

MP secures extra funding for Ambulance Service...



John Penrose has had success in his campaign for a better Weston Ambulance Service as his demands for a review of the trust, recently rated as one of the worst in the country, has led to the appointment of a new Chief Executive and £6.75 million extra funding

John said: "Ever since Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Ambulance services were merged into one service in 2006 I've been pushing the new Trust to radically improve its response rates. The merger was meant to deliver cost savings that could be re-invested in front line services and improve response rates, but these never materialised.

"The appointment of a new Chief Executive is a great first step towards sorting things out. Anthony Marsh has a good

reputation and has already started making changes. I'm delighted the Trust will get an extra £6.75 million a year to improve the service and get the response rates down too. It's what many of us have been calling for, for ages.

"Now at last we can draw a line under the failures of the past, and move forward. With dedicated staff and strong, new leadership I hope we'll see the kind of top-quality service which local people want and deserve."

Future of Town's Post Offices secured



■ MP John Penrose with Sue Reed, Manager of Winscombe's Post Office, celebrating the saving of the Card Account and the opening of the village branch's new bureau de change service (Photo: Gareth Jones)

Following strong opposition from John Penrose and other MPs, the Government has cancelled its plans to remove the Card Account from the Post Office which would have removed vital revenue from branches and could have meant further branch closures

John Penrose said: "After serious pressure from myself and many other MPs from all political parties, I'm delighted that the Government have finally decided to keep the account with the Post Office.

"The Card Account gives branches vital

revenue to help them keep afloat. Without it, many branches simply can't keep their heads above water and would be forced to close. Weston and the villages have already lost six of its 27 Post Offices and it can't afford any more.

"That's why the Government needs to look at new sources of revenues for Post Office branches, such as the new bureau de change service in the Winscombe branch, to make more of them into viable, self-supporting businesses which aren't dependent on taxpayer subsidy."

...and is demanding more cash for other local health services too

The Weston-super-Mare MP has said he's 'delighted' by the Government's recently announced plans for a 12.2% rise in local health funding, but warned that Weston and the villages will still be receiving much less than the rest of the country

John Penrose explained: "It's great that Weston and the villages are getting a big rise in our local health cash. For years Weston's hospital and local GPs were given less funding than the Government's own figures said they deserved.

"Over the last three or four years I've asked Prime Minister Questions and written to Government Ministers about this, so it's great to see the Health Department is trying to solve this problem by giving us an above-average rise.

"But before we get too excited, it's not all perfect. Despite the increase we'll still be receiving less than other trusts across the country. This isn't fair to the hardworking staff or to the patients who have to use the services. That's why I'll keep making the point in Parliament until Weston gets the funding it's owed."



■ Penrose is campaigning for more funding for Weston Hospital and our local GPs

John Penrose MP - Working for you all year round