



# InTouch

SARISBURY & WHITELEY – Spring 2021

## Wise Tories had cash jab 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



### Praise for on-line teaching

Teachers and parents say the quality of remote learning at Sarisbury Junior School during lockdown has been very positive.

The Department for Education placed increasing expectations to deliver high quality curricula and online teaching for all children working at home.

InTouch Team Leader Joanne Bull said: "What has been special with Sarisbury Junior School has been their daily 'Azoom-bly' – assembly in a different format.

"Wherever children are learning it has been a way of bringing them all together with a real sense of closeness."

### Shopping centre layout changes

Major changes are in the pipeline for Locks Heath Shopping Centre.

Owners Newriver Retail have submitted an application to reconfigure the highway infrastructure, which seeks to:

- Restructure Centre Way access road, bus lane and shopping centre car park layout to improve circulation
- Remove Centre Way loop between the redundant PFS and the bus lane
- Change existing bus lane into a two-way road connecting to Centre Way and use as main access route for all vehicles
- Provide a roundabout junction on Centre Way to access main car parks
- Build a new bus turning facility on Centre Way at western end of shopping centre;
- Include additional planting within the car park, add extra cycle parking spaces
- Construct a decked car park above existing staff parking area to serve future development

### Branch surgery hope?

Councillor Seán Woodward quizzed the managing director of our local Clinical Commissioning Groups, Sara Tiller, on the lack of standalone GP surgery provision for the development North of Whiteley.

The existing Whiteley Surgery currently has to serve Whiteley and Locks Heath patients.

She agreed that some kind of branch surgery in a community building on occasions during the working week might be worth investigating.

## New owner for listed mansion

A BUYER has been found for listed Cold-east Mansion.

It had been refurbished and converted into 37 apartments and a function venue which opened in 2017, but sadly went into administration in 2019 and had to be repaired after a flood.

After its original closure in 1996,



to trade again and open this impressive community facility."

Councillor Seán Woodward persuaded the Council to locally list it.

He said: "It is terribly sad that the owners fell into administration and that the hard working staff lost their jobs.

"I very much hope the new owners will move the new owners will move

## Solution to prevent village hall flooding

URGENT work will be carried out to prevent Burr ridge Village Hall from flooding.

It's been happening for the past two years due to poor drainage and the layout of the entrances.

The Borough Council has approved a proposal to use curbing to deflect surface water run-off from the car park.

Councillor Seán Woodward said: "We are



confident that this work will prevent flooding from the water that seeps under the doors during heavy rain."

InTouch Team Leader Joanne Bull (pictured) said: "Burr ridge Community Association trustees work hard to run the hall for the local community.

"I really hope these works remove the worry of arriving to find the hall flooded after heavy rain."

## Seán tastes victory after 30-year battle for link route

YEARS of frustration and delays ended with the full opening of Bluebell Way to Curbridge, providing a northerly access to Whiteley.

County Councillor Seán Woodward campaigned for additional northerly exits from Whiteley for 30 years and is delighted.

He said: "Bluebell Way is helpful in providing northerly access and egress for Whiteley. Of even more help will be the completion of Whiteley Way to Curbridge which should help reduce traffic flows through Burr ridge, Swanwick and Park Gate.

"Work is under way to link Whiteley Way to the A3051 north of Curbridge by 2022. When this happens, I will be pressing the County Council to downgrade and traffic calm Botley Road through Park Gate and Burr ridge and to designate Whiteley Way as the A3051.

"Next we need to see Whiteley Way completed and a



Mission almost accomplished: Seán Woodward views the new link.

secondary school built in Whiteley."

Pupil numbers driving the need for a Whiteley Secondary School show that it will be needed by September 2026.

The link route was brought forward early in the development after a grant of public money from the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, strongly supported by Councillor Woodward.

It provides the access to Cornerstone Church of England (Voluntary Aided) School which will open in its new home in September.

There is still work to do on the road which remains private until it is adopted by HCC and that won't happen until it's completed.

Following sales of the first homes in North of Whiteley and opening of Bluebell Way, there will be several bus service improvements.

Services between Whiteley, Botley and Swanwick Stations, Segensworth and Fareham will operate hourly and later half-hourly Monday to Saturday. It is intended that the service will extend to Hedge End and Sundays will be added.



## £10,000 grants for good causes

ALL SMILES, and no wonder.

Locks Heath Swim Squad has just received £400 towards pool

bookings.

It was one of the grants County Councillor Seán Woodward made from his £10,000 community budget for Sarisbury Division. Other organisations received grants as follow:

•St Paul's, Sarisbury Green clock refurbishment £2,000

- Whiteley Wanderers U11 Argonauts kit £400
- Acts Of Kindness Community (Solent) vulnerable people support £2,000
- Swanwick Lions' Club Christmas Sleigh £600
- Hampshire Search & Rescue Ferno scoop stretcher £725
- Sarisbury Green Community Centre improvements £800
- Ripple Suicide Prevention development of online search suicide prevention tool £500
- Home-Start Hampshire toys and equipment for new children's support group £575

## Parents' school path plea

CORNERSTONE Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School will open in its new location, ultimately with spaces for 630 pupils, in September.

Parents contacted Seán Woodward (pictured with InTouch Team Leader Joanne Bull) about the length of the journey by road from Dickens Drive area where there is a muddy footpath linking the rear of Dumas Drive towards the school. He asked HCC to ensure the path is surfaced ready for the opening.



## GOODBYE TO JON BUTTS

SARISBURY Councillor Jon Butts has thanked constituents for their support after deciding not to seek re-election in May.

He said: "Of my four years' service, I will remember most the dedication and spirit of the community group volunteers I have worked with, and assisted where possible. They make a real difference to the lives of people and families in our area. Their ongoing commitment 'behind the scenes' often goes unseen, so I have been keen to encourage wider appreciation and recognition of their work whenever possible." Jon says he wants to make more use of his spare time.

## COUNCILLOR FOR SARISBURY



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## 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, why not join Sarisbury Branch of Fareham Conservative Association? Call Joanne Bull on 07956 081 239 or email joanne.sarisbury@outlook.com

**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.

## It's ding dong merrily on high as church clock tells the time once more

IT HAD not dinged for over a year and it was high time to get it ticking again.

Locals missed the clock chiming from the tower at St Paul's Church in Sarisbury Green.

Now, thanks to a £2,000 grant from County Councillor Seán Woodward's community budget

and a matching sum from the Borough Council, it's going like clockwork again.

The cash paid for the clock face and mechanism to be refurbished.

Seán Woodward, pictured at the church door with the Rev Sandy Matheson, said the Council and church had worked together to go ahead with the project for one of the most important listed buildings in the conservation area.



## Bid to prevent 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.

InTouch Team Leader Joanne Bull 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 than mature ones.

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 as limited as possible.

"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 the following winter."

Embrittlement in the wood has implications for arborists who cannot use conventional rope access techniques, so work on ash trees will invariably involve the use of mobile elevated work platforms.

If you have any questions, please contact Fareham Borough Council's Tree Team - trees@fareham.gov.uk





## 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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# Suella

## 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](http://www.cfirst.org.uk/transport/community-transport-to-vaccinations).

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

**WANT 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](http://www.farehamlottery.co.uk) or by visiting Fareham Community Lottery facebook page.



## The French connection powers into UK homes

**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, said Councillor Seán Woodward (pictured).

"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 Brit-

ish homes.

"By importing low carbon electricity, they estimate that within one year, the project will prevent 1.2 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from entering the atmosphere, equivalent to planting 50 million trees."

The 127-mile connection from Normandy surfaces at Monks Hill Beach 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, Warsash.

Website: [www.farehamconservatives.org.uk](http://www.farehamconservatives.org.uk) Email: [farehamconservatives@gmail.com](mailto:farehamconservatives@gmail.com)