

Press Release

**From Councillor Barry Stamp
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Date : 27th February 2006

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Ambulance Service Consultation A Sham

The merger of Staffordshire Ambulance Service with the West Midlands may already be a done deal warns a leading Liberal Democrat today,

Barry Stamp, Liberal Democrat Group Leader on Stafford Borough Council said the fact that the post of Chief Executive of the new trust had already been advertised led many people to think the Government consultation was little more than a sham.

“Over the past few weeks the Government has undertaken a consultation on the proposed merger of the Staffordshire, Shropshire, and the West Midlands ambulance service. As one can imagine this proposal has met with considerable opposition from Staffordshire residents, who are rightly worried the excellent service they now receive will be watered-down if the merger goes ahead. However despite the fact the consultation does not end until 22nd March it has now been revealed that the Chief Executives of the existing 34 ambulance trusts around the Country were, sometime ago, invited to apply for the job of running the new West Midlands service following the merger. It does seem strange that this step should be taken before the outcome of the consultation was considered by the Secretary of State for Health. One can only draw the conclusion that the decision has already been taken to allow the merger to go ahead and that the public consultation is nothing more than a sham. Surely the Government are not so isolated that they do not know the level of public outcry their proposal has generated. If nothing else Staffordshire’s Labour MPs, including David Kidney, must be feeding back the feelings of local residents to their Government Ministers and fighting for the plan to be scrapped. It really is important the public consultation is given the value it deserves and MPs and Ministers must listen to the concerns being expressed over this merger. They should not be taking local residents for granted just to push their merger plans through,” said Barry Stamp.

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