

Council's vision for top quality community facilities

COMMUNITY centres are in line for top quality improvements under a new Fareham Council initiative.

The Executive approved a broad vision for providing high quality community facilities across the Borough and asked interested parties to give their views via a consultation through the Community Action Team process.

The broad vision and proposal to adopt a phased approach, by reviewing the Council-owned community facilities in each of the CAT areas in turn, was well received at the October round of CAT meetings.

The Executive formally adopted the proposed vision and set aside £500,000 capital budget for pump-priming to assist in delivering the vision.

Work has started on Phase 1 to develop a master plan based on providing new community facilities to replace the ramshackle Portchester Community Centre, where a public consultation was held to establish what local people wanted.

Executive Member for Community Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley thanked those who attended the event.

"The views expressed by residents will be reported to the Executive," she said.

Tory 'magic' beats all the odds for a recession busting budget

A RECESSION-busting budget. That's the rabbit Conservative 'magicians' have conjured out of the hat.

Against all the odds – and that includes what Executive Leader Seán Woodward lambasted as "one of the most derisory Government grants in the country" – a below inflation rise of just 2.7% has been achieved.

So the Borough share of council tax will rise by just 1p a day, less than any other Hampshire district council and lower than almost every council in the country.

Delivering his 10th budget speech, Councillor Woodward said: "In a recession it is more important than ever to achieve a below inflation council tax rise of just 2.7%.

"Services remain essentially intact and charges rise only a modest amount in line with the requirements of Fareham's residents.

"Fareham's proportion of the council tax for a band D property will be just £140 per year. Compare this with Gosport at over £200 and you can under-

stand the value for money provided by Fareham Borough Council."

Other improvements to services in response to residents' concerns included removal of the £20 charge for pest control officers to deal with domestic rat infestations.

Sunday and Bank Holiday car parking charges would be changed to allow free parking up to 10.30am in the short-stay car parks with free Sunday and Bank Holiday parking in the long-stay car parks.

Charges on these days in short-stay car parks from 10.30am – 4pm will be just £1.50 for as long as shoppers wish to park.

While other centres outside Fareham are losing shops, June will see a Debenhams department store and new multi-storey car park open in the town centre.

Councillor Woodward added: "With the country in a deep recession and many of our older residents seeing their fixed incomes eroded by decreasing interest rates, it is more important than ever that we continue to set the lowest possible council tax to give the best possible value for money

"I am proud that we have for the 10th year been able to achieve this by constantly looking for more innovative and cost effective ways of both reducing expenditure and increasing income."



'ello, 'ello, 'ello...did you know, Sarge, that Fareham council taxpayers now contribute more towards us than they pay for their own Borough Council services?

Costs soar to keep the blue lamp alight



How it's made up for Band D taxpayers

Fareham Borough Council £140.22 (+£3.69)
 Hampshire County Council £1,017.99 (+£18.99)
 Hampshire Police Authority £142.11 (+£6.57)
 Hampshire Fire & Rescue £60.30 (+£2.07)
Total: Band D taxpayers £1,360.62 (+£31.32) = +2..36%

Fareham capital budget improvements include

Footpath improvements: £50,000
 Holly Hill lakes de-silting: £15,000
 Cliff Road, Hill Head replacing public toilets: £170,000

Fareham revenue budget improvements include

Replacing green waste sacks: estimated cost £100,000
 Residents' parking Phase 1 in town centre: £100,000
 Capital Programme Fund: £500,000 towards new and improved community buildings

Extra green waste charges down to health and safety

CHANGES to the garden waste service will start in April 2009.

The Health and Safety Executive advised they were necessary to avoid problems of repetitive strain injury and worse.

So extra staff had to be employed, adding to the cost.

Handling one or two sacks is not a problem, but in some months crews are being asked to lift up to 20 tons per crew per day.

When the service was introduced in September 2005 it was on the basis that it would be cost neutral; however, in the current economic climate the Council had no option but to review discretionary services.

It was decided to retain this popular service and that it should be free for most residents.

There will be no charge for the collection of one garden waste

sack. Most councils charge for this service and those which charge for extra sacks charge more than Fareham proposes.

Fewer than 50% of residents use the service at any one time and most put out only one sack.

People can order extra disposable bags similar to the existing sacks at £20 for 25 sacks, which will be collected regardless of how many or when they are put out.

WARD NEWS BRIEFS

High Street crossing

Work on another much needed crossing has started at the bottom of High Street.

It will include building a zebra crossing with tactile paving, bollards, Belisha beacons and anti skid surfacing, granite kerb and pavement works.

County Councillor John Bryant has been requesting some action at the junction for several years and is pleased to see that it is now being done.

Bright lights

Fareham's West Street is brighter than ever.

Another 8 lamp columns have been added between the Aldi store and the station roundabout.

It completes £1m the West Street improvement scheme, which was funded by Hampshire County Council.

Smarter outlook

Planning consent has been given for change of use at Delme Court in Maytree Road for the conversion of the outdated offices on the first floor to provide 7 self-contained flats.

It will provide much needed extra housing as well as making the area smarter.

Election double

County Council and European elections will both take place on Thursday, June 4.

If you will be on holiday that day or would prefer a postal vote apply to the Election Services Department on 01329 236100.

Old railway on track to create fast bus route between Fareham and Gosport



End of the line: The old overgrown track will be removed to clear the way for the new bus route to by-pass the congested A32 initially as far as Tichborne Way, Rowner and possibly later to Military Road.

WORK has started to clear the overgrown former Fareham-Gosport railway line to make way for Phase 1 of the £175m Rapid Bus Transit scheme.

Engineering, ecological and environmental surveys have been carried out and a planning application will be submitted in March.

If successful, work should start on Phase 1 in early summer and last until March 2011.

It is part of a wider plan to link Gosport, Fareham (including the proposed 10,000 homes due to be built north of the town), Queen Alexandra Hospital in Cosham and Portsmouth.

It replaces the LRT tram scheme and harbour tunnel, as extra dredging needed for the new super aircraft carriers would have added £100m to the cost.

Vegetation has to be removed from the track sides and along the route from Redlands Lane bridge to create access. Bridge structures and ground conditions are being examined and surveys also include wildlife.

County Councillor John Bryant (Fareham Town) said: "Thanks to Hampshire County Council this high speed bus route on a disused railway track will hopefully relieve some of the difficulties that users of the A32 experience every day."

Priority will be given to a £50m section of the bus route, linking Fareham train station to Rowner. Buses will initially join the rail track in Redlands Lane near the arch, where the road will be widened around Cams Alders.

Later, the Redlands Lane access will be shut and the route will lead directly to Fareham Station.

About £20m for Phase 1 will come from the Community Infrastructure Fund.

Councillor Bryant said residents living near the old track were concerned about security, noise and pollution, which were addressed at the exhibitions held in Bridgemary College.

Full details are on www.tfsh.org.uk/bus-rapid-transit or phone the County Council on 0845 6035633.

FACT FILE

- Fareham-Gosport railway opened in 1841 and cost £404,271. Declining traffic reduced it to single track in 1934.
- It was a vital supply link during World War 2.
- It closed to passengers in 1953 and freight trains ceased in 1969.
- The bus/tram link isn't new. In 1937, experiments were carried out with a rubber-tyred petrol driven rail bus, but came to nothing.

New team vicar brings a breath of fresh air to St Columba's

THE REVEREND Philip Cochrane is to be the new team vicar at St Columba Church, Hillson Drive.

He has been curate at Holy Trinity Church in West Street for the past two years and has brought new ideas and a breath of fresh air to the community.

Councillor Pam Bryant said: "Philip is a real 'people person' with boundless energy, which will be most welcome among the congregation, local schools and residents living in the North West area."

It is hoped the Bishop of Portsmouth will conduct a service to license the new incumbent at the end of March.

Philip will devote some time to helping with a new building and progressing the St Columba development after listening to the community it serves.



The Rev Philip Cochrane

Town centre residents' parking plan to cost at least £100,000

A RESIDENTS' parking scheme for Fareham town centre has moved a step closer.

Councillor John Bryant said the Executive approved a parking strategy in 2008 which gave a commitment to investigate its introduction.

"Officers have been scoping out the project, and it is anticipated that implementing the first phase would require an investment of £100,000.

"This amount has now been earmarked to allow the scheme to progress more quickly," he said.

The Planning and Transportation Panel will shortly be receiving a further report with recommendations.

Zebra crossing work due to start

WORK was due to start this month on the zebra crossing at the top of Gudge Heath Lane.

County Councillor John Bryant agreed the lay-by in front of the post office had to go for the safety of those using the crossing. There is a customers' car park at the side of the shop.

Anti-skid surfacing has been applied on both sides of the crossing.

Heavy fines for littering the streets

LITTER louts are being targeted and fined heavily.

Several fixed penalty notices have been issued by Council wardens for dropping litter in the street.

And that includes cigarette butts.

110 were issued between January and November 2008 with two cases being taken to Fareham Magistrates' Court where the culprits were fined £80, with £70 costs.

Five further cases are pending.

Officers have been dealing with several fly tipping incidents and four prosecutions for contraventions under the Environmental Protection Act are likely to follow.

Skip waste plant

A PLANNING application is being processed for a recovery plant to handle a maximum of 75,000 tonnes per annum of building and skip waste with a weigh-bridge at Charity Farm, 127 Wickham Road, Fareham.

Clay pipes, bricks, classic cars ... just a few of recent exhibits at Fareham's popular museum

WESTBURY Manor Museum in West Street is proving to be most popular with a constant daily stream of visitors, including local schools.

There are now excellent files and information held in the resource room on numerous historical subjects in the Fareham area, writes County Councillor John Bryant, chairman of the Museum Joint Committee.

Topical displays from local clubs and organisations can also be viewed in the wall cabinets.

On the first floor, the displays cover a range of topics from local rivers and streams, which include information about wildlife, as well as displays and photographs of the once thriving brickworks in north Fareham and Funtley and the clay pipe manufacturing and potteries in north Fareham and



Back to the 70s: John Bryant takes a trip down memory lane at Westbury Manor Museum.

Portchester.

A recent display of life in the 1970s was popular, particularly on the first Saturday when several classic cars from that era were parked outside.

The Curator, Tom de Witte, has a programme of events planned for 2009.

He works closely with the committee, comprising borough and county councillors, with representatives from the Fareham Society.

John dishes out cash for community projects

COUNTY Councillors can allocate £10,000 a year to local projects and John Bryant has awarded the following:-

Friends of Henry Cort School: £5,000 towards a community

project manager who will develop the community, extend service programmes and foster relationships with a range of private and public organisations.

1st Fareham Scout Group: £3,500 towards

renovation of their hut.

Wallisdean Infants Friends' Association: £1,500 towards improving the ICT suite which will also be used by the After School Club and to help early year parents

Hants voted one of best places to live

HAMPSHIRE has been rated one of the best places in the country in which to live.

The county came second in a reader survey carried out by 'Country Life' magazine. Devon came top.

County Councillor John Bryant, who has lived in the County most of his life, said:

"Hampshire is a great place to live; it has so many interesting places to visit with both delightful countryside and the superb views across the Solent, which all contributes to the quality of people's lives."

Fish and chips with beetles

NORTH and North West Conservatives' next social event will be a beetle drive on Friday, April 3 at 7pm at Catisfield Memorial Hall, followed by a fish and chip supper.

It's just £6 to include supper, but bring your own drink and glass. Tickets available from Councillor Pam Bryant on Fareham 281427 .

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.

WARD COUNCILLORS Fareham North



John Bryant
14 Highlands Road
Fareham PO16 7XL
Tel: 01329 281427
email: cllrbryant@fareham.gov.uk



Pamela Bryant
14 Highlands Road
Fareham PO16 7XL
Tel: 01329 281427
email: cllrbryant@fareham.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLORS Fareham Town



Raymond Ellis
20 Cams Hill
Fareham PO16 8RB
Tel: 01329 236127
email: raymond.ellis@hants.gov.uk



John Bryant
14 Highlands Road
Fareham PO16 7XL
Tel: 01329 281427
email: john.bryant@hants.gov.uk

Your man in Westminster



By **Mark Hoban**
MP for Fareham

The recession brings its own pressures on different aspects of life. Whilst we often think about its effect on employment in the private sector, we don't take into account the effect on Government finances.

The money the Government receives from taxes falls as fewer people work and company profits are slashed. At the same time, there are additional pressures to increase spending.

We see this affecting the police. The deteriorating economic position will have an impact on crime levels. There has already been an increase in burglaries, which is borne out by figures in Fareham. It's a Hampshire wide issue and the police are cracking down on it with Operation Nemesis.

But the police are faced with squaring the circle of increasing pressures on costs, a lower increase in their income from Government and a limit on how much they can increase council tax, while meeting the expectations of the public that there will be no cuts in the number of front line officers.

We need to lift some of the burdens which get in the way of putting police on the beat.

When I've been out on the beat, the police have complained about form filling and paperwork. When an arrest is made it is not just the alleged criminal who is detained at the station. Cut the form filling and we can put more police on the beat.

In these difficult times when there will be more demands on public services, we need to look at the changes we can make in our schools, hospitals, councils and police service to get the best value for money.

More bang for the buck.

You may contact Mark via his office
14 East Street, Fareham PO16 0BN.
Telephone: 01329 233573
email: mail@markhoban.com

Fareham's 'Get well soon' message to 'sick' councils

FAREHAM Council staff are happy to be firmly at the foot of one league table.

They are currently bottom of the sick list, so they are the healthiest of all town hall workers among Hampshire's 12 councils.

With an average of 7.2 working days lost per employee, they have just recorded their lowest sickness absence figures.

The 'sick man' of the county is Rushmoor Council with nearly twice as many absences

as Fareham, with Hart and Portsmouth close behind and also needing to 'get well soon'.

Executive Leader Seán Woodward said: "Low levels of sickness absence mean our staff are at work, providing residents with the high quality services they deserve.

"We work hard to ensure we manage the levels of sickness. Employee well-being and health is an important part of keeping a fit and healthy workforce."



IT WAS one of the World War 2 slogans which inspired people to save even their potato peelings.

Rationing ended over 50 years ago, but did you know that today on average 30% of all food bought in the UK is wasted?

Of all the rubbish dumped 20% is food leftovers.

In an effort to publicise this waste a campaign organised

by the Council was held in October in Fareham. It included stands in the Shopping Centre, Lockwood Centre and Stubbington

The highlight was a visit by the catering team from 3rd Field Ambulance, recently returned from Afghanistan, to Sainsbury's at Wallington to demonstrate and produce a selection of meals from food that would usually be binned.

The team, based at Haslar Hospital, served up an excellent pumpkin soup, a vegetarian quiche



Hallowe'en recipe: Sgt Mark Holbrook (centre) shows Councillors Pam Bryant and Brian Bayford how to make pumpkin soup.

and a Thai curry for visitors to the store.

The menus were produced by students and staff at Fareham College.

These were available to visitors to the exhibitions, who were advised that the reason for food wastage included

several factors, among them 'Buy One, Get One Free', misunderstanding of 'sell-by date' and 'best before'.

"Too much choice and wastage," said Councillor Brian Bayford, Executive Member for Streetscene.

Positive response to future planning strategy

FAREHAM Council has passed another milestone towards the production of a Local Development Framework (LDF) to replace the existing Local Plan Review, by publishing its preferred options for the core strategy.

The current Local Plan Review dates from June 2000, and the core strategy sets the framework for the LDF which will replace it.

It must largely conform with the South East Plan which is expected to get final Government approval imminently.

The process has been held up by the Government continually changing its rules.

If a council does not follow these rules the plan is likely to be found unsound at the inspection stage, so wasting a lot of council taxpayers' money.

Currently, the Council does not have to publish its preferred options for consultation before submitting its core strategy for inspection, but by doing so it gave all interested parties a chance to comment in time to make changes before finalising the plan.

Responses have been gen-

erally positive with many useful comments and suggestions, including input from a well-attended seminar held for members of Networkfareham, Fareham's Local Strategic Partnership.

County Councillor Ray Ellis commented:

"It was good to see a lot of response to the draft strategy, which is aimed at ensuring Fareham continues to be an attractive, safe and pleasant place to live, work and visit."

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