



To:

Constituency:

## Meeting with local trade unionists and anti-austerity campaigners

Dear

We are writing to you as the Labour Party's prospective parliamentary candidate for this constituency to try and arrange a time convenient for you to meet a delegation of local trade unionists and anti-austerity activists to discuss the next general election.

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC), co-founded by the late general secretary of the RMT Bob Crow, is determined that working-class people should not pay for a crisis we did not cause, and we support parliamentary representatives who take the same stance.

For that reason we campaigned in support of Jeremy Corbyn and his anti-austerity manifestoes in the 2017 and 2019 general elections. However, Sir Keir Starmer has repeatedly confirmed that under his leadership "the slate is wiped clean". He has confirmed support for very few of the commitments in the 2019 manifesto, and some have been explicitly abandoned.

That is why we would like an in-person meeting with you to ascertain what position you hold on the following points from Labour's 2019 manifesto which we believe are critical minimums needed to reverse the austerity agenda.

### **\* Public ownership of rail, mail, water, telecoms and power**

The manifesto pledged to bring "our energy and water systems into democratic public ownership". This was to include a publicly-owned "UK National Energy Agency" to "own and maintain the national grid infrastructure and oversee the development of our decarbonisation targets", and for "the supply arms of the Big Six energy companies" to "be brought into public ownership". In addition the railways, Royal Mail and British Telecom were to be renationalised.

### **\* Reverse privatisation and restore public services and benefits**

The manifesto committed to "end and reverse privatisation in the NHS" and to "ensure services are delivered in-house". In addition it pledged to "offer free prescriptions for all and free basic dentistry", and to "fund free personal care for older people and extra care packages". It also promised to "restore council spending powers to 2010 levels over the lifetime of the parliament" and to "bring services – from bin collections to management of local leisure centres – back in-house". Universal Credit was to be "scrapped" and replaced with "an alternative system which treats people with dignity and respect".

### **\* Council house building and rent control**

The manifesto pledged that "by the end of the parliament Labour would be building at an annual rate of at least 150,000 council and social homes, with 100,000 of these built by

councils for social rent in the biggest council house building programme in more than a generation". In addition, it would "scrap the Conservatives' bogus definition of 'affordable', set as high as 80% of market rents, and replace it with a definition linked to local incomes". It also promised to "take urgent action to protect private renters through rent controls, open-ended tenancies, and new, binding minimum standards".

**\* Free education from nursery to university**

Under this policy heading the manifesto pledged that "all two, three and four-year olds will be entitled to 30 hours of free preschool education per week". It also promised to "abolish tuition fees and bring back maintenance grants" for all higher education students.

**\* Tax the rich not workers**

Labour's pledge in 2019 was for taxes to rise only for the wealthy, with commitments to a new additional income tax rate payable from £80,000 and a new super-rich rate for those earning over £125,000. Corporation tax would rise to 26% (with a 21% small profits rate), dividends and capital gains would be taxed at income tax rates, and a financial transaction tax would be introduced.

**\* Fighting for workers interests and supporting trade unions**

The manifesto pledged to give "everyone full rights from day one on the job", to end "bogus self-employment", and "banning zero hour contracts and strengthening the law so that those who work regular hours for more than 12 weeks will have a right to a regular contract". It also pledged to "repeal anti-trade union legislation including the Trade Union Act 2016 and create new rights and freedoms for trade unions to help them win a better deal for working people".

As you will be aware the above policies are widely supported in the trade union movement. That is why we would like you to explain your views on these issues to a delegation of local trade unionists.

TUSC has accepted from its inception that there will be Labour candidates who share our socialist aspirations and will be prepared to support measures which challenge the austerity consensus of mainstream politics.

But it is also committed to standing candidates or supporting others if that is the only way a working class anti-austerity socialist alternative can be articulated at election time.

Yours sincerely,