

Hampshire County Councillor Report - January 2020

Cllr Andrew Gibson – Test Valley Central Division

Hampshire County Council

The law has now changed meaning opposite-sex couples can legally enter into civil partnerships. Previously only available to same-sex couples this has allowed opposite-sex couples to formalise their relationship as an alternative to marriage. Winchester Registry office has already made several civil partnership ceremony bookings.

On another issue, to date there has been no change in the funding arrangements for Local Government and HCC will still need to find £80M of savings over the next two years. Regarding Highways, the rain during December has left many roads damaged further and in need of repair. Also with the flooding in some villages, the drains will need re-cleaning. A programme is now in operation but is being delayed by high ground water levels according to Highways.

Wheelabrator, Harewood, Nr Andover

The Wheelabrator waste to energy Incinerator planning consultation, which closed on the 12th December 2019, has provoked thousands of letters and email in opposition to the project and very few in favour. There have been suggestions that the consultation did not meet all the conditions to render it as 'adequate'. We now need to wait to see the Wheelabrator response, but it is expected that they will move to submit a full national planning application in the spring.

Climate change

Cllr Jan Warwick has taken on the Climate lead role at the County Council. Hampshire County Council endorsed the decision to declare a 'Climate Emergency' in line with the action taken by many authorities in July 2019. In January 2020 Cabinet approved an action plan to provide a meaningful and effective set of measures to ensure that Hampshire moves towards carbon neutrality and greater resilience to the effects of climate change. Following this initiative some parishes have started to create their own Carbon Neutral strategies. I am happy to help promote dialogue and cooperation between Hampshire County Council and the parishes.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

A new resident permit system will begin operating later this year. It will be controlled by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and will ensure continued free access for Hampshire residents to any of Hampshire's 24 HWRCs to dispose of household waste, while access for non-Hampshire residents will be for a fee of £5 per visit. Charges for non-household waste, including soil and rubble, plasterboard and asbestos remain. Hampshire residents can register up to three vehicles via the Hampshire County Council website. The introduction of this system will allow those living outside Hampshire to continue to use Hampshire HWRCs while making a contribution towards the costs of disposal of their household waste in Hampshire. Hampshire residents, including those who live in Southampton and Portsmouth, will be able to register for free access to any Hampshire HWRC from 19 December 2019 at www.hants.gov.uk/vehicle-registration-hwrc For residents without internet access, please call 0300 555 1389 to register.

Library Consultation

While it is proposed to keep 37 Libraries open, there will be some closures if the proposals in the consultation are adopted hence it is important to express your views. The consultation begins on 9th January and details plus the documentation is available on the HCC website.