

From: "Chris Philp MP" [REDACTED]
Date: 24 July 2017 12:06
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Local News from Chris Philp MP

Local news from Chris Philp MP



Dear All,

As we head into the summer break, I thought that an update on some local issues might be helpful.

School Funding

Last week the Education Secretary announced £1.3 billion of extra frontline funding for schools and confirmed the introduction of the "National Funding Formula". Croydon has been historically underfunded relative to other areas (such as Inner London) and the new Funding Formula fixes this. Most secondary schools in Croydon, including Riddlesdown, Oasis Coulsdon and Woodcote High, will get a 10% funding increase under the new Formula. Croydon Primaries will generally get increases too, although not quite as much. The extra £1.3 billion will mean no school anywhere suffers a cut under the new Formula, and it also protects education spending in real terms (i.e. after inflation) per pupil. This is fantastic news for schools in general and for Croydon schools especially.

Southern Rail

The planned ASLEF drivers' strike and the 4 day working which has disrupted services for the last month or so has just been called off, following an announcement of talks between the union and the Secretary of State. The drivers have already been offered a 23.8% pay increase from £49,000 to £60,683 for a four day week which seems pretty generous to me. The recently-published Gibb report found that the "primary" cause of the appalling "service" for the past year was the official and unofficial strike action, so I am pleased this is now on hold at least for now. I have also been lobbying the Government and Southern in the meantime to run longer trains to alleviate over-crowding.

The Government has recently announced that it is fining Southern £13.4 million for its terrible service and the money will be used to fund service improvements for passengers. I still think that the franchise should be broken up. The £300 million programme of investment in track and signal repairs which I successfully campaigned for a few months ago is now well underway. Improvements in terms of fewer signal and track breakdowns should already be visible. I recently spoke on Southern and the Gibb Report in Parliament and the short video is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyf1FuU3VL0>.

More details on Southern are at www.chrisphilp.com in various blog posts.

Purley Skyscraper

Readers will probably be aware that I successfully persuaded the Government to “Call In” the planning permission which Croydon’s Labour-controlled Council granted last December for a 17-floor Skyscraper in Purley. The Council gave permission despite strong objections from 9,000 local residents, 7 local residents Associations, myself, our GLA Member Steve O’Connell and local councillors. I have just heard that the Planning Inspector will be holding hearings at Croydon Town Hall in January and I will send round details nearer the time. I will certainly be attending and making representations, as I am sure will local residents groups and many other people. There is of course no guarantee that the Inspector will agree with our objections – but I hope they will!

People’s Audit

Every council has to open its book for a month a year for inspection by local residents, in what is known as a “People’s Audit”. I discovered in the last few days that Croydon’s month runs out on 2nd August. The Council had not bothered giving it much (or any) publicity, presumably to avoid getting scrutinised. If you have the time and background to assist with our brief effort to have a look at the books, you can email the council directly on ian.geary@croydon.gov.uk to make an appointment or email local resident Robert Ward to help him have a look at the books on robert.c.ward@btinternet.com. If you do have a look yourself, please let me know if you find anything of interest! Next year I will make sure I get notified well in advance and we can do it properly, as they did in Lambeth last year – see <http://www.thepeoplesaudit.info/report.pdf> for a report in what they found there.

Purley Oaks Recycling Centre – Gypsy and Travellers Site update

A lot of people have asked me what is happening with the Labour Council’s plan to place a gypsy and travellers site next to Purley Oaks tip. This is still being considered by a Planning Inspector. I spoke against this plan at the hearings the Inspector held in May. The Inspector is writing his report, and we will get the result in due course – I imagine in the next few months. I will email as soon as I hear anything.

Sanderstead Intensification – Stopped!

Finally, the same Planning Inspector referred to in the item above has already confirmed that he agrees with me, local councillors and local residents that Sanderstead Village is not the right place for development “Intensification”. This is a huge relief – a beautiful village like Sanderstead should not be subjected to “intensification” by the Council. I am in favour of building in heavily urban environments such as Croydon town centre – but we should be protecting beautiful places in our neighbourhood like Sanderstead.

I hope this update is useful. There is more information at www.chrisphilp.com.

With best wishes,



Chris Philp
Member of Parliament for Croydon South

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