



In Touch

with our community

FAREHAM NORTH – WINTER 2010

Summer start for residents' town centre parking plan

THE LONG awaited parking scheme for residents living in and near Fareham's town centre should be in place this summer.

The Borough Council undertook two consultations to try to make it acceptable to most.

An exhibition in Ferneham Hall enabled residents to discuss the plans with officers and give feedback.

Changes were made and modified proposals were sent out for consultation in the autumn.

A street-by-street analysis allowed the scheme to be tailored to residents' preferences as far as possible, some roads having a permit system and others restrictions on when and where vehicles can park.

Existing schemes in King's Road and Queen's Road will be incorporated.

Arrangements will be made for essential services that have to visit in permit scheme roads and there will also be temporary parking permits for visitors.

It is hoped it will be running by the end of July, but the Council will review it during the first 6 months of operation.

Councillor Pam Bryant said although the scheme must be self-financing, it was not intended to be a way for the council to raise money and permit costs would be kept as low as possible.

Council volunteers answer the call of the community



COUNCIL staff take a rest from clearing snow at the Rainbow Centre car park at Cams Alders.

'The Three Amigos' (l to r) Tony Hopkins, Paul Carter and Charlie Read gave up their lunch breaks to help centre staff and volunteers.

It was one of countless examples of how people across the Borough rallied in true community spirit.

County Council budget figures

Council tax for Hampshire County Council will be increased by 1.9%

Police Authority's tax will rise by 2.9% and the Fire Service's by 1.8% This gives a total bill for a band D property in Fareham of £1,385.73, an increase of £24.93.

Zero rated: Tories find the 'holy grail' of top value for lowest tax

HOW DO they keep doing it year after year?

Fareham's Tory councillors have set another record low budget.

This time a **ZERO** rise.

The Borough Council's element at £140 for a Band D property remains almost the lowest in England.

Executive Leader Seán Woodward explained: "I am often asked how we achieve the holy grail of good services with a low council tax, despite a low government grant.

"My reply is always that we seek to do more with less, using innovative means to save money without damaging the frontline services on which our residents depend."

Delivering his 11th budget speech, he said the average property in Fareham was band C which would continue to pay just £125 a year.

Borough Council services cost only 34p per day per household.

"Contrast that with nearest neighbour Gosport, which charges 44% more than Fareham despite receiving double the grant per head from the government," he stated.

Several districts in Hampshire hide their council tax rises by passing services to parish councils to run, but Fareham cannot do that as it has no parishes.

Nearby parish councils, Whiteley for example,

have raised their tax by 250% in just 3 years.

"Most district councils receive far more in government revenue support grant per head of population than Fareham, yet we still have a low tax.

"Despite having a high tax rise, most are sacking staff and slashing services – we are maintaining and, in a number of cases, improving our services."

Pressures facing the Council are similar to those experienced by many families, but on a larger scale – costs rising and income not increasing or, in the case of interest on savings, actually dropping.

The fall in interest rates, while good news for those with mortgages, has seen the Council's income on its investments fall by up to £1,000,000 per year.

Every £40,000 lost equals around a 1% council tax increase to make up, so the fact that there is no increase is even more remarkable.

The Council agreed the following as part of the budget:

- £500,000 to a Matched Funding Account to which organisations in the Borough can bid to fund capital schemes. For every £1 of council taxpayers' cash, it means £2 to £3 of worthwhile schemes such as new school sports facilities, sports club houses etc.

- £15,000 for flashing 30mph speed limit reminder signs to use as requested by residents.

- £1.3m to the capital programme to enable refurbishment or replacement of sports pavilions and community centres.

CCTV upgrade means you WILL be caught on camera

THERE will be no escape for criminals captured on CCTV at Fareham's upgraded control centre.

Digital cameras and displays can record at up to 25 images per second; 12.5 is more than enough for

successful prosecutions.

Police at Fareham and Park Gate can log into the system to save time investigating incidents.

It features unique mapping and display of camera locations across the Borough. New keyboard and

joystick controls enable operators quickly to control cameras independently.

Extra cameras to be connected include 5 for the new rapid bus route, 2 for Broadlaw Walk and 2 for the Quay Street Tesco store.

We keep *In Touch* throughout the year - not just at election time



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Planning decisions

The Planning Development Committee refused an application to partially demolish 74 Kiln Road and build a 30-bed residential home.

Permission was given for two replacement dwellings at 9 Kiln Road, but the ancient pond area at the rear must remain as open space and be fenced to protect the gold crested newts.

CAT meetings

The next Fareham North East Community Action Team meeting will be on July 15 at Funtley Social Club.

Should you wish to have items on the agenda or a major topic covered contact the chairman, Councillor John Bryant.

Postal votes

If you feel it's more convenient or if you are away during elections, you can register to vote by post or nominate someone to cast your vote at the polling station. Contact Election Services on 01329 236100 or email ssarling@fareham.gov.uk

Purse thieves

Beware purse thieves, who are often active between noon and 3pm.

They mostly target the elderly, often while they are in or near charity shops.

Victims will feel somebody brush against them and later notice their purse is missing.

For free lanyards to anchor your purse safely in your bag contact Fareham Police on 0845 045 4545.

Fareham Bowling Club hits the jack with visiting teams

IT'S A PLEASURE to play in Fareham.

That was the compliment given by Hampshire County Bowling Association to Fareham Bowling Club which hosted four county events in 2009.

"It isn't often that praise is received from visitors to our facilities," said Councillor Pam Bryant, chairman of Streetscene Panel.

Each event at the club's Park Lane green was a great success and competitors commented on how well the green bowled, despite bad weather.

In a match between Hampshire and Surrey, both presidents

praised the way the club had hosted the day and provided an excellent green.

"The well tended and very attractive gardens made it a pleasure to visit and play in Fareham," they said.

Club members are dedicated to keeping their clubhouse and grounds immaculate throughout the year, but this was a good example of Council officers and grounds staff working in partnership to provide a first-class facility.

Pam Bryant hopes it will encourage other organisations to work towards more attractive facilities.



Winter shutdown: But Pam Bryant looks forward to the first woods of spring bowling down the green.

Hampshire wins 'excellent' rating for giving taxpayers value for money

TORY-RUN Hampshire County Council gives great value for money.

The Council was praised for excellent financial management that has kept council tax low and made savings to reinvest in improved services.

The judgement is part of the new and more demanding Use of Resources assessment from the Audit Commission.

The audit highlighted the Council's 'innovative approach to securing value for money' and 'strong track record in delivering efficiency savings' - some £57m to date. Here are some of them:

- £4.7m saved last year through the renegotiation of Hampshire's waste management contract - with an additional £3.3m ongoing savings.

- £2.5m invested in in-house foster carers to save on costly alternative care.

- Changes in care for children in Hampshire saved £1m from residential care that was reinvested in care in the community

- The Public Finance Initiative street-lighting project specification amended to secure reduced carbon emissions

- The Council's Workstyle agenda aims to make better use of office space. The refurbishment of its headquarters will increase the capacity of the building, save money on leased accommodation and energy costs.

County Councillor John Bryant, vice-chairman of the Audit Committee, said: "The County Council strives to provide 1.5 million residents with top quality services with the lowest possible council tax to give them more for less and very good value for money.

"This year we were one of only three county councils to be rated as 'performs excellently' and we have kept our council tax rise down to 1.9% - the lowest in the whole of the South East.

"With the lowest level of Government funding nationally and more people needing our help, the only way we can continue to do this is to make our £1.75 billion budget go further and always seek opportunities to make savings to reinvest in improving services."

The Commission did not highlight any specific areas for improvement, but did offer some hints as to how the Council could take its performance to the next level.

£200 reward for housing cheat grasses

BLOW the whistle on housing cheats and earn yourself £200.

It's the reward for anybody who reports tenants illegally sub-letting council or housing association properties that are subsequently allocated to persons on the waiting list.

The Borough Council has been awarded a £10,000 grant under the Government's scheme to crack down on the cheats.

Speed reminders

Deployment of speed limit reminder devices will in future be decided in liaison with Community Action Teams.

Revamped libraries' popularity down to new technology

HAMPSHIRE'S rejuvenated libraries are welcoming more people and getting accolades from the public and awarding bodies.

Serving a population of 1.3m, the service is one of the biggest in the country, with 53 libraries and discovery centres, 24 mobiles and nearly 7 million visits

last year.

Key to the success has been listening to what the public wants, thus tailoring the service to the community.

County Councillor John Bryant said: "People want to access library services from home, office or while travelling, so we have introduced a range of on-line

services that are available 24/7.

"We are currently introducing e-audio and e-book download technology to our website and allowing Hampshire library card holders to download content for free.

Reservations made via the web nearly doubled in 2007/08 and more than 20% of renewals now take place over the internet.

Latest devices offer valuable aids to deaf

THE County Council has a contract with deafPLUS for its early intervention service which provides half-day sessions per years.

Its mobile minibus visited Fareham at the end of November and it is hoped that this valuable service, which is free to deaf and hard of hearing people and their families and carers, will visit the town again soon.

It has a wide range of the latest technology for people to try, including TV and radio listening devices, amplified phones and phones that work with inductive loops, mimicomms, vibrating alarm clocks and smoke alarms, and personal listeners.

What a waste! Households bin £50 worth of food every month

IT'S HARD to digest, but the average family throws away £50 worth of food every month.

So Fareham's Waste and Recycling team organised a series of exhibitions and demonstrations offering advice to avoid food waste.

Council officers were on hand to advise and encourage people to look at the amount of food they waste, how to use up common left-overs and top tips on shopping wisely and saving money.

It was the second successive year that the event had been held and it attracted over 400 visitors to the stalls in Fareham, Portchester and Locks Heath, where information and recipe cards with tips on how to 'Love food, hate waste' were handed out.

Councillor Pam Bryant, chairman of the Streetscene Panel, said: "National statistics show that an average family throws away £50



Pam Bryant: Urges people to stop wasting their money by wasting their food.

worth of food each month, which they have bought but not eaten. That's a lot of money (and food) to waste, particularly when times are hard."

Pam thanked soldiers from 33 Field Hospital for giving up their time to come and cook, and demonstrate the many ways in which left-over foods can be used.

Courses help recession-hit retailers

FAREHAM traders have found a series of business courses helpful during the recession.

Fareham Town Centre Management has been working with the Borough and County Councils to offer free advice and training to 90 independent retailers currently trading in the town centre.

Councillor Pam Bryant said the courses, held in the conference room of the new Community Action Fareham in West Street, were beneficial to many traders who have been struggling in the uncertainty of the economic market.

Similar courses will be held in the coming months.

John throws some light on five-year 'new lamps for old' project



WORK to replace and maintain 250,000 streetlights across Hampshire is at last a step nearer.

A five-year private finance initiative will be carried out by Southern Electric Contracting. All lighting columns over 15 years old – about

150,000 in total – and all lanterns will be replaced by new high efficiency units.

Focus for the following 20 years will be on maintaining and operating the new lights to a high standard.

County Councillor John Bryant said: "I

hope that once the project is up and running many areas in Fareham Town Division will be upgraded within the next two years.

"I have been requesting new lighting in several roads for a considerable time and officers are aware of my

requests for roads in Fareham North, which deserve to be at the top of their priority list.

"Unfortunately, other areas are considered worse than ours."

Photo: Wakefield Avenue resident Don Smith shows John a rusty lamp post.

FAREHAM NORTH & NORTH WEST CONSERVATIVES

We are very active with social and political events and membership drives. If you would like further details, to join us, or to help in any way such as distribution of *In Touch* newsletters in your road, please contact your ward councillors.

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Your man in Westminster



By Mark Hoban MP for Fareham

I was talking to pupils at a couple of schools in Portchester recently about the need to get involved when you see something happening to a place or a service that matters to you.

It was a theme echoed by a couple I met from Locks Heath who asked me to support a campaign to protect children's services at Southampton General.

Change is one of the main reasons why people get involved in politics. It certainly motivated me to get involved when I was 16. It still drives me today.

As a politician, change can mean resolving a constituent's problem or persuading the Government to change tack.

After the longest and deepest recession since the 1920s, it is clear we cannot go on like this. The country needs so many changes to get back onto the right track.

When I talk to local businesses, they tell me they want interest rates to remain as low as possible as long as possible, but unless we reduce Government borrowing, this won't be possible. But Gordon Brown is fighting shy of making the difficult decisions that are needed to encourage economic recovery.

In the health service and in our schools, I hear examples of where staff are required to put into practice decisions made in Whitehall that don't meet the needs of local people. Shouldn't we be giving our doctors, nurses and teachers the authority to do the right thing for pupils and patients rather than be dictated to by Whitehall?

2010 is the start of a new decade. I feel that we have been stuck in a rut in the last few years. I believe that 2010 must be a year for change in our country. We cannot afford another wasted decade.

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Borough-wide community centre modernisation plans under way



Bath Lane, Fareham pavilion



Portchester Community Centre

PLANS to provide each of Fareham's neighbourhood areas with modern community facilities are under way.

Top of the list is Portchester Community Centre where options for raising the £1.7m cost are being considered, but others (some pictured) also need urgent attention.

The Council's policy objectives prioritised the need to review the use of its community buildings, rationalise their provision and, as appropriate, modernise them by 2012.

The review set out a longer-term, innovative approach to the provision of Council community-owned buildings, including sports pavilions and community centres.

The vision to provide a well-designed, modern community centre in each of the six neighbourhood Community Action Team areas was agreed by the Executive, which pledged £500,000 towards the initiative, plus £40,000 for a community buildings health and safety fund.

A phased implementation



Osborne Road, Warsash officials' changing rooms (left) and players' changing rooms



programme was agreed, aimed at completing needs assessments and developing a master plan for each area.

An advisory group to the Executive was set up, primarily to consider obtaining funding for the provision of a new community centre at Portchester following consultations with residents and a needs assessment.

Executive Member for Community Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley chairs the group, which includes the five Portchester ward councillors, representatives from Portchester Community Association and the County Council.

The Executive also approved refurbishment of the sports changing rooms at Osborne Road, Warsash, Sarisbury Green and Allotment Road, Sarisbury.

Phase 2 - the Crofton CAT area - will start when the Portchester project is finished.

It's no bull – less spending reduces waste

HUNDREDS of empty coke cans went into making this life-size bull to beef up the recycling message.

But it's no bull that people are buying less in the recession, so they put less in their bins.

Fareham has seen a 5.5% reduction in green top bin waste and a 6% fall in blue top bin recyclables. But the Borough's recycling rate still reached 39.6% in October.



"An excellent figure and we aim to achieve the target for 2010 of 40%, although any continuation of reductions in total waste will make this a challenge," said Councillor Keith Evans, Executive Member for Streetscene.

Fareham is one of only three districts in Hampshire to provide free garden waste collection, although it had to be restricted to one bag per household.

One in four households generates more and they can buy disposable bags – £20 for a roll of 25 sacks or £5 for a roll of 5 – which will be collected with the green waste bags.

He added: "Fareham residents are among the best recyclers in the country. It's a good performance, but one we intend to improve

with advice and encouragement."

In Touch is published by Fareham N & NW Conservatives, 14 Highlands Road, Fareham PO16 7XL and printed by Bishops Printers Limited, Fitzherbert Road, Farlington, Portsmouth PO6 1RU.