

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS**

5 JULY 2024

1. General Election outcome

I would like to congratulate Damian Hinds on his re-election as MP for East Hampshire. I would also like to congratulate Greg Stafford on his election as MP for the new Farnham and Bordon constituency (which includes Greatham within Petersfield Hangers Division).

Both campaigns were competitive and I believe that all parties deserve credit for showcasing our thriving, healthy democracy here in Hampshire. I spoke to many people in both constituencies about issues like affordable housing, nature recovery, pollution, climate change, schools and roads. I acknowledge that your elected representatives now need to work together at pace to tackle local challenges. I can promise that I will work with Damian Hinds MP and Greg Stafford MP (and HCC will work with the new government) to ensure that we deliver tangible improvements to the quality of life for communities in East Hampshire.

2. Delay to Future Services Consultation decisions

As a result of the General Election, and conventions around making significant decisions during an election period, the democratic scrutiny and Cabinet decisions on the County Council's SP25 savings proposals were postponed until later in the year. The new Leader Nick Adams-King has reassured the public that he and his Cabinet colleagues have heard the concerns of the public which were raised in the consultation into the proposals.

County Councillors know that the retention of HWRCs and School Crossing Patrols, maintenance of vital community transport routes and the continued provision of homelessness grants to the end of their planned contract term are important to both the public and to our partners.

3. South Downs Local Plan Review

From Monday 8 July to 13 September 2024, SDNPA will be consulting on the scope of their Local Plan Review. I am sure that you will want to check out this consultation when it launches on Monday. It could be an opportunity to make some important points. Here is a link to the page:

<https://sdnpalocalplanreview.commonplace.is/>

4. Skills Bootcamps

I would like to give a plug to the HCC Skills for Life initiative, which offers Skills Bootcamps to the public. This scheme has just received an extra £3.8m in funding from the Department for Education; this was a great vote of confidence from the government. I would like to encourage Parish Councils to raise awareness of this initiative through your channels.

At skills bootcamps, individuals are supported to re-train, upskill or start a brand new career. Businesses can use the scheme as an excellent recruitment tool to fill current and future vacancies.

The website is available at this link:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/skillsbootcamp>

This latest round of funding will enable training to be offered to at least 1,000 learners and will include training in coding, construction, engineering, project management, early years education, health and social care, and hospitality and tourism. I hope you will agree that this is a service which can really benefit our local economy if we all promote it widely.

5. 2024 Awards for Parish Councils and Clerks

I feel fortunate to work with great Parish Councils and Clerks. I hope you will consider applying for the Council of the Year and the Clerk of the Year awards this year. Many of you will be in with a strong chance. When Councils and Clerks receive these accolades it delivers a great boost to the whole community. The deadline for applications is 13 September so there is still lots of time to apply!

Here is a link to the relevant page:

<https://www.hampshirealc.org.uk/news/hampshire-alc-comms-awards-2024/>

6. My next report

Just a reminder that I do not normally send out an August report because most Parish Councils do not meet in August. My next report will therefore be on 1 September. I hope you all have a good break over the Summer if I do not see you beforehand.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers