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Title:

Councillor Paul Bell announces his nomination for selection as Labour candidate for Mayor of Lewisham.

My reference: C0048

I've been fortunate enough to be described by the co-chairs of New Cross Learning, Kath Dunbar and Gill Hart as having a "lifelong commitment to core community values, unimpeachable personal integrity and compassion for our community". I've been a Lewisham Councillor for seven years, a position I combine with my job as a national officer of the public sector trade union, UNISON.

I've been endorsed by both Unite the Union and by Lewisham Momentum, I was raised in a working class family on a council estate in Sheffield, know what it was like to live on benefits in Thatcher's Britain, confronted homophobia as a young gay man growing up in the era of Clause 28 and the HIV/AIDS panic and overcame dyslexia to get a degree at university.

I'm dedicated to representing the diverse communities that enrich Lewisham and standing up for the most vulnerable. I voted for Jeremy Corbyn in both leadership elections (in 2015 and 2016) and want to build on the same vision, ambition and hope that galvanised Labour support in this year's general election.

To make change in Lewisham, I want to tap into the talent and creativity in the borough to generate wealth and provide innovative solutions to overcome the savage cuts the Conservative government has dealt local authorities. I'll conclude much better deals with private developers attracted to Lewisham's potential, deliver more social housing more quickly and tackle under-achievement in Lewisham's schools. I will also place Lewisham in a leading role in the national campaigns to extract proper funding for adult social care and schools, help the NHS fight the cuts facing South East London and work with the Mayor of London and TFL to improve public transport and deliver healthier streets.