

# ***TOGETHER***

**ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP**

**END OF YEAR REVIEW 2020**





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## COUNCILLOR DAVID BAINES

### LABOUR LEADER OF ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welcome to this End of Year Review from your St Helens Borough Labour Group of councillors.

This has been a year unlike any other. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been directly affected by Covid, and our thanks and admiration go to all the keyworkers who got us through the worst of the pandemic.

**We're proud of the way our council and keyworker staff responded to the challenges of Covid, supporting residents, businesses and voluntary groups while also continuing to provide essential services. When reflecting on what we've delivered this year, my Labour colleagues and I are mindful and forever thankful to each and every member of council staff who has gone above and beyond the call of duty.**

This year has shown us what really matters, both to each of us personally and to our communities and the country. The community spirit and kindness in our borough was incredible, and whatever the future might bring, Labour are going to work to make sure that sense of togetherness is remembered.

At the start of the pandemic we launched #StHelensTogether to coordinate support and that will now underpin all our work - by working together, we achieve more than we achieve alone.

**Every member of our Labour Group works hard for their community and I want to thank Group Chair Cllr Sue Murphy and all my colleagues for their efforts in a difficult year. As this booklet demonstrates, our Group - working with our MPs Conor McGinn and Marie Rimmer, and Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram - will always act in the best interests of our whole borough, and with Keir Starmer leading our Party we'll act in the national interest too.**

Best wishes,

David



# YOUR LABOUR CABINET



**COUNCILLOR SEV GOMEZ-ASPRON**  
**DEPUTY LEADER AND RESET AND RECOVERY**



**COUNCILLOR JEANIE BELL**  
**STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES**



**COUNCILLOR MARTIN BOND**  
**FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

**COUNCILLOR ANDY BOWDEN**  
**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**



**COUNCILLOR ANTHONY BURNS**  
**WELLBEING, CULTURE AND HERITAGE**



**COUNCILLOR NOVA CHARLTON**  
**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**



**COUNCILLOR KATE GROUCUTT**  
**EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND SKILLS**



**COUNCILLOR RICHARD McCAULEY**  
**REGENERATION AND PLANNING**



**COUNCILLOR MARLENE QUINN**  
**INTEGRATED CARE AND HEALTH**

Scrutiny is a vital and statutory part of local government, holding the Leader and Cabinet to account and adding value to policymaking across the council.

In 2020 Labour councillors have led various scrutiny task groups into important issues such as apprenticeships, child protection, and environmental issues.



**COUNCILLOR JOHN WISEMAN**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION CHAIR**



**COUNCILLOR ROBYN HATTERSLEY**

**PLACE SERVICES SCRUTINY CHAIR**



**COUNCILLOR LYNN CLARKE**

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE CHAIR**



**COUNCILLOR DENNIS McDONNELL**

**ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY CHAIR**



**COUNCILLOR TRISHA LONG**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY CHAIR**

### JANUARY

Brought motions to Council supporting **higher taxi standards** and promoting **suicide awareness**, calling for funding for those essential services trying to save lives.

### FEBRUARY

Supported **#TimetoTalk** Day to raise awareness of mental health issues.

Joined Labour MPs in writing to the PM and Chancellor to back **#MakeEndsMeet** campaign for **changes to Universal Credit**.

### MARCH

Campaigned for fair **long-term sustainable funding for social care with a motion to council and letter to the PM**.

Brought motion to council calling for **investment in our local police estates**.

### APRIL

Wrote to government backing the **Raise the Bar campaign**, asking for the many local hospitality and leisure venues who missed out on Covid grant support so far to be considered.

### MAY

Leader, MPs, and all group leaders wrote to government to ask for **urgent funding certainty for essential services**.

Committed to **#WhateverItTakes** to tackle Covid.

### JUNE

At Cabinet, we marked the **#BlackLivesMatter** movement and the responsibility of each of us to **tackle racism, prejudice, and injustice**.

### JULY

**Stood up for care homes** in the face of Tory attempts to blame them for the spread of the virus.

Brought a motion to council **promoting education about racism**.

### AUGUST

Supported local pupils and students in the face of the government's **exam fiasco** and we called for BTEC students to be urgently supported.

### SEPTEMBER

With new restrictions looming, with City Region colleagues we called on government to work with us; provide **financial support for our local economy**; and give us **more testing** capacity.

### OCTOBER

Guaranteed food vouchers over half term, supporting **#ENDCHILDFOODPOVERTY** campaign.

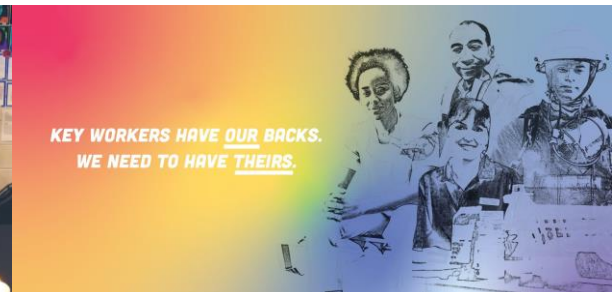
Leader, MPs and group leaders **wrote again** (see May) to government, with no reply.

### NOVEMBER

Brought motions to council supporting the UN **Sustainable Development Goals**, the dangerous use of **nitrous oxide**, and a comprehensive motion on Covid including calls for **fair funding for schools and social care**.

### DECEMBER

Pledged that **free school meal vouchers would be offered over the Christmas holidays** for every child who needs them.





# #STHELENSTOGETHER

**The way our community came together this year was incredible. In addition to the outstanding dedication of keyworkers, it was thanks to the community spirit, strength and kindness shown by residents, local businesses and charities that our most vulnerable residents were supported.**

Across the borough, residents stepped up to deliver food parcels, volunteer, produce or donate PPE and other essential equipment, and more. In addition to supporting this work directly in our communities, our Labour Council worked with partners including Halton and St Helens VCA, Torus and others, and we:

- **Set up #StHelensTogether as a one-stop shop for those who needed support and those who wanted to volunteer, ensuring help reached those who needed it**
- **Registered hundreds of volunteers in partnership with HSHVCA**
- **Delivered over 100 food parcels per week to those that were most vulnerable in our communities**
- **Supported local charities, old and new, working across the borough**
- **Supported our care homes and careworkers**
- **Kept schools safely open for vulnerable children and those of keyworkers**
- **Supported hundreds of businesses quickly and effectively in numerous ways, whether through administering grants or offering licensing support for them to change the way they operated.**

#StHelensTogether is here to stay – Labour are determined that the council works **with** residents, businesses, charities and voluntary groups, supporting them to make sure essential services are delivered together, for the good of all our borough.



**TOGETHER**

# **JOB S, HOMES, INVESTMENT AND REGENERATION**



Our local economy has faced unprecedented challenges this year. Throughout the crisis, we've done whatever it takes to offer support, and led by Cabinet members Cllr Richard McCauley and Cllr Kate Groucutt, together we've got on with the job of bringing jobs, new homes, investment and regeneration to our borough....

## JANUARY

First meeting of the **Town Deal Board**, bringing together local private, public and third sector representatives to bid for up to £25m government funding for regeneration projects.

Secured £2m funding from the City Region to help deliver a **major housing project on brownfield land** at Moss Nook.

## MARCH

Announced a **game-changing 20 year partnership with English Cities Fund** to deliver regeneration across the borough, with St Helens and Earlestown town centres a priority.

## APRIL

Launched **St Helens Is Open**, a campaign and online portal to showcase businesses operating throughout lockdown.

## JULY

Labour agreed an **Economic Recovery Plan** for St Helens and the City Region, setting out how we can **build back better**.

## SEPTEMBER

Announced £1m Towns Fund advance grant funding to **demolish Chalon Way car park**, opening up the canal area of St Helens town centre for regeneration, and agreed to submit the draft **Local Plan** to government for independent inspection.

## OCTOBER

Secured new funding for **Glass Futures**, the multi-million pound industry leading project that will put St Helens back at the heart of the glassmaking map.

Approved Home Bargains' application for **hundreds of millions of pounds of investment at a new distribution centre at the M62 Omega site**, delivering jobs, £1.8m for Bold Forest Park, a new public nature conservation and woodland area, a local employment scheme and £750,000 towards a bus service from St Helens to Omega to help enable local residents to access jobs there.

In the absence of any support from the Tory government, with Labour colleagues from the City Region we announced **£40m emergency business support** for those businesses affected by Tier 3.

## NOVEMBER

Extended the eligibility criteria for the £40m pot to **make funding available for those who had so far been forgotten by government, including the self-employed and sole traders**. The City Region is the first place in the country to offer such support.

## DECEMBER

Final legal agreement with English Cities fund signed – work will now begin on **masterplanning for regeneration of St Helens and Earlestown town centres**.

**TOGETHER**



It's a requirement for all councils to have a Local Plan to meet housing and employment need in the borough. The draft St Helens Local Plan covers the period 2020-2035 and is currently with the government for independent assessment. All residents will get their chance to contribute to that process.

**Labour support the draft Local Plan because it is ambitious for jobs, new affordable homes, growth, investment and infrastructure, and at the same time it protects 59% of the borough as greenbelt – plus our many outstanding parks and other open spaces.**

The housing target of 486 new homes a year is only thirty more than the local Tory-coordinated opposition accept is needed (*St Helens Star*, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020), and it's fewer than has been delivered in recent years.

We'll continue to fight for funding to unlock brownfield sites, as we have done at Moss Nook, but we believe urban areas deserve open space too and they shouldn't be the only parts of our borough that benefit from growth.

**Young people right across the borough, whether in Rainford or Rainhill, Eccleston or Earlestown, deserve the best possible chance in their local area to buy their own home and to access job opportunities. Labour will always do all we can to fight for them, and we'll act in the best interests of the whole borough, not just those who shout the loudest.**



## CASE STUDY #1

# A LOCAL PLAN FOR THE WHOLE BOROUGH

Read more:  
[www.sthelenslabour.org/localplan](http://www.sthelenslabour.org/localplan)

# HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE



Local health services have been pushed to the limit this year. NHS, social care and public health services have done an exceptional job in unprecedented circumstances and we thank them all. Led by Cabinet Member for Integrated Care and Health, Cllr Marlene Quinn, and Cabinet Member for Public Health Cllr Anthony Burns, our council worked with partner organisations on a range of issues including....

## JANUARY

Launched a campaign to combat the rising suicide stats in the borough. **OK2ASK Suicide Awareness training was launched for every St Helens community** following a motion to council raising awareness and taking the fight to the government proving the links between Tory austerity and suicide.

## FEBRUARY

Supported a public event championing **dignity in social care** at St Helens Town Hall, promoting dignity and respect for people receiving care or support.

The Marmot Review: Ten years On was published, showing the impact of a decade of Tory austerity on health and inequality in St Helens and the country. Labour held a **poverty summit chaired by Cllr Andy Bowden with attendees including the local Citizens Advice Bureau, DWP, foodbank, churches, Torus and others** to discuss poverty and health inequalities and how we can work together to address these vital issues.

## MARCH

Brought a motion to council calling for **sustainable funding for social care** to address the funding crisis faced by the system nationally, and wrote to the Prime Minister urging him to take action now.

Launched **#StHelensTogether**, a campaign to support those isolated or vulnerable due to Covid and to encourage and coordinate volunteers to provide help during lockdown. This initiative is a partnership between the council, Halton and St Helens Voluntary Community Action, working with other organisations such as Torus and local businesses.

## APRIL

Gave more than **£40,000 extra funding to Halton and St Helens VCA, Teardrops, Age UK Mid Mersey and the Hope Centre** to support their work helping the most vulnerable members of our community during lockdown.

## JULY

Supported a campaign to promote **a wide range of activities taking place during the summer holidays**, thanking the staff involved with the running of these sessions for helping children and young people enjoy some sort of normality during their summer break.

## DECEMBER

St Helens Cares, our innovative and unique provision model for integrated health and care in the borough, is **nominated for a prestigious national HSJ award**.

Following hard work lobbying the government our borough became one of the first places in the country after Liverpool to launch **mass symptom-free COVID-19 testing**.

**TOGETHER**



Labour have always been on the side of essential public services, because we recognise the importance of the security and dignity they provide for all of us who may need them at any time.

**We believe that access to quality healthcare for all is a fundamental right. The NHS is our proudest achievement as a Party, and right now social care faces a crisis that demands action.**

Thanks to our creation of the award-winning St Helens Cares in partnership with the local NHS we are in a very fortunate position in St Helens. But we recognise that the whole social care funding system needs urgent reform.

**Councillor Marlene Quinn has raised this issue constantly. She has highlighted the crisis facing council and social care budgets across the country. This cannot and should not be allowed to continue, yet it goes on from one year to the next due to government delay and dithering.**

This crisis will continue to escalate unless and until the government produce a fair and sustainable plan. Encouraging councils to raise extra money for social care through council tax is fundamentally unfair – it punishes residents, and it punishes boroughs with smaller council tax bases than others, entrenching inequality and unfairness in the system.

The time to act decisively is now.



**CASE STUDY #2**

**FIGHTING FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL CARE**

Read more:  
[www.sthelenslabour.org/socialcare](http://www.sthelenslabour.org/socialcare)

# **SAFER, STRONGER COMMUNITIES**



Throughout the pandemic, the council's licensing and regulatory service teams have supported hundreds of businesses and individuals to adapt quickly to the new and fast-changing rules. Led by Cllr Jeanie Bell, the council has also continued to deliver important advice and support on issues such as domestic abuse, fuel poverty and rough sleeping....

## FEBRUARY

In an event at the Hope Centre we celebrated local community groups and charitable organisations for the difference they've made after receiving £45,000 grant funding from the council to **promote social cohesion and inclusivity** in the borough.

## MARCH

Provided **advice and support during lockdown for those at risk of or suffering domestic abuse** - for more information all year round visit [www.safe2speak.co.uk](http://www.safe2speak.co.uk)

Agreed a **new Domestic Abuse Strategy**, and the council's new Domestic Abuse Prevention Officer started in post.

Cabinet Member Cllr Jeanie Bell and Licensing Chair Cllr Dave Banks **attended the national LGA Licencing Conference to deliver a presentation on the #KnowYourRide scheme** introduced in 2019 for St Helens Borough taxi drivers. **Our council is now seen as beacon of good practice:** we have been approached by other councils to develop their licencing safeguarding training.

## APRIL

Launched the **#Ready2Respect campaign, providing advice and guidance around the measures we need to follow** and the impact of things such as noise, bonfires and other ASB.

**Froze the cost of all license fees and charges until April 2021** and brought forward our measures to issue driver and vehicle license renewals electronically.

## JULY

Launched a campaign to **discourage the use of so-called 'laughing gas'**, highlighting the danger to users and the impact on communities of associated drug litter and anti-social behaviour that blight our parks and open spaces, causing great harm to the environment and our community pride.

## OCTOBER

Secured more than £1m new funding in partnership with Torus to **provide accommodation and support to rough sleepers** in the borough.

## NOVEMBER

As the colder weather begins, our council launched its annual **Winter Warmer campaign** to help local people stay warm and well, and to heat their homes for less.

## DECEMBER

Throughout the pandemic this year officers in Licencing, Trading Standards and Environmental Health helped resolve hundreds of requests and **supported businesses across the borough to diversify and stay open** in difficult and everchanging times.

**TOGETHER**



**Who's taking  
you home?**

**#KnowYourRide**

Look for the badge  
All Gold Standard Drivers  
have been checked by  
St Helens Council.  
Your safety is our priority.



**Safe2Speak**

**WINTER  
WARMER  
2021**

This winter, as we have done all year, our council is continuing its work to prevent rough sleeping.

**In March, the Tory government gave councils extra funding to get everyone sleeping rough off the streets and into safe and suitable accommodation, proving that they could have acted to tackle this crisis sooner if they had wanted to do so. In 2019 the charity Crisis reported that rough sleeping had increased by 165% since 2010. It shouldn't take a pandemic for the government to address this huge issue.**

Since the start of the pandemic the council and partner agencies have helped over 100 people into either supported housing, private rented or other forms of housing, and in October, the council and Torus were successful in a bid to government for £1,134,083 funding to provide interim and long-term 'next steps' accommodation for rough sleepers or those who have slept rough or been homeless.

All year the council has partnered with a range of agencies including the Salvation Army, St Helens YMCA and Whitechapel Assertive Outreach, and we provided extra funding to Teardrops and Hope House. The council's Housing Options and Advice Service has also operated throughout the crisis.

Under Labour, our council will continue to do everything we can to accommodate new rough sleepers during the winter and help those already off the streets into safe, long-term accommodation with the appropriate support.

**And Labour, both locally and nationally, will continue to do all we can to end the rough sleeping and housing crisis for good. We can't go back to business as usual.**



**CASE STUDY #3**

**PREVENTING ROUGH SLEEPING**

# A GREEN COUNCIL AND A HEALTHIER BOROUGH



Climate change is the most fundamental threat our world faces, and Labour acknowledge this. Cllr Andy Bowden and our whole Group are determined to do all we can to make sure the Council works with partners, residents and businesses to promote green and sustainable practices and growth. And we want to promote leisure and improve health too....

## FEBRUARY

With City Region colleagues we announced plans to develop a **Mersey Tidal Power** project, which has the potential to deliver power for hundreds of thousands of Merseyside homes and businesses, thousands of jobs, and millions of pounds of investment for our region.

Announced a **£300k scheme to carry out work on the Sankey Canal at Gerard's Bridge** to reduce flooding at the hotspot on College Street and also to open up the canal for cyclists and walkers..

## MAY

Worked in partnership with Saints Community Foundation, Community Integrated Care (CIC), and Pedal Power – a local volunteer-led initiative – to deliver a **Bikes for NHS** campaign, providing more than **50 free bike loans to NHS staff at Whiston, St Helens and Newton hospitals** as an alternative means to public transport.

## AUGUST

Together with Labour City Region partners we become **the first governmental body in the world to join the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll)**. The worldwide alliance seeks to ensure that we prioritise shared wellbeing and a healthy planet in our economy.

## SEPTEMBER

A scrutiny task group led by Labour Councillor Mancyia Uddin produced its report into **how the council can reduce its use of paper and plastics and contribute to global climate crisis action.**

## NOVEMBER

Plans are unveiled for a **significant makeover at King George V playing fields in Haydock** to improve facilities for sports clubs and residents as well as enhance security in the area.

Cabinet agreed a **Climate Change Action Plan**, including a number of measures to make the council more ecologically responsible.

Labour proposed and fully support a call to **back the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which encompass issues from housing, jobs, and poverty, to climate action, peace, and equality.** The agreed steps include producing a tracking document to show progress made, and to take account of the SDGs in all future council reports and policy papers.

The improvement works announced in February **to help prevent flooding on College Street** are completed.

With Labour City Region colleagues we agreed an **action plan to improve air quality** in St Helens and across the region.

## DECEMBER

Announced that in partnership with The Mersey Forest our council will **plant hundreds of trees in the borough** in 2021.



In November our Cabinet agreed a detailed action plan to ensure the council does much more to help tackle climate change.

**The agreed actions include significant reductions in the use of paper and plastics across the council; the creation of a Climate Action Working Group to lead on developing and implementing initiatives; the appointment of an accountable officer for overseeing and leading on climate change issues; and training for all councillors on the climate emergency.**

This should be seen alongside our focus on the environment, for example, within the protections and enhancements in the local plan, and our work at city region level on green and sustainable transport and energy.

**We're also working to encourage and attract jobs, homes and investment to our borough, and let's be clear: supporting action on climate change and sustainable development goals is not incompatible with the creation of jobs and the building of houses for those that need them.**

Labour will make sure the council uses its influence to encourage our staff, partners and communities to be more conscious of the environment and be mindful in the choices they make.

**Collectively achieving economic, social and climate justice should be at the heart of everything we do.**



CASE STUDY #4

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Read more:  
[www.sthelenslabour.org/climatechange](http://www.sthelenslabour.org/climatechange)

# SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE



Young people and their families have had a tough year with massive disruption to their school and college life, restrictions on activities, and for those leaving secondary school and college the added stress of uncertainty about exam results and next steps. Under Cllr Nova Charlton, Cllr Kate Groucutt and Cllr Sue Murphy our council has offered support to children and the services they need....

## FEBRUARY

Cabinet voted unanimously to **extend the Council Tax reduction scheme for all young care leavers who live in the borough.**

## APRIL

The council's youth service **delivered isolation packs to young people** under the lockdown.

Offered **free school meals to all eligible pupils over the Easter holiday.**

## JUNE

**Supported schools and colleges** who wanted to safely welcome back pupils in transition years before the end of term.

Scrutiny Commission received **a task group report, chaired by Labour's Councillor Trisha Long, on apprenticeships for care leavers** and how we as a council can do more to help them. The report was accepted by Cabinet in September.

## AUGUST

Launched the All-In campaign, **giving information and reassurance to parents, carers and pupils** about getting back in the classroom.

## SEPTEMBER

Received written **confirmation from Ofsted that we are making progress in improving Children's Services**, following a two-day virtual inspection in July.

Cabinet accepted a scrutiny **task group report, chaired by Labour's Councillor Michelle Sweeney, into the issue of County Lines** and how we can better protect children and young people from this scandal.

Announced plans to **move Penkford pupils to a new site at Red Bank** in Newton-le-Willows, and **a complete rebuild of Ashurst Primary School** in Blackbrook.

## OCTOBER

Announced the findings and next steps of **the Good Childhood Report**, a huge consultation with more than 3000 local Primary and Secondary pupils carried out by the Children's Society.

Pledged our **support for the #ENDCHILDFOODPOVERTY campaign** and confirmed that we would provide food vouchers for all those pupils eligible over the half term holiday.

## DECEMBER

**School attendance for autumn term is confirmed to be above the regional average**, showing parent and pupil confidence in the safety measures our schools have taken with support from the council.

**TOGETHER**

## Free School Meals

St Helens Borough Council is funding free school meal vouchers for 6,000 children this half term



The issue of holiday hunger and child food poverty has been highlighted this year as families across the country face extra hardship due to Covid, and Marcus Rashford has everyone’s praise and admiration for his efforts to tackle the issue.

**For several years as a Labour council we’ve funded a holiday hunger scheme in the borough, and in October this year - alongside businesses, charities and residents who came forward to help - we stepped up too, offering food vouchers to every eligible child. We’ll always do what we can to tackle poverty and hunger.**

In the same October week that free school meals were making the headlines a new report from the End Child Poverty commission confirmed that child poverty has risen in St Helens borough and across the country, with almost a third of children growing up in families living below the breadline. Many of these families are in work, which just shows how unfair and unrewarding current circumstances are for many people.

A decade of cuts to essential services, pay freezes, and the dismantling of the social security safety net for jobseekers and low paid workers is behind this increase in poverty in Britain, and the pandemic has made a bad situation even worse for millions of families.

**The Labour Party have spent a decade challenging the government and their policies which have led to this situation, and we’ll continue to do so.**



**CASE STUDY #5**

**FIGHTING HOLIDAY HUNGER**

# HERITAGE, CULTURE AND EVENTS



Our borough has a proud heritage and a strong cultural offer. One of our top priorities is bringing the Gamble Building and Earlestown Town Hall back into full public use, and this year we've made progress on both of these projects. We've also got a strong cultural offer, whether through our outstanding libraries, art, music or sport, and this year, in their absence, we've all realised the value and importance of these things....

**FEBRUARY**

Held public consultation events in person and online about **the future of the historic Earlestown Town Hall**, and announced events for March to discuss **the iconic Gamble building**.

**APRIL**

Launched the Library Home Delivery Service to **help residents access books and services through lockdown**, tackling loneliness and isolation.

**MAY**

Labour publish a **Heritage Opportunities document**, setting out our bold and ambitious plans to preserve and promote the borough's heritage in the next decade.

**AUGUST**

**Construction work began on Earlestown Town Hall** to demolish the newer, out-of-character outbuildings.

Welcomed the Sports Minister to Blackbrook Rugby Club to hear about the fantastic community work done by the club and the **exciting plans for next year's Rugby League World Cup**.

Launched a **comprehensive database of professional and emerging artists** in St Helens Borough to help the local creative industry find new work and commissions.

**SEPTEMBER**

Opened our **new St Helens Library at the World of Glass**, with 18,000 new books, a cosy children's area, the borough's first self-serve kiosk, and a computer suite and study area.

**NOVEMBER**

Working with local organisations and partners our council **held virtual Remembrance events and placed poppy tributes on prominent roads and locations** around the borough.

**DECEMBER**

Cabinet approved a draft Arts Strategy for publication in the early new year. This is an **ambitious vision for the arts** and will provide a sustainable, pragmatic and engaged framework for delivering, promoting and inspiring the arts and culture in the borough.



Both the Gamble and Earlestown Town Hall are historic buildings, and they mean a great deal to all of us.

**They should both be in full public use - Labour are committed to making this happen.**

This year we've held public events online and in person (socially distanced during the pandemic) to give residents the chance to have their say on what exactly they'd like to see each building used for.

In the case of the Gamble, the Archive Service has remained there while the Central Library has – for now – moved to the World of Glass until repairs are completed at the Gamble to make it safe. The rest of the building has for some years accommodated council staff, and it's our intention to move these staff out and allow the whole building to be used by the public.

Earlestown Town Hall was closed in 2008 by the Lib Dems when they controlled the council. It needs significant investment to be made safe, but work has already begun – in August demolition work began to remove the out-of-character annexes.

**Using the information from those who took part in consultation events earlier this year, Labour will continue to work on plans to bring these buildings back into use and make them sustainable for the future. We want to see them fully restored, open, and thriving at the heart of our communities.**



CASE STUDY #6

THE GAMBLE AND EARLESTOWN TOWN HALL

# A MORE MODERN, RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL



Before Covid we already recognised the need to make the council more modern, effective and efficient. That's why we introduced the One Council programme in 2019. Under Deputy Leader Cllr Seve Gomez-Aspron and Cllr Martin Bond, we're finding new ways of working and we're determined to make the most of every opportunity to modernise, improve services and generate new income....

## MARCH

Labour's budget for 2020/21 includes a **freeze on councillor allowances** and the **scrapping of St Helens First magazine**, alongside a commitment to **communicate and engage with residents in different, more modern ways**, as well as **finding new ways of generating income that don't hit residents in the pocket** – this will include the **appointment of an Assistant Director for Commercialisation**.

No opposition councillors responded to the invitation to take part in the budget scrutiny process.

## APRIL

Throughout lockdown **services such as leisure and libraries switched to new ways of working**, including online and home delivery.

## JULY

**Labour propose and fully support a move to all-out elections from 2022**. This switch will give the council certainty and stable leadership for 4 year periods, and will make councillors more accountable to the public. Importantly, it also saves public money due to holding fewer elections.

Public **consultation on the St Helens Borough Strategy** began online and would be followed up throughout August with socially distanced events to give as many residents as possible the chance to have their say.

## AUGUST

Announced **sweeping changes to ways of working**, with plans to consolidate the office and accommodation space currently used by council staff and a move to hybrid and agile working across the borough.

## SEPTEMBER

Created a **new Cabinet role of Reset and Recovery**, to be held by the Deputy Leader, to focus on modernisation and transformation of the council and the way services are delivered.

## NOVEMBER

A brand-new **Investment and Acquisition Strategy** was approved by Cabinet. This will create a £10m pot using capital receipts (money that cannot be used for services) to use for commercial investments, generating income which can be used to fund services.

## DECEMBER

Feedback from **the independent Local Government Association highlights the good work and progress** the council is making in many areas, and the support we've given to communities this year.

Finished appointing **new senior officers to help deliver on the priorities of residents and the borough**.

**TOGETHER**



Councils are required to have a Council Plan, a document that tells everyone – council staff, residents, partner organisations and businesses in the borough – what the council's priorities are and how they will be achieved.

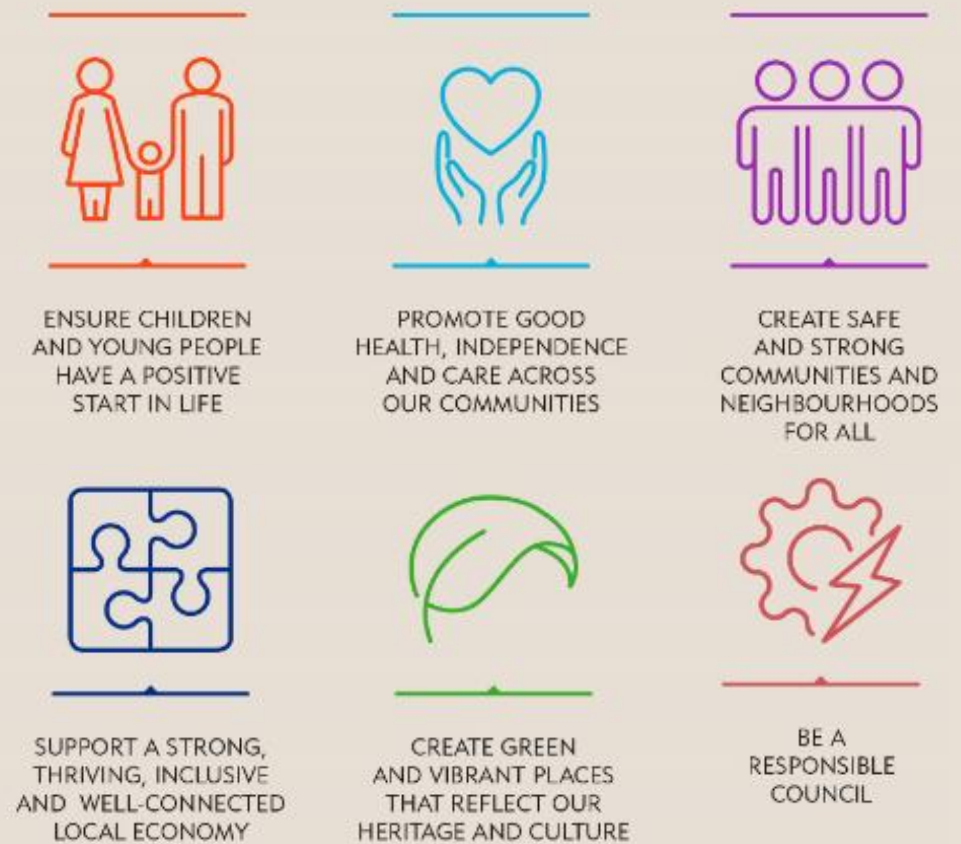
**For our new council plan, Labour wanted to not just have a very clear vision and key priorities, but we wanted to set out the new relationship we believe the council can have with residents, businesses, and partners post-Covid. It's therefore important that everyone in the borough has a chance to help shape the strategy and as much as possible feels ownership of it.**

In July we launched a consultation and this was followed up with socially-distanced public events and online surveys to ask people what they thought was important, and what they thought the council could and should be doing to improve the borough.

**The result is our vision: *Working together for a better borough, with people at the heart of everything we do.* This is supported by six key priorities focusing on children, health, communities, the economy, environment and heritage, and council modernisation.**

The final strategy document will include key targets for each of these priorities, and will clearly set out how we as a council together with residents, businesses, charities, and groups can achieve them and help our borough fulfil its potential.

**#StHelensTogether: Our Borough Strategy will be published early in the new year.**



## CASE STUDY #7

# #STHELENSTOGETHER: OUR BOROUGH STRATEGY



## CONTACT YOUR LABOUR COUNCILLORS:

**Find your councillor:**

[www.sthelenslabour.org/your-labour-councillors](http://www.sthelenslabour.org/your-labour-councillors)

## STAY IN TOUCH ALL YEAR ROUND:

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[www.sthelenslabour.org](http://www.sthelenslabour.org)

## APPLY FOR A POSTAL VOTE:

In May 2021 elections are scheduled for the council, Metro Mayor, and Police and Crime Commissioner.

**Don't miss your chance to vote early and safely for Labour:**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote)



**TOGETHER**



“

I BELIEVE THAT  
**A BETTER FUTURE**  
**IS POSSIBLE**  
FOR THIS COUNTRY.

KEIR STARMER,  
LEADER OF THE LABOUR PARTY

**A NEW LEADERSHIP**  
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# ***TOGETHER***



**ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP**

**END OF YEAR REVIEW 2020**

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