

Cllr TIM DWELLY report January 2018

Since Candy Atherton's death the Labour Group at County Hall has been stretched at a difficult time. Despite that we have made some good impact at County Hall.

I am leading a campaign to stop the outrageous £200k pa cut to the CAB service, proposed by the Lib Dem/Independent Cabinet's Budget. This proposal is outraging many councillors. If the cut goes ahead it will close up to **7 of the 9 CABs in Cornwall**. Just as Universal Credit comes in.

I am hopeful we can win this battle, because we have managed to corral cross party opposition to this choice of cut – even the Tories are against it! I proposed a motion at the Economy Scrutiny Committee budget meeting to scrap the cut - which was passed with cross party support.

If there is no climb down by the Cabinet I expect to table a Budget amendment at the February 13 Budget-setting full council – and win the vote in the Chamber. It would be helpful if members used letters to the local press and social media to oppose this cut. There are details on my councillor facebook page: [facebook.com/timdwellypenzanceeast](https://www.facebook.com/timdwellypenzanceeast).

I have been standing in temporarily for Candy Atherton at Health Scrutiny Committee. Labour Group is pushing for the proposed NHS 'Accountable Care System' in Cornwall, if established, to **rule out private sector** contracts of key services, to insist on a **debt write off** and for there to be a full **council vote** after proper public **consultation**. Even if these things are agreed (and we are trying hard as a group to achieve this, with help from union and party NHS advisers), the plan is still being rushed.

We are taking the same stance as the Labour party in parliament, calling for full in-depth debate. Worryingly, the risks are not only of a new system being introduced without safeguards - but of what happens if things stay as they are. If the NHS continues to be mismanaged as it has been here in recent years, there will be terrible consequences. Few people realise that we have over £100 million of NHS debt in Cornwall. If there is no debt write off, most of this money will have to be found from local health service budgets. The result will be closures, severe cutbacks and more outsourcing. 'Business as usual' is surely not an option for anyone who supports the NHS as a quality service.

At Full Council the proposals of the Investment Task Group (which I chaired) were all endorsed. Results include up to £600 of additional borrowing to invest in housing and workspace. Also a commitment by Cornwall Council to become the **top affordable housing provider** of any council in the UK. This should mean around 1,500 affordable homes per year – with a lot more council housing in the mix as a result of the investment.

Fittingly this decision was made on the same day of Candy Atherton's funeral – where I met Jeremy Corbyn, who managed to come all the way to Truro with other MPs, despite critical Brexit votes that evening. I would like to add that there was a one minute round of applause for Candy by all councillors including 40 Tories at the beginning of the full council meeting that morning. Mention of this standing ovation provided a moment of humour at a very moving funeral.

It is vital that Labour wins the forthcoming Falmouth by-election on February 1, to return former PPC Jayne Kirkham as a Labour councillor, so that we continue to sit on key committees and have a Falmouth voice at County Hall. I am helping this campaign and would encourage members to do alongside the town council by-election in Penzance on the same day.