



Wise **Tory** budgeting braces for end of Whitehall support

IT'S BEEN a financially challenging year for councils across Britain and there are rough seas ahead.

In Fareham, it's brought out the best of **Conservative** budgeting and wisest spending of your money.

Against the odds, we kept Fareham's council tax to almost the lowest in England for many years with zero rises, while maintaining services with declining government support.

In his 2017-18 budget speech, Council Leader Seán Woodward said another low rate had been achieved with a modest £5 a year rise for Band D properties.

The average home in Fareham is band C, so Borough Council services will cost them just 1p extra per day.

But in 2019, all government revenue support will cease and we'll be left on our own to generate sources of income, plus what we can get from business rates.

Your prudent **Conservative** Council anticipated this and

laid plans to generate income from property investment.

He said: "Only £6.3m of our £48m annual budget comes from council tax, so the Borough Council relies heavily on income from fees, charges and commercial investments.

"Days of living off income from cash investments are past with interest rates at record lows, so we began buying commercial property with good solid tenants (Tesco, Sainsbury's, Specsavers etc) providing a much better income.

"The commercial portfolio generates a 6% return and the buildings remain an asset to sell if the capital is needed.

"75% of the portfolio value is in Fareham. Recent acquisitions include Halfords, PC World, Argos and Dunelm at

Park Gate and a commercial building for Universal Tool and Production at Daedalus.

"Millions of pounds annually are now being generated and every £60,000 is equivalent to around 1% off the council tax bill."

WHAT BAND D PROPERTIES WILL PAY

Fareham Borough Council £150.22 (+£5)

Hampshire County Council £1,133.10 (+£53.82)

Hampshire Fire and Rescue £63.84 (+£1.24)

Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner £165.46 (+£5)

TOTAL £1,512.62 (+£65.06)

Fareham has lots to look forward to during the year ahead

Modest savings will come from moving Fareham Today magazine online.

We will now be publishing more frequent, shorter editions on our website.

If you'd still like a copy posted through your door or to receive email alerts you can sign up.

We welcome a well-known hotel chain that will bring a long overdue hotel to the town centre.

We have exciting ideas for making the centre a vibrant place and have put together some draft plans.

But we'd like your ideas on how we can improve it.

A splendid new play area will open in the summer at Holly Hill, Sarisbury.

School children are collecting items to put into a time capsule which will be buried there for 25 years.

It will add to the highly successful £9m Leisure Centre.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of flying at Daedalus, the former Fleet Air Arm HQ.

We've looked at its history and will be holding an event in the summer for the community to mark this historic milestone.

More details later.



POSITIVE steps are being taken to make better use of Fareham's £25m Community Hospital.

Since it opened in 2010, it's only operated a business week of 45 hours and just 40% of its space is used.

Putting Community Hospital to better use

Councillor Brian Bayford blames the original funding arrangement whereby community health partnerships (which paid for the build and maintenance) have charged commercial rent and demand separate leases for use of the rooms.

"This has led to the nonsense of no single person being in control and some NHS users seeking cheaper accommodation elsewhere.

"For example, community nurse staff are currently accommodated at the Office of National Statistics in Segensworth," he said.

In January, Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group agreed a single annual payment with the CHP for the rest of the contract.

The remaining issue is that of a single NHS manager, as CHP insist on appointing one to control useage!



Going swimmingly
Holly Hill Leisure Centre, opened by Olympic gold medallist Adam Peaty in October, is thriving. Over 2,500 memberships have been taken out and the £9m centre receives an average of 35,000 visitors a week. “This is excellent. We are delighted,” said Councillor Brian Bayford.

Elderly warned of scams
Recent scams targeting the elderly – including the false letters from Lloyds Bank – have brought a warning from Community Action Fareham. A Stubbington resident handed over £80 on the doorstep to a rogue builder who returned next day demanding another £120. The home help sent him packing. People are advised not to call numbers on letters, but visit their bank; hang up on cold callers; display a County Council ‘We do not buy’ sign on your door; don’t reply to emails or click links; ask a family member to check for you.

Potholes filled
Driving through Barnbrook Road, Councillor Brian Bayford noticed the surface was full of potholes (pictured). He promptly emailed a photo to Hampshire Highways. “A week later, I was pleasantly surprised to see the repairs had been completed,” he said.

Masked mayoral ball
There’s a different theme for this year’s Mayor’s Charity Ball – guests will have to wear masks. It will be at Ferneham Hall on March 31 with music from Sounds Alive. Tickets cost £45 each or £40 if you make up a table for 10 and can be obtained from the Mayor’s Office on 01329 824303.

Borough ends traffic order agreement

TRAFFIC regulations, which help to reduce congestion and parking problems and improve road safety, have been implemented by Fareham Council on behalf of the County Council since 2009.

But HCC has now moved the goal posts by cutting its funding for traffic regulation orders (TROs) and only supporting them in life-threatening situations.

Councillor Simon Martin said: “This would have resulted in Fareham having to find an additional £60,000 for undertaking a service that is a County Council function, adding 1% to council tax bills.

“As a result, the Borough Council had no alternative but to terminate the agreement and all TROs will now be the sole responsibility of the County Council from April 1.”

Residents who want to complain about traffic regulation should contact their county councillor.



TRO needed: Upper Brook Drive, Priory Park

Abbeyfield festive treat

THERE was plenty of good cheer around Park Gate area at Christmas.

Abbeyfield Court, a sheltered home offering supported living for the elderly, held its annual Christmas lunch for residents who enjoyed the cooking of manager Neil Thompson and his team.

PHOTO: Judith Arnold Boakes, residents’ committee members Hilary Wartig, Christine Cheshire, Sarah Clansey and Robin Kelly, who are volunteers at Abbeyfield, and chairman Gail Leitelmayer, Neil Thompson, housekeepers Alison Walker and Rita Burchett, guests Councillors Susan and Brian Bayford.



Residents’ alarm at knock-on effect of Lidl plan



FEARS of a huge traffic knock-on effect are mounting in Park Gate after Lidl submitted plans for a superstore at neighbouring Whiteley.

Councillor Simon Martin said residents would have received a letter from Lidl about their new store of 1,500 sq metres (4,920 sq ft) that they wish to build

on Solent Way.

Lidl say it will have 121 parking spaces, an in-house bakery and create 40 jobs.

He said: “You will all be aware of the increasing traffic concerns in Whiteley area and we have received several emails from residents concerned about the knock-on effect of traffic in Park Gate.

The site, which is in Winchester City Council’s district, is currently an overgrown wilderness, Councillor Martin said it was planned to take vehicle access off Solent Way, via the business park that connects to Rookery Avenue, Whiteley Way and surrounding residential areas, including Whiteley Shopping Centre and Swanwick.

He added: “I am seriously concerned about the traffic impact that this store would have on an already congested area and support the residents who have

contacted me about a store such as Lidl being built in this location.”

Residents who wish to comment should write to Roger Huxstep, the Winchester City councillor for this part of Whiteley (rhuxstep@winchester.gov.uk). Formal objections should be made to Winchester City Council who will make the decision.

Councillor Seán Woodward commented: “While further diversity of shopping on offer is welcome, there are concerns.”

He told Lidl’s senior consultant: “Road improvements planned for Whiteley are not planned and funded to facilitate a Lidl supermarket and its effects on the local road network.

“I await with interest the answer to my question about what measures Lidl will fund to mitigate the effects.”

New parkland opens

FAREHAM’S newest parkland and walks at Coldeast Meadows are open.

Interpretation boards are being designed for visitors to appreciate the flora and fauna on the lake-land paths, community orchard and meadows.

Dan Powell’s work can be seen elsewhere in Fareham and he will design several boards to be erected in the spring. The Council’s countryside rangers and Friends of Coldeast look after the area.

Councillor Seán Woodward said: “Most local residents will be unaware of this gem so close to Holly Hill Woodland Park and the new leisure centre. It is very accessible and beautiful and I am sure it will be popular.” **PHOTO** (l to r): Mark Trigwell (ranger), Rosie and Dan Powell, Seán Woodward, Helen Sosnowski (ranger)



Parliament visit for deliverers

VOLUNTEERS who give up their time to deliver InTouch were rewarded with a trip to the Houses of Parliament.

It was arranged by Park Gate Councillor Brian Bayford and the party included deliverers from neighbouring wards, Locks Heath and Sarisbury.

The group toured the House of Commons and House of Lords, then had tea in the Jubilee Tea Room with Fareham MP Suella Fernandes, who hosted the event.

All agreed it was a great day out.



Bids to make Sainsbury’s A27 car park access safer reach deadlock



MOVES to improve safety on the A27 Bridge Road at the access to Sainsbury’s car park have reached an impasse.

Councillor Simon Martin, who receives numerous complaints from residents, has been trying hard to resolve the issue.

He said: “Motorists are parking illegally in the zig-zag no-parking area and turning right out of the car park when they should be turning left and heading towards the Hunts Pond Road roundabout.

“The ‘No Right Turn’ sign is almost invisible and the parking of cars on the road is also causing problems and obstructing residents’ drives and pavements.

“On my latest visit, I saw a car turn right in front of oncoming traffic and nearly cause an accident, and I feel something needs to be done to try to improve safety before a serious accident happens.”

He has pressed the County Council on extending the central railing to prevent vehicles turning right across on-coming traffic, but this option was ruled out.

Engineers discussed it with Sainsbury’s, but considered the extension of the railings would stop delivery vehicles that have to enter the car park from the A27 travelling west.

Other suggestions are to extend the central reservation by painting hatched lines to discourage traffic crossing and to investigate formal measures to restrict right turns.

“We will continue our fight to improve the safety in this area. Let us know about problems that you witness and write to the County Council,” he added.

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WE SERVE YOU ALL

Whether you voted for us or not, your Conservative councillors promise the highest standards of service to everyone in the community. Contact us any time and we’ll respond personally within 48 hours.

COME AND JOIN US

If you support **Conservative** principles and would like to vote to select your Council and Parliamentary candidates, to attend social and political events or help us by delivering InTouch in your street, then why not join Park Gate Branch of Fareham Conservative Association? Please phone Brian Bayford on 01489 577772.

A clear plan for Brexit and an economy that works

The Prime Minister has set out a bold plan for a global Britain.

It contains 12 objectives including controlling our own laws, strengthening the Union, controlling immigration, protecting workers' rights, free trade with European markets and new trade agreements with other countries.

After a Parliamentary vote and debate, Article 50 will be triggered, enabling the formal process of withdrawal to begin.

All of this is set against a backdrop of the lowest unemployment in 10 years, the UK being the fastest growing G7 economy, the deficit cut by two thirds and Global businesses like Nissan and Google investing in the UK since the Referendum to create even more jobs here.

The UK's strength will ensure that we can deal with the challenge ahead!



Suella



FERNANDES MP for Fareham

Hundreds flock to Ferneham Hall for Apprentice Fair

EQUIPPING Fareham's young people with skills and know-how is crucial to ensuring that they thrive in the workplace, build expertise and boost business.

I am passionate about apprenticeships as a means of empowering the next generation and was delighted to hold my second Apprenticeships Fair in Ferneham Hall in January.

Hundreds of school pupils, sixth formers and job-seekers attended the day event, kindly sponsored by Segensworth-based manufacturers, Saab Seaeve.

With over 30 organisations represented, covering the IT, engineering, aerospace, marine, health services, care, military, naval and charitable sectors, visitors met employers, apprentices and learnt more about training and jobs.

Throughout the day, workshops were held at the Careers Hub on CV preparation, inter-



Suella discusses the fair with Saab Seaeve apprentices Jack Burgess (left) and Zach Coates.

view skills and presentation.

By the end of the whole day, some people even left with an offer of an interview!

Suella said: "Thanks to all sponsors and companies who made the event possible."

FAREHAM CONSTITUENCY NEWS

Progress on Fareham Community Hospital

We need to use Fareham Community Hospital better.

That's why I set up The Fareham Community Hospital Taskforce (pictured) last year.

The local CCG has now agreed to a pilot project which will enable the hospital to be used by more healthcare providers and will create a more centralised management system to help patients make better use of this valuable local asset.

Office of National Statistics visit Parliament

I was delighted to welcome Fareham's team from the Office of National Statistics to the Houses of Parliament.

We had a good discussion on the impact of the Digital Economy Bill related to the work that the ONS does.

Speaking up for Southern Rail commuters

The Southern Rail strikes have affected many rail commuters in Fareham. They are totally unacceptable, when there are no jobs at stake, no pay cuts and no safety implications of the new driver-operated doors.

I raised the issue in Parliament with the Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling, who urged the Rail Unions to call off strikes and come back to the negotiating table.



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Surgery dates

I will hold surgeries at different venues across Fareham. Please call to arrange an appointment to meet me.

Keep up to date

To stay up to date with all of my recent visits and speeches in Parliament please sign up to my newsletter at www.suellafernandes.co.uk/contact

Arrange a tour

I am happy to arrange tours of the Palace of Westminster for groups of my constituents.

To book please contact my office with a minimum of three months' notice, as they are very popular.