



Independent Health Concern

Media Release



Health Concern Council Protest.

Independent Health Concern Councillors this evening staged a mass walkout from the Wyre Forest District Council Annual General Meeting. The walkout was in protest at the failure of the Tory administration to offer them any Chairs of Committees in accordance with established protocol and good practice. It was described by Health Concern Leader, Howard Martin, as *“the Tory Leader putting party politics before effective council running and demonstrating his gross inexperience and naivety in his new position as Council Leader.”*

The Tory Party have awarded 15 positions (6 cabinet & 9 Committee posts – all attracting a financial allowance) to members of their own group out of a total of its 18 members. The two Chairs of the influential Overview & Scrutiny Committees have both been taken by Liberal Councillors (Cllrs Fran Oborski & Graham Ballinger.) Health Concern was only offered Deputy Chairs but declined in protest at both losing the Chair of the Audit Committee, which it held last year, and failure to be offered an alternative or new position, despite being the largest and official opposition party.

“The new Tory & Council Leader, John Campion, has publicly said he wanted to be inclusive and take other parties with him this year and we were hopeful that he would be a man of his word. Clearly he is not. He has failed at the first hurdle because he has lost our co-operation already,” said Howard Martin. *“Politically he needs to get out of the kindergarten and grow up – he’s playing with the big boys now and needs to develop inclusiveness and statesmanship as skills as oppose to the dictatorship he is currently demonstrating. He must be very, very unsure of his own ability, or scared of us, to want only his own party around him!*

When we ran the Council, we gave committee Chairs to all the opposition parties and that has been the position for years before this Tory Administration – it was an unwritten protocol and ensured that other groups could put forward their members to utilise relevant skills, enhance the quality of work undertaken and do the best collective job for the people of Wyre Forest. That’s what we want now but it seems the Tories only want jobs for their own members. Politics before people. It’s appalling and demonstrates a complete lack of political skill and savvy by Campion.

Their offering 2 seats to their Liberal supporters is designed to keep them in power and demonstrates how moribund and unsustainable their administration ultimately is. Also the sooner the people of Wyre Forest realise that a vote for a Liberal candidate just helps to keep the Tories in power the sooner we can start to change things.”

Of the 24000 votes cast at the recent elections the Tories polled 8500, Independent Health Concern 7500 and the Liberal Party 2500 – the remaining votes went to Labour, the Lib-Dems and the Green party – the lack of proportionality is clearly demonstrated and is insulting to the wishes of the Wyre Forest electorate.

Ends

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