

FOCUS on 24%

Spring
2009

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Are North Somerset services 24% better than last year?

That's the increase in their allowances that Conservative North Somerset councillors voted for.

YET –

1. Portishead Open Air pool is closed
2. Highway teams fail to co-ordinate road works on M5 and Weston in Gordano. RESULT - CHAOS
3. Portishead Youth Club is under-funded
4. Cllr Pasley claimed to have found over £3million (from developers in Portishead) stashed away. This was promptly contradicted by Cllr Lake, who said such funds could only be spent on specific projects. But in his spring newsletter Cllr Pasley again "uncovered £4.8m." In September the Mercury reported that "the council rubbished these allegations." **Who do we believe?**



Brian Mathew and Graham Watson, MEP at the Liberal Democrat BBQ in Portishead

We need to get local decisions into local hands

- Liberal Democrats say that the tax burden on most people is too high. We will cut it.
- There is scope for reducing spending on:
 - insane IT projects,
 - overpaid quango chiefs
 - failed executives and bankers with tax-free payoffs
 - wastefully complicated benefits systems
 - ID cards instead of police on the streets and
 - vast civil service departments meddling in local affairs.

Centralised controls now used so oppressively by Labour were introduced by Conservatives. Many of these controls should be scrapped.

We do not change our principles.

As circumstances change, we adopt policies to meet the real world.

Liberal Democrats will make it happen.

JOHN H CLARK RECALLS the previous increase in councillors' allowances



John H Clark

Several years ago when the Conservatives controlled North Somerset Council they described it as an "average council".

Comparisons were agreed.

Future increases in line with inflation were agreed.

This gave a 50% increase in allowances.

The Conservatives are back in control and have abandoned the arrangements they themselves set in place.

Are we no longer "average"? Was **another** 24% in their manifesto?

Part of their excuse is that we need to attract a better quality councillor. VERY TRUE!

Remember - in two year's time in North Somerset we will be able to vote for people **who do not pay for their increased allowances by cutting services.**

A CHARGE ON THE MOST VULNERABLE

Tory controlled NSC boasted of keeping the Council Tax increase down to 1.9% in 2008.

At the same time, they decided to charge for day centres.

This will cost the family of a person attending about £250 per year for TWO HALF DAYS per week.

That is the equivalent for those families of **more than 20% increase in their Council Tax (at band D level).**

Is it fair that our most vulnerable residents and their carers pay so much, so that most of us save a little?

Every cut benefits the wealthy three times as much as the less well off. But ALL the service cuts hit the less well off.

FINANCIAL CRISIS

The Tories overlooked problems in the British economy until the international situation brought them into focus. If they were so blind **then**, how can they be trusted to solve our problems **now**?

Will the Tories on NS Council be helpful to small local businesses in the current financial climate: *Will they ensure that all bills and rebates are paid on time?*

Will they give help to, and find accommodation for, those affected by repossessions?

Will they take on and train apprentices for Council work?



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