

The County Councils are under pressure as more cuts in the region of £80m are planned before 2021 and you will see information related to that titled Tt2021 in consultations and missives from HCC, and the press.

I cannot stress enough how money is being vired from one department to another to ensure the budgets statutory services are managed to achieve a balanced book by the end of the financial year: in many cases, £10's of millions of ££'s are being added to the departments' 'cash limits' mid-year to cope with the growing needs. County Councils are particularly under pressure because their statutory role includes Social Services -for adults and children.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) funding need is growing, but the money *per child* is diminishing. Despite the population living to a good age, the health of many of us diminishes in the last years, and we are told that the % of over 80's is growing rapidly.

The challenge for our Conservative run County Council is to extract money from the Conservative run Government to meet those needs. If not, this council ,like others, will be forced to cut even more if not all of the non-statutory services.(eg: Alresford Recycling Centre, Library, some elements of the countryside service)

Nevertheless,a decision was taken last week to **continue funding at least some transport to every community that currently has it**, commissioning companies to do this if necessary, and to continue the fund to buy new minibuses for community schemes.

At the same Decision Day, I was pleased to make my comments to the first paper on a **plan to improve the Adoption of Roads process**. Since my first formal question to Council (I think in 2016) I have been working with the Officer to describe the difficulties in my division for some years, and this paper links to that original query. This is a 'bit nerdy' but please bear with me! It's important to our residents and tenants!

It is complicated, but broadly speaking, currently, a developer can choose whether a road completes to adoption and potential buyers are purchasing on a false premise, which can lead to high Maintenance costs long term, and frustration for residents who think their road is adopted and councillors (who know the road is managed by a developer or private company). I made the point that these companies often control the hedges and open spaces too. The paper describes a 'bond' process which the developer pays as part of the planning permission, if there are 6 or more homes on the site. This provides peace of mind for the owners and the county who may have to pick up the tab later.

The CIL is a matter of confusion for Parishes-and it appears the Councils. The Regulation 123 list was written in 2014, and expected to be updated regularly (but wasn't) . It is a list which describes things that S106 (from larger developments) cannot buy, but which are cumulatively necessary (from smaller sites-and can be off site) to improve infrastructure. For a reason unknown to me, the City and County have never worked out exactly how the projects that could be funded from the current pot -of around £4million!!!-are delivered. A WCC paper threatening to take back the county pot of around £1.2 million has concentrated minds at HCC and I am writing to request funds of HCC now.

If you'd like to add anything to the list of requests, please let me know asap.

(My list currently includes Railings at West Street, Alresford, Improvement to footpath on Millennium Walk, Crossing at Sutton Scotney, Traffic calming at Old Alresford, flooding work at

Headbourne and Kings Worthy, hedge outside and footpath alongside railway at Micheldever Station, new signage for Northington village hill)

Although the Cart and Horses junction is the 'people's hotspot' , the A31 and A33 have had more than their share of accidents, and unfortunately, another young man, Ben Wilson, as a pedestrian, was killed on the A33 on the 23rd September. I have asked the County to document the last five years on both roads to see if there are general lessons to be learned that could be applied, rather than for individual changes for cases which are raised at the Inquest. I will report back.

The Lengthsman scheme is going strong- so I was glad to see Parishes contributing to the conversation. If you have any queries on the scheme, but not work/job queries, please direct them to me

It is expected that by 2027 over half of the cars sold will be electric and at the 'Café Scientific' meeting at the Discovery Centre, Ben Potter described the challenges and opportunities that will bring for us all as we share them in our homes and at work. I am asking all electric car owners in the division to contact me because I would like to set up a Forum for them to tell me what the Council should be thinking to expand the use of these vehicles.

It's been a Green week! The next day, I listened to a fascinating presentation by a food manufacturer who is developing non-plastic containers for ready meals. Little or none of these currently 'CPET' plastic containers are recycled. His company uses a by-product of sugar cane production. The presentation was at a Green exhibition at the Ageas Bowl, where I saw low energy-use home-warming systems which could be amazing for us all , but especially for those likely to suffer 'fuel poverty' in affordable homes.

Which brings me to the subject of Affordable Homes

I know that WCC officers have been talking to each Parish about exception housing, and the County is looking at its land holdings too. Currently land values for this sort of housing are around £10K-£15K an acre, dependant on services and site.

Please keep the conversation going in your parishes. I regularly work with tenants of private property, whose lives are transformed when they are allocated a council or RSL property rented to them as their *permanent* home. I see families struggling with living (health and social care needs sometimes bring this to my attention) because the space for their growing family is just too small, and they have so much potential to live better in a house or flat near family members who can support them.

We all see applications for the larger new private developments : they must offer up to 40% affordable for anyone-but these are not exclusively for local people, with local connections. Many people say, 'if we could add just a few more houses, the village would become more sustainable and families could help each other'.

You will have seen that the **Micheldever New Town proposal** is back on the page again. These households won't be exclusively for local people: but exception housing is. Please look at every possibility-exception sites can be small -as little as three or four homes if necessary- and consider how you could do this for your parish. It could even help *your* family one day?

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