



Conservative Central Office

32 Smith Square Westminster London SW1P 3HH
Tel. 01-222 9000 Telex 8814563 Fax. 01-222 1135

local Gov
AP, please keep on file.

g.

Stephen Sherbourne, Esq.,
Political Secretary,
10 Downing Street,
SW1.

11th June, 1985

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for your note. I am enclosing our analysis of the state of the hung Councils in England and have highlighted these in respect of the lead position being taken by the respective Parties. What is interesting is that the Alliance (or as we prefer to say the Liberals supported by the SDP - because they are predominantly Liberals) have in fact only enabled Labour to take control in one County, namely Shropshire which we previously controlled (just) with the help of the Independents - before 2nd May we had with the Independents 34 out of 66 seats and Labour and the Alliance had 32, now they have 35 and we have 31

In this respect therefore, Janet Todd's article is very misleading.

Cumbria - Labour previously had an overall majority of 1 - they have lost this majority and in effect no-one controls Cumbria as you will see from my note.

Northumberland - Prior to the election Labour had 33 out of 66 seats and ruled the No Overall Control situation with the help of the Liberals - they now have 30 seats with the Alliance having improved from 15 to 19 - however, we consider the situation to be much the same as it was.

Avon - Prior to the election Labour had an overall majority of 1 which they lost on 2nd May - there is no Alliance support for Labour, if anything because of the still relatively small Alliance representation there is a degree of co-operation between ourselves and Labour.

Warwickshire - The situation in Warwickshire has still not yet been resolved but it looks as if Labour will allow themselves to be supported by the Alliance.

Cheshire - Prior to the election the Liberals were already supporting Labour and there is in effect therefore no change, although there has of course been a slight re-distribution of seats.

Shropshire - As mentioned earlier there is indeed a Lib/Lab pact.

The Liberals have help from Labour to run the administration in Cambridgeshire, Somerset, Devon and Gloucestershire. They are trying to do it on their own in Wiltshire.

Active work between Labour and the Alliance in Essex, Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire and Humberside could take away the lead position we currently have - although in Humberside the Alliance are giving us some degree of support at this moment whilst by contrast in Bedfordshire we are co-operating with Labour to shut out the Alliance.

What I think we could say is that increasing the total of Alliance Councillors in a some of the Counties is going to produce (in fact is already beginning to produce) a number of very unstable situations in which, either, no decisions are made, or else decisions are reversed at one meeting, and restored at the next. The Alliance have attempted to be power brokers but have not been terribly successful. They have pushed for 'power sharing' and although there are some examples of attempts to strike compromises, their stance is ever leading to wrecking tactics.

The prime example of this is what has happened on the ACC. The Liberals voted with Labour in Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire for example, to prevent us having any seats on the ACC as a deliberate act of revenge. The net result therefore is that they have put Labour within striking distance on the ACC:

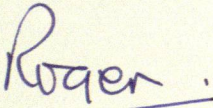
	<u>ACC REPRESENTATION</u>			
	<u>CON</u>	<u>LAB</u>	<u>ALL</u>	<u>IND/OTH</u>
AT PRESENT:	70	61	30	11
IF AVON & DERBYSHIRE RE-JOIN:	71	67	31	11
IF GLC & METS ARE ACCEPTED:	71	102	31	11

The GLC have voted to apply for membership and we suspect that the Metropolitan Counties will follow quite quickly - the results can be seen above.

The Alliance Leader on the ACC is looking for some degree of Committee Chairmanships on the basis that the ACC should represent the tendencies in all authorities. Labour on the other hand, want to lead - and if the GLC join one has to suspect that Livingstone wants it as another vehicle.

I am sorry therefore if this does not provide the immediate answer to the point you raised - I think the key point is that they (the Liberals and the SDP) have produced sterility in the Shire Counties particularly in those balanced on a knife-edge. The prime example is what they have tried to do in Lancashire. The 8 Alliance members voted for Pat Case, our Leader, as Chairman of the Council and then tried to vote with Labour to elect Labour Committee Chairmen. In Lancashire by tradition the Chairman of the Council is also the political boss and you can therefore see that they tried to divide the power between ourselves and Labour.

Yours sincerely,


ROGER BOADEN, M.B.E.

Head of Local Government Department.

*P.S. Also enclosed
 copy of press cutting
 from Devon.*

David Morrish, the Alliance leader of the Devon County Council talks to Derek Lean about his plans to improve the quality of life in the county.

How will Alliance rule affect Devon?

W.M.M.
Sri 85
P-5

MAN who many might regard as being been, for nearly a quarter of a century, a political voice, albeit a shyly articulate one in the wilderness, speaks with the power of authority in Devon. He is David Morrish, 54, the Alliance leader of Devon County Council.

Ever since 1961, when he was first elected to Exeter City Council, at that time he was one of its three Liberal members, he has known the role of opposition in local government.

On top of that he has fought unsuccessfully four Parliamentary elections in Devon.

But, following the massive political make-up of the May County Council elections, University lecturer Mr. Morrish leads the Alliance administration of Devon County Council, and with the backing — for a year at any rate — of the ten Labour members has ended more than a decade of conservative rule.

It is a position that is capturing nation-wide attention. Following theshire county elections, and in the wake of opinion polls, some pundits see what has happened in Devon as a foretaste of what might occur with the next Parliament.

Mr. Morrish was not prepared to crystal-ball gaze about a future Parliamentary election, but said what was happening in Devon and other shire counties could give the Alliance much useful experience.

And he stressed: "Nobody has told me nationally what to do at all. There has been no set of instructions coming down telling me how to operate in this sort of situation."

In his view the Liberal/S.D.P. Alliance members of the council, there are 23 Liberals and 13 S.D.P. — have not done a "deal" with the Labour group as such — but they have formed a "working arrangement" and for the next year, they are going to try to find common ground.

"In a country which is now clearly a three party country, it is important for our democratic institutions that politicians learn how to work within that situation," he said.

While, before those County Council elections, Mr. Morrish did not consciously speculate on the possibility of finding himself the full leader of the council, rather than an opposition group leader, he did forecast, and many were either sceptical or downright scornful of the idea that there could be a "hung" Council.

Throughout all those years of opposition, he never doubted that one day the tide would turn.

"I always believed that it was inevitable that the Liberal party — now we are obviously part of the



David Morrish, pictured outside County Hall, Exeter, is a man with plans for Devon's future.

The Labour group asked to explore the Alliance package and later there were discussions between the parties.

"There was no talk of coalition, pacts, or deals, but a working arrangement for twelve months. There were certain things both sides found in their manifestos we could jointly work on."

So just what are those things which have produced this dramatic change in Devon's political administration?

DAVID MORRISH, 54, and his wife Joan, a teacher lives at Birchy Barton Hill, Exeter. They have a daughter, Claire.

He was born at Plymouth but evacuated for a time to St. Austell when the family home was blitzed. He won a Ballard scholarship to the University College of the South West and took a degree in geography and geology. After taking his master's degree, Mr. Morrish spent a year on a Rotary Fellowship at the University of Wisconsin.

A Quaker, Mr. Morrish did his National Service with the Religious Society of Friends' ambulance unit, working at a hospital in Worcestershire. Later he

wanted a blunter statement about how the county felt about its unemployment and they wanted to see a more integrated development thrust in Devon and Cornwall through the two counties' development bureau.

"This needs to be worked out with our colleagues in Cornwall, and, on the job scene, perhaps there should be a strengthening of our co-operation with district councils.

"One is not going to pretend that just because you have a shared influence in the County Council you are suddenly going to reduce unemployment figures overnight."

The two groups also agreed that they did not want to see any more "privatisation" schemes suggested in council work for the year of the working agreement, and they want to step up opposition to the Government's Transport Bill, particularly where it involves privatisation of the bus services.

They are in accord on the need to mount increased pressure on the Government for fairer arrangements

Over
prea
to

sum

THE rise in at the end stimulated While the exceptional followed by but there a few frosts that was d sub-normal ary and recovered, retarded so sun and wa riot of flo species blo time. Paus bank for enjoyed a s

Huge bu roses were they were early flowe tered betw the moist c around of dainty w were in Easily ov one of the our nati creeping green, pur leaves w welcome t close to approach ness.

The five are quite tiny plan streaked

Lesser this shell makes a February, up for it with a c which spr over are yards in cacy of achieved abundant basal tub is capab new plan Rambit rough 57 bank 2 gerows, played

citizens learn how to work with the situation," he said.

While, before those County Council elections, Mr. Morrish did not consciously speculate on the possibility of finding himself the full leader of the council, rather than an opposition group leader, he did forecast, and many were either sceptical or downright scornful of the idea that there could be a "hung" Council.

Throughout all those years of opposition, he never doubted that one day the tide would turn.

"I always believed that it was inevitable that the Liberal party — now we are obviously part of the Alliance movement, but going back to earlier days — would make a come-back."

And throughout the campaign for the council elections, Mr. Morrish was acutely conscious that, with the reduction in the number of councillors, from 98 to 85, and the significance of the S.D.P. strength in Plymouth, that a "hung" council was on the cards.

"What I did not try to calculate, leave alone anticipate, was the extent to which that swing would take place. Certainly I did not go around thinking, 'ah, yes, we are going to have a hung council, so who is going to be leader and deputy leader,'" said Mr. Morrish.

Eventually, after the elections had thrown up the result it did, with the Conservatives losing their overall control and having just one member more than the Alliance group, a meeting of party leaders was held.

"My opening move was to state a list of policy priorities we were interested in developing. I gave out that list and said that was what we wanted to do and we were interested in finding the support of anybody who wanted to help us with that list. The Labour party asked, if in view of that list, were we prepared to form an administration, and I said we were."

DAVID MORRISH, 54, and his wife Joan, a teacher lives at Birchy Barton Hill, Exeter. They have a daughter, Claire.

He was born at Plymouth but evacuated for a time to St. Austell when the family home was blitzed. He won a Baillard scholarship to the University College of the South West and took a degree in geography and geology. After taking his master's degree, Mr. Morrish spent a year on a Rotary Fellowship at the University of Wisconsin.

A Quaker, Mr. Morrish did his National Service with the Religious Society of Friends ambulance unit, working at a hospital in Worcestershire. Later he transferred to OXFAM, helping Hungarian refugees at a time of the uprising.

He also worked for the United Nations in Teheran, helping aid and development teams before returning to England to teach in London.

In 1960 he joined the staff of St. Luke's Teacher Training College in Exeter, and one year later Mr. Morrish, a Liberal since he was a young student, was elected to Exeter City Council. He remained on the council until local government reorganisation in 1974, when elected to Devon County Council, where he became leader of the Liberal group.

Now a lecturer at Exeter University's School of Education, Mr. Morrish, who has fought Parliamentary elections for both the Exeter and Tiverton constituencies, is prospective Liberal candidate for Tiverton.

His hobbies include gardening, travel and reading political biographies.

A slimming down of the committee places, and the number of sub-committees, working parties, and panels, was one which emerged at the recent annual meeting of the council.

"The Council was rather like a ship which had been too long at sea. There were a lot of barnacles and seaweed on its hull," said Mr. Morrish.

A greater emphasis on the plight of the unemployed in Devon was another. Both the Alliance and Labour groups

because you have a shared influence in the County Council you are suddenly going to reduce unemployment figures overnight."

The two groups also agreed that they did not want to see any more "privatisation" schemes suggested in council work for the year of the working agreement, and they want to step up opposition to the Government's Transport Bill, particularly where it involves privatisation of the bus services.

They are in accord on the need to mount increased pressure on the Government for fairer arrangements regarding local government finance. They stress they are being very cautious about making claims as to what they can do — in things like redecorating schools or improving road maintenance — because, they say, they have inherited a difficult financial position.

"We have said that the grip central government has on public sector finance has to be loosened, but we do not pretend that it is going to be easy. What we are saying is we have got to mount a new offensive."

Labour and Alliance share the view — mind you there was a hiccup at the annual meeting — that steps should be taken to complete secondary education, reorganisation on comprehensive lines, which means an end to selection. Again Mr. Morrish stressed that there had to be consultation.

Both want to see moves like more home helps, they are concerned about the level of local authority provision when it comes to old people's homes, and they want another look taken at the county's planning department.

"We may not be able completely to reinstate it, but we should look to see if the department can again be an independent structure within the council," he said.

up for with a which s over a yards o achieve abunda basal to is capa new pla

Ram rough bank gerows played flowers than u the b which mints, totally "Ale

are old No do ived shape practic using plant e the Ro

Som variety ground this m comm nised, potenc

Our appea have surprt haze to st woodl betwe

is the best



10 DOWNING STREET

7th June, 1985

I would like to include in the Prime Minister's Welsh speech examples of where a vote for the Alliance have given Labour control. Could you therefore let me have a list of those counties where the Alliance have allowed Labour to take control. This thought was triggered by Janet Todd's article in the Daily Telegraph (copy attached).

Could you let me have this material by Wednesday, 12th June at the latest.

I am copying this letter to Robin Harris in case he has anything to add.

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

Roger Boaden, Esq MBE