



VALERIE WELCOMES COUNCIL U-TURN ON BAIL HOSTEL



Artist's impression of the proposals

Valerie has welcomed confirmation that the former Moxley Infants School site will be sold with a development brief for residential use, ruling out plans for a 40 bed bail hostel to be opened on the site.

"I am astonished that the Council thought it could do a behind the scenes deal with the Staffs and West Midlands Probation Trust to sell the land for a bail hostel. I had to step in to find out what was going on so that local residents could be informed. In my view, the questions that we asked and the Trust's failure to engage with local residents' reasonable concerns made it impossible for this development to go ahead."

Valerie said: "After pressure, the Council has made a rapid u-turn and announced that it has decided to sell the site with a development brief for residential uses. The Trust has confirmed to me that the Council will not sell it the land and that plans to open a 40 bed bail hostel on the site will now not go ahead."

"I wrote to the Chief Executive of Walsall MCB on 9 March 2012 to seek confirmation that this means the site must be used for housing and not for a bail hostel. He has confirmed to me that the Council will not sell the land to the Trust."

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International

Women's Day

On 8 March 2012, Valerie spoke during a Commons debate marking International Women's Day 2012.

Valerie said: "Not for nothing are the scales of justice held by a woman. It is our right to be treated as equals. It is not only our right, but our duty, to get justice and equality for the next generation."

Mencap Event

On 2 March 2012 Valerie spoke about social care and rights for people with a learning disability, at the County Hotel in Walsall.

Valerie said: "There needs to be much more integration of services for people with disabilities and older people. Care Trusts such as Torbay have been pioneering integrated care but I am concerned that this will be disrupted under the NHS reorganisation."

Health and Social Care Act



In Parliament, Valerie opposed the Health and Social Care Act and called on the Government to abandon its reorganisation of the National Health Service.

Speaking in the House of Commons during an urgent Opposition Debate on 13 March 2012, Valerie said: "If the Bill was so good in the first place and so necessary, why did it have a pause for a rethink? There have been almost 2000 amendments but the Bill is still unclear: if GPs are in control why are there commissioning support groups? Who are the groups accountable to? The Secretary of State says that the numbers of managers are being cut, but management consultants are crawling all over the NHS."

"A GP wrote to me to say that GPs are disengaged and uninspired with the Bill. GPs have no experience of a business model. Nor do they want to be business managers."

The Bill received Royal Assent on 27 March 2012 .

High Parking Charges

Figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Valerie reveal that Walsall Borough Council's income from parking charges exceeded £1.1 million from November 2010 to November 2011.

Valerie said: "I was appalled to learn that Walsall MBC's income from parking charges from November 2010 to November 2011 was £1,185,395. The breakdown of the figures showed that more than £611,269 was income from Penalty Charge Notices and £566,486 was raised from the sale of parking tickets."

"The parking regime in Walsall is out of control. It is difficult to see how a well run scheme that is operated in the interests of local residents and local business could generate more revenue from fines than it does from the sale of tickets. Parking charges are stopping people shopping in the town centre."

Surgeries

Valerie holds regular surgeries. To arrange an appointment, please call the Constituency Office on 01922 635835