

Statement by Cllr Paul Crossley to Cabinet 04-Feb-09

Paul Crossley:

I would like to concentrate on 2 or 3 points. When making its budget proposal the Liberal Democrats would like to put clearly on the record that we do not support plans for this Council to build itself new offices.

We believe the Council is right to commit to maintaining a real presence in all three urban centres, but also to making best use of its current buildings and to making best use of the ever cheaper technologies afforded by the web and modern communications

Furthermore we believe that the Council should extend its neighbourhood working to a full and significant roll out of neighbourhood working with the Neighbourhood Councillors being accountable for the budgets and service delivery in their neighbourhoods of those services rolled out. This proposal will increase inclusion in neighbourhoods, local accountability and the engagement of front line Councillors.

We propose the setting up of a one-off fund of half a million available to residents to obtain grants to improve the energy efficiency of their homes in addition to national projects such as warm front. A key goal of such a fund should be to address the issues of fuel poverty. There are many innovative ideas around including one from York which sees a number of smart meters being held at the public libraries for residents to hire/borrow out so that they can really understand the energy use of their homes. This would have the added effect of getting more people into libraries which is one of our LAA targets.