

Spring 2019

FOCUS

Liberal
Democrats 

FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS MIKE NORRIS, WENDY MARCHANT AND STEVE PHILLIPS

Austerity Is Over! Really?

The Tory led county council has announced that the council tax will increase by a total of just under 4% in 2019/20, this will be made up of a 2.99% increase in general council tax and a 1% increase for the Social Care Precept.

You would think that this would give the council the opportunity to begin to improve services that have suffered over the last ten years of austerity. Yes? You would be WRONG!

Below are further stringent cuts in our council services that the Tories will implement over the next year despite their extra income:

Deferred staged removal of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) grant

Liberal Democrat Group Leader Councillor **Penny Otton** says, "I believe this is a big mistake; CABs do a fantastic job helping people with problems, often related to council services."

Reduction of housing related support

Including the provision of hostel beds for the homeless.

Social care pricing re-negotiation

Either price increases or service cuts will be inevitable we fear.

No more bus timetables

Stopping the display of bus timetables at the roadside.

Reduced bus services

A reduced spend on sponsored bus services.

Reduced out-of -hours services

Reduced out-of-hours council stand-by services.

More dangerous winter roads

A reduction in the winter support fleet for Suffolk Highways.

Neglect of road signs and markings

Stoppage of road sign cleaning and only maintain mandatory road markings throughout the district.

Motion on single use plastic

Penny Otton writes, "Following the support I had on the plastic bottle motion last year I put a motion to Suffolk county council asking that the council and all its commissioned businesses conduct a survey of all single use plastic and to end its use where feasibly possible. I am delighted that this was agreed unanimously.

We all now know just how devastating all this plastic waste is to our seas, land and wildlife.

As Liberal Democrats we want to reduce as much plastic as we can and I am sure you feel the same."



HOWEVER...

The Mid Suffolk district council can manage to find £1 million in extra money to place in a contingency fund to offset any lack of income on their high risk investments in retail premises, many of which are not even in the district.

Liberal Democrat Councillor **Penny Otton** says, "How can the administration justify putting £1,000,000 into a corporate risk reserve and then propose putting the council tax up? Year on year we are being told that the government grant to councils is to reduce and that is the case. But we do not support this constant reduction in services to the community when money is being put aside to offset any possible lack of income from their investments in retail premises outside of the district. The Liberal Democrats have argued all along that this is not what public money should be used for."

Dark Streets

The turning off of more street lights overnight.

Reduction in help for the young

Ceasing council accreditation of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

The move to Endeavour House in Ipswich

The Liberal Democrats have constantly voted against this cost saving move as this takes decision making away from the public and makes it so much more difficult and costly for the community to access council staff.

Working Hard For You All Year Round



Middle School Site Redevelopment

Despite objections from the Town Council and several residents, and Mike and Wendy speaking out vigorously at the Planning Committee Meeting against the MSDC planning application on this site because of the unsuitable access via School Street, it was approved by a majority vote of the committee members.

Steve Phillips said, "*The narrowness of School Street and The Causeway were major factors in my concerns about the Middle School Site development. An alternative strongly supported by the Town Council was via the Quinton Road end of The Drift which would also have allowed an alternative access to the playing field and Bosmere Primary School*".



The proposal included in the July 2018 public consultation for a new library building is now shown as being relocated to within the old Victorian school building on the north eastern corner of the site.

Rail Replacement Bus Services

In the past when passengers were stranded on Needham Market Railway Station, because a train was cancelled, there was no directional signage to show them where to get the replacement bus; Wendy wrote to the Stations Manager, and this was put right.



Police Community Support Officers

Mid Suffolk is proposing to fully fund 2 PCSOs. There needs to be a "Service Level of Agreement " with the police. We have asked that the 2 PCSOs should not be concentrated in Stowmarket, but used across the district.



Mike, Wendy and Steve at the Willow Tree Sanctuary - Residents are concerned that this local nature reserve may be lost.

We need your thoughts on what YOU think...

Let the team know if they can help you

Contact Mike on - 01449 720871

Contact Wendy on - 01449 720965

Contact Steve on - 01449 721710

Join the Lib Dems at: www.libdems.org.uk