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Tim Loughton MP's Parliamentary E-Newsletter

Welcome to my E-Newsletter

Dear Constituents,

Welcome to my first E-Newsletter of 2008. I hope everyone had a good break over the New Year - which seems so far away now.

If you've been watching the news you'll be aware of the controversy over expenses and the employment of family members at Westminster. On my website I have always provided a breakdown of what expenses I incur in the running of my office and who I employ. If you want more information please [click here](#).

I hope you enjoy my newsletter. Do let me know at loughtont@parliament.uk if there are any particular issues you would like to see covered in the next one.

Best wishes,

Tim Loughton
MP for East Worthing and Shoreham



Post Office delivers bitter news for local branches

Tim has expressed his fury at the decision by Post Office bosses to go ahead with all 7 closures of sub-Post Office branches in his constituency despite massive local opposition to the plans. He has branded the consultation exercise a sham and has called on the Government to reverse the decision.

During the so-called 'consultation' Tim worked alongside local residents, councillors and Sub-Post-Masters on his campaign to 'Save Local Post Offices'. He raised the matter in Parliament, organised marches against the cuts and public meetings for the local community to express their concerns about the proposed closures.

Tim has vowed to continue the campaign to Save the Post Offices and has said: "This news is another bitter blow to my constituents. I am appalled that the Post Office appears to have stuck two fingers up to thousands of customers in Adur and Worthing and indeed the whole of Sussex who will now struggle even more to access dwindling post office services.

"We were assured by the Post Office and the Minister that this was a 'meaningful and genuine' consultation exercise even though it had been truncated to 6 weeks in the run up to Christmas.



Yet they have clearly ignored the 6200 people who signed our petition in a very short space of time; they have ignored the hundreds who took to the streets in protest; they have ignored the worsening deprivation figures which were published during the consultation and they have completely ignored the very genuine concerns of residents, police, businesses and councillors that the increased travel distances will be unworkable and dangerous for many people, let alone adding to congestion.

"At a stroke the Post Office have halved the number of sub-post offices in my constituency without any idea of how the remaining branches will cope and once gone they are gone for good. The whole of Sompting and Lancing especially has suffered a body blow condemning a population on near 28,000 effectively to rely on one main post office which is already struggling to cope.

"This is a complete travesty and the post office has lost all credibility in terming itself 'the people's post office' and is clearly more interested in maximising profit and has lost any concept of providing a public service.

"It is shameful that the Government is standing by and letting this happen and can only result in losing even more business to the competition such that no one can be assured that we have even seen the end of the cuts.

"We will be fighting this decision all the way and I will be tackling the Minister to justify how this consultation was anything other than a sham and another cruel deceit to the people of Sussex."

Tim has now written to the South East Chair of Postwatch, Sheila Button, requesting that an official appeal is made against the findings of the Post Office Ltd's 'Area Plan Discussion Booklet' which condemns to closure 7 sub-post office branches in the constituency.

In writing to Postwatch, Tim has drawn attention to omissions and errors in the Post Office's report and in particular has requested that the findings against both Mill Road and Bowness Avenue branches are appealed immediately.

For more information about the campaign to Save the Post Offices please visit [Tim's website](#).

Making the most of the extra day! East Worthing and Shoreham Schools Eco-Summit - 29th February 2008

Tim Loughton MP is currently working on plans for an event on Friday 29th February with Adur and East Worthing's secondary and middle schools. He has decided to make the most of this year's extra day to work with local schoolchildren on new ideas to help our local environment. The main purpose of the event is to share best practice of how schools are already undertaking various innovations to reduce waste, increase recycling, maximise energy efficiency, etc, and how local communities generally can be more environmental friendly. Tim is hoping that they can come up with a "Green Print" from the event which can then be disseminated amongst Adur and Worthing as widely as possible.

He is currently trying to raise some sponsorship to help cover the costs of providing lunch for all the children. If you would be interested in supporting the initiative or indeed would be keen to find out more, please email Tim at loughtont@parliament.uk

Tim adopts a Whale

Tim has adopted a Whale to show his support for the charity IFAW's campaign against Japanese whaling. He is pictured here with his adoption certificate.

The humpback whale is listed as vulnerable and has been protected from whaling for more than four decades after being driven to near extinction by commercial whaling during the last century. Despite this, Japan has now added 50 humpbacks to its target list as it sails towards the Southern Ocean Sanctuary in Antarctica to hunt 1,035 whales. In addition to humpbacks they will target 935 minke whales and 50 endangered fin whales in an internationally recognised whale sanctuary.

After having formally adopted the whale Tim commented: "Whaling is cruel and unnecessary and I am delighted to be supporting IFAW's campaign against it. I have called on the Government to take action to ensure that the moratorium on whaling remains in place and is observed by all countries. The Government cannot afford to be complacent if we are to ensure that the planet's endangered species are preserved for future generations."



For more information about IFAW's campaign please visit www.ifaw.org

Tim's concern that the Government Planning Bill will damage the voice of local authorities...

Tim is worried that the Government's new Planning Bill will give local communities less of say and lead to more unsustainable development.

The Bill proposes the creation of a new unaccountable Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) which is a blow to local communities, as it reduces their say not just over airports, power stations and motorways, but also on incinerators, sewage plants and hazardous landfill. The make-up of the Commission will be unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats, who will look to the Government for re-appointment. Tim is worried that this gives them the green light to ignore local opinion.

Tim's colleagues on the Conservative front bench will be tabling amendments throughout the Bill's passage through Parliament in order to preserve the voice of local communities, protect the environment and maintain a democratic and accountable process.

Tim opens a new Nursery and joins the children for tea!

Last week Tim officially opened the rebuilt environmentally friendly nursery at Our Lady of Sion School. The rebuild took five months to complete, uses solar energy and low energy under floor heating to maintain a low carbon footprint. It was designed to maximise the educational environment, exceeding all OFSTED requirements and offering full disabled access.

The new Nursery offers an exceptional environment for our



children, for both learning and playing. It has state-of-the-art facilities, such as an interactive white board, which will enhance children's learning experience. The focus has not just been on creating a light, spacious interior; the outdoor play area has a canopy covering the special safety surface, enabling children to play outside in all weather whilst being protected from harmful UV rays. Every effort has been made to offer a nurturing and stimulating environment.

Tim commented: "Our Lady of Sion school has been open since 1862 and this nursery is a fantastic modern development which both the staff and children should be very proud of. I spent a wonderful few hours at the school speaking to children and as you can see from the pictures enjoyed a very merry tea party in the new nursery!"

Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill

Tim has received a number of letters from constituents concerned about the Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill.

The Government announced, on 8th October, that they would amend the Bill to create an offence of inciting hatred against people on the basis of their sexuality. For the same broad reasons that inciting hatred against people on the basis of their race is a criminal offence, the law should protect people from those who intend to harm them because of their sexual orientation. It is wrong that any minority should face violent attacks simply because of who they are.

Clearly there are important considerations in any such proposal in protecting freedom of speech. The Lord Chancellor himself has said that Parliament "must be extremely careful to ensure that the law strikes a proper balance" and the starting point for the drafting of this measure will be "the parallel example of the current provisions in respect of religious hatred." This legislation ensures that the offence of stirring up hatred must be intentional and covers threatening language only. Vehement criticism or merely abusive or insulting language is not prohibited.

Tim and his colleagues on the front bench team will make sure that any such approach is about stopping people inciting violence and is not an infringement of free speech. On incitement to religious hatred, the Conservatives got the Government to compromise and produce something that was not against free speech and they will be ensuring that this forthcoming Bill strikes a balance between free speech and protection against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

To follow the progress of the Bill please [click here](#).

The Lisbon Treaty

Tim voted against the Bill which seeks to introduce the Lisbon Treaty into UK law when it came before the House of Commons on 21st January. As per the articles in Tim's last Newsletter Tim has strongly criticised the Government for its broken promise on the referendum. Tim will be recording a special video podcast on this subject within the next few days. You'll be able to view it at www.telltim.co.uk

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill has just finished in the Lords and is now expected in the Commons. The Bill revises and updates legislation for assisted reproduction and changes to the regulation and licencing of the use of embryos in research and therapy. It includes provision

for research on different types of embryos, and proposes changes to definitions of legal parenthood for cases involving assisted reproduction.

Tim has received correspondence from a number of constituents concerned about its implications, in particular the fact that if passed in its current form the Bill would remove the necessity to consider the child's need for a father when providing IVF treatment. Tim will certainly be taking his constituent's strong views on this into account when he votes on the Bill. MPs will have a free vote on the Bill which means they will not have to vote along Party lines. To follow the progress of the Bill please [click here](#).

Tim in Parliament

Earlier in January, in his capacity as Shadow Minister for Children, Tim led for the Conservatives in a Westminster Hall debate on the provision of services for children with a disability. To read Tim's full speech please [click here](#).



This week in the Commons chamber Tim challenged the Minister for Children, Young People and Families Beverley Hughes to explain why in the last year she has halved the number of staff working in the Teenage Pregnancy Unit when the World Health Organisation has just released a report showing that the UK has the highest number of children in Europe having underage sex. [Click here](#) to read the debate in full.

Surgery Dates

Forthcoming surgery dates are as follows:

- 15th February in Southwick
- 29th February in Worthing
- 14th March in Shoreham

To book an appointment please ring Tim's constituency office on 01903 235168

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