

Press Release

**From Barry Stamp
Liberal Democrat Prospective Parliamentary Candidate
Stafford Constituency**

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Stafford Mothers To Benefit From Guaranteed Weekly Income Plan

Stafford mothers having their first baby will be better off under Liberal Democrat plans to pay them a guaranteed weekly income says the towns would be MP this week.

Barry Stamp said that over the past few weeks he had meet a number of new mums who had all complained they were struggling to make ends meet on the current levels of maternity pay.

“Currently statutory maternity pay is partly based on the level of salary a woman earned before she finished work to have her baby and partly on a set payment, which means that many women who worked part-time could miss out. Over the past few weeks I have meet a number of first time mothers in Stafford who have fallen into this trap and are now struggling to make ends meet. To overcome this problem Liberal Democrats are planning to introduce a ‘Maternity Income Guarantee’ which will mean all working mothers will be paid at least £4,420 for the 26 weeks of statutory maternity leave when they are starting a family - this equates to £170 per week. This income guarantee would run alongside the current scheme so no one would loose out. Many of those new mothers who I have spoken to over the past few weeks welcomed the idea and many would be significantly better off under this plan. What is clear is that it will certainly prevent what should be an exciting time for new parents being marred by the financial worry a new baby can bring. By ensuring an adequate level of maternity pay is paid, many Stafford mothers will be able to spend more time with their new child before returning to work ,” said Barry Stamp.

Further details from Barry Stamp
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Notes to Editors:-

- 1) Currently mothers receive statutory maternity pay of 90% of salary for six weeks and £102 for another 20 weeks.
- 2) Under the Liberal Democrat plan a guaranteed minimum income of £170 a week for all the 26 weeks that statutory maternity pay is currently offered will be paid to a mother having her first child. It is equivalent to the gross income of 35 hours a week at the current minimum wage. The Maternity Income Guarantee would mean that a woman on a salary of £14,000 will receive more than £900 extra over the 26 week period. It's a guaranteed minimum figure of £4,420 for 26 weeks. For those working women on higher salaries, for whom the current system provides more than the Maternity Income Guarantee, the Statutory Maternity Pay system would still be available. They could continue with the current system, if it suits them.
- 3) The Maternity Income Guarantee would cost approximately £145m a year. It would be paid for through the £5bn a year savings that the Liberal Democrats are proposing to make from current government spending by shifting money from low priority areas to high priority areas. These figures have been fully costed and can be delivered.