



Newsline

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INSIDE:

page 2

CALLS FOR MORE POLICE TO TACKLE CRIME



page 3

PUT BRITAIN FIRST ON JUNE 10TH



page 3

CONSERVATIVES TO DELIVER A BIGGER STATE PENSION



TORIES ARE TOPS FOR THE LOWEST COUNCIL TAXES

And they provide the best services

FAREHAM'S council tax will rise by just 2.5% for 2004-05 - making it once again one of the lowest in the country.

Band D property owners will pay £123 per annum, thanks to another year of tight housekeeping by the Tory-controlled Borough Council.

The low tax was achieved despite having to fund an ever-increasing number of Government schemes, many of which receive little or no financial support and cost the council over £500,000 annually. And there has been a steady reduction in the proportion of expenditure funded by Government. The average council has to raise only 25% of its expenditure via the council tax. But for Fareham the figure is 52% due to receiving a grant settlement which is no higher now than it was 10 years ago. The full bill that Band D taxpayers face, including charges from the County Council, Borough Council, Police and Fire Authorities, will be £1,123 per year.

Council Leader Seán Woodward

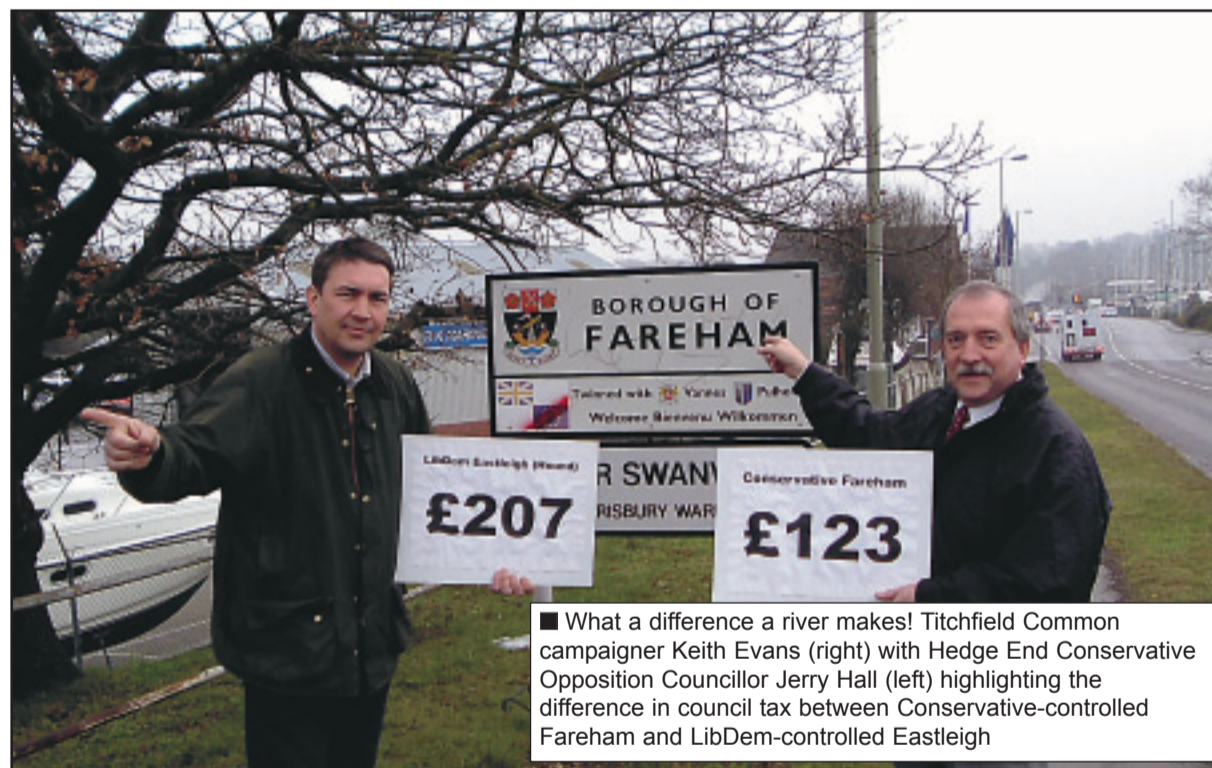
said: "I am pleased to have been able to propose such a low increase in council tax with some useful increases in services.

"Five years of Conservative administration have turned around the council's finances from a predicted £2.2m on-going annual deficit of revenue, a £3.8m capital deficit and £5.8m of external debt to the present debt-free state.

"All funding is in balance and no use of reserves is necessary to maintain one of the lowest council taxes in England."

Fareham's council tax is in stark contrast to, for example, Liberal Democrat controlled Eastleigh where residents in the parish of Hound have to pay £207 for district-level services, 68% more than in Fareham.

In line with new legislation, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority set its first council tax rate at £51.30.



What a difference a river makes! Titchfield Common campaigner Keith Evans (right) with Hedge End Conservative Opposition Councillor Jerry Hall (left) highlighting the difference in council tax between Conservative-controlled Fareham and LibDem-controlled Eastleigh

Labour's Special Offer
*You won't pay until 2005**

*Gordon Brown has just borrowed another £37 billion. Next year he will borrow a further £33 billion. Like all borrowing, this will have to be paid back. That will mean yet more tax rises if Labour win the next election, expected in 2005. So if they stay you'll pay.

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Labour's third term tax rises

Gordon Brown has been dubbed the 'Credit Card Chancellor' by Michael Howard. Mr Brown – who has already raised taxes 66 times – now plans to borrow another £141 billion over the next five years, plunging the country further into debt. As with all debt, this will have to be paid back eventually – meaning more taxes for hardworking families if Labour get in again.

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