

Dear Andrew,

I'm writing to congratulate you on your appointment as the Chief Executive of Lambeth Council and to emphasise the need for us to now work closely together on achieving our organisational and political priorities.

Labour secured a very strong result at the ballot box. We have been elected for a record fourth term, have secured 57 of 63 councillors and received an increased share of the vote. The people of Lambeth have endorsed our work to date and overwhelmingly backed our vision for the future. Our manifesto contains the pledge to continue being a modernising, innovative and radical council that is focused on building a fairer, better borough. For these reasons it's absolutely vital that we complete our positive and ambitious agenda to:

- Tackle youth violence and knife crime, and fighting for more police on our streets
- Complete our ambitious programme of 1,000 new council homes
- Increase enforcement against rogue landlords
- Improving air quality, increasing recycling and maintaining weekly bin collections
- Press businesses to follow the council's lead on paying at least the London Living Wage
- Fight for the rights of EU citizens
- The creation of at least 1,500 new apprenticeships and invest the developers' tax in youth services

The council has a good track record of achievement. During the previous administration we built the first new council homes in a generation, made a record investment in our roads and pavements, tackled anti-social behaviour and campaigned for the London Living Wage. The borough introduced 20mph speed limits to make our streets safer and our parks came top of an independent survey for the quality their management. We have worked hard to keep our streets clean, improve air quality and making Lambeth a more environmentally friendly place. When it comes to ensuring the best start in life Lambeth has excellent early years provision, with outstanding nursery schools, children's centres and child care centres. Ninety-four per cent of Lambeth schools are rated Good or Outstanding.

We have become a more efficient council, saving money on our contracts and cutting the number of buildings we run from 14 to two, saving £4.5million a year in the process. This has been achieved despite a 56 per cent cut to our core Government funding since 2010 and having the ninth lowest council tax in London.

During the election campaign conversations on the doorstep highlighted the things residents value about their council, and where people think we have achieved as an organisation. But what also came through was concern about challenges ahead. The Government's ongoing programme of austerity which is now expected to run into the mid-2020s, Britain's departure from the European Union, and the way politics is changing are all creating uncertainty for our residents.

These factors combined with a lack of clarity about our financial future beyond the immediate and pressing need to make even deeper cuts in the region of a further £40million mean we face an unprecedented period of challenge. How we respond to these challenges is key. I am asking that the council redouble its efforts to engage with local people, involving them in the decisions that shape their communities, ensuring that even as we have less staff due to government cuts, they are still responsive to local people.

Despite the huge financial challenges, Lambeth has always been committed to early intervention and prevention, in particular across health, adult social care and children services. We need to build on our excellent partnership work with local health institutions and organisations towards even greater integration of service delivery that puts the patient experience and care at its heart. And while recognising the organisation's huge effort in turning around children services from an Ofsted rating of inadequate to requires improvement, we want to redouble our efforts to make it truly excellent.

There are huge opportunities in Lambeth and as an organisation the council must prioritise ensuring we are able to channel them, be that through raising income, maximising the potential benefits of devolution, building on our partnerships - as demonstrated through Lambeth Together, working with the Mayor of London and modernising the organisation. Our resident satisfaction rates are high, but with the ongoing cuts to our budget those figures might falter. I want the council to manage expectations, but also ensure that areas that have been targeted for extra investment are really delivering; be that our environmental services, our domestic violence initiatives or our crucially important children's services. Further where we know we are under-performing we need to make tackling those issues a priority.

We now need council staff at all levels of the organisation engaging with our communities. The way we tackle the challenges ahead needs to be set out now so we can direct an organisation that is transparent, high performing, works with community and gets value for money. The council must take urgent and immediate action to cut the number of senior interim officers who were necessitated by absence of a Chief Executive, and ensure the pay ratio between the highest and lowest earner in the council does not exceed 10:1 and continues to come down.

Despite these challenges, the building blocks for success are in place. Our 57 freshly elected councillors are a talented and diverse group that are rooted in and reflective of our community. Lambeth council's staff are motivated and professional. Our new council cabinet members are strong, experienced and keen to get on with the job on behalf of all our residents. I'm personally proud to have been the council leader for the last six-years, and am determined that we will use all the resources at our disposal to deliver for our communities.

Leading Lambeth Council is a huge job with equally serious responsibilities, and I now look forward to working with you, all councillors and all council staff over the rest of this electoral term on tackling the challenges we face and realising our ambitious agenda.



Yours sincerely

Cllr Lib Peck, Leader of Lambeth Council