

## **View from the House.**

I hope you have all had a well earned break during summer from your usual routine. You will know that on 29 August 2013 Parliament was recalled to debate the use of chemical weapons in Syria. I want to set out why I voted against the Government's motion.

At the time of the debate and the vote, there was some evidence of chemical weapons being used. However neither the use of chemical weapons nor the perpetrator had been identified by the UN Inspectors who were in Syria. The Leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband tabled a separate motion which required that any response would have to be United Nations led.

To those of you who contacted me, the overwhelming majority said you were opposed to an intervention in Syria. Whilst the use of chemical weapons is condemned, the vote in Parliament was significant. This showed we should not to rush to intervene before the evidence is available and the international community agrees to it.

I was in the Chamber to hear the Justice Secretary reverse his policy on Criminal Legal Aid. Price competitive tendering would mean that client choice would be removed and the contract would not necessarily be based on the quality of the work but on how cheaply it was done. When I asked the Justice Secretary how many of the 16,000 responses were in favour he could not give me a figure.

The Green Belt is not safe in Walsall South. It is outrageous that Walsall MBC submitted an application for outline planning permission to construct 8 homes on the site of the former Three Crowns School during the school summer holidays. Many local residents who may have wanted to express their view were on holiday during this statutory consultation.

With a local school wanting to expand and a purpose built school available it seems perverse to build houses particularly as there are a large number of brownfield sites in the Borough which could be developed. In any event let the Council know your views.

There is some good news about Darlaston Town FC. At a recent meeting, fans agreed to re-register the team with the Birmingham FA. Given FA Chairman Greg Dyke's recent speech on the need for home grown talent, I will do all I can to find a way to help Darlaston Town FC. Premier league clubs should do more to support local teams.

Valerie Vaz MP  
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