

Leader and Corporate Strategy Portfolio – Cllr. Richard Millard

Corporate Performance

Following consideration by Audit Committee, the East Hampshire Quarter 1 Performance Report will be published on the Authority's website. Headline achievements for this quarter are:

- We continued to help more than 600 local businesses by distributing Covid-related support grants as the country came out of lockdown.
- Planning permission has been granted for the Havant Thicket Reservoir which will safeguard water supply in the borough for decades to come, as well as providing a recreational asset for local residents to enjoy
- We pledged almost £1 million to help make the Whitehill and Bordon Health Hub a reality.
- The local elections in May were run smoothly despite the additional Covid-19 safety requirements
- The mobilisation phase of Shaping our Future has been completed, following the all member briefings, overview and scrutiny meetings and approval of the business case and associated resources by Cabinet.

It does need to be noted that, due to nationally recognised issues with driver shortages, increasingly significant parts of some waste collection rounds are not being carried out to schedule. This has started to impact on residents, as reflected in the latest report. Plans are already in train, to address this.

Environmental Services

As detailed above, we are continuing to operate Garden Waste collections although they are currently running behind schedule. Norse are providing additional resources, including weekend working, wherever possible to catch up with the delayed collections and we are hoping to see these numbers fall over the coming weeks. We will keep the situation under close review especially as we enter the autumn season when Covid and other illness may increase.

Residents are encouraged to continue to leave their bins in their usual collection place, log their missed bins via EHDC's website: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/bin-collections> and sign up to <https://my.easthants.gov.uk/> for regular updates.

Leisure

The Leisure contract continues to deliver impressive metrics from its recovery. Currently, performance is exceeding the most optimistic predictions from the recovery modelling.

Monthly membership subscriptions are back to pre-pandemic levels. The recovery of the membership base is driving increased attendance and income generation.

Month on Month attendances are currently growing at 8% and have surpassed pre-pandemic baselines. The Swim school program is now delivering almost 3,000 lessons per week over the contract.

EHDC, with our Partners at Everyone Active and other stakeholders, has developed the 'East Hampshire Locality programme'. The project aims to address health inequalities through partnership working to create sustainable change. It is funded through a successful bid by the operator to access funds from the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (**ARRS**) administered by the Primary Care Network (PCN).

EHDC is leading this way with this pilot. It is the first model to be developed with a leisure operator following the pandemic. The pilot will go live in East Hampshire in October. There are plans to replicate the model and roll it out across 13 other local authorities in the South East.

The New WH&B leisure centre hosted a Family open day on Saturday 11th September. The event was the first opportunity to celebrate the success of a new fantastic facility delivered in the most challenging of circumstances.

Whitehill & Bordon Update

Following the 1 July meeting where Cabinet agreed to contribute nearly £1M of developers' contributions and Eco-Town fund, District Council officers continue to work with project partners to deliver the planned new Whitehill & Bordon health hub.

A new drive-in cinema opened in mid-July in the former parade square in front of the Sandhurst Building which has been decorated with public art. Together with the new leisure centre this brings another facility to add vibrancy and improve the leisure opportunities in the town.

In addition to the Town Centre, new houses continue to be built, the next stages of the green loop (a 7km walking & cycling route around the town) are being installed as well as wayfinding markers and signs to help people navigate the route.

EH Commercial Services

The easing of Government restrictions has allowed the Company to transition back from Covid Marshal work to Enforcement. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the Company for their work as Covid Marshals. Their ability to adapt quickly and skills in engaging residents in difficult circumstances and to supporting local businesses has been exemplary.

The Company is now focussed on its core services and is on track for a solid recovery from Covid. The prospects for growth are excellent. Two Partners are looking to extend, we are now delivering services with Adur and Worthing, and are in discussions with three potential new partners. The company continues to innovate.

The first revenue from Courts costs has been received for our new prosecution service. Working with Petersfield Town Council, we have issued our first penalty for littering using video evidence and are providing additional environmental patrols for Alton Town Council. The Council's reputation as an innovative, collaborative, trusted partner continues to grow.

Deputy Leader, Welfare and Community Engagement – Cllr. Julie Butler

Charity Walk For Peace

Charity Walk For Peace took place on Saturday, after being cancelled in 2020. We were very lucky with the weather and over 40 walkers took part including representatives from the chosen charities, Damian Hinds and Councillors. Along with the main walking event, some walkers chose to do a route near where they lived to avoid large crowds etc. It was a great event and glad it was able to happen this year, my thanks to everyone involved. We are now planning Charity Walk for Peace 2022.

Community Cop 26 Event

We are working with Damian Hind's team and Cllr Mocatta to organise the CC26 Climate Change event on 8th October taking place at the Alton Maltings. We have a number of guest speakers including Lord Deben as well as three local Action Groups who will talk on key subject areas of buildings; transport; and land use and agriculture.

As well as these presentations we have an exhibition fair with a variety of local eco groups and organisations, as well as an electric vehicle display so guests can learn more about electric bikes and cars. The event is free, and guests can book to attend via Eventbrite.

EHDC Community Chest Lottery Fund

On 1st September the first round of EHDC's Community Chest Lottery Fund was launched! Good Causes have until 30th September to apply for grants of up to £1000 for a Community project. There is approximately £8000 up that can be applied for. All applications will be taken to the Grants & Awards Cabinet Liaison Panel for decision.

Grants Dashboards

The Community Team will soon be publishing their Community Grants Dashboards on the EHDC website. These are user friendly dashboards which show where the Supporting Communities Fund and Cllr Grants funding is being spent. The dashboards show who has spent what, where, and on what type of activity or project. The dashboards are an upgraded version of the Word tables which are currently used.

Pinewood Village Hall

Cabinet have approved the release of £792,000 of developer contributions for the conversion of Pinewood Village Hall into 10 'pods' for homeless people. This project is a UK first, supporting both the Council's effort to address homelessness and the climate emergency. Work is expected to start on site in the Autumn and complete mid-2022.

The Affordable Housing Cabinet Liaison Panel is proving to be a great success, with all members highly engaged with the work underway in the Housing Team. A sub-group has formed and met several times to set the priorities for the Housing Strategy, which will evolve over the coming months.

Governance and Legal – Cllr. Nick Drew

Health and Safety (H&S)

No issues, risks or concerns to report. All monitoring of H&S processes and contractors continues to ensure compliance.

Further review of office space has been undertaken and covid controls continue where needed.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee meeting took place in July 2021, no issues to report, minutes are available on Skoop+.

The Councils Out of Hours service at EHDC and HBC, continues to offer support, advice and guidance to members of the public and partners when the offices are closed.

Business Continuity (BCP)

No issues, risks or concerns to report.

Review of P1/P2 critical functions has been undertaken to ensure there is sufficient resilience in the council to continue to deliver these services if reasonable worst case scenario re staffing levels was realised.

New Corporate and Service plans templates have been created to reflect the service changes and feedback during the pandemic, both now reflect the command and control protocols.

Potential for cyber security threat has increased. A review is underway to consider how this risk is best managed to ensure the resilience of IT systems and the continuity of service delivery.

Emergency Planning

Annual training programme has taken place for the Emergency Control Centre staff. New roles and arrangements have been introduced within the (ECC) across the County to streamline and simplify the approach.

Annual exercise to test ECC staffing to take place during September.

We are reviewing the Adverse Weather Plan in conjunction with several other teams in advance of winter weather e.g. snow. Flooding guidance booklets are being reviewed and updated.

Strategic HR and OD

Transformation

HR and OD work activity continues for the transformation programme. Focus now is on the development of a pack of “OD tools” for heads of service to use alongside the toolkits being developed by the team working under Vicki Potts and Sue Parker. We are also working on the development of a performance scorecard in conjunction with Matt Goodwin and on the Spans and Layers project commissioned from the LGA.

Future Working

The trial went live on 19th July. Weekly stats on usage are monitored which indicate that building usage is low. Activity is underway to explore how to create usable collaboration spaces for teams. A further survey will go out to staff in October 2021.

Employee Wellbeing

The third employee wellbeing survey closed, and feedback went to EB prior to discussion with Unison and further circulation. Several key measures have been identified are being put in place to support staff and have been added to the Wellbeing Action Plan. Employee wellbeing continues to be prioritised in light of both covid 19 and the future working styles trial.

Learning and Development

The e-Learning system has been relaunched and staff and councillors are reminded of the mandatory courses and timescales for completion. Work also continues on the development of a digital L&D passport which will apply to all staff and will set out the requirements for L&D on an annual basis.

Performance Management

Implementation of a revised approach to performance management has been developed by the HR advisory team, following approval by Executive Board. Implementation will be supported by learning and development opportunities in relation to performance management provided by our L&D providers and by the in-house team who are presenting a number of focused “bite-size” sessions both live and on-line. This supports the PDR and talent modules within the existing My View software package.

Recruitment

The team are working with the supplier and supported by the Communications team to launch the new recruitment and applicant tracking system later in September. This will enhance the digital use of recruitment processes and streamline the way recruitment and onboarding is delivered.

Equality and Inclusion

The team are supporting the Councils' lead officer to ensure we have a robust workforce plan in place to dovetail with the overall strategy.

Communications and Marketing

-Charity Walk for Peace promotion

- COP26 East Hampshire promotion – branding, press releases, webpage, online event sign-up

- Design for digital-based bin calendars

-Developed branding for the Creative Footsteps festival – as well as overall promotion of this

-‘Welcome Back to East Hants’ brochure designed and written – which will be distributed to homes

Website update:

Since the start of this year, the website has had:

- More than 210,000 visits
- Searching and commenting on planning applications was the most viewed page on the website
- Bin collections was the most viewed service area
- The website was mainly viewed from London, Alton and Petersfield
- 53% of users access the website from a mobile device – mainly using an Apple iPhone.

Website changes

There are on average 30 updates made to the website each day to ensure it is relevant and up to date.

Coronavirus

The website has been updated to reflect the legal restrictions being lifted (step 4 of the roadmap). Although restrictions have lifted, there is still a strong emphasis on managing the risk to ourselves and others. In the top six boxes, we have created new icons and links to 'coronavirus testing' and the 'vaccination programme.'

The 'coronavirus testing' page includes information such as the different types of tests available and the reasons to get tested.

The 'vaccination programme' page includes how to book your vaccine and how to avoid scams.

There are also many links to the GOV.UK website and the NHS website which provides additional information.

Supporting Afghan evacuees

A new page has been created on the website to outline the council's role in helping Afghan evacuees - <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/supporting-afghan-evacuees>

Our housing team is doing everything it can to work with partners to help house Afghan families.

Welcome back campaign

The welcome back campaign has been launched on the website to support residents and visitors returning to the district's high streets and visitor areas - <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/welcome-back>.

Accessibility update

New accessibility regulations came into force in September 2020 which ensures the website can be used by as many people as possible.

The last accessibility test was on Tuesday 24 August 2021. The test was carried out by [Site Improve](#) who gave this website an accessibility score of 94/100.

Social media

Since the end of the first quarter of 2021-22, our social media channels have continued to grow.

Now that we are in level four of the coronavirus guidelines, we have been posting more business as usual content. During the summer holidays, we have been sharing information about local events, for example the upcoming COP26 event and the Charity Walk for Peace.

Our most popular post on Facebook during August was about the volunteers who have planted wildflowers on the grassy verges off Butts Road and Borovere Gardens. This post was seen by more than 29k people and received 112 likes.

Legal & Democratic Services

Covid-19 - Legal Services' team members have now returned to the office on a part time basis; they are continuing to work from home for the remainder.

Permanent Recruitment – 3 new team members have been recruited to fill vacancies for permanent solicitor roles in the areas of property, planning & litigation. The first of these is to start next week and thereafter the remaining two in October and November respectively.

I would like to welcome to Democratic Services Emma Carlyle, who is on Secondment for a year. Emma has worked for the council for 5 years and comes to us from the Executive Team.

Planning – Cllr. Angela Glass

Planning Policy Committee

Following the call for sites last year and the Large Sites Consultation process, ten sites were submitted by landowners for consideration as suitable, sustainable, locations for large scale future development. The District Council has to consider all sites that are put forward.

On Tuesday 6th July, the Planning Policy Committee which comprises ten members from the three main parties, following a long debate, approved the Spatial Strategy strategic choice of Chawton Park Farm, Alton, (Option 2), among other Options, as the preferred site for future development of up to 1,200 homes. This choice will go forward in the Draft Local Plan. This site will be Recommended for Approval at the next Council meeting on the 23rd September. In addition to Chawton Park Farm, there is additional land which is suitable for development, for up to 819 homes, which has been identified at the Garrison site at Whitehill and Bordon. This site was originally chosen to take the bulk of the identified need during the Plan period, but subsequently, following consultation with Natural England, it was recognised that sufficient mitigation, (SANG), could not be provided, which led to the reduction in housing capacity and the necessity to choose an additional site for development. Consultation work on all the identified Option sites will continue over the next months, ahead of the Regulation 19 consultation process which is due next Spring.

Local Plan Working Group

This cross-party group continues to meet on a regular basis in order to discuss progress on the Draft Local Plan, and to receive new information from Planning Policy officers about the Draft Local Plan 2017-2038. The Option choices for large development sites were considered by the LPWG prior to identifying the final four choices which were brought to the Planning Policy Committee.

Development Management

The team continue to be very busy, with only a small reduction in the number of minor, mainly householder applications being registered. Site visits by officers have recommenced subject to risk assessment.

On the 1st August there were changes to planning legislation. The first is a new requirement for buildings over 18 metres, or 5 storeys in height, to submit a fire risk strategy as part of the National Requirements for applications. The second are changes to the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) under which all parts of the new Class E use class, can change to residential with just a prior approval. Class E now replaces Class A1, A2, and A3, B1 and B2, and D1 and D2, Business classes. Planning permission would still be required for the alteration of the external appearance of a building.

Planning Committee

The next Planning Committee is due to take place on Thursday 14th October..

Finance – Cllr. Charles Louisson

Finance

Exchequer services cover processing of invoices, purchase orders and cash handling, which is a shared services with Havant Borough Council. We are in the process of reviewing processes that are currently in place to improve these services and streamline efficiency.

Work to finalise the financial outturn and Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 is underway. Due to volume of transactions associated with grants processed during the pandemic as well as Covid-related delays in the initial phase of accounts preparation we are unlikely to meet the statutory reporting deadline for accounts, and we are working with our external auditors to complete this as soon as possible.

We are also reviewing pandemic related risks to the 2021/22 budget and this will be reported back to Councillors and built into the 2022/23 budget setting process.

Business Grants

During the coronavirus pandemic, East Hampshire District Council issued nearly £46 million in grants to more than 2,600 local businesses. The grants were delivered over 12 different schemes set up between March 2020 and July 2021.

The Council has successfully applied for further grant funding of £1,100,000 for its discretionary scheme (Additional Restrictions Grant), having fully spent the original allocations of £3.3 million.

Council Tax

We continue to achieve excellent results for the collection of Council Tax. Results for 2020/21 show that EHDC is the tenth best performing council nationally, an improvement of one position over 2019/20.

We are currently working on the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) annual comparison between Council Tax Records that hold a single person discount and the Electoral Roll. This is a national scheme that most authorities have signed up to and EHDC has been involved in the scheme for over 8 years.

The NFI highlights other individuals registered to vote at a property where the Council Tax Records shown a 25% single person discount has been granted. Enquiries are made by way of a review form as to why these individuals are linked to the address. In many cases the address is used for voting purposes where the individual lives abroad, or it is a Student living away during term time.

The matching of both registers enables us to ensure that our records are up to date, accurate and highlights those accounts where a single person discount needs to be cancelled.

Throughout the review we will regularly update the NFI website producing data as to how many searches are carried out, how many single person discounts are cancelled as well as their value. During the 2020/2021 financial year we carried out over 770 reviews with 102 single person discounts being cancelled which resulted in an extra £21,700 Council Tax falling due.

Customer Services

Reception re-opened to the public in June. The number of visitors has remained low, on average 5 per day, the majority of which have either wanted signatures for proof of life for their pension, to drop off documents, make a cheque payment, or they have come to us in error (e.g. wanting lateral flow tests, wanting the Taro or the Festival Hall). We have made use of the virtual meeting room once in order that a customer could meet with a Benefits Officer face to face. The virtual solution worked well.

Insight

The third wave of the COVID-19 residents survey was conducted over the summer and the results are now being analysed. The data – including details on mental and physical health, trust and understanding of COVID messaging and impacts upon personal finance – is currently being presented to relevant colleagues to inform the Council's work moving forward.

We also continue to provide economic dashboard updates to the Business and Economy Recovery Group on key statistics such as the local and national labour markets, UK GDP and business outlook, which continue to show signs of recovery. For instance, the claimant count rate in East Hampshire has reduced below levels seen in March 2020 for the first time since the start of the pandemic and the numbers of residents claiming furlough support is at its lowest level since the scheme was introduced, reflecting a general trend of optimism in the national economic outlook.

We will continue to monitor these factors, especially with the end of the national furlough scheme in September and feed this data to the above group to inform forward actions.

Elections – Registration

We have started our annual canvass writing to every property in East Hampshire to make sure the register is up to date ready to publish on 1st December.

The new way of running the canvass means that the number of forms that must be returned by households is reduced which cuts down on both paper and postage costs.

Community Development, Placemaking & Infrastructure – Cllr. Robert Mocatta

Environmental Services

Waste services

The ongoing difficulties in crewing refuse collection vehicles continue nationally and locally and it seems unlikely there will be a quick solution to them.

We are continuing to operate Garden Waste collections unlike many councils, although because of the statutory and public health need to focus on refuse and recycling it is the first to be affected when there are staffing shortages. Garden Waste collections are currently running behind schedule in East Hampshire. Norse are providing short term additional resources, including weekend working, wherever possible to catch up with the delayed collections and are medium term resourcing improvements.

We will keep the situation under close review going into the autumn when Covid and other illness may increase.

EHDC has provided some additional resource to assist Norse with the catch up on outstanding bin delivery numbers and we are hoping to see these numbers fall over the coming weeks.

Residents are encouraged to continue to leave their bins in their usual collection place and to only log their missed bins via EHDC's website where only their bin has been missed after a collection has taken place: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/bin-collections> and sign up to <https://my.easthants.gov.uk/> for regular updates.

Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning

Grass cutting is continuing throughout the District. NSE are currently on the 4th cut of the season. Progress for each cut is still taking longer than usual this year due to the length of grass, however with this drier, warmer weather we are currently experiencing we are hoping the grass growth will steady and the crews will be able to make better progress.

Hedge cutting and shrub bed maintenance has started and the crews are working their way around the District.

Street cleaning service have been continuing as normal with no service issues to report.

The council is currently working with Norse South East, Hampshire County Council, Chevron TM and Highways England to schedule in and plan the next litter pick of the A3 and A31.

Place-Making Update September 2021

I am pleased to report continued good progress with place making projects across the district and ongoing liaison amongst all tiers of local government to support delivery of important place making projects:

- East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) is working in partnership with Hampshire County Council (HCC), Network Rail (NR) and South Western Railway (SWR) to deliver the Alton Station Forecourt Enhancement Project using developer contributions and SWR funding. We are currently obtaining property, telecoms and landlord approvals. We anticipate starting construction in Spring 2022.
- The redevelopment of the former Molson Coors brewery site in Alton progresses with demolition work well underway. The Development Liaison Panel meets regularly and coordination continues on the car park works at Manor Car Park and the Community Hub between the District Council, Alton Town Council and Hampshire County Council and CALA.
- The District Council, Hampshire County Council, Petersfield Town Council and South Downs National Park Authority continue to work together on a list of priority transport and travel projects for improving pedestrian safety and promoting active travel in Petersfield. Currently at pre-feasibility stage to outline the scope with consultant team and hope to proceed with workshops later this year.
- The Land East of Horndean site is still awaiting completion of the S106 legal agreement. The S106 Agreement negotiations still are being progressed on Havant Thicket and the stakeholder groups have started.
- Work continues across various teams in the council, plus at all levels of local government within the district, to carry out the next stage of the government's re-opening road map, the "Welcome Back Fund". This is aimed at welcoming people back to our high streets, tourist attractions and green spaces. This includes helping to fund the Creative Footsteps literary festival in East Hampshire (2nd to 10th October), as well as other potential projects. Meanwhile, the retail reports by Heartflood, the consultant commissioned to carry out business engagement work earlier in the year, are in the process of being finalised with a view to publish in October.

Climate Change & Environment – Cllr. Robert Mocatta

EHDC is planning for the local COP26 on 8th October to be held at the Maltings, Alton. We have confirmed Lord Deben as keynote speaker. The event will include presentations from our three panels, all chaired by local residents and involving EHDC residents, businesses and community groups like ACAN and PeCAN. The event will be part of EHDC's "let's talk" programme, and is a significant community involvement. We are encouraging residents to attend either in person or virtually. Full details are on:

[COP26 East Hampshire | East Hampshire District Council \(easthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.easthants.gov.uk/cop26-east-hampshire)

Economic Development and Rural Affairs – Cllr. Ken Moon

Apprenticeships

The Council's apprenticeship grant scheme continues to receive applications from businesses keen to support local people into local jobs. Six apprenticeships have been secured this year with a further 3 applications pending. The scheme has proved popular with local businesses, especially SMEs and is a key part of the council's priority to support young people into work.

Jobs Fair

We are currently working with DWP to hold another virtual jobs fair on 4 October for Havant & East Hampshire residents, after the extremely successful event held October 2020. The Havant and EH job fairs held last year had the highest participation level in the West of England region.

This is a key opportunity to connect local job seekers with local vacancies and further supports the council's focus on supporting young people.

Creative Footsteps Literary Festival - 2nd to 10th October 2021

As part of the Welcome Back Fund programme, the Economy Team (working closely with Communications and GIS) is co-ordinating a Literary Festival in October to encourage people to continue to visit the beautiful places across East Hampshire as the seasons change. The focus is on the area's literary heritage, with walks and talks taking place every day.

For more information, and to access a map of self-guided walks please visit:
<https://www.easthants.gov.uk/creative-footsteps>.

Rebel Business School

Just a reminder to Councillors that the Rebel Business School (formerly Pop Up Business School) will be delivering an online course to East Hampshire residents and businesses from 18th to 22nd October 2021. The course provides training in all aspects of starting and running a business, including digital skills and e-commerce. This follows a highly successful course delivered last year which a high level of participation across the district. This is being delivered in partnership with Havant BC, New Forest DC and Waverley BC and is part of the Council's economic recovery programme.

Neighbourhood Quality – Cllr. Ingrid Thomas

Parking

September brings the start of a new school year and a new focus for the Parking team. CEOs will be working closely with local schools to address parking issues at drop off and collection times.

Schools will be contacted by the team to better understand any issues that they may experience during the course of the academic year. This will then inform the work undertaken going forward.

The team will be taking a phased approach, methodically working across the district with local schools. To feed into this work, the Parking Service would welcome any local information that councillors may have regarding schools in their ward. If you would like to make contact the email address is seniorceo@easthants.gov.uk

Traffic Management

Progressing through the TROs

Have completed the guidance notes for Councillors on the TRO programme (no feedback from Councillors as yet)

Continue to have positive meetings with Hampshire County Council regarding the Agency Agreement.

Community Safety

Work continues on the Public Space Protection Order and progress is positive. The final draft is now with our legal team.

A small number of enquiries have been received more recently, from parish and town councils, and the team continue to liaise with stakeholders to work through the issues raised and provide clarity with regards to what the Order covers.

Environmental Health

With COVID restrictions lifted the services are working towards addressing the backlog of work accumulated due to the challenges and additional responsibilities imposed by the pandemic. We are producing recovery plans to outline our methodology, and trying to recruit to vacant posts to ensure we have the resource necessary.