

CONSERVATIVES – Over two decades of outstanding civic service



InTouch

TITCHFIELD & TITCHFIELD COMMON – Spring 2021

Wise Tories had cash job ready to ward off Covid tax hike

SIDE EFFECTS from Covid-19 played havoc with Fareham's finances, leading to the worst budgetary situation in two decades and threat of a council tax hike.

But the wise **Conservative** administration had an antidote ready for rainy days – and pandemics.

Prudent investments and careful handling of the coffers had built up a 'vaccine' of reserves, so £2m was available to inject into the budget to relieve the pain in taxpayers' pockets.

Fareham Borough Council's tax increase for Fareham's 44,000 homes is just 1p per day and the result for the average home stays at less than £3 per week for all Council services.

"This remains almost the lowest in the country," said Council Leader Seán Woodward, recalling that in 1999 **Conservatives** inherited a huge deficit from the previous administration.

'Toughest by far'

"Now we are in a similar situation. This is the 22nd budget that I have presented to the Council and it was the toughest by far.

"The economy of this country has been decimated by the Covid-19 pandemic and Fareham Borough Council, like every family and business, has not been immune to the turbulence.

"Thankfully, due to **Conservatives'** financial prudence that we have practised over two decades, we have been able to weather the financial hurricane.

"The Council has paid over £45m to businesses in the Borough for Covid hardship by way of grants and business rate reliefs."

Share of Council Tax for 2021/22



To Fareham's precept will be added the much larger Hampshire County Council precept and that from the Police & Crime Commissioner and Fire & Rescue Service.

Overall income from council tax of £7.5m represents just 15% of the budget to deliver all services costing over £48m. Other income is realised from fees and charges such as rents arising from the Council's £64m commercial property portfolio, car parking charges, hire of sports pitches etc.

There is also a capital programme over the next 5 years of £86m. Subject to necessary viability studies, we plan to invest:

- £10m for building new council houses
- £15m for improving existing council houses
- £6.5m for acquiring new council houses
- £12m for a new arts and entertainment facility – Fareham Live
- £7m investment in improving Fareham's two leisure centres
- £0.5m for playground improvements
- £2.5m for disabled adaptation grants
- £10m for investment in Solent Airport @ Daedalus including new buildings for businesses and jobs
- £6m for car parking improvements across the Borough

Councillor Woodward added: "I am grateful to our residents for stepping up during these tough times to help friends, neighbours and strangers. Our Borough is one amazing community."

Fareham planning nightmare: 'Events out of our control'

PLANNERS are tearing their hair out after another Whitehall U-turn sent the housing element of the current Fareham Draft Local Plan to the shredder.

Executive Member for Planning and Development Simon Martin said: "We are being penalised by events out of our control."

The Plan went out for consultation just before Christmas after the Council approved an earlier Government change-around allowing a lower number of houses.

Two days before the consultation closed, the Government moved the goal posts

again, reverting from 2018 to 2014 figures for estimating housing growth.

Councillor Martin said: "Consequently, Fareham's annual housing need has been confirmed as 508 homes per year, as opposed to 403 homes per year that the Publication Local Plan was based upon.

"We must now revisit the housing requirement, amendments will need to be put forward and also to consider the responses received from the consultation.

"Additional sites required to deliver the higher number of houses will be included in an amended version of the Local Plan."

Fareham has to submit annual figures on

housing completions over the last 3 years, but fewer houses have been completed against the Government's requirements.

Government added 20% to the 5-year housing targets and required preparation of a Housing Delivery Action Plan.

The Council couldn't meet the target due to being unable to issue planning consents for 2 years due to the impact of nitrates on the Solent. Simon Martin added:

"We are lobbying Government hard to ensure they support us. Despite our best efforts to issue planning permissions and proceed with the Local Plan, we are being penalised by events out of our control."

Almost England's lowest district council tax – thanks to CONSERVATIVES

NEWS ROUND



Poppy has a fresh agenda

Titchfield Division has a new Team Leader for the May County Council Elections.

Geoff Hockley is retiring after 16 years and InTouch team leader Poppy Taylor-Porter (pictured) says she'll have big boots to fill as she hopes to replace him.



She has lived in the Southampton and Fareham suburban area all her life, so understands as a commuter how frustrating traffic and congestion can be and is passionate about improving this.

She said: "I hope to bring a fresh perspective to local politics and you have my commitment that I will stand up to protect the unique attributes that make living in this area so special."

Energy bills side effects

Lockdown has brought new challenges for those staying at home while trying to reduce the carbon footprint.

InTouch team leader Poppy Taylor-Porter says traffic may have reduced, but side effects are evident with increased heating bills.

She said: "Hampshire County Council has a very helpful green campaign website, which includes tips on how to save on energy consumption which in turn will save you money."

www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange/whatcanido

Warning of traveller sightings

Travellers have been spotted reconnoitring areas around Segensworth.

Councillor Sarah Pankhurst says residents should contact her if they suspect incursions.

Warsash Councillor Trevor Cartwright is on a committee working with the Council and police to try to prevent invasions.

Last year, travellers threatened residents when they invaded a site in Hunts Pond Road, leaving piles of filth and dangerous asbestos, for which taxpayers had to pay to clean up.

Lockdown call to focus on noise standards

NOISY neighbours have become a major issue during lockdown, affecting living standards and mental health.

Titchfield Common Councillor Sarah Pankhurst said: "I want to discuss how important high quality housing is to mental health and healthy living."

"As Fareham Borough Council has agreed plans for the new major housing development at Welborne, I will be interested to understand the noise standards within housing, such as terraced and apartment living."

"We are at home for longer as well as working from home so general day-to-day living and

noise just with moving around can become a challenge."

The Government reviewed Building Regulations, especially for buildings above 3 storeys.

Sarah added: "I think this should go further because these regulations work on minimum standards."

"Noise drop levels are also tested for minimum standards and, unfortunately, when subjected to family living during a lockdown, then noise can become an issue affecting quality of life."

If you are finding lockdown life challenging for your mental health please call NHS111.

A gentleman and an inspiration



TRIBUTES have been paid to long-serving County Councillor Keith Evans who died from Covid-19 in Queen Alexandra Hospital in December.

He was County Councillor for Fareham Warsash Division and Borough Councillor for Locks Heath Ward. He was also Executive Member for Planning and Transportation.

"Fareham lost a truly inspiring, knowledgeable, self-effacing and brave soul," said Councillor Sarah Pankhurst.

"Keith was a real gentleman and gave me so much support leading to the 2012 local election. He was gently spoken and always kept calm."

"I remember Keith standing up in Council for several hours presenting the Local Plan and answering questions. He was dedicated to his family, friends and colleagues."

'Keep Fishers Hill traffic-free' say most residents



Walkers' delight: Councillor Tiffany Harper enjoys a safer, almost traffic-free Fishers Hill.

EIGHTY percent of residents support permanent measures to stop drivers using Fishers Hill.

It is currently closed temporarily, with access only for residents and deliveries.

And residents are delighted the lane is now much safer and a pleasure to walk along.

Hampshire County Council says it was set up as an emergency measure in line with Government advice to promote walking, cycling and social distancing during the pandemic.

And it has been a great success.

Between August and November, when surveys were undertaken, the average number of people walking on the hill had increased 338% and cycling was up 50%.

HCC says to reduce maintenance, such as moving the barriers each week for refuse vehicle access, it will replace the barriers with a temporary gate, or similar, that can be operated by the refuse driver.

"In the late spring we plan to undertake a public consultation to seek people's views on the scheme."

"The temporary gates (or similar) will be in the same place as the cur-



Fishers Hill has reverted to being a picturesque country lane.

rent mass barriers, with space at the side for people to walk/cycle/ or horse ride straight through."

Voting alternatives

THREE elections will be held in Fareham on Thursday, May 6 and there are different ways you can vote due to Covid restrictions.

Last year's postponed Borough Council elections, elections for Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Police & Crime Commissioner will take place.

Alternatives to visiting polling stations:

1 Postal Votes – Apply by phoning 01329 824588. Ballot papers will be sent to you with a pre-paid return envelope. Deadline is 6pm on Tuesday, April 20.

2 Proxy – Apply online by filling in a simple form on the Electoral Commission website or visit Fareham Council's website.

The French connection

ELECTRICITY is flowing between France and England as the massive sub-Channel project powers up.

Interconnexion France-Angleterre 2 (IFA2) was tested successfully in December and has now moved to a 90-day operational phase.

In this phase they can transfer low carbon electricity between the UK and France using IFA2's full capacity of 1000-megawatts – enough to power a million UK homes.

The 127-mile connection from Normandy surfaces south of Solent Airport at Daedalus and goes on to a large converter station north east of the airfield, from where 1 1/2 miles of underground cables link it to the National Grid at Chilling, near Warsash.

Don't risk jail or £50,000 fine

LOCKDOWN has given people the chance to clear out lofts and attics and tidy up their gardens.

Streetscene chairman Councillor Tiffany Harper says decluttering produces waste and there are proper ways to dispose of it.

Most charity shops are closed, so don't leave donation boxes in doorways and if you have to take rubbish to Segensworth tip, you'll have to book a slot via the County Council website.

Use a composter for garden waste and check what is acceptable to put into green and blue top bins.

If you use private waste disposal such as a skip or man-in-a-van, check they are accredited with a waste carrier licence.

If your waste is fly-tipped and traced back to you, then you face up to a £50,000 fine and/or 5 years' imprisonment.

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS Titchfield

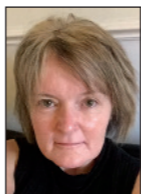


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Looking forward to a year of success and recovery

I know that many people are struggling with covid restrictions.

However, I sincerely believe that

2021 will be a year of recovery and success for us.

With Brexit finally done, this Conservative Government fulfilled its major promise to the British people, securing a historic deal with the EU which takes back control of our borders, laws, money and trade restoring our political and economic independence.

We have also delivered one of the most comprehensive economic responses in the world to support jobs and businesses during the pandemic, providing over £280bn in jobs support-including protecting 12 million jobs through the furlough and self-employed schemes.

Together, we are beating Covid.

Please note that I am on maternity leave until September following the birth of my daughter. My office remains fully functional and I continue to serve Fareham residents through my ProxyVote in Parliament and representation to Ministers in the usual manner.

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BRAVERMAN MP for Fareham



BUILDING on my recent visit to the Royal South Hants Hospital in Southampton to meet the team behind the Hampshire Research Hub, I am delighted that we as a nation have now passed the 15 million vaccinations milestone.

At the time of writing, the UK was the first country in the world to approve the Pfizer/Biontec vaccine and is one of the global leaders in its roll-out of the vaccine.

I know I speak for many people in Fareham in paying tribute to the front-line NHS staff and volunteers who have helped to vaccinate thousands of local people at sites like Fareham Community Hospital, Brook Lane Surgery, Portchester Practice and Village Pharmacy. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is



Suella at the Hampshire Vaccination Research Hub with Team Leader Professor Saul Faust and East Hampshire MP Damian Hinds.

also one of the leading Partnerships in the South East and the country, issuing over 100,000 doses in one week alone.

Community First are providing a safe, accessible and Covid-secure transport option for people in need.

For more information see www.cfirst.org.uk/transport/community-transport-to-vaccinations.

Win up to £25,000 on Fareham's Community Lottery

WANT TO to help good causes and be in with a chance of winning up to £25,000?

Then buy a ticket for Fareham's new Community Lottery which is now live online with draws taking place every Saturday, having started on March 13.

Tickets are on sale at £1 each, of which 40p will go to one of 55 local charities that have registered to take part.

When you buy a ticket, you can choose which charity you want to support.

Funding was awarded to set it up to One Community, whose Chief Executive, Jean Roberts-Jones, said it had been made possible through hard work by volunteers.



"This scheme will help provide vital support to good causes which have been hard hit by the pandemic and it's lovely to be able to offer a positive, simple way for them to increase their income and continue to support people in every generation from our local area."

Fareham Council's Executive Member

for Leisure and Community Councillor Sue Bell said: "I am pleased our Community Lottery tickets are now available to buy and would like to thank One Community for their efforts in setting it up."

"With 55 good causes registered to benefit from the scheme, every ticket purchased will contribute to the fantastic work they do across our Borough."

"I sincerely hope that Fareham residents will show their support now that tickets are on sale."

Tickets can only be bought online, either at www.farehamlottery.co.uk or by visiting Fareham Community Lottery facebook page.

Council's urgent action to prevent deadly ash tree disease spread

ASH DIEBACK disease is spreading through Western Wards woodlands.

Holly Hill Woodland Park and Whiteley have been affected, so has Wicor Copse, Portchester where 65 trees have to be felled.

Fareham Council started taking urgent measures in February to halt the spread.

It's caused by a fungus whose symptoms range from leaf and branch dieback to the

death of the tree.

Councillor Sarah Pankhurst said a high proportion of ash trees would die once infected, although a few might survive due to genetic factors giving them resistance.

Infected trees lose water content, so younger trees die more quickly.

She said: "Works to remove affected ash trees identified in the summer began last month when the trees were dormant and

the environmental impact would be limited.

"In many areas such as woodlands and semi-natural greenways natural regeneration will be encouraged, but in parks and open spaces trees will be replaced next winter."

Embrittled wood has implications for arborists who cannot use conventional rope techniques, so work on ash trees involves use of mobile elevated work platforms.