

Council to introduce public ban on alcohol

BOOZE in public in future and you could be arrested

A ban on drinking alcohol in designated public places comes into force in Fareham on March 1.

It will be welcomed by long-suffering residents in areas such as the town centre and may be extended.

“The aim is to control consumption of alcohol in public places and tackle alcohol-related crime, disorder and nuisance, as well as problems of under-age drinking,” said Council Executive Leader Seán Woodward.

The Criminal Justice Police Act 2001 gives councils powers to designate areas known to be anti-social drinking trouble spots.

It will be an arrestable offence for anyone caught drinking in public in a designated area to refuse to stop when ordered by police, who can also seize and dispose of any alcohol containers found in the offender’s possession.

Councillor Woodward, chairman of the Vandalism Task Force, said the council was working hard to fight vandalism across the borough.

“This latest initiative to ban drinking in public places should, hopefully, go a long way to achieving our goal.”

YES! 2009 DATE FOR FAREHAM HOSPITAL

Council makes pledge to fight Haslar sacrifice

DECADES of languishing on the waiting list are almost over and Fareham will get its community hospital at Coldeast.

But the borough will have to spend another four years in the hospital waiting room before it is ready.

And it comes at a sacrificial cost. Community hospitals at Fareham and Gosport War Memorial will mean withdrawing community services from Haslar Hospital, unless campaigners can overturn the decision.

Fareham Council came out strongly against the Haslar closure at its December meeting.

Members agreed to challenge the Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust PFI (Private Finance Initiative) bid to place all acute and elective services at Queen Alexandra Hospital.

The council has written to Hampshire County Council’s Health Review Committee, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust and The Save Haslar Task Force urging them to work to restore Haslar to traditional hospital status.

Executive Leader Seán Woodward said community hospitals at Coldeast and Gosport War Memorial would provide best value for the area.

“However, we believe Haslar should be transformed into a traditional NHS secondary care hospital.

“We will be lobbying the County’s Health Review Panel in



Council leader Seán Woodward (left) and Fareham MP Mark Hoban pictured at the site for the new hospital at Coldeast.

January to challenge the Queen Alexandra PFI bid, which should enable services to be shared between QA and Haslar, thus providing the best value and combination of services for the whole area.

“The QA site cannot cope with all services, whereas a two-site solution could work well.”

for emergency medical care for Portsmouth and East Hampshire and Haslar should be fully used as an elective surgical or medical centre, so all admissions booked from out-patient clinics and waiting lists would be treated there.

Haslar had all the investigative facilities needed for such work and an intensive care unit, although it was currently closed due to staff shortages.

“All the facilities are at present at Haslar and no money needs to be spent on building or upgrading.”

The argument for putting everything into one site on staff efficiency grounds was costly and problems of scheduling consultants’ work between QA and Haslar sites could be overcome.

“Clearly £1 billion over 30 years is rather a lot to spend so that all in-patient facilities are on one site. What we are doing is mortgaging the future for something that is completely unnecessary,” added Dr Ashton.

OPERATIONAL BY 2009

Fareham’s hospital will be operational to match the opening of the new, extended QA Hospital by April 2009. Phase 1 will offer:

- An enhanced maternity unit with birthing pool
- Beds and day care centre for the elderly
- Consultant out-patient suites providing approximately 25,000 appointments a year
- On-call facilities for GPs
- Physio/occupational therapy and speech therapy
- Diagnostic services including X-Ray

A later phase is confidently expected to provide an accident treatment centre to serve the Western Wards of Fareham, Whiteley, Bursledon, Lowford and Hedge End.

The 25-acre site has room for expansion.

Dr Richard Ashton, consultant dermatologist at Haslar for the past 20 years, backed the council. He said QA should be the centre



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Book launch

A book containing contacts and information to help families with children under 16 has been produced by Hampshire Children and Families Forum.

County Council Chairman Councillor John Bryant, accompanied by Councillor Mrs Pamela Bryant, thanked those involved, especially organiser Catherine Cornish, when he launched the book at Oak Meadow Early Years Centre where the forum is based.

Law breakers

Thoughtless drivers are upsetting residents and blocking access for emergency vehicles by parking on grass verges and pavements.

It is particularly bad in narrow streets around Leigh Road, New Road and Colenso Road.

Councillor John Bryant says they are breaking the law by obstructing the highway or breaching parking regulations.

Supertram

Revised plans have been submitted to the Government, with costs lowered by phased construction and delaying the loop between Fareham train and bus stations.

If these plans are accepted, Councillors John and Pam Bryant will request urgent regeneration in that part of West Street, which has been neglected while a decision on the LRT scheme was awaited.

UNACCOUNTABLE...UNDEMOCRATIC...UNELECTED...

How Prescott stealthily stamps his authority

LABOUR is stealthily removing democracy in local government to force through its unpopular policies.

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott refused to take 'no' as the answer of people in the north of England who overwhelmingly rejected his plan for an elected regional assembly.

He is now committed to set up unelected regional assemblies to tell us what to do.

And it is already happening as plans are forced through to swamp the South East with 650,000 more houses.

"A Conservative Government will end this charade of democracy," pledged County Council chairman Councillor John Bryant.

Several months ago, Mr Prescott went behind the public's back and quietly stripped English county councils of their right to produce structure plans, which used to determine how to distribute housing at local level.

"This decision was handed down as a *fait*

'I am surrounded by unelected decision makers'

Noisy town centre pub's licence is under review

ROWDY behaviour by youths leaving a West Street pub has led to a restricted renewal of its licence.

The Licensing and Regulatory Committee granted a public entertainment licence to Moda for three months, with strict conditions.

Committee vice-chairman Councillor Pam Bryant said she had received numerous complaints from residents about noise from the former Royal Oak pub on the corner of Trinity Street.

She said the licensee was told he must have a minimum of two registered door supervi-



Pam Bryant

sors during any regulated entertainment.

He has to set up monthly liaison meetings with residents and a Fareham licensing representative.

He must also resolve any noise problems caused by people leaving the premises after-closing time.

The committee will review the application in February.

accompli from the Deputy Prime Minister's Office with immediate effect.

"Instead of elected councillors determining housing distribution in their area, it's now the responsibility of **unelected, undemocratic, appointed** regional assemblies to decide.

"The most powerful body of Tony's Cronies is called the Regional Planning Committee," said Councillor Bryant.

"Apart from a few appointed councillors accountable to the electorate, this new committee mostly comprises Labour Party members belonging to the TUC, CBI and social/environment partnerships to name but a few.

"This Government has given these people the power to impose their collective will on our area.

"I am surrounded by unelected decision makers."

Councillor Bryant said even as constituents read this edition of *In Touch*, highly-paid officers of the SE England Regional Assembly (SEERA) are recommending how many extra houses should be built in our area, over and above the current agreed Hampshire numbers for which the Conservative administration fought at county and district level.

"John Prescott wishes to flood our South East countryside with 650,000 houses within the next 20 years.

"He wishes to do all this without any guarantee of investment in infrastructure.

"Labour flunkies like Housing Minister Keith Hill take great joy in summoning Conservative council leaders to London to tell them in no uncertain terms that we must follow ministerial guidelines...or else.

"If we do not comply, this Government will take away what small powers we still have to influence decisions in our own areas and enforce housing numbers without any democratic process.

"And what about our quality of life?"

"The reply is, in effect, 'we don't deal with quality of life - we just want to build houses'."

Merry decision for residents

RESIDENTS have welcomed the planning committee's decision to reject an application for another extension to Merry Hall nursing home.

The Kiln Road property has been extended four times since private occupation ceased in 1991.

Neighbours say it has encroached on their privacy and Councillor Pam Bryant agreed.

"This application is just one too many. It's the straw that broke the camel's back," she said.

Applicants have six months in which to appeal.

COUNTY COUNCIL ROUND-UP

THE Solent Transport Partnership was singled out for praise by the Government, who promptly cut funding for integrated transport and maintenance.

Hampshire's performance on local transport was judged above average.

County Councillor John Bryant welcomed the 2005/06 allocation of £34.1 million, but was disappointed it was £5.6 million less than this year's settlement.

"Surveys consistently show the condition of our roads and tackling local transport issues are among the highest priorities our residents have," he said.

LEAFLETS have been issued by Hampshire and other councils to advise people suspected of being abused.

Figures show that in 2003-04 191 cases of alleged abuse of adults were reported to Social Services.

However, it is considered this does not represent the true picture and work is under way to establish a more compre-

hensive database.

County Councillor John Bryant said: "Protection of vulnerable adults is a vital area of our work."

Leaflets can be obtained by calling 0800028 0888 or online at www.hants.gov.uk

THERE are now 28 community safety officers patrolling some of Hampshire's troubled streets.

They will be tackling anti-social behaviour such as causing alarm or distress, graffiti, fly-tipping and under-age possession of alcohol and cigarettes.

They have the power to demand names and addresses and to issue £50 fixed penalties.

Residents have welcomed the highly visible presence of the safety officers, who have also been visiting schools.

"Building safe and strong communities is one of the key issues at the top of our Conservative agenda," said Councillor Bryant, who said it would go a long way towards reassuring communities.

More college parking



THE CAR park at Henry Cort Community College has been extended, thanks to joint funding from Hampshire and Fareham Councils.

College management committee chairman Councillor John Bryant (pictured) commented:

"The new layout provides clearer parking and better access for buses turning. Since its completion the previous disruption with cars parked in the roadway has stopped."

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.

ANY PROBLEMS? WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Please write the details here and give the exact location

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Your name
Address
..... Postcode.....
Tel Email

Please cut this out and post it or email or phone your councillors who are listed here.

WARD COUNCILLORS

Fareham North

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



John Bryant

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



COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Fareham North West

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



Four man in Westminster



By
Mark Hoban
MP for Fareham

RESTORING school discipline is one of my top priorities as Shadow Schools Minister.

In a recent poll, over 70% of respondents thought it was getting worse.

Poor discipline lowers teachers' morale and disrupts learning. The Government has failed our schools by being too soft.

Parents need to play their role in restoring standards. We should have home-school contracts, whereby parents and pupils sign up to a school's rules and it is clearly stated that a breach of contract could lead to a child being excluded.

Decisions to exclude pupils are second guessed by appeals panels, who can reverse a decision which the head teacher thinks is right. We will scrap them.

The Government recently announced plans to force schools to admit disruptive children excluded from other schools. We will stop this.

Pupils who are excluded need support, too, and we will introduce Turnaround Schools to replace Pupil Referral Units. Unlike Pupil Referral Units, Turnaround Schools will be full-time, focus on behaviour and learning the basics, and follow an established curriculum. Attendance and performance will be monitored.

Finally, teachers deserve protection from false, malicious claims against them. Only about 5% of allegations against teachers prove to be true. Too many careers and lives are destroyed by false accusations. Conservatives will give teachers anonymity until they are charged with an offence.

By being soft on school discipline, we are harming the chances of children who want to learn. Disruptive pupils can stop others from learning and teachers' time is spent tackling their behaviour rather than helping those who want to get on. Let's give every child a chance by restoring school discipline.

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

County Hall savings needed to cushion council tax rise

Whitehall's 4.9% grant not enough

HAMPSHIRE County Council should get 4.9% more from the Government towards providing services next year – still not enough to cover costs.

So the council is already looking at ways of cushioning council tax rises by cutting expenditure through increased efficiency.

"While it's too early to say what the impact of the settlement will be on the budget, it is clear that the extra funding is to keep council tax as low as possible, rather than spending more money on services," commented County Council Chairman

John Bryant (Fareham NW).

"While the Government has given us a 4.9% increase in grant, we will still need to find 40% of our budget from council tax."

Pressures on the budget were huge. Spending on social care must increase to cope with increasing numbers of frail elderly people and vulnerable children.

Government has also told Hampshire to increase school spending by 4.9%. Waste disposal is another burden.

Councillor Bryant said the extra Government cash would not meet the rising costs, so departments have been asked to look for savings up to 17% (about £9m).

"Over the last three years we've made efficiency improvements of £12m, but at the same time we have lost a massive £29m in



John Bryant: 'Government has manipulated the figures' Government grant."

The Government had based its grant on 1991 census data for the second year running, but it had itself admitted that Hampshire lost around £7.5m a year through the out-of-date figures – equal to 2% on council tax.

Planning changes forced on council

GOVERNMENT changes to planning law are forcing Fareham Council to increase housing densities and making it harder to refuse developers without risking costly appeals.

And 90% of planning applications will shortly have to be decided by planning officers and not the elected councillors.

Whitehall says residential development should provide 30-50 dwellings per hectare (12-20 per acre) and the council will need good grounds to refuse.

Most decisions are already made by the officers when there are no objections, but to meet the 90% target some will be decided by officers regardless of objections.

To safeguard democracy, Fareham Council has agreed a system to allow the Planning Development Control Committee to decide before the publicity period expires.

If you have a serious objection, you should not only write to the Planning Department, but make sure you send copies to **both** ward councillors.

However, they may not ask for a committee hearing unless there are solid planning reasons for objecting.

The Council is now very careful about refusing applications because it could land taxpayers with a big bill and kill any chance of impos-

ing conditions if the developer wins an appeal.

It is possible the size and design are out of keeping with the area and could be refused, but if that is not the case and people still do not want the development, it leaves the committee with three choices.

- 1 Approve the application as it stands
- 2 Approve but impose conditions
- 3 Reject it

If they opt for the third choice and there are insufficient grounds for refusal, the developer will certainly appeal and he can choose the format:

- A 'paper' appeal – done with an exchange of correspondence with an inspector
- Informal inquiry – both parties sit down at a table and thrash it out with an inspector
- Full hearing – developer knows he has a strong case and will call in legal experts

Losing a full planning inquiry will mean the council has to pay the developer's legal expenses and court costs, which could total £20,000 – equal to 0.5% on the council tax.

So the committee may have to disregard public opinion and allow an unpopular application, but at least members can impose conditions which mitigate some objections.

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