



STAR CHAMBERS

The results of next week's local elections will decide the political balance of city councils across England and Northern Ireland. The photographer *Simon Roberts*, who was the official artist for last year's general election, took a series of portraits of city councils as they set their budgets for the coming year of austerity

◀ **LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**
Photographed on February 23
Budget reduced by £90m; areas affected include loss of 1,500 staff posts, closure of up to 13 buildings in adult social care, savings in back-office operations, cut in grants to arts organisations, library services to be reviewed



NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL ▲

Photographed on March 7

Budget reduced by £33.6m; areas affected include loss of 370 council posts, increased charges for adult social care, reduction of casual posts in children's services, restructuring of highways maintenance budget, 25 per cent reduction of library book fund



LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL ►

Photographed on March 9 (budget meeting was held on March 2)

Budget reduced by £91m; areas affected include loss of 1,600 posts (including council and voluntary sector), cuts in funding for voluntary groups, children's care and adult social care, libraries budget cut by £2m



BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL ▲

Photographed on February 22
Budget reduced by £28m; areas affected include loss of at least 340 posts, 10 per cent savings in arts budget, review of care packages for the elderly and disabled, reduction of tenant support budget, cut in annual libraries budget

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL ►

Photographed on March 9
Budget reduced by £109m; areas affected include loss of about 2,000 council posts, reduction in adult and children's services, reduced grants to the voluntary sector; review of recycling and waste disposal services, savings in back-office services, review of library services, Lord Mayor's reception cancelled



BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL ▲

Photographed on March 1
Budget reduced by £212m; areas affected include reduction of 2,450 full-time posts, reduction in adults and communities budget, reduction in children's services, reduction in transport budget



NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL ▶
Photographed on March 2
Budget reduced by £44.1m; areas affected include loss of 655 full-time equivalent posts, £28.3m in efficiency savings, closure of two city care centres, library services to be remodelled without closure, car parking costs to rise

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL ▼
Photographed on March 4
Budget reduced by £80m (£66m from services budget, £14m in efficiency savings); areas affected include loss of 731 posts, 15 per cent cut across all departments except children's social services and 7.5 per cent reduction in adult social services, reduction in grants to trusts and voluntary groups, chief executive has taken a 5 per cent pay cut

