

More consultations, more cuts

Fewer tickets to ride

Concessionary bus fares are also in the County Council's sights. Surrey wants to make disabled pass holders pay if they travel before 9.30am or after 11pm on week days AND they want to stop providing companion bus passes ENTIRELY. £400,000 of cuts to be borne by some of the most disadvantaged members of our community. You can comment on these ideas at:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/environment-and-infrastructure/concessionary-bus-travel/>

or, as before, ask for a copy from the library or call 03456 009009 to be sent a hardcopy version .

Making recycling more difficult

Another Surrey consultation that closes on January 4th is all about making recycling more difficult. They want to close several Community Recycling Centres, increase charges for the disposal of some items and introduce new charges – including for van, pickup and trailer permits. From a Haslemere perspective, there is no proposal to close Witley Recycling Centre .

This consultation is at:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/environment-and-infrastructure/crcs/>

or, again, pick up a copy at the library or call 03456 009009 to be sent a hardcopy version.

Tell us your views!

Your local Lib Dem campaigners are committed to monitoring all our Tory-controlled Councils on behalf of local residents. If you have concerns about ANY Council services in your area, please do contact one of us and let us know.

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Ten years on from the financial meltdown, YOU are still paying

Rumours that austerity has ended are false. Certainly, no-one has told Tory-controlled Surrey County Council who want to hit all of us with further, massive reductions in services.

They have launched five consultations covering Libraries, Recycling Centres, Concessionary Bus Fares, Children's Services and SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities). All but one of these 'consultations' are about cuts and of particular concern to Haslemere must be the Tory plan to close our highly-successful Tennyson's Sure Start Children's Centre located at St.Bartholomew's School.

As Lib Dems, we believe that reductions in local government funding have now gone way too far. Vulnerable groups and individuals are paying the price for the greed of the financial sector.

Tory Surrey's response is to say:

'Since 2010 we've saved £540 million. But over the next two years we need to save a further £85 million ... This means we will have to stop providing some services we know Surrey people value and rely on'

No, they should be developing a backbone and resisting these government cuts, not timidly going along with what their fellow Tories' demand. It speaks volumes that even the former Tory leader of the Council has simply given up and resigned his post!! The consultations end on January 4th. Please take part in those that interest you and send a clear message to the Council that Haslemere has now had enough of the Conservatives' Austerity Agenda.

You can find the consultations at:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/consultations>

Take their word for it

We may be critical of the Conservatives – but at least they agree with us!! Here are some examples of what they have said: **David Hodge**, the former Leader of Surrey County Council, described himself as '*extremely disappointed*' the government had failed to deliver on its promises of inflation funding for severe learning disability services and said that a 'staggering' £16 billion had been cut from local government since 2009 – including more than £230 million taken from Surrey.

Local Tory Councillor Carole King described her own Council's draft Local Plan Part Two document as '*not fit for purpose*'. She said '*To be frank, I am embarrassed by this report. It is sloppy and either ignores or puts aside major obstacles*'. Fellow local Conservative Councillor Robert Knowles attacked the cuts imposed by Tory Police and Crime Commissioner David Munro saying '*I'm disgusted that now there will not even be a front counter for Waverley. Waverley is the largest borough district in Surrey and we will no longer be able to see the police there*'.

Help Haslemere's young families: SAVE OUR SURE START CENTRE!

According to the Tories, the fifth largest economy in the world can no longer afford to provide a vital Sure Start Children's Centre in Haslemere AND THEY WANT TO SHUT IT DOWN. Yet the Haslemere Sure Start centre:

- Is highly effective - it has over 850 children under 5 in its catchment area, 88% of whom are registered with them
- Is excellent value for money – it has a total annual budget of only £83,000

The Centre offers tremendous help to young children and their parents. Much of the help is 'universal' and so available to all families but, at the same time, more extensive and targeted support is also provided specifically to those facing significant problems. But Surrey Conservatives:

- Effectively want to scrap the 'universal' services
- Will expect families in need either to travel to Farnham or Godalming OR rely on 'outreach' support from those locations (Despite the fact that the number of outreach staff will be reduced while their travelling time will be increased!!)

The centre is the only place in Haslemere providing parenting courses. It has also taken over responsibility for issues that previously might have been covered by Health Visitors– such as assistance to mothers struggling with breast-feeding .

We ask as many Haslemere residents as possible to respond to the current Surrey County Council consultation and make really clear the town's opposition to the loss of this important community asset. We thought about launching a petition but have been advised that the Council will not take any notice of petitions – it will only consider views expressed through its own consultation process. The link for online submissions is:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/csf/family-resilience-childrens-centres/>

You can also request a hard-copy from the library or by calling 03456 009009



Campaigns are running elsewhere in Surrey against the closure of other Sure Start Centres.

Let's make sure Councillors know we care as much about ours!!

Our suggestions for the Sure Start consultation:

Obviously, you will answer the consultation questions as you feel appropriate. However, we think the following are the key questions - and here are our suggestions for them:

Question	Topic	Response
1a	Comments on the new 'family resilience' approach	An opportunity to express concern at the removal of universal services available to all families
8b	Whether you agree that children's centres are an appropriate area for savings	Disagree
19a	Views on proposed changes in Waverley	Call for continued provision in Haslemere
19b	Whether you agree the right locations have been chosen to remain open	Strongly disagree

Help save the library service, too!!



As a consultation the one covering Libraries is a disgrace. It is full of jargon-filled, leading questions - designed to get the answers they want as 'cover' for massive cuts.

BUT IT IS STILL WORTH TAKING PART AND ANSWERING QUESTION 4. This is your chance to speak out against the only bit of the strategy that has been made clear - **REDUCING THE AMOUNT SPENT ON THE LIBRARY SERVICE BY 25%**

We don't yet know what that might mean for Haslemere library. But let's take part in the 'consultation' and show the Tories running Surrey that we want to keep our libraries safe. Indeed, let's tell

them that we support their claimed objective - '*to place libraries and cultural services at the heart of lifelong learning*' and that they way to do that is not to slash spending!!

You can find the consultation at:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/legal-and-democratic-services/libraries/>

Alternatively, pick up a copy at the library or call 03456 009009

Contact a Tory

You might also want to pass on your views about any of the consultations to Haslemere's own Tory County Councillor. No doubt he has our interests at heart even though he lives in Chiddingfold. His email address is - richard.hampson@surrey.gov.uk

Make your voice heard to protect these vital services