

Hampshire County Council Divisional Report for Corhampton & Meonstoke Parish Council

Coronavirus (Covid-19).

Hampshire County Council is working closely with Public Health England, local NHS partners and other agencies to ensure we are all well prepared as the situation develops. Our priority is to ensure critical local services to Hampshire residents are maintained and that we are signposting people to the most up-to-date official sources of information and advice.

As of 0900 am today 27,476 people have been tested in the UK, of which 27,020 were confirmed negative and 456 were confirmed as positive. Six patients who tested positive for COVID-19 have died. As of 0900 yesterday there were 10 confirmed cases in the county.

General advice for Hampshire residents.

There are some simple but important steps we can all take to help minimise the spread of all viruses, including the Coronavirus. Follow Public Health England advice by **washing your hands for 20 seconds** using soap and water:

- when you get to work or arrive home,
- after you blow your nose, cough or sneeze,
- before you eat or handle food,

If unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand gel.

You should also cough or sneeze into tissues, then put them in the bin straight away.

NHS 111 has an online coronavirus service that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do. For more information on the symptoms and steps to take, go to www.nhs.uk/coronavirus For the latest advice for travellers returning from affected areas, plus guidance to schools and care homes, visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Use this service if:

- you think you might have coronavirus, or,
- in the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus – see the coronavirus advice for travellers, or,
- you've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus.

Council Tax

County Council approved £2.1 billion budget for 2020/21 on Thursday, 13th February.

At the meeting of the full County Council, budget plans for the upcoming financial year were agreed, which will see funding prioritised for vulnerable children and adults, alongside key investments in Hampshire's roads and infrastructure, and further commitment to tackling climate change.

Commending the budget plans to Council, Councillor Keith Mans, said: "The County Council has a strong financial track record. Our budget proposals are the result of some very careful planning which began last autumn to address significant financial pressures resulting from the anticipated shortfall in our revenue budget of a further £80 million by April 2021. We have set our course for the year ahead – to maintain high performing services for the people of Hampshire while keeping council tax the 2nd lowest of counties nationally."

The annual council tax charge for a Band D property will be £1,286.28 – an increase of 3.99%, or just over £49 per year or 95 pence a week. 2% of this increase will be spent specifically on adults' social care, in line with Government policy. The other rates, beginning 1 April 2020 for properties will be: £ Band A £857.52, Band B £1000.44, Band C £1,143.36, Band E £1,572.12, Band F £1,857.96, Band G £2,143.80, and Band H £2,572.56. Please note these taxes do not include precepts for WCC, the Police & Fire Authorities nor your parish council.

The priority remains protecting those who are most in need in our communities – vulnerable children, and the growing numbers of elderly people and adults with very complex care needs. A proportion of the Council Tax precept will be used specifically to meet adult social care pressures in 2020/21, and we continue to press Government Ministers for a long-term funding solution beyond 2021/22, as we simply cannot sustain growth in demand and cost indefinitely.

In the coming year, we will also be making significant one-off investments in Hampshire's future - with £3 million for maintenance of the county's 5,500 miles of roads and fixing potholes, and an extra £2 million of funding annually thereafter. Furthermore, and building on our commitment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, we will be investing an additional £2 million in carbon reduction measures across the Authority and initiatives to help make Hampshire more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate.

Maintaining Hampshire's strong and prosperous economy has also been reflected in the budget plans – through a capital programme worth £386.5 million over the next three years to boost jobs and the quality of the environment. This provision for Hampshire's infrastructure brings the County Council's four-year total investment in the fabric of Hampshire, to £733 million – one of the largest capital programmes in the country.

Schemes include:

- £94.8 million for new and extended school buildings in Hampshire to ensure there is a school place for every child in Hampshire – and giving a total of 19,100 new school places by September 2023
- £115.8 million for structural maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges in Hampshire
- £45.8 million for integrated transport schemes including over £10 million specifically focused on walking and cycling improvements
- £107.7 million for major improvement of school and other County Council buildings.

The County Council, like many other Councils, is therefore experiencing huge fiscal pressures and the Leader has made representations to the Prime Minister, corresponded with Treasury ministers and had face to face meetings with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) including the Secretary of State.

Cllr Roger Huxstep

Member for Meon Valley Division

11th March 2020