

HURRAH – CHEQUES CAN STAY

The UK Payments Council has reversed its decision to scrap cheques by 2018 and so the use of cheques should continue for as long as customers need them. This is Good News for small businesses and sole traders. Cheques are a crucial form of payment and their removal could drive up their costs. For many customers cheques are reliable, safe and easy to use. Last year alone there were over one billion cheque transactions which shows just how widely used this form of payment still is.

The 'Save the Cheque' campaign was launched by the Liberal Democrat MP for Cheadle, Mark Hunter, through an Early Day Motion in Parliament.

GOOD NEWS FOR ECONOMY

The Government has delivered more than 100,000 extra apprenticeships, twice as many as expected. Figures released by the Government show that over 103,000 additional apprenticeships started last year, bringing the total number on an apprenticeship scheme to 257,000.

Commenting, Liberal Democrat Business Secretary, Vince Cable, has said "The growth in apprenticeships demonstrates our commitment to delivering the skills businesses need to grow and young people need to build productive careers. With every £1 of Government money delivering a return of some £40 to the wider economy, this is a sound investment in the country's future"

Printed by Aylesbury Liberal Democrats, 6 Castle Street, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2RE.

Published and promoted by Alan Bacon on behalf of Chiltern Liberal Democrats at 'Windrush', Bellingdon, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 2XN

Lib Dem is here



Cheryl Gillan is... not here.



A photo-opportunity was arranged to mark the start of the *Bucks Examiner's* Stop HS2 campaign. Two minutes before this picture was taken, in Amersham this summer, Cheryl Gillan MP was on this spot having another photograph taken with Buckinghamshire Conservative Council Leaders. Unfortunately by the time this photo was taken, she had disappeared, thus missing out on the chance to be in a *Lib Dem Focus!*"

"Putting councils back in control of their own finances" – (Yawnsville Arizona – but it could be important)

The coalition government plan for Local Government finances includes the re-localisation of business rates which are currently collected locally but all handed to the Treasury in Whitehall.

Andrew Stunell MP, Liberal Democrat Communities Minister, has said "The current formula grant system is broken – it is far too complex and lacks transparency. For too long councils have had to do what Whitehall told them and could only spend what Whitehall gave them. [This] announcement will give councils much greater freedom to raise their own money and promote growth in their areas. Crucially, no council will lose out in the first year of the scheme...When it comes to localism, this government is determined to practise what it preaches."

In theory this means that councils in Buckinghamshire will be able to spend more of what is generated locally.

It's Just Embarrassing

(but we're going to keep on printing it)



FOCUS

Ballinger South Heath & Chartridge

Autumn 2011

www.libdems.org.uk

Work continues on wheely-bins

Wycombe and Chiltern Councils continue to work together towards a joint contract for waste collection. The schedule is for the new system to start in November 2012. Residents in Ballinger, South Heath and Chartridge will have wheely-bins instead of black bags, and tins and plastics will also be collected.

The local councillor for the ward, Peter Jones, has been appointed vice-chairman of the so-called Task & Finish Working Group, a joint meeting of members from Chiltern and Wycombe councils that is scrutinising the contract negotiations.

Peter says "I am hoping that this will be good news for local residents. As readers of *Focus* will know, I have been campaigning for tins and plastics to be collected for many years. But I am concerned that there are some people in our villages who will need help with the wheely-bins. In some areas the bins are left out all the time which would not be good.

"I am also looking into the arrangements for green waste. The new proposals indicate an annual charge of about £35 for a bin to take away green waste. That may not be a problem for those with large gardens and compost heaps – but what do you think? You can email me at peter.m.jones@btinternet.com"



HS2 - Carry On Working

The Consultation Period on the government's HS2 proposals finished at the end of July, but there is still a lot that we can do to derail this project. Peter Jones and other Chiltern Liberal Democrats will be hosting a meeting on the subject at the party's national conference in Birmingham in September. We know that many other local residents of all parties and none are also continuing to campaign in many different ways. Well done!

In the news recently has been the government's revised e-petition idea. If we get 100,000 'signatures' we get a debate in the House. Many of you may have signed an earlier petition but this is totally new – please sign this one as well. This could make a difference if we get everyone to sign in large numbers.

The link to the petition is at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/353>

Liberal Democrats working for you

Peter Jones writes: The other side of this issue of your regular *Focus* leaflet is given over to news from my friend Catherine Bearder who, along with my other friend Sharon Bowles, are the two Liberal Democrats out of ten members of the European Parliament that represent us in the South-East of England. Whether you like the idea of the European Union or not, at least Sharon & Catherine are taking the opportunities they have to work for us - unlike some other parties that make a big noise at European election time but don't appear to do much that is any use once they are elected! And we have also included on the back page other examples of Liberal Democrat actions which will make a positive difference. Plus as always in *Focus*, some local news as well.

