

Cllr David Drew – Hampshire County Council – Report to the Houghton Annual Assembly

This has been a busy year for everyone, me included, as I have taken on the role of your County Councillor when Andrew Gibson stood down. This is an elected position, so there was no certainty about being elected! So a big thank you goes to all those who did support me, and a reassurance to everyone that I am here to serve the whole community.

Hampshire County Council has a huge budget of in excess of 2 billion pounds. Half of this is spent on schools and children's services, and one quarter on adult social care. As many will know, the local roads fall to Hampshire to keep in good order. This hasn't been easy as the budget is constrained. At Hampshire I pay a keen interest in education, sitting on the Children's and Young Persons select committee, as well as being a governor at two schools in the area. I also sit on the Hampshire pensions panel (as a deputy) which makes decisions about the nearly £10Bn of assets the County has under its stewardship.

One positive aspect of being a councillor is the ability to sign off grants to the community. Every County Councillor has a grant pot of £8,000 every year, and I always encourage parishes and other community organisations to apply if they have projects or events to support. In this respect I work closely with the Communities' team at Test Valley as well as the Test Valley councillors for this parish.

As some of you may have seen, I'm now the Chairman of the Hampshire & IoW Air Ambulance as well as a governor on the Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. This enables me to provide occasional updates to the Parish about front line medical services. Most prominent recently has been the increasing number of Covid cases in local hospitals. Fortunately most cases now have mild symptoms as a result of the vaccine programme.

Finally I would like to say thank you to the Parish Council and its clerk, and I look forward to working with the Houghton community over the next year.

David – 26th April 2022

Cllr David Drew
Test Valley Central (HCC)