



Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 41; October 2010

Welcoming Note

Welcome to the October 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 October issue.

A word from the Chair

A week is a long time in politics!



Mole Valley District Council suffered a serious setback this week when the Conservative Party candidate was beaten in the Capel, Leigh & Newdigate by-election. What is even more galling is that our candidate, Corinna Osborne-Patterson, is an outstanding individual who would have been able to offer so much to the community; we can only hope her experience will not discourage her in the future. Local Councils will need people of quality when they have to implement actions to ensure they can live within their means.

The week has been a frantic one, with the Strategic Defence and Security Review, followed by the Comprehensive Spending Review. Yet at the end of it all, the interest payable by HMG will still be higher than it is today.

The Defence Review was very emotional, with Nimrods phased out, RAF Stations to close, tanks and heavy guns to be cut by 40%, and the loss of HMS Ark Royal and the Harrier Squadrons. To increase the International Development budget by 10%, as we make this country more exposed, is certainly a good debating topic. Let us hope the Argentineans do not take advantage of our lack of fighters and, initially, of our lack of an aircraft carrier (HMS Illustrious is a helicopter carrier). We also have to hope that no major land conflict, demanding tanks and heavy guns, breaks out over the next ten years.

The Spending Review was vital – the headlines of surprise suggested that no one had thought the cuts would happen. Since 1997, at least 1.3 million public sector jobs have been created – and this despite a net drop in uniformed members of the armed forces – so a cut of 500,000 over the next four years still leaves some 800,000 “new public sector roles”. I wrote in this newsletter in February 2008, that some 600,000 state employee roles would have to be pruned and then in December 2009, I modified this view to suggest a cut of 500,000. The cuts do hurt and will continue to do so. Discussions as to whether one income families paying 40% tax should lose their child benefits as opposed to families with two incomes who may earn between them, say £80,000, is a very difficult one to address – I personally would prefer the latter but for the moment, the Chancellor has made his decision. The imminent election of Len McCluskey as the leader of Unite (with its 1.6 million members may be the biggest threat to Mr. Osborne's proposals).

The coming months will see activity throughout Mole Valley Conservatives as we prepare to fight for one third of the District Council seats, all of the Guildford seats, and to address the referendum on the



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alternative vote proposals. If you have time to support us, please contact our office on 01306 883312 or mvca@btconnect.com.

Mr Colin Crispin
Chairman, Mole Valley Conservative Association
22 October 2010

News from the House of Commons

Spending Review 2010 - Confronting the bills from a decade of debt



Chancellor George Osborne stood up in the House of Commons, Wednesday 20 October 2010, to deliver the Coalition Government's Spending Review, setting out how Britain's unavoidable deficit reduction plan will be carried out.

Tackling the deficit is essential to restore fairness, growth and economic stability to the UK. The Government is now spending £120 million every single day, just to pay off the interest on Labour's decade of debt.

The Spending Review focuses upon building the Big Society where everyone plays their part, by reducing welfare costs and wasteful spending, radically reforming public services, shifting power away from central government, as well as getting the best possible value for taxpayers' money.

The Spending Review will ensure that economic growth is sustainable in the medium term, centred on a broad-based economy supporting private sector jobs, exports, investment and enterprise.

With **growth** in mind, the Coalition Government's first Spending Review will:

- protect high value transport maintenance and investment;
- ensure the UK remains a world leader in science and research;
- increase adult apprenticeship funding;
- invest in the low carbon economy;
- put higher education on a sustainable financial footing;
- provide support to individuals from low income backgrounds.

The review set out a new vision for a **fairer** Britain, at its heart is social mobility. The Government will ensure that:

- school spending is protected;
- support for the poorest schoolchildren is increased, in the early years, and then at every stage of their education;
- those on the lowest incomes in higher education are protected;
- capital funding is provided for new schools;
- Sure Start funding is protected in cash terms;
- support further increases in participation for 16-19 learning;



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- fundamental reforms are introduced to simplify the welfare system and promote work and personal responsibility, whilst providing enhanced support for those with the greatest barriers to employment;
- the welfare system is put on a sustainable footing;
- social housing is more responsive, flexible and fair.

The Spending Review is underpinned by a radical programme of public service reform, changing the way services are delivered by redistributing power away from central Government, and enabling sustainable, long term improvement in services. The **reform** programme is built on the Coalition principles of increasing freedom and sharing responsibility, by:

- localising power and funding, including by removing ringfencing around resources to local authorities;
- cutting burdens and regulations on frontline staff;
- increasing diversity of provision in public services;
- improving the transparency, efficiency and accountability of public services;
- reforming the sentencing framework so that it both punishes the guilty and rehabilitates offenders more effectively;
- taking decisive action to cut the cost of central government, with a 34 per cent cut in administration budgets across the whole of Whitehall.

Finally, the Spending Review provides the resources needed for the **defence and security** of the UK and its interests. The review demonstrates the Government's commitment to Britain's operations in Afghanistan, and targets other expected future threats, in line with the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Early in October, the Coalition Government welcomed backing for the spending plans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD.) A further double dose of good news was came last week, firstly from The Office of National Statistics, who recorded the strongest 6-month growth figure for over 10 years, and then from the credit rating agency Standard & Poor, who revised the UK's AAA rating from negative to stable.

October has been a month of tough choices and has reminded us that we are all in this together. By putting the national interest first, Britain will emerge stronger.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

For more information on the Spending Review 2010, please visit www.hm-treasury.gov.uk



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Report from Surrey County Council

County council encourage residents to speak up



Following the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) announcement made Wednesday 20 October, and its implication for local government, Surrey County Council will have to make tough decisions in the coming months. The Chancellor, George Osborne outlined major changes to local government finance in June's Emergency Budget. Mr Osborne warned local authorities that they were to lose more than a quarter of their funding, as part of the drive to get the British economy back on a sustainable footing.

Implications for local government:

- Overall reduction in funding to councils of 7.1% every year for four years
- Ring-fencing of all local government revenue grants will end from April next year, except for a simplified schools grants and a public health grant
- The number of separate core grants will be reduced from over 90 to fewer than 10
- Confirmation of the abolition of Local Area Agreements
- Funding for local authorities that freeze council tax next year
- Grant funding for social care to be increased by an additional £1bn by the end of the spending review
- A further £1bn for social care to be provided through the NHS to support joint working with councils
- Greater flexibility given to local authorities to manage council tax together with direct control over council tax benefit, within an overall budget that will be reduced by 10% from April 2013
- Investment of £30bn in transport projects
- Reduction of direct bus subsidies while statutory concessionary fares will remain
- Details of further transport allocations will be made public next week along with a national infrastructure plan
- Funding of £1bn for the Regional Growth Fund over the next two years and £500m for the third year
- Sixteen pilot areas confirmed for community budget arrangements. The government has said that all areas "may be able to operate these approaches from 2013-14".

Preparation by the county council in the past year has left it in a strong position to limit the impact of savings upon provisions residents have come to expect, but more savings are needed from local authorities to contribute to rebuilding the British economy.

Although the council recognises that there are some very tough times ahead, it welcomed the increased freedom the budget gives by ending the ring fence around grants, which will allow Surrey to find local solutions to local problems.

To coincide with the Spending Review, Surrey's public sector organisations (including Surrey County Council, Surrey Police Authority, Surrey Police, NHS Surrey and borough and district councils) launched the **Have Your Say** campaign.



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Surrey County Council wants to guarantee residents that every penny spent will ensure value for money. The campaign asks residents for their service priorities, suggestions on where savings could be made and ideas on how they could help keep Surrey special.

To take part and for more information, residents' can express their views by:

Visiting the recently launched website www.surreyhaveyoursay.info

Emailing enquiries@surreyhaveyoursay.info

Calling 03456 009 009

The **Have Your Say** public debate takes place at Salesian School, Chertsey, on 18 November between 7pm and 9pm. It will feature key public, voluntary and business sector figures. To book a place at the event, email enquiries@surreyhaveyoursay.info

County Councillor Helyn Clack
Member for Dorking Rural

Report from Guildford Borough Council Good news at the council



In another important step towards the opening of Guildford's replacement to the Civic Hall in autumn 2011, HQ Theatres Limited were appointed at the end of September to run the new venue.

HQ already runs nine venues, predominantly in the South East of England, and they are very excited about bringing a high quality of live entertainment to the Borough. They delivered an exciting and competitive bid to run the new venue and we are looking forward to working with them.

The council also had some good news recently when Antigua and Barbuda became the first nation to sign up with Spectrum as its pre-Olympic Games training venue in 2012. Although Spectrum was completed in 1993, it still remains a very competitive and successful sports venue, which it has demonstrated once again by signing up Antigua and Barbuda.

Finally, Guildford is establishing a customer service centre to improve the way that it handles interaction with the public. We are keen to ensure that anyone dealing with the council gets through to the right person who is trained to handle their query quickly and efficiently. Given the improvements in call centre technology in recent years, we are confident that that this will improve the quality of service residents experience, without them being passed from department to department to find someone who will handle their query.

Cllr Andrew French
Deputy Leader, Guildford Borough Council



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Report from Mole Valley District Council

Latest News from Mole Valley

Conservatives welcome scrapping of Government bureaucracy



Local Conservative councillors on Mole Valley District Council have warmly welcomed the latest announcement from Eric Pickles, the Local Government Minister.

Mr Pickles, a former Councillor himself, has listened to Conservative representations and has abolished 4,700 Government 'targets and reporting indices' – a huge swath of bureaucracy which Labour had placed on councils.

Cllr James Friend, Leader of the Council says "We warmly welcome this announcement. Local councils should be about delivering local services for residents and encouraging the local economy and environment, without the need to fill in forms and count everything and anything that moves. By axing all these top-down targets and reporting requirements, Mr Pickles is allowing local authorities to get on with that job rather than spend so much time form-filling. It allows us to concentrate on providing service to local people rather than data to Whitehall. We warmly welcome this move and thank him for it! It's just what we have been asking the new Government to do, and shows the benefit of having local councillors who can lobby Government.

The time saved will enable us to focus council officer efforts on protecting the character and environment of Mole Valley, connecting with our communities and partner organisations and helping residents to access the service they need. We will save on the wages bill when the opportunity naturally arises, delivering value for money for all residents of Mole Valley."

Cllr Chris Hunt

Ashted Village Ward, Mole Valley District Council

Mole Valley Conservative Councillors new Communications Officer

Feature Article

UK Armed Forces



The state of our Armed Forces has been a big concern to many Mole Valley constituents. It has been raised with me in correspondence and on the doorstep, particularly with the prospect of defence cuts following the replacement of the Labour government by the Coalition. Even to those of us hardened to the prospect of an enormous financial deficit, the state of the Defence Department finances came as a shock.

Recent comments by ex-Armed Forces Chief Sir Jock Stirrup reported in the media, exemplify Labour's cynical approach. It is as if on realising that they were going to lose the election, Labour ministers went on a spending spree despite warnings from the UK Defence Board. Apparently sometime prior to the election the Defence Board recognised that "painful" expenditure cuts to fast jet aircraft, ships and equipment were required to deal with the £38 billion blackhole. The Board's



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proposals were overruled by Labour ministers.

This left the new Coalition Government to deal with this appalling situation. Defence Secretary Liam Fox has explained that the previous Labour government continued to spend money, including £20 billion on equipment and support, with absolutely no idea whether the money was there to cover it or not, and in spite of warnings from the Defence Board.

Reluctantly we must accept that the Defence Department has to contribute to the deficit reduction and eliminate its own £38 billion deficit. Clearly we need a strong economy to enable us to ensure national security, both externally and internally.

Liam Fox has made it quite clear that these cuts will not impact on Afghanistan and that we will continue to meet NATO's definition of 2% of GDP on defence over the next four years.

There will be a hard impact on the services.

The Royal Navy will keep a continuous at sea nuclear deterrent and will in time introduce the new Trident. We will retain seven attack submarines and 19 frigates and destroyers. Fortunately all three bases of Devonport, Portsmouth, and Faslane will be retained.

All 36 army infantry battalions will be kept but there will be a new structure of five deployable Multi Role Brigades. There will be no reduction in the Army units involved in Afghanistan. 12 new Chinook helicopters are to be ordered and we will continue with upgrades to the Puma and the purchase of the Wildcat.

The RAF will move to a fleet of Carrier Variant Joint Strike Fighter and Typhoon Fleet by 2020. State-of-the-art Strategic Airlift aircraft consisting of C17s, A400Ms and A330s will be maintained.

The MOD currently has 82,000 civil servants and this will be reduced by 25,000 by 2015.

Sadly HMS Ark Royal which was due to leave service in 2014 will be retired early. The fact that the Harriers are being taken out of service contributes to this decision. I find it particularly obnoxious that having left our defences internally vulnerable from the debt blackhole, Labour are now criticising the efforts to straighten out the defence spending while organising a modern effective UK force.



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News in brief

Securing Britain in an age of uncertainty

The first large-scale strategic defence and security review since 1998 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, was published Tuesday 19 October by the Coalition.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) is absolutely critical for the future safety and security of our nation. It sets out how the Government will deliver the priorities identified in the National Security Strategy.

The SDSR will bring defence plans, commitments and resources into balance so that we have a coherent defence capability and a sustainable defence programme for the future.

In a speech made by the Secretary of State for Defence, Dr Liam Fox, the public were reassured that frontline protection was guaranteed, because the Government see it is an absolute priority to remain committed to the war in Afghanistan.

The SDSR is not only about tackling the previous Government's legacy of waste and spending, which left a £38 billion black hole in the Ministry of Defence budget, but also about making the right decisions now to protect our national security in an age of uncertainty.

Labour MEPS support hike in EU spending

As Chancellor George Osborne announced the spending cuts in October's Comprehensive Spending Review, Labour MEPS in Strasbourg voted for a substantial increase in EU spending.

The budget increase which will cost Britain close to £900 million in 2011, left a bitter taste on the day the Coalition Government confronted the bills from a decade of debt.

Evening in the Commons raises £27,000

A successful evening reception held at the House of Commons, Friday 8 October, raised £27,000 for the Children's Trust in Surrey.

The event, hosted by Sir Paul Beresford, Mp for Mole Valley, saw 168 guests enjoy a private tour, auction, drinks reception and a three-course dinner in the member's dining room.

Everyone had a wonderful evening, all in aid of a worthy cause. The trust is a national charity based in Tadworth, Surrey, working with children who have multiple disabilities and complex health needs.

Association's Autumn Dinner with guest Speaker Eric Pickles

Mole Valley Conservative Association was delighted to welcome guest speaker The Rt Hon. Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Local Government and Communities, to their Autumn Dinner.

The event was held Friday 29 October, at Tyrrells Wood Golf Club, Leatherhead, and included a three-course meal, bar and raffle.