

Preston Labour Manifesto

2018 City Council Elections



Building community wealth for everyone



A message from Labour Leader Peter Rankin



Labour in Preston asks for your support to help us continue to do our best for your city.

With election day looming residents must be made aware the Conservatives have cut our central government grant further this year and will completely end it from 2019-20. Therefore, we need to increase the Council Tax by more than we would wish to ensure our essential services perform well from waste collection, street cleaning, maintaining our wonderful parks, licensing taxis and restaurants and providing things like the Guild Wheel.

Labour in Preston will continue to work to promote a local economy for our people in which poverty and inequality are tackled, inclusive growth is fostered, and creative new ideas identified to retain wealth and expand economic democracy.

Our city centre has been regenerated, including the wonderful new Market Hall. As a result it has attracted new businesses, including restaurants, and buildings are being converted into city apartments as young professionals are keen to live in the city centre.

Exciting plans for the regeneration of the City Centre are being developed by investors. For instance, a fantastic job has been done to invest £10m into the Guild Hall over several years.

We will continue our powerful social justice agenda which has seen an expansion of the living wage, affordable housing, energy and a credit union along with the adoption of Preston's first Fairness Charter in January 2015.

And despite facing huge government cuts Labour has secured over £4 million external funding to invest in Preston's heritage and glorious parks and found money to expand arts and culture.

Labour also worked to adopt Preston's first neighbourhood plan and we continue to support a raft of inclusion policies to benefit the whole community that is nurturing a live and let live feeling across Preston.

Labour needs your support in 2018 to continue moving towards our goal of ensuring fairness is at the heart of our city.

Vote Labour on Thursday 3rd May

Labour's manifesto for 2018

Sections

- ✓ **A local economy where wealth is shared**
- ✓ **A real living wage for Preston**
- ✓ **Looking after the Preston Pound**
- ✓ **Help with the cost of living**
- ✓ **A cleaner and greener place to live**
- ✓ **Better, more affordable homes in Preston**
- ✓ **A creative city of leisure**
- ✓ **A healthier, happier city**
- ✓ **One vibrant community**

A local economy where wealth is shared



Times are difficult for many in Preston with continuing Tory austerity and a national economy not yet recovered from the global economic crisis of ten years ago.

Despite these big challenges Labour in Preston **is fighting back** with a collaborative and creative municipal socialism gaining widespread recognition as a successful blueprint for a post-crash economy.

Since 2011, our policies have helped Preston rise out of the bottom 20% of the UK's most deprived local authority areas and improve in the government's Social Mobility Index. For the last 2 years Preston was voted **the best city to live and work in the north west** in a respected annual PWC/Demos report.

Our strategy combines a mixture of radical and common-sense approaches rooted firmly around:

Bringing investment and jobs to Preston

Labour has taken a leading role in working with both public and private sectors to promote economic development across Preston.

In 2013, Labour-run Preston was one of the first councils to bid for the new wave of City Deals. **The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal** in partnership with South Ribble and Lancashire County Council incorporates an agreement with government to invest £350m in infrastructure aiming to generate 20,000 jobs and 17,000 new homes with at least 30% affordable over a decade. This equates to £1 billion added in gross value to the local economy. Over 3000 houses have already been built in the City Deal area including over 800 in Preston in 2016/17.

The Lancashire County Pension Fund has agreed to invest up to £100 million in the City Deal area. This has seen an £18m student apartment block on Friargate constructed in partnership with a local construction firm employing 200 people with refurbishment of the old Park Hotel to follow soon (below).



Labour will approach the £7bn pension fund and its trade union representatives to ask if they will consider investing more in the Preston and wider Lancashire economy rather than in risky overseas equities and environmentally damaging fossil fuels.

Labour will also explore with other authorities opportunities for an investment vehicle similar to a **local wealth fund** to leverage public pension and other investments into Preston and Lancashire.

A fantastically vibrant city centre

Improvements to Fishergate have made a big difference to the city centre expanding along Lancaster Road this year giving Preston a more cosmopolitan European feel.

Work with Lancashire County Council (LCC) has brokered a planned investment of up to £23 million into **Preston Bus Station** which has a long-term future in public ownership. After a design competition for alternations to improve the car park and waiting facilities for bus passengers the development should finish this year. The key **Youth Zone** facility for young people is currently delayed and we continue to press the County Council to make a start.

The transfer of the loss-making **Preston Guild Hall** to the locally based Rigby Organisation has levered in a planned £10m and this lynchpin of city centre entertainment is improving Preston's leisure offer.

Labour will work with LCC to submit a bid for significant lottery and Arts Council investment to improve the **Harris Museum & Library** soon that would see it expand as a key public anchor institution.



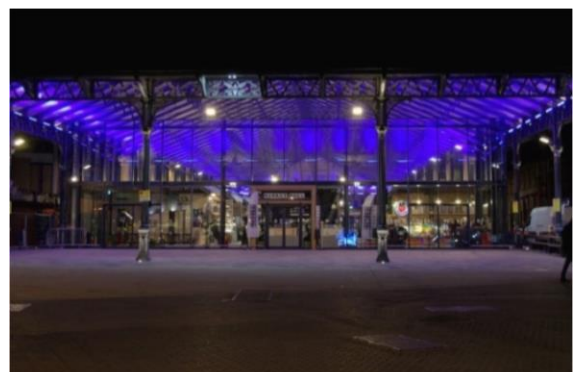
Labour will work closely with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to deliver their 10-year £200 million investment plan to benefit both Preston and the city centre. Across all these developments our planning policies commit to encourage the **use of locally based suppliers and labour**.

Preston City Council has invested over £5m in our new **City Owned Markets** including the recently opened Market Hall under the Outdoor Market canopy. We also launched a unique and vibrant container-based market under the Fish Market. This has seen a resurgence of existing and new creative independent businesses occupy the city centre.

After demolition of the old market hall and car park Labour aims to develop a £30m new cinema and restaurant complex to enhance the whole Market Quarter.

The Council transferred the disused **old Post Office** in 2017 and work is underway by the Signature Living Group to convert the wonderful building into a boutique hotel known as the Shankly Hotel Preston.

Also underway across the city centre is development by private investors to build and convert buildings to apartments for **'City Living'** leading to new restaurants and leisure outlets to open.

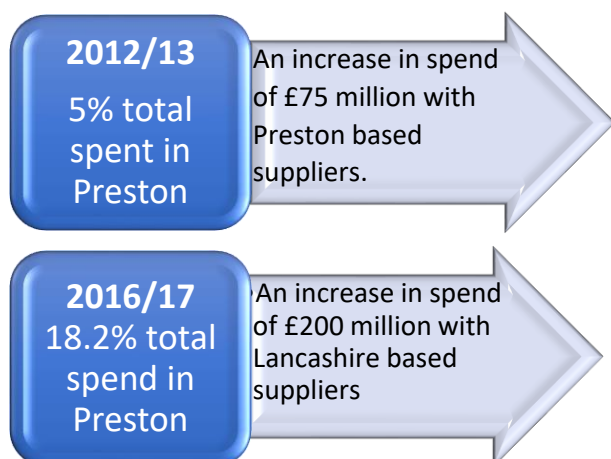


Following the public pound

In 2013, Labour began a remarkable **Community Wealth Building** project which now receives support from the European Union with Preston City Council acting as lead partner alongside 10 other European cities.

Labour has worked with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and several large place-based public sector '**anchor institutions**' including Lancashire County Council, Preston's College, Community Gateway & Lancashire Constabulary to redirect more of the significant amount of public wealth spent by these institutions on goods and services to deliver social and economic benefits to Preston and Lancashire.

The initiative has seen an **extra £75m redirected to Preston based suppliers** in 2016/17 and **£200m across Lancashire** supporting 4500 jobs and expanding the real living wage, apprenticeships and other social and environmental outcomes.



Several new place-based institutions including UCLan have since engaged with the project with growing interest from neighbouring councils across Lancashire.

Labour will promote this approach to other large place-based institutions including Lancashire Teaching Hospitals, Preston

Prison and British Aerospace to use their significant purchasing power to benefit more people and businesses across Lancashire.

Putting more democracy in our economy

To realise Labour's aspirations to improve our community we must not manage but transform our local economy. This means promoting **forms of economic ownership and activity** that are democratic and create and retain wealth locally.

From the purchasing power of the local public sector we have identified significant gaps in the local economy where few or no appropriate local businesses exist.

Labour's intention is to compete for these gaps by establishing **worker owned cooperatives** to create locally owned jobs and wealth. This year worker owned businesses in food and IT will be established in partnership with **Preston's Cooperative Development Network (Presco)** to begin this process.



UCLan is encouraging cooperative enterprise working within their business school (Propeller) and adopting cooperative education within the curriculum. Labour will explore partnerships with Spain's **Mondragon Cooperative Corporation** and

trade unions to expand worker cooperatives with both expressing support for The Preston Model.

Since 2008, it has become clear our mainstream banking system is not fit for purpose. Large banks are withdrawing from the high street despite vast public subsidy and wealth is disappearing to distant investors who often don't pay the amount of tax the law intends starving our public services.

To challenge this Labour will work with other councils and anchor institutions to establish a **Lancashire Community Bank** based upon emerging practice in Hampshire and Greater London. The aim will be to launch a fully licensed not for profit bank to support local businesses and individuals often ignored by the mainstream banking community.



Protecting working people in Preston

Labour will promote the **rights of working people** in Preston by promoting trade union recognition across the city and as a social value outcome in local purchasing.

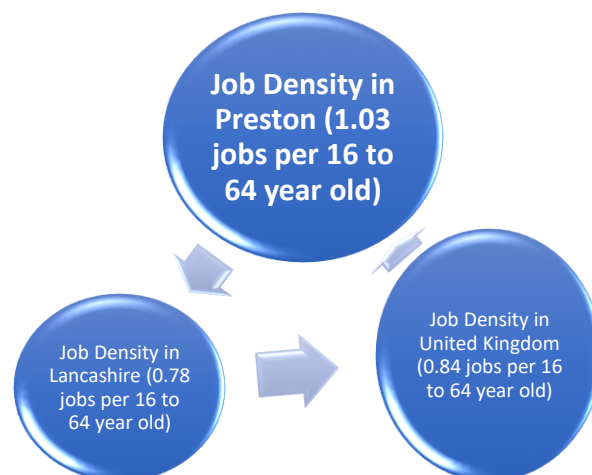
Labour will not employ staff on zero hours contracts and apply this principle to our purchasing policies as far as legally possible. Neither will we engage with organisations involved in illegal blacklisting activities.



Labour will expand **the real living wage and apprenticeships** including in our City Deal infrastructure programme and encourage it through our wealth building arrangements.

Labour will keep refuse collection and other services **in-house** unlike Preston's Conservatives who want to privatise them. This will enable us to keep control of the service and retain both fortnightly bin collections and recycling services.

Labour welcomes Community Gateway and Lancashire Constabulary's decision to **insource** key activity improving the quality of service and treatment of staff. Labour will encourage this approach across the wider public sector in Preston.



A real living wage for Preston



Labour run Preston City Council **became the first employer** in the north of England accredited with the Living Wage Foundation in 2012. Labour will continue to pay and promote the real living wage now valued at **£8.75 per hour**.

There are now nearly 50 other organisations in Preston who join us as Living Wage Employers. This has helped Preston rise to **1st out of 14 local authority areas** in Lancashire for individuals receiving the real living wage or more who work here. This helps women especially who are more likely to be in low paid part time employment.

Labour will continue to expand the real living wage through local procurement and by influencing the investments we have.

Labour will encourage more Preston based employers especially in the private sector to pay the living wage and ask any new Lancashire Combined Authority to expand the living wage based upon best practice in parts of the USA.

Looking after the Preston Pound



Preston has faced an ideological onslaught from Conservative led governments since 2010 that as a traditional working-class community has reduced money available to spend on people in our city by more than a third.

Despite this Labour has **balanced the budget** by reducing senior management costs, becoming more efficient, sharing services with other authorities where appropriate and prudently using our reserves.

When we have had no choice to transfer loss-making assets to maintain existing services Labour hasn't handed them to faceless corporations but to organisations in line with our values: like our leisure centres run now as an **employee owned social business**.

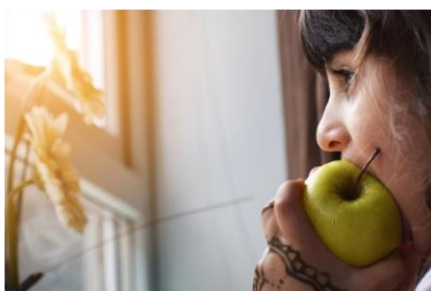
Going forward Labour will continue to increase efficiency, generate more revenue from investing strategically and restructure our senior management in a way that both saves money and allows us to deliver our key priorities.

Help with the cost of living

Tackling food poverty

Preston's new markets provide cheap and excellent quality locally produced food that help reduce food bills. Labour will support **Our Food Coop** providing vegetables, fruit and salad at two thirds of the price of most supermarkets and Preston Food Partnership who will launch a new city centre café offering affordable food soon. Labour will also work with community cafés and foodbanks to help the most vulnerable.

Family hunger affecting children is something we shouldn't tolerate. Labour will work with the voluntary sector to use healthy surplus food to **expand free meals** during school holidays and **free school breakfasts** for infant school children saving families up to £30 a week. Labour supports the Parliamentary Bill co-sponsored by Preston's Sir Mark Hendrick MP to make free school meals and activities during school holidays a statutory provision.



Financial Inclusion

Labour has adopted a financial inclusion strategy since 2015. This has seen over one thousand residents access bank accounts, get online and reduce debt and household expenditure. Labour will maintain this expenditure in 2018/19 with the rollout of full service Universal Credit needing active intervention from the council.

Affordable energy and credit

Labour established a city-wide credit union in 2015 rebranded as **Clevr Money** with now over 500 members who live or work in Preston. Labour will look to obtain a permanent presence for Clevr in the city centre shortly. Labour will also invest in **Lancashire Community Finance** as a not for profit alternative to payday and doorstep lenders providing affordable credit.

Labour launched **Fairerpower Red Rose** last year as a municipally supported not for profit alternative to the Big 6 energy companies. This helped many people obtain fairer tariffs with average savings of £300 per annum. Labour will continue to support **Cosy Homes in Lancashire** (CHIL) to ensure more people receive free cavity and loft insulation and boilers to save on household energy bills.

Advice Services & Work Clubs

Labour will protect its **Benefit & Debt Advice Services** which has secured over £10 million in unclaimed benefits and resolved over £5 million of debt for all sections of the community in recent years. These services are individually tailored including completion of claim forms, representation at tribunals and food bank referrals.

In partnership with the DWP Labour expanded the number of **Community Work Clubs** across priority wards and within specific voluntary sector services to provide neighbourhood-based employment support. Labour will continue to provide this vital service and go further by linking new developments within Preston to **job opportunities for our residents**.

A cleaner and greener place to live

Labour will improve our environment in Preston reducing mileage by buying more goods and services locally and do much more including:

Improving our parks and green spaces

Labour has secured millions of pounds of external funding to improve our parks recently developing the play and sporting facilities on **Moor Park**. Central to this is the creation of a £500,000 skate park designated as a centre of regional excellence for extreme sports.

Winckley Square Gardens have been restored through much hard work and external lottery funding and also host creative events over the summer period. Major public realm improvements in Cannon Street are attracting investment into the wider area. Labour will also work with voluntary sector organisations such as Let's Grow Preston to improve the environment and use the planning process to increase allotment provision.

As part of **Preston's Local Plan** Labour will ensure new parks and open spaces are secured on forthcoming developments through the planning process.



Opposing fracking, supporting renewables

Labour remains opposed to the undemocratic decision by central government to impose fracking on Lancastrians and supports our national policy to introduce a moratorium.

Labour will look to expand renewable energy within our community despite large cutbacks from government. Red Rose Fairerpower aims to increase the amount of renewable energy it supplies to residents which Labour will actively support.

Labour welcomes the decision by **UNISON** to seek to divest the £14bn invested by local government pension funds from fossil fuels and will welcome any plans to redirect some of this into municipally owned energy networks.

Sustainable transport in Lancashire

Labour supports the **licensing of bus franchises** to ensure more democratic control over the price and quality of our bus services. This is particularly suited to a possible Lancashire Combined Authority which we will argue should be a key devolved power to improve public transport and the environment in Lancashire.

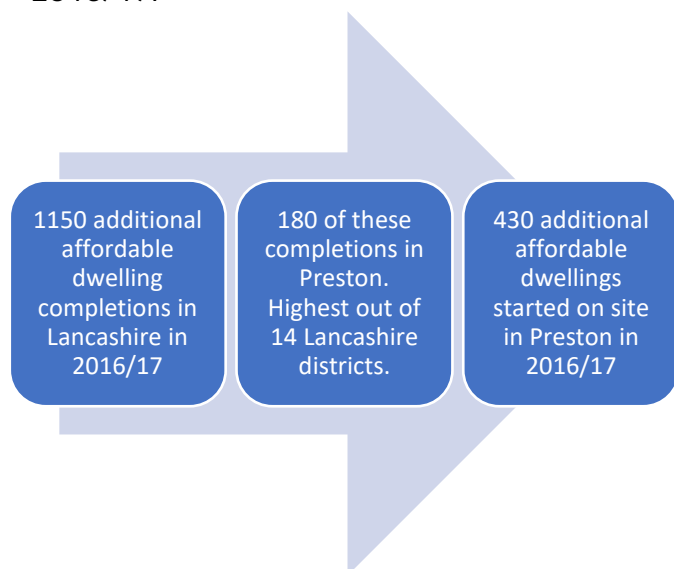
Banning Single Use Plastics

Labour will stop the use of **single use plastics** in town hall buildings which cause so much damage to both people and the wider environment. By taking this lead we will persuade other public and private sector employers to do the same. This will also help reduce the amount of litter on our streets and the need for recycling.

Better, more affordable homes in Preston

In the last six years planning permission has been granted for approximately **4000 houses** in Preston. Labour's policies ensure at least 30% of homes on developments of 15 units or more are **affordable homes** including properties for social rent.

This has contributed to very positive outcomes with Preston having the largest number of additional affordable home completions out of 14 Lancashire districts with **180 affordable housing completions** by new build or acquisition/rehabilitation in 2016/17.



Tackling empty homes

Labour has increased the number of empty properties brought back into use since 2011 working with Methodist Action, Community Gateway and others to achieve this.

Labour will go further and use commuted sums from developers to establish a **partnership vehicle** to bring empty homes back into use for affordable housing. We estimate this will amount to millions available in the long term to bring empty homes back into use.

Creative new approaches to housing

Labour has made land the council owns available to social landlords to build new affordable and social properties. Labour will continue doing this and support a **social lettings agency** to secure more fairness for those who rent.

Labour welcomes the decision of the Lancashire Pension Fund to invest in new affordable housing provision. This has led to new shared equity properties in Preston developed by Heylo Housing. Labour will ask the fund to consider directly investing more in housing locally.

Labour will also promote a **new housing company** across Lancashire with other local authorities to develop affordable homes linked to pension and other investments.

Fighting homelessness

One of the biggest consequences of Tory austerity is the growth of homelessness and rough sleeping across the country. Labour will look to deepen its **multi-agency approach** to try and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in Preston.

People who face homelessness often have complex multiple needs involving substance misuses, mental health issues and are in and out of the criminal justice system. Labour will aim to break this cycle by working with multiple partners as part of **Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM)**.

Labour will continue working with Preston's excellent homelessness charities such as Foxton and Emmaus to collaboratively tackle the problem.

A creative city of leisure

Due to financial pressures Labour transferred **West View and Fulwood Leisure Centre's** last year to protect jobs and existing services.

In line with our values the assets were transferred to GLL who wanted to introduce their employee owned model into Lancashire. As part of the transfer **£1 million** will be invested in both centre's and a partnership board will be established with elected representatives and others.

Labour will refresh its **arts and cultural strategy** with the bi-annual Lancashire Encounter festival aspiring to be the key cultural event for central Lancashire. Labour will continue our annual events programme around the Flag Market, Harris and Moor Park with Race for Life, Rockprest and circuses and fairs planned for this year.

Labour will **invest £225,000 each year** into The Harris after receiving Arts Council funding. This will deliver an enhanced programme of activity backed by existing plans to expand the Harris's programme of events and exhibitions.

The Harris has a new wireless system, a modern rebranded café and new open spaces for public use. Our long-term aim is to redevelop the Harris with significant investment involving a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid and support from other partners.



A healthier, happier city

Labour will ensure we have the healthiest possible living environment for people in Preston. As part of development plans Preston is one of few authorities to adopt Health Impact Assessments encouraging **new GP provision, open spaces and quality housing** to create healthier communities.

Labour will examine the feasibility of relocating out-patient services to a more city centre-based setting that could see relocated GP practices, offices and new housing meaning the NHS is closer to the community with added social and economic benefit.



Labour will launch a 10-point plan to **reduce smoking** in Preston as a public health priority. We will regulate new takeaways and educate people about the dangers of tanning salons, shisha cafes and problem drinking and gambling. Labour has actively supported proposals to reduce the maximum stake on **fixed odds betting terminals to £2.00** and will lobby government accordingly.

Improving mental health is a big challenge for younger people especially which Labour will tackle through initiatives like **This Stylist Listens**. Labour will work further with partners to see how to help those at risk of suicide especially younger men.

One vibrant community

Labour will strengthen our community making people feel valued and included. We will continue to work hard to harness a sense of togetherness and inclusion across Preston.



Labour will **help older people** reduce the cost of heating during winter time and support community centres to combat isolation. Labour will promote a **positive view of ageing** and make more work opportunities available for over 55's. Labour will continue to promote dementia awareness, ensure taxi licensing is responsive to older people's needs and the benefits they are entitled to are claimed.

For **children and younger people** life can be difficult and demanding. Labour will ensure the young are safer by raising awareness of **child sexual exploitation** and other issues like school bullying. Labour will support measures to improve the mental health of younger people through **MH:2K** and ensure more young people receive work and apprenticeships through our economic policies. Labour will promote cultural activities that appeal directly to the young.

Preston's strength derives from its diverse communities we will embrace to nurture a **live and let live** feeling in our city. Labour will support events like Preston Mela, Caribbean Carnival, Armed Forces Day, Preston Pride and Standing Together Against Racism (STAR) many of which emerged under our current administration.

Labour will ensure services are impact assessed so no group of people are negatively affected and promote good practice across Preston through our **Inclusion Reference Group (IRG)**.

Labour will enhance the **rights of women** by working with Labour's Police & Crime Commissioner **Clive Grunshaw** and others. Labour will help fund services for women needing refuge from abusive relationships and bring the sensitive topic of 'hygiene poverty' into our financial inclusion policy.

Labour will work with Preston's excellent voluntary sector organisations to promote equality and tackle discrimination. We will promote a zero-tolerance approach to all aspects of **hate crime** and aim to increase reporting levels.

A Labour Council will use its resources and work with others to ensure Preston remains safe and friendly for the whole community. Labour will continue to **support CCTV** to reduce crime and work closely with the Police to ensure resources are used effectively and in areas of most need. Labour Councillors will continue to be a visible presence at PACT meetings working to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

Labour's 25 pledges for Preston

- ✓ Labour will increase investment and jobs based upon City Deal and the Preston Model.
- ✓ Labour will regenerate the city centre with a £30m cinema and restaurant development in the Market Quarter area.
- ✓ Labour will work with partners to increase the extra £200 million spent by the public sector with Lancashire suppliers.
- ✓ Labour will seek to create the Lancashire Community Bank and a local wealth fund.
- ✓ Labour will put democracy in Preston's economy by creating new worker cooperatives.
- ✓ Labour will protect worker's rights and aim to expand the real living wage.
- ✓ Labour will expand free school breakfasts and meals during school holidays saving families up to £30 a week.
- ✓ Labour will invest over £100,000 in financial inclusion and protect first-class advice services.
- ✓ Labour will ensure new developments lead to job opportunities for Preston residents.
- ✓ Labour will oppose fracking and pursue an expansion of renewable energy.
- ✓ Labour will maintain our parks and public spaces and create new ones through Preston's Local Plan.
- ✓ Labour will provide land for affordable housing and ensure at least 30% of housing is affordable on new developments.
- ✓ Labour will setup a vehicle to reduce empty homes and explore forming a housing company with other councils.

- ✓ Labour will ask the Lancashire Pension Fund to invest more in the local economy and less in risky and damaging equities.
- ✓ Labour will support the multi-agency Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM) programme to fight homelessness.
- ✓ Labour will invest £225,000 each year in The Harris and refresh its Arts and Culture strategy.
- ✓ Labour's leisure centre transfer to Greenwich Leisure will yield extra investment of £2 million.
- ✓ Labour will discuss with the NHS if more outpatient and GP services should be delivered from city centre locations.
- ✓ Labour will work with partners to reduce smoking and improve people's mental health.
- ✓ Labour will help older people stay warm in winter, reduce isolation and promote a positive view of ageing.
- ✓ Labour will try to protect children and young people from abuse, expand apprenticeships and support activity they enjoy.
- ✓ Labour will promote a live and let live feel in Preston, tackle discrimination and support its diverse culture.
- ✓ Labour will promote women's rights, fund domestic violence provision and address hygiene poverty.
- ✓ Labour will partner with the voluntary, community and faith sector and tackle hate crime.
- ✓ Labour will work with Labour's Police & Crime Commissioner to create safer communities and continue supporting CCTV.

Vote Labour on Thursday 3rd May

