

St Laurence FOCUS

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Liberal Democrats



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2019

DELIVERED FREE TO HOMES ACROSS ST LAURENCE

The "sheer brilliance at how successful something can be when the work is put in" – Echo

In our last Focus there was a mention of the charity I had set up in memory of my late wife. Wherever possible, it was always the intention to keep my charity work separate from my candidacy although there will naturally be some crossover as so many people in the ward are involved with the Carl's Foundation.

On January 2nd 2019, the Echo ran a nice article on my charity, what we had achieved in 2018 and what's planned to be achieved in 2019 (and beyond). Having spoken to the reporter, I knew what the article would contain.

What I wasn't aware of – and have been totally humbled by – is that the Echo made their own comments on me and the Foundation! The above quote is taken directly from the Echo's COMMENT column. I'm mentioning it in Focus because I want residents to know I will do whatever I can to help them and will show as much drive and determination into (hopefully) being a councillor for this ward as I have shown in building up Carl's Foundation.

There is no hidden agenda, or ulterior motive, to my candidacy – I would just like to help give something back to the ward; to people who have given me so much support over the last 18 difficult months

Please don't hesitate to contact me about any local issues you have concerns with. I can't guarantee that I will be able to solve them all but promise to do everything I possibly can.



ALDI'S MOVE APPROVED

Karl Lansley reports: Aldi in Eastern Avenue is moving to a new site in Priory Crescent. Aldi is a popular store with an expanding customer base so the current site won't cope with the growth they expect. This is a positive.

Traffic flow in and out of the store must be carefully implemented. The plans approved include a dedicated right-hand turn lane from Priory Crescent (heading from the bridge) and a 'forced' left-turn exit from the store. In theory, these should work.

However, some residents believe more pedestrians will use the pelican crossing at Priory Park which could lead to more stop/start traffic using Priory Crescent. Meanwhile, some people believe the expected increase of vehicle movements (70 per week) is an underestimate! Let's make sure traffic flow and surrounding roads are not adversely affected.

PARKING NEAR THE AIRPORT – WHAT DO YOU THINK?

No-one doubts that parking on roads near Southend Airport is a problem, especially as more people park their cars for weeks (for free!) before jetting off. This isn't easy to resolve. But there's no point in the Council putting forward plans with a negative impact on residents, or just shift the problems to neighbouring roads.

Recently, a proposal came before the Council Committee for a 2-hour daily restriction in Eastwoodbury Lane & Crescent and Alton Gardens. These restrictions were NOT popular with residents – the Council admitted there were no comments to support their introduction! The proposals have now been deferred and further consultation may be undertaken in the early part of this year. **Let Karl know your views**

M127 THROUGH EASTWOOD?

Leading Southend Tory calls for upgrade of A127 to MOTORWAY

THE A127 should become a motorway, with junction improvements just the start, according to the Tory leader of Southend Council!

The *Echo* reported that leading Tory Councillor, John Lamb, revealed his ambitions for the major route as the Cabinet agreed to move ahead with a £5million scheme for the Bell junction during a meeting in November 2018. He said: "What we want to see is the whole road upgraded to a trunk road, which would mean it would be maintained by Highways England who have a lot more money to keep the road up to the standard it should be."

Conservative Cllr Lamb stated: "We want to see investment and we'd like to see it brought up to a motorway."

Local Eastwood Park & St Laurence Lib Dem campaigners Paul Collins & Karl Lansley are very concerned – our residents do **not** want a Motorway through their neighbourhood. Paul and Karl say: **"Air and noise pollution is bad enough now! The local Tories want to make that worse by upgrading the A127 to Motorway standard. The A127 already is difficult to cross at the best of times, we must consider what a Motorway may do to our communities. Would there be junction closures, such as Bellhouse Road? We believe that Southend should be promoting better public transport and the use of green transport, such as cycling." If you agree, please get in touch with us (contact details on p4).**



A127 – Making this a motorway would mean increased noise and air pollution for local residents. It could bring traffic even closer to housing, and might see junctions closed. And "motorway" traffic is likely to be much faster than 40mph from the Borough boundary!

RAIL FARES GO UP AGAIN!

The life of an Eastwood Rail Commuter becomes more expensive.

Train fares were increased in January and an Annual Season Ticket has increased by 3.16% to £3,516 – from Chalkwell/Leigh to Fenchurch St. A lot of upset has been caused over the last two years that the Annual Season Ticket has increased by 6.8% in total.

It's all over the news – the Conservative Minister blaming the Unions for too high pay increases and the Labour Party blaming private businesses for profiteering.

The truth is that Annual Season Ticket rises are controlled by the Department of Transport (the Government).

From Rayleigh to Liverpool St, the season ticket price rose to £4,028 for the year, over £5,000 if that includes going further into London or Docklands.

Paul Collins and Karl Lansley – both c2c commuters – say: "We don't call for a return to BR; that was a poor experience, with no investment in the railways and withdrawal of labour by the Unions far too frequently."

"We need increases to be fairer. And if you have to suffer long-term disruption, as travellers on the Liverpool St line have done, you shouldn't face any increase at all!"



Teddy Hewitt Foundation

Karl Lansley says "In 2018, Teddy Hewitt sadly passed away with a neurological condition aged just 2 years. In something I can personally relate to, Teddy's parents – St Laurence residents – chose to set up a charity Foundation."



Teddy's mum, Nikke, says: "I worked within recruitment as a manager and intended to return to this after my maternity leave. When Teddy was born it became clear that would not be possible. Medical-led childcare is beyond expensive so the decision was made as a family to reduce outgoings and leave work to care for Teddy full time."

"When Teddy passed away the income that the family relied upon was immediately taken away – I had to return to work after just 2 weeks. This just isn't possible for some. There are families that end up in financial hardship due to the pressures on them during this incredibly difficult time. Often heartache is further compounded by these financial pressures. In the worst cases, some families lose their homes."

Our Foundation aims to help these families return to the workplace in a reasonable amount of time with the assistance they need. The **Teddy Hewitt Foundation** was set up to assist families in need of financial and physical support following the passing of a child, when one parent is financially reliant on the disability living allowance and carer's allowance in the 3 months following the child's death. We are initially limited to families living in Essex but we hope to increase geographic cover.

To find out more of what the family are trying to achieve through the Teddy Hewitt Foundation, please go to www.teddyhewitt.org.uk

THE BELL JUNCTION: DOES THE COUNCIL REALLY KNOW BEST?

Karl Lansley says: In the last Focus, we highlighted the Council's "preferred plans" for the Bell Junction. Three proposals were put to the Council – bizarrely, all 3 removed the right turn into Rochford Road from the A127. It's almost as if this part of the scheme was an absolute given!

Parts of the proposal look positive. A dedicated filter lane from the A127 turning left into Rochford Road, and a longer filter lane to turn right into Hobblythick Lane should have benefits. However, the removal of the right turn option into Rochford Road will force all traffic going to the airport, and to local roads like **Hornby** and **Feeches**, to go down **Manners Way**. Local residents have told me they fear this will turn **Hampton Gardens**, **Byrne Drive** and **Oakengrange Drive** into high-speed short cuts.

Our suggestion would be to concentrate on the improvements heading into Southend, tinker with the timings so the right-hand turn coming from Cuckoo Corner is still there, but only relevant to the number of cars that use this turning, if that proves to be a success, leave it there.



Residents MUST make their views known on this now, so please get in touch. We can't just assume that the Council knows best – look at the problems at Kent Elms for an indication of how they can get it wrong.

Karl reports: New PCSOs for Eastwood

In December, I met with PCSO Shane Brook for 'coffee with cops' at the Holiday Inn to discuss recent developments. It's disappointing that only 3 people attended! This is a good opportunity for residents to meet their PCSO on a 1-to-1 basis for a private conversation on any concerns.

PCSO Brook has now been reassigned to focus on other wards in Southend – St Laurence will now be covered mainly by **PCSO Steve Hollands**, assisted by **PCSO Carol Fox**. All non-emergencies should be reported to 101 and, if related to our ward, will be passed to them. PCSO Hollands is on Twitter **@PCSOHollands**. For emergencies, continue to call 999.



I'm actively encouraging all roads in the ward to start up a **Neighbourhood Watch** scheme, starting with my own road, **Shepard Close**, where I hosted a launch meeting for residents on 22 January. These schemes can help reduce crimes such as burglary, car theft, anti-social behaviour, all by neighbours simply looking out for each other. Contact Kevin Blake at Kevin.blake@essex.pnn.police.uk to find out more.

Light comes back to Coniston!

In late December, a Coniston resident told me a lamp post "stump" had been left unattended for many months. I contacted the Street Lighting Engineer at Southend Council, who responded very promptly.

I'm pleased to say the work was done in a timely manner – the new post is now installed and should be "powered up" and completed shortly.

10 out of 10 for the Council, and the officer, in helping to get this resolved.



St Laurence & Eastwood Park Liberal Democrat Team

Working together to make St Laurence & Eastwood Park a better place to live and work

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