



# FOCUS



*Welsh Liberal Democrats  
Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru*

*on Tonteg*

## MAJOR CASH BOOST FOR OUR SCHOOLS THANKS TO WELSH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS



**Schools across Wales will be handed an unexpected Christmas bonus thanks to a budget deal made by Welsh Liberal Democrats at the National Assembly.**

The draft budget was voted down by opposition parties in early November. We made it clear we wanted more money to help close the funding gap in schools as well as greater investment in jobs and the economy.

After much negotiation a deal was struck to support a revised budget which will see Welsh schools receive a much needed boost. The money is aimed largely at pupils in deprived areas which means **RCT are set to benefit by more than £3million.**

RCT Welsh Lib Dem Campaign Manager and school Governor Karen Roberts said

*"This is excellent news for our schools and the deal will help close the funding gap between Wales and England which is currently around £600. It means that schools in Pontypridd will receive just short of £1million between them, with the amount being determined according to the number of pupils they have on free school meals."*

*There is also extra money being put into recruitment and skills, housing, and school buildings. This is a very good deal for Wales."*



## *Labour's failings threaten Local Health Services.*

For years the health service in Wales has been failing us with waiting lists for treatment and operations growing and ambulance response times getting longer.

Whilst front line staff struggle to provide the high level of service they want to offer poor management and political interference means the service overall is suffering. Labour cannot blame the UK Government as they are so fond of doing. Health is devolved to their Welsh Government.

Cwm Taf Health Board have been quick to try and stop rumours that the A&E at the Royal Glamorgan could close. However, the Minor Injuries Unit at Ysbyty Cwm Rhondda has closed – temporarily they say.



This has knock on effects as people who would be going there will instead go to the Royal Glamorgan A & E making waiting times there longer.

The reason? Staff shortages – a common problem across Wales. The Chief Executive of Cwm Taf said recently that for every team of nine doctors on duty at least four of them will be locum doctors.

There is also a lack of specialist nurses. It was shortages such as this that led to the downgrading of the Neo natal Unit at the Royal Glamorgan.

Trained medical staff do not appear overnight – this problem should have been anticipated and steps taken to address the problem years ago. Now patients locally have to pay the price for the incompetence of Labour's Health Ministers.



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*Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year from RCT Welsh Liberal Democrats*



## Are efforts to boost town trade too little too late?



RCT Council have got the Christmas spirit and are offering free parking in town centres for a whole six days.. From 19<sup>th</sup> December we can shop until we drop in Pontypridd and other town centres. If we haven't done it all online by then or at one of the increasing number of out of town developments.

Is this too little too late? Across Wales Councils are introducing free parking in town centres to encourage trade. Wrexham offer free parking after 12pm , whilst Maesteg and Newport have free parking all day to try and boost trade.

Charges have been suspended in Llanelli for a year whilst regeneration works are ongoing and even Cardiff shoppers are offered an hour's free parking in an effort to help struggling small traders.

Yet RCT Labour remain defiant - calls from traders and from the Welsh Liberal Democrats and other opposition parties fell on deaf ears. They brag of the money being spent in Pontypridd town centre, but to what end if businesses are not being attracted there and people are spending their money elsewhere?

Come on RCT how about carrying over a bit of that Christmas cheer? January sales anyone?

**Karen Roberts**  
**Campaign Manager RCT Welsh Lib Dems**

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## Do we need Talbot Green new town?

"Developers want to create a new town centre at Talbot Green. I'll be holding off judgement until the plans come before RCT's Planning committee but I have expressed my opinion on the over development of this area in the past."

Says Cllr Mike Powell, leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrat Group on RCT Council.



"New jobs and investment are usually to be welcomed. However, there are questions to be asked. Traffic congestion around Talbot Green is a nightmare. Our only General Hospital is there and access to it for anyone from Tonteg or anywhere this side of the constituency is difficult enough now at peak times.

Also what effect will it have on Pontypridd town centre? Labour brag about their investment there. We have expressed concerns that the so called regeneration is merely a cosmetic exercise and will not bring in extra business. If the Talbot Green proposal goes ahead then it may well be the final nail in the coffin."

**To find out more about RCT Welsh Lib Dems go to**  
[www.pontylibdems.org.uk](http://www.pontylibdems.org.uk)  
 Email: [enquiries@rctlibdems.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@rctlibdems.org.uk)  
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## Where is the joined up thinking?

Russell Roberts annual report tried to justify his position as Council Leader, Police Authority Chair and member of Cwm Taf Health Board saying it strengthens relationships between those bodies and helps "provide solutions to the problems we face."

So where is the evidence of this? Recent figures show that so called 'bed blocking' is at its worst in the Cwm Taf area which covers RCT and Merthyr.

The official term is 'delayed transfer of care'. It covers patients - mostly elderly - who have been admitted to hospital



as urgent cases, have recovered medically, but cannot be discharged until adequate care is found for them either in a care home, or via a social services care package, allowing them to return to their own homes

Hospital beds remain out of action and new patients cannot be treated, hence longer waiting lists.

The number of hospital beds affected in Wales rose by 26% last year. The worse figures were in Cwm Taf where 135,431 days were lost.

How many patients have been left waiting in pain for operations because of this?

So much for joined up thinking and the advantages of having Russell as a paid member of Cwm Taf Health Board.