



FOCUS

On Lytchett Matravers
& Morden

SEPT 06

CASH CRISIS AT COUNTY HALL

BUT YOU PAY THE COST

The Conservative-run County Council has hit a cash crisis, which unless drastic action is taken will result in the Council being £20 million in debt by 2010.

In the five years the Tories have run the Council, they have increased your Council Tax by over £300 (the County element of the tax is now an average £1,000) despite the fact that Government Grants have increased from £195 million to £290 million a year.

Whilst income has soared, spending has got totally out of control. Staffing costs alone have increased from £86 million to £131 million a year, up 52%.

To get their budgets to balance the County Council proposes cutting services and increasing charges which will hit the blind, the deaf, the elderly, infirm and those using day centres for the aged. Some charges at Youth Centres will increase by a staggering 350% and thirteen libraries are under threat of closure in a year's time.



To keep these libraries open this year, the Conservatives have raided the 'Book Fund', used to buy new books, which means all library users have less choice.

"Conservatives promise 'good housekeeping' at election times, but this cash crisis proves they have failed to keep their promises" says Local County Cllr Fred Drane. "I am concerned that more services could be cut if no answer to the cash crises is found." said the Liberal Democrat Councillor.



Annette Brooke MP and Cllrs Fred Drane and Michael Peacock are concerned that local residents are not getting value for money from the County Council

Lytchett Minster School

Rebuilding of the teaching block burned down by a fire over 7 years ago has finally started and is being managed by a sub-committee of five, including governors, the head teacher and County Cllr Fred Drane.

So far, everything is going well. Meetings with the Dorset County Council project team and contractors will be held every two weeks. Hopefully disruption to staff will be minimal and they will be kept informed of progress made.

"Hopefully we can get the school children involved with the rebuild as well, any feedback on what they would like included in the rebuild space would be welcome." says Fred.

<quote from Annette>



Fred Drane and Annette Brooke MP inspecting plans at Lytchett Minster School

Most Vulnerable suffer as County Council proposes to cut home care

Home care for the elderly is one service which may be cut by Conservative controlled Dorset County Council. Elderly people with moderate service needs may be cut completely from home care provision, leaving only those with substantial need eligible for home care. Since the re-routing of bus services may have made it harder for those who are able to use public transport to access care, this decision has been strongly condemned by your County Councillor Fred Drane.



When Liberal Democrats ran Dorset County Council, there was no debt and home care was better provided for. However, cuts to other services are expected as the Conservative controlled council tries to clear its £20 million budget deficit.

“I am appalled that the County Council is considering these cuts, the loss of home care provision could cause unnecessary suffering for some residents of Lytchett Matravers. I feel this is being proposed as a result of the County Council’s inability to balance its budget rather than any reduction in the need for care.” says Cllr Fred Drane.

Future of local library in limbo



Earlier in the year, the future of Lytchett Matravers Library was thrown into doubt, Annette Brooke MP and your Liberal Democrat Cllrs Michael Peacock and Fred Drane have been fighting hard to keep the library open.

Back in June, the decision was suspended for 12 months, but this is no guarantee that the library will not be closed next year. Claims that the library was to be re-peived have so proved to have been unfounded.

“Local residents in Lytchett Matravers should be congratulated for working together to put pressure on Dorset County Council with the petition and letter writing campaign. However only by keeping up the pressure and using the library throughout the year will give us a chance of keeping it open.” says Cllr Michael Peacock.

Got a problem or concern?

If you have any views about the issues raised in this FOCUS, please fill in the form below.

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Your Concern



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Local Liberal Democrats - Working all year round