

I think Budget Day is the hardest of all the big events in the political calendar but it has got even more difficult in recent years. Everyone knows that the Government inherited a massive financial problem bequeathed to us by the previous incumbents of Numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street so as well as trying to get the deficit under control the Chancellor has to balance this with measures that will also boost the economy.

Some of these measures deal with the macroeconomics of running a country and some deliver more microeconomic benefits to individuals. There will be much analysis and comment on whether he has done this over the coming days and months but I was certainly pleased to hear from the Chancellor's initial speech measures that will benefit Kent specifically.

One particular measure, which is one I have spoken about in Parliament, was the commitment to remove VAT on fuel for our air ambulances. This is something that our brilliant Kent Air Ambulance raised with me directly, noting that they paid 20% VAT on fuel despite being a lifesaving service. It was a no-brainer that this should be cut but the Treasury cited EU laws for not allowing us to do so. I am pleased therefore on two levels that we have now not only cut the rate but also stood up to Europe and made it clear that we, the UK Government, should decide varying VAT rules for our lifesavers.

Also benefiting from the Budget will be the motorists, savers, beer drinkers and workers with fairly significant changes to duty and income tax. However I will leave wider comment on these measures for other people.

The truth is we remain as a country in a difficult economic position and we are not yet in a position to cheer loudly but we are definitely on the road to recovery, and most welcome it is too.