



Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 16; July 2008

Welcoming note

Welcome to the July issue of the Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter.

To unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact us through the website 'Contact us' page with a subject line of 'unsubscribe'.

Our aim is to provide you with a monthly update on the work of the Conservative Association and your elected representatives. We would value your feedback or comments.

We hope you enjoy reading the July issue.

A word from the Chair

Improved living standards in China and India come at a price for all of us



Last month I commented on the nightmare scenario being laid down by Messrs Brown and Darling for the incoming Conservative Chancellor. The PSBR must be going up to accommodate for the 'U' turns and the lower corporate tax take. A well known Sunday newspaper has come up with the suggestion of a "poisoned chalice" being almost a deliberate ploy by the Labour Party to try and defer the day of reckoning until after the General Election. Mr Osborne will have a huge mess to work out – a marked contrast to the 1997 economic scene passed by the Conservatives to Mr Brown.

I also made fleeting mention of the Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty. One of our MEPs has suggested that most of the Euro hierarchy will try and ignore the vote and go ahead anyway. Only the Poles and the Czechs seem to believe in acknowledging a democratic decision.

The costs of motoring continue to soar even before the ill thought out increase in vehicle licence charges. At the time of writing oil has hit US\$147 per barrel – this is despite Saudi Arabia increasing, marginally, output. Should Israel and Iran come to blows then US\$180 is a realistic assumption. The British government use petrol and diesel as a milch cow for revenue. In India, where demand is going up, the oil companies face a government freeze on prices. In China the Government has agreed to an increase of 17% in the price of petrol and diesel. The demand for oil is bound to increase. China is expected to sell 10 million new cars in 2008 (in 2007 8.5 million were sold). At present China uses 9 million barrels of oil a day by 2030 this is calculated to rise to 16 million barrels a day (with some 300 million vehicles on China's roads). The logic of supply and demand dictates upward pressure on oil prices.

One positive aspect of Labour policy is the realization that Nuclear Power is a must, the wind and tides are not the answer to our long term needs however admirable the concept. The only criticism I have is that the decision to build the new nuclear power stations is taking too long and the lead lag time is such that by the year 2015 (or even as early as the Olympic year) power cuts could become unavoidable.

On a local note we, in Mole Valley Conservatives, are selecting candidates to fight the County seats in 2009. The party members have delivered some 10,000 personalised letters from David Cameron and over the coming months we hope to distribute, to many households, a comprehensive survey for completion and return.

Let us hope that the economic headlines in our newspaper are brighter than of late and the questions of knife crime can be addressed (perhaps violence on video games and T.V. may be a cause?)

Mr Colin Crispin
Chairman, Mole Valley Conservative Association



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News from the House of Commons

Save our village and town shops and services



On Monday, 14th July, I opened the Keep Trade Local town day in Dorking. The campaign, which was launched by the Federation of Small Businesses, aims to highlight the problems small businesses face in towns and villages.

With competition from out of town shopping complexes and London our small shops need our support to ensure they do not disappear from Mole Valley towns and villages. The FSB has discovered that 2000 local shops are closing nationally each year and they surmise that by 2015 there will be many fewer independent retailers left in the UK.

The campaigners are keen to stress that they are not anti-supermarket but they do seek “a level playing field” for small shops and supermarkets. It is important to view supermarkets and smaller shops as operating within the same market place and local economy. Mole Valley has two main towns and about 30 villages. Particularly as times get hard our shops are threatened. Not only could the Government help but so can we as local residents. If we do not use our village and town shops and services we may lose them.

Many consumers clearly support these sentiments as 1 million signatures have been collected for the petition so far. If you would like to add your name visit <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/keeptradelocal/>

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

Report from Surrey County Council

New brief ‘Safer and Stronger Communities’ is all absorbing



I was really pleased to be able to get a result for the Brockham parents in their campaign to get their children into their local school in the village, they felt strongly that this would help build the community for the future and give them a sense of belonging. We must of course also protect and support all our rural schools and I am pleased to see that the acorns will not suffer but will give more children a chance to go to their schools who were on the waiting lists. The County has a specific policy in protecting rural schools and this must remain.

Once again the planning application for an EFW (incinerator) at Capel was due to be heard this month at County Hall but has been delayed due to technical difficulties and challenges. In 2001 I lost the vote by one to overturn the planning application for this plant at Capel, it was then thrown out at judicial review who maintained the three points I had made at planning committee as reasons along with lack of information for the committee to make an informed decision. I will continue to fight against this because an energy from a waste plant that transports waste across the countryside and burns waste without putting heating into local people's homes, or provides them with energy is not an EFW but an incinerator and is a waste of resource. EU directives (love them or hate them) are now saying that all new homes



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should be built with sustainable heating and power sources and with the ever rise in cost of fuel, waste must be converted into useable local energy.

My new brief 'Safer and Stronger Communities' is all absorbing, this month I have met with my fellow Fire Chairmen and their Fire Chiefs to improve better use of resources, talked to Youth Justice team about their important work in reparation, met with senior officers from all sectors on improving our communities, and also opened a brand new library in Walton upon Thames. As well as enjoying meetings with local residents the work that is done across the county on our behalf by services of all the local authorities and the voluntary sector is a real eye opener.

The 58 Conservative County Councillors are looking towards next year's county elections and the likelihood that they will be paired with Euro land elections in June. Before the summer recess the group will meet to discuss strategy and the manifesto for the election with a view to a new administration. The County's main priorities are looking after children and vulnerable adults (social services), education, highways and reducing the amount of waste both rubbish and use of resources. Please contact me with your views...

Email me on Helyn.clack@btopenworld.com

County Councillor Helyn Clack
Member for Dorking Rural
Executive Member for Safer and Stronger Communities

Report from Guildford Borough Council

South East Plan



With a sickening predictability, plans to build thousands of new homes in the region look set to become a reality with the Government announcement on 17 July of its proposed changes to the South East Plan, the document that will shape future development of the region until 2026.

The draft South East Plan, prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly, recommended that 29,800 homes a year should be built in the region. The EIP (Examination In Public) inspectors recommended 32,000 homes a year should be built, something they recognised would be unlikely to be possible without the release of green belt land. Now, the Government has proposed a total of just over 33,000 new homes a year in the South East (excluding London) - bringing Surrey's total for the plan period to just over 59,000.

For Guildford, this means land will need to be made available for an average of 422 new houses a year up to 2026 - an increase of 100 a year above the original proposals in the South East Plan, the same level as recommended by the EIP inspectors. The Government says that use of some green belt land is likely to be needed for the new homes and that the Council should look to north east Guildford, in practice the boundary between Burpham (in Guildford constituency) and West Clandon (in Mole Valley) for this as it prepares the local plan for future development - the Guildford Development Framework.

The proposed changes, which are now subject to a 12-week public consultation, are the Government's response to the recommendations of an independent examination of the plans.



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Unsurprisingly, we are very unhappy with these proposals, which seriously threaten the Green Belt. In addition, the new housing would require significant infrastructure development. We will be lobbying strongly against these proposals during the forthcoming consultation period.

Meanwhile, the council has been going through a consultation process with staff in respect of the current management structure. The Executive has recently endorsed plans to reduce the number of Service Units from 19 to 15, saving around £300,000 per annum. Sadly, this will result in some redundancies, but the revised structure will streamline council services and improve efficiency.

Cllr Andrew French
Deputy Leader, Guildford Borough Council

Report from Mole Valley District Council

What's happening at Mole Valley District Council?



Conservative Councillor Chris Hunt, Deputy Leader of the Council has been talking to local people about how they can best weather economic difficulties. Chris is the Economic Development spokesman for Mole Valley District Council and he has been promoting a number of ideas for local people to save money.

Says Chris:-

"The recent inflation figures are pretty dire. Local companies, be they the brickworks at Ewhurst or Marks and Spencer are clearly finding the economy difficult. Recently Alistair Darling spoke about inflation on the radio and seemed to blame everyone for it except himself! Families, the elderly and single households are all having to reduce their expenditure. One useful way of helping your local economy is to shop locally - if you can. Walk to your local shops and support your local businesses. If mobility is difficult for you, then see if your neighbours can help or use the internet. In any case you'll be saving money and at the same time helping the environment. You'll also have the added satisfaction of knowing that the 74 pence tax in every pound of the cost of petrol will not be going to Gordon Brown."

It doesn't end there. Chris is launching a campaign to try to help local businesses weather the economic storm that is fast approaching. Speaking to local newspapers on this issue, he said:-

*"Although the Council has a list of statutory consultees on formal matters, I am keen to speak with any local groups with a view on this matter. So, if you are a trader, run an office or factory, or are a traders organisation, Parish Council, school, sports group, residents association, church group or simply anyone interested in trying to help maintain our villages and towns as healthy economic places, do please contact me. I will then add you to my list and let's see if, together, we can do anything to help. Write to me at 'Chris Hunt - Deputy Leader of the Council, Mole Valley DC, Pippbrook, Dorking RH4 1SJ' or email me cllr.hunt@molevalley.gov.uk
Thank you."*

Cllr Malcolm Johnson
Communications Officer, Conservative Group
Mole Valley District Council



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News in brief

Wisley Development



Many of you will remember the article in the last Westminster Report about the threat of a new Eco-Town being built around a source of energy in Wisley. Sir Paul recently visited the former Wisley Airfield site to meet with representatives from Wharf Land Investments who own the site. The company are about to make an application to Surrey County Council for a 30,000 tonne capacity anaerobic digestion plant for kitchen and garden waste on part of the site put aside in the Surrey Waste Plan for waste usage. The building would be about 12 metres high and there would be a huge amount of HGV movement to and from the site on a daily basis. The developers intend discussing other plans for the site with Guildford Borough Council as the waste plant is only the first project within the mixed use development of the site. Other possible developments include a residential area and a business park. This is green belt land next to a Site of Special Scientific Interest and to the world famous Royal Horticultural Society show case Wisley Gardens. A campaign of heavy resistance is about to be required to help keep Surrey green, or at least this small part.

Westminster Report Survey Results



Many of you kindly completed and returned the survey that appeared in the last Westminster Report. Almost two thirds of those who replied disapproved of the increase in flat building in Surrey and over eight in ten think there should be restrictions on the building of new homes on back gardens. Thankfully, most of those who have children have been able to secure a place for them at a school of their choice. However, it is worrying to see that well over a third of you have had difficulty registering with an NHS dentist and you can be assured Sir Paul will be raising this matter with ministers. Many

thanks for your varied and detailed comments on anti-social behavior and the provision of new facilities in the constituency; these are all very helpful and Sir Paul will be passing them onto the relevant bodies. He will also be in contact with South West Trains as over 40% of you are not satisfied with the service they provide.

South West Trains Stations



South West Trains have been conducting a consultation regarding the reduction of ticket office opening hours at a number of their stations. The Customer Service Director for South West Trains explained in a letter to Sir Paul, "The first phase of consultation into these proposed changes has been with passenger bodies, neighbouring train companies, trades unions and the Department for Transport. Now their initial feedback has been received, a list of the final proposed opening hours will be displayed at those affected stations." The company has assured passengers that any of the stations where there are proposed changes to ticket office opening hours will benefit from additional ticket vending machines (TVMs) and all affected stations will have at least one TVM. In Mole Valley, the stations facing closure of their ticket offices on Saturdays are Effingham Junction, Clandon and Bookham. All three, plus Horsley station, are threatened with reductions to their weekday opening hours too. The shortened opening hours and lack of staffed stations at weekends is likely to cause inconvenience to some train users but South West Trains defend their plans, stating, "it is vital that we make best use of our resources to enable us to meet the tough financial targets we face over the next 10 years." The proposals will now be subjected to public consultation between 14th July and 5th August. Passengers are welcome to voice their opinions to PassengerFocus and London TravelWatch.



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Feature Article

Polyclinic Plans and the Pharmacy White Paper

Recent proposals have been put forward by the Government for the creation of 271 'polyclinics' across England. With the aim of modernising the health service, the proposed 'one stop shops' for healthcare would supposedly provide better quality and patient access. There would be approximately 121 polyclinics outside London and 150 within the city, each with about 25 GPs in practice.

These new super-practices would be set up to improve access for those in need of medical attention. However, estimations suggest that many residents outside London will have to travel 3 or 4 miles to reach one of these centres, which could cause problems for the elderly or very ill. Designed to improve the quality of care patients receive, opinions are currently mixed as to how successful the polyclinic model will be, with only four in ten consultants saying the polyclinics will increase patient care. The plan also intends to make it easier to book appointments, due to an increase in the number of GPs available. As good as this may sound, most of the public would prefer to remain close to one GP alone. In the recent survey of 24 Primary Care Trusts, only one in ten patients favour the polyclinic model over the current system.

These plans are giving deep concern to Mole Valley doctors and their patients. To quote one GP they would be like "black holes – sucking resources and patients who could travel into the centre which would mean our many village and town GP surgeries will starve and die." Having already lost so many village post offices and shops, the loss of their GP surgeries will be severely damaging to rural residents. In spite of the obvious threats, the Secretary of State for Health claims not a 'single' GP practice will close. However, there are concerns that this would not be the case and that whilst the polyclinic model makes sense in large towns and cities, in rural communities local residents' primary concern is for an easily accessible GP so they do not need to travel far for a minor complaint. Similarly, local healthcare providers, such as the Dorking or Leatherhead Hospitals, already offer many of the services which the polyclinics are intending to make available. The Mole Valley GPs I have spoken to would prefer any extra funds to enhance the services we already have in Mole Valley.

With regards to the future of polyclinics, the NHS Operating Framework has reportedly instructed each Primary Care Trust to create a polyclinic within the year, so we can expect the first to be in place in the not too distant future.

The Government's new Pharmacy White Paper is intending to give a much greater role to pharmacists themselves in providing extra services such as risk assessment, screening, health and lifestyle advice and medicine use reviews. This seems to be a popular idea as people would no longer need to visit the hospital or doctor for these services.

However, the document also outlines the removal of many GP surgeries' dispensaries, in an attempt to allow only professional pharmacists to dispense prescriptions. MPs in rural areas, such as Sir Paul Beresford MP for Mole Valley, have voiced concern over the inconvenience this may cause to people without a pharmacy nearby. Local, remote surgeries often dispense their own medication to save their patients the journey of going to pharmacy. For example, the village of Shere currently has a large dispensary in its GP surgery which saves residents from having to travel to collect their prescription from the nearest town with a pharmacy, such as Dorking or Guildford.



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The responsibility of dispensing is not one taken lightly by doctors. In 2006, the 1170 dispensing practices in England administered over 7% of the total prescriptions given. Although the move to a more professional and equal pharmaceutical service nationwide is a good way to maintain high standards, dispensing doctors in the countryside provide a vital service. Furthermore, if surgeries were disallowed from dispensing, their income would decrease, which would leave them with less money to reinvest into the practice which would ultimately lead to a worse service for patients and the potential closure of some of our smaller village GP outposts.

The Government has agreed to produce a comprehensive and genuine consultation before any future plans are made. This consultation will hopefully consider the needs of rural areas. On 22 July, Sir Paul delivered an adjournment debate in the House of Commons on polyclinics and the Pharmacy White Paper.