

PUBLIC OPINION

Can we afford to borrow £80m ?

IF WE had started burning £25 million each day since Queen Victoria died in 1901, it would take well into 2011 to burn £1 trillion.

Like it or not, the coalition government have to make cuts because of the debt legacy from 13 years of Labour's fiscal mismanagement

Yes, a certain responsibility stands with the bankers, but Labour naively removed controls placed over their activities.

Labour's intimate relationship with bankers saw dozens given honours including Sir Fred Goodwin, three brought into government as ministers and involved 37 in commissions and advisory bodies, seven got jobs with quangos, ten were appointed to local councils and four were given life peerages.

What did we get for £1 trillion? A doubled national debt, the largest budget deficit in the G20, a legacy of spinning, cover-ups, old fashioned wasteful centralizing inefficient, unaccountable politics, ten pence tax, 90-day detention, an illegal war, a denied referendum, gold sold at half price, bad news buried and Mandelson resurrected, pension funds destroyed, foreign prisoners not deported, Gurkhas kept out and extremist preachers allowed in.

Newham's Council Tax has increased under Sir Robin's current rule, and it has been frittered away on "free" parties, propaganda magazines, large increases in the Mayor's salary and councillor allowances, £116million spent on a fancy office whilst the old ones remain a drain on resources; £195,000 for an over-paid Chief executive whilst keeping funding away from front line services.

Now, in these indebted times, with a council deciding to cut front line services and unable to fund council pensions, where reserves kept for a rainy day are not utilised, can the Mayor, with a duty of care to the public finances, consider borrowing £80 million to shore up a failing local business? — **MARIA J ALLEN, Conservative Mayor Candidate, Address Supplied.**

Time for stadium sense...

IT is time for some common sense over the Olympic stadium. Neither West Ham United or Spurs should get it.

Orient should be given the chance to have it, and the stadium should be kept for athletics for the future of the community in East London. Tottenham should not be let anywhere near the place. Their fans have already started a Say No to Stratford campaign. The legacy should be for the community. Not Premier League football. NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED.

MARVELLOUS DAY FOR THE COMMUNITY...

AS Beckton councillors we would like to express our thanks and congratulate everyone involved in the St Mark's Christmas Festival held in Beckton on December 4.

The event was organised by Anchor House and the many fantastic organisations and faith groups working in the St Marks Community Centre on Tollgate Road.

Over 1,100 people, representing a wide spectrum of the Beckton community attended the event which included craft fairs, food stalls, a Santa's Grotto, seasonal performances, carols and even an ice rink!

There was an excellent buzz and good feeling between people and we hope that this will be the first of many celebrations and that the Christmas Festival will become a regular event in the Beckton calendar.

Everyone involved should be very proud of their achievements and that the hard work and perseverance they put in turned into a fantastic event for the whole community. We would like to wish everyone involved and all residents of Beckton and Newham a very Happy Christmas and New Year. — **ALEC KELLAWAY, AYESHA CHOWDHURY, and DAVID CHRISTIE, Beckton Ward Councillors.**

We need real opposition to this Government now

SERIOUS consequences are developing from the present crisis.

Drastic cuts are to be imposed in Newham as parts of the policy of the Tories to solve the problems caused by reckless behaviour of banks can go ahead.

The banks continue to enjoy bonuses while ordinary people are penalised.

We hear that these cuts have been accepted by the Mayor and Newham Council with the honourable exception of two members on the grounds that there is no alternative.

It has come to light that thousands

of pounds have been paid to consultants for useless advice that is detrimental to Newham staff.

This demands an explanation from the Mayor and the council.

No councillor has approached me for my views on this transaction.

In Parliament the new Labour opposition is failing and no wonder when in office they proposed many of the policies that the present government is persuing perhaps in closer degree.

Labour's new leader Ed Milliband says he supports change.

In order to do this he needs to stop surrounding himself with members of the previous government who cannot mount real opposition to the Conservatives because of their record in office.

There are genuine members of the Labour Party who have been kept at arms length with a proven record of defence of people's interests who could develop a more robust opposition to the condems. — E DEMPSEY, Stevenage Road, East Ham.

STEP UP AND HELP NOW...

THERE are only a few days left to Christmas and I have been reading each week apart your marvellous Christmas Toy Appeal.

It really does not seem possible that this appeal has been going for more than 34 years and the fact that the need has grown each year shows how much Newham has NOT changed.

Community Links is a marvellous group and I urge anyone who has not done so to give NOW in the appeal's last few days.

Come on, we can do it.— NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED.

Comments made were hypocritical

I FEEL compelled to write in after reading Neil Pearce's outrageous remarks in the Recorder (December 1).

To accuse Ms Brown of being partisan is at best naive and at worst hypocritical, given his comments.

The underlying issue is that the present Government have imposed huge cuts, which will hit the poorest.

My son is seriously reconsidering whether to go on to Higher Education despite always having dreamed of becoming a doctor.

How is it fair that people who do not have a high income are not only taxed more, but are also told that the small incentives they previously received will be stripped bare. If Mr Pearce really thinks the Government's plans will help people in Newham, I am amazed — **NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED.**

TAXING THE BANKS...THAT'S THE ANSWER

I KNOW we are in difficult economic times. But there is one easy decision that could spare a lot of the "tough ones". A tax on the banks could raise £20 billion in the UK to help those hit by the financial crisis in this country and around the world. For every cut I hear the Government announce I keep asking: could a tax on the banks have paid for that?

I want to see my MP and leaders start fighting for a tax that would make Robin Hood proud. — **JIMMY MWANANG'UMBI, Sprowston Road, Forest Gate.**

Message that could help you save loved one

I AM writing to you in the hope you will pass my message on to your readers.

I lost my husband Marcel to meningitis on Christmas Day last year. He was just 36 years old.

Like many of your readers I wasn't fully aware of the symptoms nor was I aware that cases of meningitis peak during the cold winter months.

The risk of meningitis heightens around Christmas and New Year when people's immune systems are weakened from fighting common illnesses like colds and flu, making them more vulnerable to the disease.

Meningitis and septicaemia can kill in hours but lives can be saved by knowing the symptoms and taking quick action. We thought Marcel was suffering with food poisoning but we were wrong and I never got the chance to say goodbye to him. I am urging your readers to familiarise themselves with the signs and symptoms of this deadly disease.

Meningitis and septicaemia can be hard to recognise at first; symptoms can appear in any order and can be similar to many mild illnesses, such as fever, vomiting, headache and feeling unwell. The "red flag" symptoms, such as cold hands and feet, pale or mottled skin, and limb, joint or muscle pain, often appear earlier than these symptoms so people need to be vigilant.

Free symptoms information can be obtained by calling Meningitis Research Foundation's Freefone 24 hour helpline 080 8800 3344 – or by logging on the website at www.meningitis.org. You can also download their free i-phone app from i-tunes which contains signs and symptoms advice and your local A&E contact details.

Meningitis can affect anyone, of any age, at any time, even those who consider themselves fit and healthy like my husband. I understand now that time is critical when dealing with these diseases and early recognition and treatment are imperative. Know the symptoms and you could save a loved one's life. — **KAREN FELIMOND, ADDRESS SUPPLIED, via e-mail**

e-mail letters to admin@newhamrecorder.co.uk



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