

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

4 DECEMBER 2017

1. Transformation to 2019

The County Council is facing considerable challenges to identify the £140m of savings needed within the coming two years. Regrettably, the Chancellor's Budget on 23 November did not include any substantial measures to ease the financial pressure on local government.

Around £20m is being found through corporate housekeeping including a change in accounting practice relating to minimum revenue provisions in respect of depreciation. The other £120m of savings which need to be found means an average reduction of 19% for each department. Delivery will have to extend beyond two years, due to the difficulty of implementation, but this will be supported financially by "cost of change reserves" held by Departments, with the exception of Children's Services. Officers have been instructed by the Full Council "to continue to explore all viable options to revise or refine these proposals with particular regard to service continuity in areas such as community transport, school crossing patrols and waste and recycling centres, in consultation with partners and stakeholders as appropriate."

The programme risk apportionment exercise has resulted in £85m (61%) of the overall amount of £140m being classified as Amber or Red. This mostly relates to adults and children's services. 11 separate service specific consultations are planned to take place in 2018 with the bulk of the exercises likely to occur in the second half of the year.

We continue to lobby Government in respect of new charging powers aimed specifically at raising income that will be used to protect important universal services e.g. Household Waste Recycling Centres.

2. New fund for waste reduction initiatives

The County Council has launched a new grant fund supporting local communities and organisations to help people reduce waste. To mark European Week for Waste Reduction, the County Council is inviting applications from local organisations for up to £5,000 to support them in delivering projects, products and services which prevent household waste.

Example projects could include (but are not limited to):

- Sharing, hiring and rental services, such as for baby products or home wares and equipment.
- Educational activities on home management, such as cooking, food preparation and storage, sewing and growing your own food
- Community engagement activities to increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of preventing waste, for example events, films and social clubs
- Digital projects that make preventing waste easier or more convenient, such as the development of an app or an online hub
- Repair and upcycling of furniture and other household items
- Redistribution of surplus household food, for example via community fridges
- Introduction of local services that enable waste prevention and reuse, such as community composting and tool libraries

At HCC we know that some of the best work in waste reduction goes on at a local level with groups sharing knowledge or providing facilities and we want to encourage these initiatives and inspire more. The closing date for applications for the Waste Prevention Community Grant Fund is 31 January 2018.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential projects with the County Council's Smart Living team prior to submitting an application. Please contact the team via email: waste.prevention@hants.gov.uk to arrange an informal discussion.

For full eligibility criteria and more information on the Grant, including how to apply, visit: www.hants.gov.uk/grants/environment-grants.htm

3. Plans for the new assault course at Queen Elizabeth Country Park

A £2m investment program is getting underway at QECP. Up the hill at Juniper car park, the Forts and Fleets project is close to completion. We at HCC are working with the armed forces to bring military and civilian communities closer together through a shared love of nature and the great outdoors. Armed Forces Covenant Funding is helping us improve the park with a new play area, assault course, community space and dog activity trail. These will be ready early in the New Year.

Meanwhile back in the visitor centre we're showing our new plans for the centre. This includes making the restaurant larger, moving visitor reception, a flexible hall space and landscaping the front and rear of the building.

4. New winter fleet keeps Hampshire moving in icy weather

The latest technology fitted in the new winter fleet means that salting operations are as efficient as possible, that salting is accurate, and there is no salt wasted. Highways teams monitor conditions constantly, from October through to April, and send out the gritters when road surface temperatures are set to hit zero or below, and frost or ice is likely. The winter vehicles have state-of-the-art Euro VI efficient engines, are fitted with snow ploughs, and with the latest technology, which provides:

- Satnav guidance
- Programmed and automatic salting of roads so no salt is wasted
- The ability to vary the width of the road treated for more accurate and effective salting
- A record of which roads have been salted and when

Highways teams use localised weather forecasting and roadside weather sensors around the county, constantly monitoring conditions to make decisions about the best time to salt the roads, where to salt and how much salt to use. Road surface and air temperatures, wind speed and direction, rainfall, and ice formation are all important factors in putting the winter fleet to work. Roads are treated with salt before temperatures drop to freezing to try to stop frost and ice forming. Temperatures and conditions can vary significantly even within one county, so, winter teams look at three distinct weather bands: north, central and coastal. This helps decide when and where to put the winter fleet to work.

Highways crews will always salt Hampshire's main roads first. These 'Priority one' routes cover approximately one third of the county road network but carry the majority of Hampshire's traffic; covering A roads, some B roads, major bus routes, roads to hospitals and other key emergency hubs, large schools and colleges, areas of high traffic concentration and public transport interchanges. During periods of prolonged severe weather, Priority two' routes, which include remaining B roads and single access roads to villages, may also be treated.

We've a full stock of salt for the winter, with 20,000 tonnes of salt ready in barns which are strategically placed across Hampshire at Hook, Havant, Bishops Waltham, Weyhill, Totton, Micheldever, Dummer and Petersfield - and stocks are topped up when needed.

During severe weather, everyone can do their bit in their community to keep pavements and smaller roads not covered by the main salting routes clear of ice, by using the salt provided in the blue or yellow community salt bins. There are around 3,700 across Hampshire, and all are now re-stocked and full for the winter. All it takes is about one tablespoon of salt (20 grams) to treat one square metre of road or pavement surface. So, used sparingly, a full salt bin should last through the worst of a severe winter.

Find out more about priority routes and where to find your nearest salt bin on the map at this link:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/severeweather/salting>

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