

BUDGET SPEECH

CLLR SUE JELLISS, UKIP LEADER

21/02/17

Thank you Mr Mayor

We are glad to see that the proposed rate increases are not the maximum permitted, however they will still be a considerable burden on our local residents.

It is lovely to see the increase in revenue from our Theatres, despite the fact that they are still in the red, a situation we have to keep an eye on, as the Theatres have been a drain on resources for years, it would be a great shame to lose either of them. In particular we would like to congratulate them on the wonderful pantomime which was held this Christmas. I hope that soon we will have an offering which will make a profit for the town.

In the coming years our income will depend more on local building targets.'It is noted that the Government will withhold payments from authorities not supporting housing growth, whether through absence of a local plan or by not granting planning permission (which is then granted on appeal)'. Is this why the latest controversial plans for the Aquarena were passed by the planning committee? Yet each time plans are granted there is less allocated for affordable housing. While we need to balance the budget we need also to be mindful of the constraints placed on us by the area we live in. We cannot keep building houses in an area which is closed in by the South Downs on one side and the sea on the other. We will end up with a massive sprawl of building all along the coast from Cornwall to Kent. All this while the A27 'Improvements' are likely to be shelved yet again by Government getting their sums wrong. Without a clear plan for this road, and in the opinion of many Worthing residents, a bypass to the north, we will come to a standstill. We cannot cope with the current level of traffic, let alone the increased levels which will follow all the planned building. Businesses will be discouraged from coming to the area due to the delays suffered by their transport. Already the constant gridlocks at Grove Lodge Roundabout and Lyons Farm are costing our local firms millions of pounds each year.

Please don't forget that our Hospital is already under strain and has been in 'Business Continuity' several times this year, which means, amongst other things,

that there are no spare beds! Our Doctor surgeries are also over run. So bear that in mind when allowing developments and buildings on every scrap of land.

The County Council has introduced charges for waste disposal at our local sites, plus a reduction in the times they are open. However they still want to increase their share of the Council Tax. This is causing an increase in fly tipping in the area, and although our leaders would have it that there is no increase in this fly tipping, I have received complaints from local residents that they have noticed an increase. The changes may have been put in place by the County Council, but the impact is to our residents and the area we live in.

It looks as though the Government will be returning less and less of our money over the coming years and so this Council will have to work hard to become more business like and seek to find more ways to make a profit.

After all Councillor Dan Humphreys is quoted as saying "*We offer world-leading employers a highly networked environment supported by wise regulation and a business positive approach in which to grow their companies. The message is clear – Worthing works.*"

And Councillor Brian Turner says "*Through years of consistent work and investment, the Borough has become a launch pad for people to do great things.*"

We can only 'do great things' if we have the infrastructure and resources to do them. If not then Worthing will not work but come to a standstill.

It seems to me that this Council now needs to follow through and "Do great things" and make sure "Worthing Works"