

# FACT OR FICTION

## *What the Liberals would have you believe*

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| 1. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council have wasted £43m on refurbishing Ashburton Court HQ Building  |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost is £40 million found from capital receipts and savings. There is no cost to the Council Tax payers; in fact there will be office lease cost savings of £200,000 pa among others.</li> <li>• The building was about to be condemned. A new building would have cost £70m</li> <li>• The refurbished building will house twice the number of staff, enabling us to sell 3 other office blocks and avoid the lease costs of another, it will also half the carbon footprint and is being hailed as the best example of its kind in the country.</li> <li>• The Lib Dem leader and his deputy agreed this spend in committee.</li> </ul> |
| 2. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council should have invested the £40m in adult social care.   |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservatives have invested £49.5 m in the last 9 years in 10 state of the art Nursing Homes and in refurbishing every one of our 26 residential Homes.</li> <li>• Conservatives have increased the Adult Social care budget (day to day running costs) by 76%.</li> </ul>  |
| 3. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council has closed 6 Residential Homes.   |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have built 10 Nursing Homes, described by others as “5 Star hotel accommodation” and have increased the number of beds we have by 562 (from 873 to 1436) all in the last 4 years.</li> <li>• The Lib Dems took the decision in 1997 to give our 26 Residential Homes to a Charity.</li> <li>• We overturned this appalling decision on being elected in 1997.</li> </ul>   |

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| 4. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled County Council has reserves of £180m and should use them.  |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When Lib Dems were in power (1993-97) they ran reserves so low that the District Auditor warned them.</li> <li>• When schools reserves (which we cannot touch) and balances (for day to day emergencies) are subtracted the amount in reserves is around £100m which is earmarked for specific purposes, such as:-</li> <li>• £28m due to be lost to the north as Government takes our grant (in addition to £64m already taken) and gives this to Labour heartlands; and equal pay claims for which we have set aside £36m but which is presently calculated at £50-£60m.</li> <li>• There is no flexibility in our reserves: they are fully committed.</li> </ul>   |
| 5. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council has over-charged the Council Taxpayer and this is why they can increase Council Tax by only 1.9% this year.   |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.9% is the increase for 2009/10 AND 2010/11.</li> <li>• This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest increase of all County Councils it keeps us in the lowest quartile of Council Tax which is our policy.</li> <li>• All of this, despite the lowest level of Government grant in the country and yet we are the TOP PERFORMING COUNTY COUNCIL IN THE LAND.</li> <li>• We cannot have over-charged Tax Payers if we have remained as having the lowest Council Tax in the South East.</li> <li>• We reduced our planned increase of 3.5% for both 2009/10 and 2010/11 by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Using under-spends to reduce it from 3.5% to 3.0%</li> <li>➢ Using efficiency improvement in Waste management to reduce it from 3.0% to 2.5%</li> <li>➢ Allocating 1.5% to pay and 2.25% for prices as the RPI/CPI reduces.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| 6. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council spent £12,000 on taps and £1.2m on designer furniture for Ashburton Court   |

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| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £12,000 is the total for a complete water system and includes boilers, trunking and electronics, so that boiling water for coffee/tea or ice cold drinking water is available at the touch of a button.</li> <li>• In order that we can accommodate twice the number of staff, we are moving to open plan furniture. Desks not suitable for open plan have been re-cycled to other of our offices. Therefore the gross cost is considerably reduced Three 3-storey blocks housing 1,200 staff means that each space cost £1,000..</li> <li>• This is within the £40m budget which is running to time and budget.</li> </ul>  |
| 7. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council is installing a pent house suite for the Leader.   |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no truth in this. It is a lie.</li> </ul>   |
| 8. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council employed a security guard to guard the Leader's car.   |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police advised this guard during a terrorist extended alarm and while we installed shatter proof windows.</li> <li>• The guard overlooked our car park where the Lib Dem Leader and his Deputy Leader parked their cars too!</li> <li>• In that same car park were the cars of each Chief Officer and Cabinet members.</li> </ul>  |
| 9. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council cabinet member voted themselves a 25% increase in their allowances.  |
| The Truth is    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was a ballot of all County Councillors. A majority, including Lib Dems decided in favour of this. There are 9 members of cabinet and manifestly they could not have produced a majority out of 78 Councillors.</li> <li>• During the last 6 years members of the Cabinet have rejected the award from 2009/10 for 6% increase for 4 years. Saying that it is for the next administration's Cabinet to make this decision.</li> <li>• Members have reduced the Panel's recommendations on an allowance increase and on another occasion froze the allowance recommended for them.</li> <li>• Members now cost the Council Tax Payer £1,000 pa less each year than the Panel's recommendations thus saving £78,000 pa.</li> </ul> |

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| 10. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council spent £4.5m on pens and mint chocolates   |
| The Truth is     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These cost £1,200 and were on our nationally acclaimed Personalisation Programme stand at the Liberal Democrat Party Conference and other Party Conferences as we successfully influenced their own opinion formers.</li> <li>• This £1,200 was found from an under-spend and to claim that £4.5m was spent is a grotesque exaggeration of the most serious kind.</li> </ul>  |
| 11. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council spends £4.5m pa on Publicity.   |
| The Truth is     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £2.4m is recruiting cost not publicity, and is spent replacing 1.000 teachers and some of the other staff who leave each year. Teachers recruitment cost are reimbursed by Government Grant – some £1.3m.</li> <li>• £1m is spent on producing reports, leaflets and brochures on our services and Statutory Plans such as Local Transport Plan, the School Plan, and the Annual Statement of Accounts etc.</li> <li>• £0.9m is spent on Press and enquiries – some 3,000 pa – and producing our own Press Releases.</li> <li>• The cost to the Council Tax payer is £3.06p pa each.</li> </ul> |
| 12. Lib Dems Say | When the Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council officially opened its Winchester Discovery Centre and invited the Duchess of Cornwall to officiate, Champagne and wine was served.   |
| The Truth is     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was mid morning in the working week. Cups of tea and coffee were served to those attending including 15 to 20 Lib Dem County Councillors who should be ashamed of their Party for such an exaggeration.</li> </ul>   |
| 13. Lib Dems Say | The Hampshire Senate is another tier of Local Government and costs £100,000pa to run.  |
| The Truth is     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is not another Tier; it is the Local Area Agreement democratised to include all District Councils and is entirely voluntary.</li> <li>• It is not costing Hampshire Council Tax payers a penny, Government is funding it at £50,000.</li> </ul>  |

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| 14. Lib Dems Say | There is a black hole in our budget for 2009/10  |
| The Truth is     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no black hole but there would have been if we had followed the Lib Dems budget strategy for 2007/09 and 08/09.</li> <li>• In true “Northern Rock” style budgeting, the Lib Dems wanted to take Reserves for their budget. A true case of use of one off reserves for continuing expenditure and “let the future take care of itself” except, of course, that the future does not take care of itself and reserves run out leaving continuing expenditure high and dry and in deficit.</li> <li>• We reject such a policy.</li> </ul> |
| 15. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council has cut bus services.   |
| The Truth is     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have increased spending on subsidies to commercially operated bus services by 11.6% in the last 5 years.</li> <li>• We have increased our spend on Community Transport (CANGO – DIAL-A-RIDE etc.) by 63% in the last 5 years.</li> <li>• The overall increase is 4.1% pa for 5 years.</li> <li>• We have refused to subsidise some evening and weekend services which were costing up to £10 per passenger trip and had 2 or 3 passengers per bus only.</li> </ul>   |
| 16. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council has reduced spending on libraries.  |
| The Truth is     | <p>This is another lie.</p> <p>We have spent £15.8m on refurbishing 34 of our 54 libraries in the last 4 years.</p> <p>The Recreation and Heritage revenue budget has increased in the last 2 years by £500,000 and by a one off increase of £300,000 to boost the purchase of new Library books</p>   |
| 17. Lib Dems Say | Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council spent £17,000 on the three Party conferences in 2008.   |

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| <p>The Truth is</p>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was the cost of taking a stand at the 3 party conferences to influence MPs and Ministers on our nationally acclaimed Personalisation Commission findings on the future of Adult Social Care in England.</li> <li>• This includes rental of the smallest space available at each Conference, hotel costs at 2 party conferences (not Bournemouth) travel costs, and £1,200 on pens and complimentary mint chocolates, at a total cost of £17,000 ALL FOUND FROM UNDERSPENDS ALLOCATED TO THE PERSONALISATION COMMISSION COSTS AND UPON WHICH A LIB DEM COUNCILLOR SAT.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>18. Lib Dems Say</p> | <p>Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council is spending hundreds of pounds replacing mature trees in Ashburton Court</p>   |
| <p>The Truth is</p>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Condition of the granting of the Planning Permission to refurbish Ashburton Court specified by Winchester City Council was the replacement of mature trees destroyed by the rebuild.</li> <li>• Tender documents specified such replacement on a like for like basis. The cost is WITHIN the contract price and therefore WITHIN the £25 m refurbishment contract.</li> <li>• The Lib Dems have complained about the sacking surrounding the tree roots, the soil, and the origins of the trees. These were procured in England by the contractor. Most mature trees in garden centres come from outside the EU.</li> </ul> |
| <p>19. Lib Dems Say</p> | <p>Conservative controlled Hampshire County Council has imposed higher Council Tax increases as a percentage than they did in their (disastrous) four years in office.</p>   |
| <p>The Truth is</p>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Chegwyn has figures from 1993 and these show that in these 16 years Conservative County Council imposed a lower figure than they - 6.1% compared to Lib Dem 10.8%.</li> <li>• Over the last 9 years the Conservative Controlled County Council has averaged 6.3% compared to the Lib Dem's 10.8%.</li> <li>• This year 2009/10 and 2010/11 the Council increase will be 1.9% for BOTH YEARS.</li> <li>• Lowest Council Tax since <u>1969</u> and 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest in the Country.</li> </ul>  |

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| 20. Taxpayers Alliance Claim | We have the fourth largest number of staff earning more than £50,000   |
| The Truth is                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest Council in the land. The surprise is that we came 4<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• Within our number are many Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers and we have no control over these.</li> <li>• We included these while other Counties had their Heads and Deputies EXCLUDED FROM THE FIGURES BY THE ALLIANCE BECAUSE THEY BROKE DOWN THEIR FIGURES TO SHOW THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS – WE DID NOT.</li> </ul>  |
| 21. Taxpayers Alliance Claim | We have a “black hole” in our Pension Fund. (£860m)  |
| The Truth is                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The so called “black hole” is nothing of the sort. It is THEORETICAL and based on (48,000) of Hampshire Pension Fund employees retiring tomorrow and drawing a pension for the rest of their lives and not making any further contribution. NOTHING COMING INTO THE SCHEME AND EVERYTHING GOING OUT.</li> <li>• This is ludicrous! The next 10 years’ surplus of £100m every year would pay off this. At £2.4bn the present value of the Pension Fund is 3 times as much as the funds theoretical liability.</li> </ul> |
| 22. Taxpayers Alliance Claim | That Councillors “snouts are in the trough” in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme which is a FINAL SALARY BASED PENSION.   |
| The Truth is                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Hampshire Pension Fund (Local Government Pension Scheme) is a contributory pension scheme in which the costs of the scheme are borne by contributions from employees and the employer.</li> <li>• Councillors will <u>not</u> receive a pension based on final salary. THEY WILL RECEIVE AN AVERAGE SALARY BASED PENSION.</li> </ul>  |