

I refer to your article dated 9<sup>th</sup> Feb. headed “Schoolyard political games are hurting town”. The statements made by Councillor Coombes and his Conservative colleagues show the spin we continually get from the Tories at Fylde. He states that they have already put £250,000 in this year’s budget to repair Kirkham’s war memorial, this is not true. Kirkham Town Council asked for £50,000 to be put in the capital estimates 2-3 years ago but the Conservatives declined to approve the spend.

He also says they have been working on the delivery of a £1m. pool for Kirkham. As a member of the Task and Finish group asked to look at the future of the Borough’s pools I can confirm that the Task and Finish group has not met for nearly a year. It was, however, interesting to read that interested parties had met, for the first time, to hammer out future provision of swimming in Kirkham. Not one Kirkham councillor was informed of the meeting, let alone invited to attend and, as the County Councillor as well as a Borough Councillor for Kirkham I have to wonder why.

The £100,000 referred to to bring Memorial Gardens back to life is an essential sum of money which has been put into the next financial year’s capital estimates, which have not yet been approved. As paths in the gardens have had to be closed on safety grounds since last October, I sincerely hope it will be approved.

As for the Market Town initiative, £25,000 was put into the budget and a lot of hard work has taken place between local councillors, traders and officers to work on plans for using the money for improvements to the town, a far cry from the millions spent in St. Annes.

The Kirkham Urban District Council was the body responsible for Kirkham’s facilities until 1974 when local government was re-organised and we, and the rural areas, were amalgamated with Lytham St. Annes to form Fylde. At that time our swimming pool was in excellent condition. The Kirkham Council did, of course, have to hand the pool to Fylde to ensure that Kirkham ratepayers did not pay for their own pool whilst subsidising Lytham St. Annes baths.

In the 32 years of Fylde Borough Council’s existence there have been 8 elections. In that time there have been 3 hung Councils and 5 Conservative Councils, the Conservative group have always been the largest group on the Council, a sad indictment on Conservative husbandry.