would also ensure that the number of people living in poverty in our borough is significantly reduced, working towards lifting all children out of poverty.**



### **'Fairer' pledges for 2024-26:**

- Work with volunteer groups.
- Fight to reduce poverty.

### Priorities and plans to **work with volunteer groups:**

- ➔ Urgently review how the council engages and consults with the community and plan to deliver improved community engagement.
- ➔ Collaborate with the community and voluntary sectors so that the council hears from the people that they support or represent. This will improve the council's engagement with residents and will ensure that the council hears 'all the voices' of Rugby – not just those that shout loudest.
- ➔ Improve the council's understanding of the support needs of the community and voluntary sectors by meeting with them and jointly developing a long-term support plan. This will include supporting sports clubs, youth clubs and community interest groups so they thrive in the town and continue to contribute to Rugby's wellbeing.

### Priorities and plans to **reduce poverty:**

- ➔ Launch a community supermarket, garden, and kitchen, giving residents access to low-cost food, support with growing home produce, and help in planning healthy, economic meals on a budget.
- ➔ Form a local 'anti-poverty alliance' with organisations such as Warwickshire County Council and the community and voluntary sectors, with shared goals to significantly reduce poverty across the borough.
- ➔ Make sure that the council reduces the risk of people being excluded or treated unfairly because they are on low incomes.



*Rugby Labour councillors and campaigners raising awareness and money for Hope 4 by 'sleeping out'; we regularly collect for Hope 4.*

### **A Message from Cllr Michael Moran, Leader of the Labour Group**



***"Thank you*** for reading our manifesto for 2024-26. Labour has won Conservative seats in the last two elections, and we hope to win more on 2 May 2024. We are close to being the leading party in Rugby. We are serious about leadership and have considered what it will take to deliver this manifesto". **Read on to learn about our workforce and funding plans...**

## Workforce plan

***How will a Labour leadership ensure Rugby Borough Council has the people to deliver this manifesto and a decade of renewal?***

**A Labour-led council would:**

- ➔ Oversee a new council strategy to deliver on this manifesto.
- ➔ Review and improve how the workforce delivers council priorities.
- ➔ Ensure the council's staff structure is fit for purpose.
- ➔ Ask staff why staff retention is so poor (40% left in the last two years).
- ➔ Find out how the council can improve recruitment and job satisfaction.
- ➔ Improve staff training, development, and support.

## Funding priorities

***How will a Labour leadership ensure Rugby Borough Council has the funds to deliver this manifesto and a decade of renewal?***

**A Labour-led council would:**

- ➔ Raise millions of pounds from developers by implementing a tax known as the Community Infrastructure Levy; making sure that the tax rate is right, and the money is spent on infrastructure.
- ➔ Recruit staff to find new sources of income, for example from grants, national government schemes and big businesses found in the borough (they have budgets to spend on community or environmental projects, this is under a scheme known as Corporate Social Responsibility).
- ➔ Invest to save in council processes and services, for example, investing in Information Technology to help deliver services more effectively.
- ➔ Invest to improve the local economy; for example, by drawing more visitors into our commercial centres in Rugby and the villages. This will help businesses thrive and bring in more business rates.
- ➔ Invest in the 'Love Rugby' Festival so it makes a substantial annual contribution to our local economy within three years and continues to contribute to long-term economic growth.