



ROTHER ROSE



Spring
2024 Edition

Limited Release | **FREE**

THE INSIDE SCOOP ON RDC | Rother Labour Group of Councillors' 2024 Residents' Newsletter



Only Labour have a plan to fix it.
More on back...

Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Election
Thursday 2 May



COUNCIL TAX RELIEF SUCCESS!



Labour's 2019 Local Election Pledge fulfilled as Rother District Council restores full Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Thanks to the number of Labour Councillors elected last year, and the success of Rother's current financial resilience plans, a move to restore a full Council Tax Reduction scheme was voted through during the first Full Council meeting of 2024. This decision has been praised by multiple local charities and voluntary organisations for the difference it will make to some of Rother's poorest residents during the Cost of Living Crisis. The move undoes a punitive cap that was placed on the scheme by Conservatives in 2016.

Cabinet member for Wellbeing and Equalities, Cllr Sam Coleman was keen to emphasise the difference this change would make. "The Independent Food Aid Network's research shows that the best way to help someone out of poverty is through more cash in their pocket. Removing this cap will improve the finances of our poorest residents almost overnight." The full Council Tax Reduction Scheme is in effect as of the 2024-2025 Financial Year onwards.

STRIKES AVERTED, SERVICES PROTECTED.



It is well known that the last decade of Conservative cuts has left local councils like Rother in financially difficult times. Unfortunately, one of the knock-on effects of this is suppressed wages for staff. This is not something that any Councillors want to see, but only Labour's Councillors have the solution. In fact, it was part of our 2023 manifesto.

This is to rejoin the National Joint Claim (NJC) for local government pay, ensuring that the pay award staff receive is consistent with other local authorities and giving staff unions the opportunity to negotiate a good deal for their workers as part of a national pay bargaining arrangement. Rother left the National Joint Claim (NJC) during the last Conservative administration as they wanted to offer staff a lesser pay rise. Since then, staff pay scales in Rother have drastically fallen behind other local authorities. This leads to staff moving to other areas for better pay, affecting recruitment and morale.

We are pleased that thanks to the work of Labour Councillors, especially our Group Leader Cllr Bayliss and our HR Committee members, Cllr Coleman and Cllr Legg, we have convinced the administration to support a process of rejoining the NJC. It was this commitment, plus negotiated improvements to the originally budgeted 3% rise (a real-terms cut) that led staff to call off the strike action they had originally balloted to take. Labour's Councillors supported the measures to improve this pay deal and meet some of the Union's demands as we know a happy, well-paid staff is more efficient, more effective and better for the District. Our aim now is to oversee the process of rejoining the NJC when best able to do so, to avoid the risk of strike action and rectify the pay imbalances that have resulted from previous decisions.

