



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

3 March 2021

Bexley Labour respond to Tories “Pay more, get less” budget

Bexley Labour Councillors tonight responded to the council’s “pay more, get less” budget, which was passed at a meeting of the council on Wednesday 3 March.

The budget increases Bexley’s share of council tax by 4.99% while cutting funding to services and 16% of staffing roles in the council. The budget was passed in the wake of news last month that Bexley were one of just four local authorities who have been forced to seek permission from Government to use capital money for day-to-day expenditure.

Labour Councillors proposed an amendment to the budget which would reinvest monies saved from members foregoing a rise in allowances into our community libraries, who are facing a cut to their grant funding.

However, the Conservative Councillors refused to support the amendment. The budget was then passed.

Speaking after the meeting:

Cllr Stefano Borella, Candidate for Bexley and Bromley in the London Assembly elections and Shadow Cabinet Member for Places said:

“The choice before the Conservatives was clear tonight – cut funding to community libraries or maintain space in the budget for councillors’ pay rises.

“They chose to cut grants to community libraries – libraries which are the centre of our communities, a place where people come together, a base for community groups.

“The pandemic has been hard on our local residents. They deserve more than warm words – they deserve real investment in local services.”

Cllr Daniel Francis, Leader of Bexley Labour Group said:

“Bexley has not been immune from the challenging circumstances facing local government up and down the country.

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“But the Conservatives in Bexley have brought forward a budget which raises council tax by 4.99%, cuts 264 council jobs and cuts funding to vital services like libraries and reactive highways maintenance.

“This is a ‘pay more, get less’ budget, from a council that had to go cap-in-hand to government for a capitalisation order to allow them to keep a balanced budget following overspends.”

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