

Hampshire County Councillor Update – June 2021

Hello

This is my second update which covers June 2021. It's been a busy month.

Hampshire County Council Balancing the Budget Consultation

The greatest challenge facing the County Council is, unsurprisingly, that of financing its commitments.

Hampshire County Council's consultation, *Balancing the Budget* launched earlier last month and aims to gather views of residents and stakeholders across Hampshire on options to help the Authority deliver a balanced budget up to 2023/24. The official release said:

To date, by planning ahead and using reserves carefully, the County Council has successfully found ways to deliver services differently and more efficiently, securing recurring savings of £560 million over the past 13 years. However, the County Council continues to face a budget shortfall of at least £80 million over the next two years (2022/23 and 2023/24). Councils across England are facing the same budgetary pressures.

This requires us to make more tough decisions about what the County Council can and cannot provide in future.

Opportunities for reducing costs are getting harder to find which is why it is important that the County Council listens to the views of residents and stakeholders, many of whom are likely to be affected by the outcomes.

*The Balancing the Budget consultation runs until **11:59pm on 18 July 2021.***

We would like to hear from as many residents and stakeholders as possible. Feedback will help to inform areas where the County Council could focus on balancing its budget through to 2023/24 and help us to understand and consider the potential impact of any changes proposed.

It is important that residents and stakeholders are clear that no prior decisions have been made regarding the proposals.

People can take part in the consultation via the online response form on the webpage: www.hants.gov.uk/balancingthebudget

There will also be a full information pack about the proposals in the consultation on this webpage. Paper copies can be requested by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk or calling 0300 555 1375 and will also be available from local Hampshire libraries.



You will note there are a wide range of options up for consideration. They include a number of controversial proposals including charging for use of the waste and recycling centres, closing some of them, removing funding for school crossing patrols (with the expectation that schools will pick up the costs themselves), substantial changes to public health services.

As the release says, none of these options have as yet been agreed. My personal view is that the County are flying a number of ideas to see which attract the greatest amount of opposition and will make decisions accordingly.

I am greatly concerned about some of the proposals for the Waste and Recycling Centres, most particularly how those might impact upon Bunny Lane. Whereas, for example, I feel there is some opportunity to better align the County Council's public health role with NHS, and particularly CCG, services which do provide an opportunity for savings.

I would very much encourage you to comment on the consultation before 18th July.

Highways

I'm pleased to say that the repairs to Old Salisbury Lane have now been completed. I'm still chasing for the repairs to Scouts Lane in West Tytherley. They appeared on a list of works due in the last week of June but have as yet not been completed.

Here's the monthly report on Test Valley highway works



Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems:
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will add a comment as County Councillor, which should hopefully bump it up the priority list.

Footpaths

Footpath update this month includes agreement to install kissing gates on the Romsey Extra/Awbridge footpaths running to the south west of Audley Stanbridge Earls, subject to landowner consent.

I'm still working on the W Tytherley footpath issue, (this will take some time to resolve) and drainage work on the footpath in Lockerley which runs on the north side of the river Dun from Butts Green towards Dunbridge.

Planning

Hampshire County Council deal with planning applications in respect of minerals (quarry) and waste sites and also on their own land.

The Regulatory Committee of the County Council considered the proposal from Waltet Ltd , Salvidge Farm, Bunny Lane, Timsbury; to vary the hours of operation from 0730 to 1730 to 0630 and 1900 on weekdays and from 0730 to 1230 to 0700 to 1400 on Saturdays at their June meeting. This was approved, but with slightly amended timings to ensure work did not start until 7am on weekdays.

The application which seeks to obtain permission for a wash plant and to alter landscaping which is designed to hide the site from surrounding countryside will be heard by the Regulatory Committee at its meeting on Wednesday July 14th.

The consultation on the Raymond Brown application to extend their Roke Manor Quarry at Shootash has ended. It's anticipated this should be before the Regulatory Committee sometime in the autumn.

Waste Less

Applications for the Hampshire Waste Prevention Community Grant Fund are invited from now until 6 September 2021. The fund is open to community, neighbourhood, voluntary groups, parish, and town councils. Applicants should discuss their ideas with the County Council's Waste Prevention Team before applying - email waste.prevention@hants.gov.uk to arrange an informal discussion.

Grants are available for community projects which will introduce a new waste prevention, reuse or repair service to the local area - to help build a network of waste prevention services across the county. Full details of what can and cannot be funded, as well how to apply, are available online at: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20210628CommWastePrevGrnt>

Getting About

The extension to the Government's restrictions has curtailed many Parish Council meetings this month. I've attended meetings of Romsey Extra, Nursling and Rownhams, Sherfield English, Awbridge, West Tytherley and Lockerley Parish Councils (some in person, some virtually).

New Chief Executive for HCC

You might be aware that John Coughlan, the current Chief Executive of the County Council, is retiring later this month. His successor will be Carolyn Williamson, currently Director of Corporate Resources and Deputy Chief Executive of the County Council. This followed a prolonged and thorough process which culminated in a strong short-list of four candidates.

Carolyn joined the County Council in 2010 as Director of Corporate Resources and became Deputy Chief Executive in 2017. Among her many achievements so far, as well as her successful stewardship of the council's finances during tremendously difficult times, she has been instrumental in the leadership of HCC's unique and expanding shared services partnership with Hampshire Police and Fire and several other local authorities

County Council Activity

The final membership of County Council committees has been agreed, so I now know the bodies upon which I will be sitting. They are:

- Health and Social Care Select Committee
- Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee
- Children and Families Panel
- Corporate Parenting Board
- Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum Advisory Committee
- Hampshire Countryside Access Forum

I've attended a meeting of the County Council (to approve the new Chief Executive appointment), of the Children and Families Panel, Corporate Parenting Board and the Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee.

Contact

Do please get in touch if I can ever be of any help. For those of you using social media, I post very regular updates on many local issues including roadworks and planning applications on my Facebook page here: facebook.com/nickadamsking

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CLLR NICK ADAMS-KING
Caring for Romsey Rural

