

Very little from Tesco isn't helping to remove eyesore

Council searching for alternative prestige food superstore site

EVERY little helps, boast Tesco in their famous TV slogan.

Fareham Council could do with a little of that help from the food store colossus to develop the derelict foundry site in Quay Street.

Tesco have owned the land for a year and it has become a blot on the landscape against the nearby showpiece Market Quay centre.

Council Leader Seán Woodward said Tesco appeared to have bought the site to keep out rival chainstores, but were now dragging their feet.

But he warned the council's patience was running out with the giant, which made a profit of £1.6 billion last year, and alternative sites were being explored.

"Development of the foundry site, which is an appalling eyesore in an otherwise high quality town centre redevelopment, is high priority.

"The council has now widened its search for a suitable site due to the imperceptible progress being made with Tesco.

"It has been a long-held ambition of the Conservative administration of Fareham Borough Council, having achieved the



Eyesore: Seán Woodward surveys the foundry site in Quay Street where the council hopes Tesco will build a top class food superstore.

superb Market Quay shopping and leisure development, to get a quality food superstore into the town centre with the foundry site highlighted as the favoured location," he said.

Tesco have submitted a planning application for a superstore and housing, but it has not been registered because the company must submit requested details

regarding highway and environmental impact of their retail and residential scheme.

He believes an application for a car park on the site, which the council rejected, was part of the delaying tactic.

"At the end of the day, they can afford to sit on the site indefinitely," added Councillor Woodward.

Minister refuses to refer local NHS crisis to independent review panel

HEALTH Minister Lord Warner has refused to refer the provision of health in Southeast Hampshire to the Independent Health Review Panel.

Fareham has had no hospital facilities since St Christopher's Hospital and Blackbrook Birthing Unit closed.

County Councillor Dr Ray Ellis, chairman of Hampshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), told the Minister this contradicted Labour's intention of making the

NHS respond to local needs.

Why, he asked, set up expensive consultation and scrutiny arrangements if the Minister ignored the statutory referral request for independent review, especially after such a long delay? Is the Government worried about the outcome?

The joint Southeast Hampshire OSC was making every effort to progress the development of community hospitals.

Fareham's hospital, including an accident treatment centre

and a new midwife-led maternity unit, has been over 20 years in the waiting room.

The local NHS is in financial crisis, but the hospital needs of Fareham's 110,000 population should be top priority. Failure to do so will mean that some services are not available and others will only be available at St Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth or Gosport.

National policy on maternity is to give expectant mothers a choice, so all first pregnancies

are dealt with at a major unit and second and third confinements (provided there have been no complications) should be carried out in a unit such as a new Blackbrook unit in the community hospital or at home.

A new Blackbrook within a community hospital with significantly improved facilities would give expectant mothers an even better delivery environment.

Meantime, it is necessary to have some provision locally for midwife-led delivery.



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Apollo lift off

July was an important month for Fareham with the opening of the new luxury Apollo Cinema, shops, restaurants and leisure facilities.

Executive Leader Seán Woodward, who opened the development, said: "Market Quay has brought a new vibrancy to the town centre.

"The new cinema is already breaking all records for its owners and providing a much-needed facility."

Lighting up

After discussions with police, Councillor Pam Bryant has asked for extra lighting on the path leading from West Street to Dertyn Road.

Resurfacing

Pressure by Councillor Pam Bryant has paid off and resurfacing in Mallory Crescent, Tensing Close and Irvine Close will take place next summer.

Laundry site

An application to demolish the old laundry in Gudgeheath Lane to build 50 homes and a new access has been received.

New lamps for old

Lighting columns in Miller Drive, Maylings Farm Road and Norton Drive will be replaced and extra columns inserted. Work in Miller Drive is programmed for January/February. The new columns should last 60 years and the lanterns are of a style used throughout the county.

Market Quay is showpiece, but Tories promote local shops too

SHOPPING is a more pleasant experience since improvements have been carried out in two local precincts.

Smart new shops and a day nursery have given a facelift to the parade in Miller Drive.

At the revamped Highlands Road centre, the council is negotiating with Somerfield to take over the supermarket with a guarantee to keep it open for 10 years.

Local resident Tim Geoghegan is delighted with the progress as he uses both shopping areas.

He said: "Fareham's Conservative Council has been keen not only to promote Fareham with the rejuvenation of the town centre with the Market Quay development, but also to support and promote the importance of neighbourhood shopping facilities such as the precinct at Highlands Road.

"The sale of the freehold and the recent revamp of the store help to support the precinct, which has recently been rejuvenated.

"I regularly use the chemist, newsagent's and other shops at the precinct at Highlands Road and the improved parking and landscaping have made it even more convenient.

"It's important that retailers who provide such valuable community services receive the support of the council."



Boon for parents: MP Mark Hoban and Councillor John Bryant at the opening of the popular Miller Drive day nursery.

At Miller Drive, the final unit is being considered by prospective tenants and negotiations are under way.

Good Manors Day Nursery has completed a full year in its new centre and is proving very popular, being within walking distance for many parents.

Mr Geoghegan added: "My daughter thoroughly enjoyed her time at Good Manors as well as having made new friends there.

"She has now moved on to Uplands Primary School with several other children from Good Manors and has settled in quickly, partly due to the friendships already formed."

Get your electric blanket checked before winter arrives

SNUGGLING into a nice cosy bed in winter is a luxury.

But if you use an electric blanket to warm it, beware the danger.

Hampshire Trading Standards Service advises people to book their blankets in for an MOT

before switching on.

Large numbers of blankets fail annual safety checks – 44% in 2004.

Old blankets with damaged cables, faulty plugs and wrong fuses are all too common.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue and most district councils will arrange free checks. An elderly relative or neighbour might benefit.

Call 01329 316183 or email electric.blanket@hants.gov.uk to book an appointment.

Bin it? Not if there's a park seat to dump it under



THERE'S a bin just a few feet away, but yobs danned their beers and left the council to carry the cans.

Residents in Colenso Road had enough of loutish behaviour in the Park Lane recreation ground during the summer and suggested the council should remove the seats.

Councillor Pam Bryant took up the issue with leisure officers and the police.

However, it was felt relocation of the seats to the far side of the park would not deter anti-social behaviour and park users would lose out.

She was told at a recent police liaison meeting that more officers would be on duty in the area.

At the same time, residents are urged to report any incidents to the police on 0845 045 4545.

You can trust these traders

BUYING with confidence is easier in Hampshire with another nine businesses receiving the County Trading Standards' seal of approval

Latest Fareham firms to join the approved trader scheme are The Alarm People and Ideal Window Solutions Ltd.

County Councillor John Bryant said: "Buy with Confidence lists companies which have been independently checked by our Trading Standards Service."

A wide range of businesses belong to the scheme, giving residents hundreds of trustworthy traders to choose from.

Details from www.buy-withconfidence.info or call 0845 6030081.

Pam protects park access for disabled



PARKING remains a problem around the Colenso Road area, particularly next to the Park.

Access to and from the park for disabled people became almost impossible due to cars parking over the slip road.

Councillors John and Pam Bryant took the issue up with council officers and now a sign is clearly displayed to remind drivers to leave the entrance clear.

•Photo shows Pam Bryant with a disabled scooter rider.

Your views invited on Hants housing plans

NOW IS the time to have your say on where new housebuilding should take place in Hampshire over the next 20 years.

Target for Hampshire, including Portsmouth and Southampton, has been set at 6,100 new houses a year by the SE Regional Assembly (SEERA) – 4,000 per year will be in South Hampshire – which has asked the three councils to advise how to spread the burden.

Individuals and organisations are being asked for their views.

Options are set out in a consultation document which can be seen in public libraries and council information centres.

It has also been sent to all parish and town councils and around 1,000 organisations and individuals who are required to be consulted, or who have asked to be kept informed.

The County Council asked for residents' views in a special edition of 'Hampshire Now' magazine which has been sent to households.

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.

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Your man in Westminster



By
Mark Hoban
MP for Fareham

Whatever your views about the desirability of the 80,000 new homes planned for South Hampshire, we all agree better services are needed to meet the needs of those already living here.

Closure of the Blackbrook Birthing Centre and the question mark hanging over the long promised community hospital tells me there must be something wrong with our health service when we also hear about record amounts of taxpayers' money being spent on the NHS.

Our road network is under pressure from the existing volume of traffic and the Government says the answer is to use public transport, but it has not given the County Council the resources to maintain the bus network and it has been unable to decide about the South Hampshire Rapid Transit Scheme, despite its own advisers saying that it is a "must do" scheme.

I get fed up hearing the Chancellor talking about new school buildings, yet there are many children in Hampshire, including some in this constituency, being educated in temporary classrooms put up over ten years ago.

Labour has spent over £1 billion trying to tackle truancy and bad behaviour in schools but both are getting worse.

With this backdrop, people are rightly concerned about the plans to build so many new houses in South Hampshire. If we cannot meet the needs of the existing population, how can we meet the needs of so many extra households?

I have been in politics long enough to be sceptical when I hear people say the Government will fund the infrastructure. We have only to look around to see that the Government does not always meet its promises. We should not fall for the argument that whilst there is no jam today there will be jam tomorrow. If we build houses today, the jam we can look forward to is the one on our roads!

**You may contact Mark via his office
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All the signs for the future look good

FAREHAM'S boundary has been marked with new signs replacing the tatty ones some entrances to the Borough have had for several years.

They show the Borough crest, the union flag and cross of St George, as well as the crests of our twin towns, Vannes in France and Pulheim in Germany.

Struggle to maintain subsidised bus routes

THE MOST widely used bus services in Hampshire have been safeguarded for next year following a review of the County Council's subsidy budget.

The County Council spends £8.5m a year to subsidise 28 per cent of services countywide (excluding Portsmouth and Southampton).

Journeys costing the council £2.50 or less per passenger in subsidy are retained.

Consultations with neighbouring councils and operators ensured the future of more bus services than would be provided commercially, but has limited the cost of subsidising underused routes.

Hampshire had increased its subsidy budget by more than £1m per annum above inflation during the last three years at a time when the government had reduced our funding by £41m, said Executive Member for

Environment (South) Councillor Tim Knight.

"Fuel prices, insurance and drivers' wages are being passed on to the County Council in the form of increased tender prices."

Several services had thus become uneconomic for the operators, putting escalating pressures on the subsidy budget and forcing the County Council to reassess where the money was being spent.

It was agreed to maintain weekday services requiring a maximum subsidy of £2.50 per passenger journey and to keep the better performing Sunday and evening services, which need a subsidy of £2 or less. School specials that fail the £2.50 criterion are unaffected.

The measures will ensure the County Council uses council taxpayers' money wisely, while subsidising those services that would otherwise cease for many residents.

What would Ted have done today without his faithful sidekick Dusty Bin....?



The composter that looks like a Dalek minus gun and eye stalk is available for £5, but the rest of those on parade in the picture are free.

There's a smart 240 litre green top to replace your 140 litre model if necessary and households with six or more people can upgrade to the giant 360 litre range.

You could go for two 240 litre blue tops if you have masses of recyclables and don't forget the smart accessory - the green bag for the garden.

The council isn't saving money from the new fortnightly collections. It's ploughing it back into the

free green waste collection.

But it must meet the current target of recycling 30%, which is likely to rise to 40% and even 65% in the future.

If Fareham Council fails to meet its targets, it's likely to face a Government fine.

No prizes for guessing who'll have to foot the bill in the long run.



HE WOULD probably have flipped his lid!

Dusty bins, like the booby prizes with which failed contestants walked away from the 1980s Ted Rogers TV game show, are consigned to the archives.

Today, the right answer to the question of disposing of your household waste will win you a super selection of bins from Fareham Council.