

*County Council sets the 17-18 budget on February 14th*

### Lib Dems spell out their priorities

Faced with the prospect of the most severe service cuts in living memory, the County Lib Dem group has been up-front about how it would spend the extra £5 million that could be raised by a 2% tax rise.

#### 1. Children's services: £1.795m

- A. Increase services to supporting young mothers and their babies
- B. reducing Children's Centre closures
- C. maintain special needs support for schools
- D. support the work of locality Children's social care teams
- E. maintain central support for the Cambridgeshire Race and Diversity Service (CREDS)

*Failure to invest in services for children blights their life chances and can increase the cost to society in their later lives*

#### 2. Services for Vulnerable Adults: £1.905m

- A. To allow for a higher percentage increase for care providers
  - B. Jointly commission a specific home care service for more rapid hospital discharge
  - C. increase the hourly rate for home care helpers
- With an increasing proportion of older people, we must make sure we can provide a decent service, keeping the elderly safe and happy in their own homes and recruiting qualified staff to do that.*

#### 3. Roads and transport £1.3 m

- A. free parking at Park and Ride sites for Cambridge
- B. subsidise bus routes and community transport
- C. better maintenance of verges and footpaths
- D. additional maintenance for our roads, pavements and cycle-ways

*We must reduce congestion, get more people walking and cycling safely and reduce carbon emissions*

#### Increasing council tax

We fully understand that nobody wants to see an increase in their council tax. We would only recommend this if we thought it was absolutely necessary to maintain vital services for the most vulnerable in our society. A 2% increase costs an average household 42p per week.

If you would like to see the detailed reasons for these proposals and what they would cost, please look on the Huntingdon Lib Dems web-site: [www.huntingdonlibdems.org.uk](http://www.huntingdonlibdems.org.uk)

### Facing up to challenges!

We have always tried to keep you honestly and clearly informed about the pressures felt by the councils on which we represent you.

We work collaboratively with officers and other councillors to make sure that services are provided as efficiently and economically as possible.

In this area and across the whole country, in social care and health services, we are reaching breaking point.

The government allows local councils to put up taxes by 2% for social care and a further 2% for other services. If you go above that, you have to have a referendum.

The Conservative-controlled Council in Surrey is proposing a 15% increase, which shows how serious the situation is.

We are heartened by the fact that, here in Brampton, more and more people are coming forward to volunteer to do things for the community and to look after others. That is going to be even more vital in future.

It's a challenge we have to face together.

*Patricia, John, Peter*

We are available on the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Scout HQ behind the shops. At other times, please contact us directly:



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**Liberal Democrats - working for you and with you, keeping you informed, all year round**

## Local topics

### Buckden Road traffic issues

We are keeping in close touch with the contractors to minimise the disruption caused to local residents by the housing development on the former RAF site and by the construction of the A14. The speed limit as you leave the village heading for Buckden is an advisory 30 mph. This will become official once new street lights have been installed.

### Primary School inspected by Ofsted

Our village primary school recently had a 'short inspection'. Two inspectors spent a day in the school, looking at work in classrooms, interviewing Head, staff and the governing body. The official outcome will be published shortly. The Governors are confident that the school's current classification as 'good' will be maintained.

### We have been working on:

- \*identifying with council officers stretches of footway where hedges are narrowing the path for wheelchair users and pram-pushers. It is the responsibility of landowners to keep their hedges trimmed back. If they don't, the council will have to step in and do the work, sending the bill to the house owner.
- \*discussing with council officers exactly what work the Tidy Village Group is permitted to do to provide basic maintenance that the County Council is no longer able to fund. We are grateful to all those who have been cleaning signs, re-painting the Buckden Road bridge parapets and trimming back trees.
- \*liaising with the Community-Led Plan team to implement the 'Good Neighbour Scheme'.

## Huntingdonshire District Council

### Changes to the waste bin collections

These will come into effect on **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27**, so please make sure you check the letters sent you by HDC and look at the on-line calendar. These changes, the first since 2001, are aimed to provide the same service at a lower cost. The estimated saving is £180,000 per year.

### Proposed increase in District Council Tax

The reduction in grant from central government and the rising cost of providing services mean that HDC will be raising its tax by 2% for 17-18. This will add 5 pence per week to the council tax bill for a Band D house.

## Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> is the election date this year

Will you be here to vote? If you think that you may be away on business, or on holiday, or if getting to the polling station is physically difficult, you can register to vote by post. Forms can be obtained from the Electoral Services Officer at Pathfinder House, St. Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN. You can make contact by phone on 388388 or via the web-site:

[www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/More/Councils and Democracy/Elections/How to vote/postal vote](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/More/Councils and Democracy/Elections/How to vote/postal vote).



### Rod Cantrill for Mayor

Although we disagree with the 'Devolution Deal with compulsory Mayor', we believe it is not an option to disengage from the process. Rather, we believe in working to create the best outcomes, and working for change, from within the system we will have.

The Liberal Democrats have selected a respected and experienced councillor and campaigner, **Rod Cantrill**, to be their candidate for Mayor, on the premise that the Mayoral office should seek to deploy power back to local people. You will be hearing more from Rod soon and will have the chance to meet him in the coming weeks. You can also find out about his ideas on-line: [www.rod.org.uk](http://www.rod.org.uk)

## National perspectives

We live in a time of great national and international uncertainty. At a time when other political parties are divided, you can see why more and more people are joining the Liberal Democrats, attracted by our clear policies: working for an open, tolerant and united country, making society fairer but building a stronger economy which benefits everybody, not just the wealthy. You can keep up-to-date by visiting our local web-site: [www.huntingdonlibdems.org.uk](http://www.huntingdonlibdems.org.uk) or our national web-site [www.libdems.org.uk](http://www.libdems.org.uk) where you can join the Liberal Democrats and support our fight back and make a real difference for our country. There is no point in just complaining - let's work together to improve what we can.