

Update from Hampshire County Council – November 2021

Parish and Town Councils and Community Organisations invited to apply for grants to tackle climate change

Hampshire County Council is offering grants to make community buildings more energy efficient as part of its commitment to combatting climate change. Measures that could be funded include solar panels, LED lighting, window replacements or insulation for buildings such as village halls and community centres.

Hampshire County Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and is committed to becoming Carbon Neutral by 2050. Grants will be available for projects that can demonstrate how they will contribute to these targets. The amount of funding available for any one project will depend on the overall level of demand, but there will be an absolute upper limit of £30,000 for any single organisation.

The funds will benefit community buildings by helping to install energy efficient measures. This could include LED lighting conversion, improvements to heating systems, window replacements or solar panels. Smaller grants are also available to undertake energy performance audits prior to any larger work taking place.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20211028climatechange grants>

HCC to look again at options for a 20 mph speed limit on residential streets

As a result of my question about electric vehicle charging points at the HCC full Council meeting on the 4th November, Hampshire County Council's Executive Member, Councillor Rob Humby agreed to look again at the option of a 20 mph speed limit on residential streets in town and village centres. The review will be undertaken by the chairman and members of the Environment, Transport and Economy Select Committee. I will support any application which meets the criteria (once set) and on the basis the community supports it. Further details will be available soon!

Boost your immunity this winter

Hampshire County Council is lending its voice to the NHS call for everyone to 'Boost your immunity this winter' by getting the COVID-19 booster and 'flu vaccine.

With COVID-19 infection rates continuing to rise across the county, eligible residents are being urged to get their booster and 'flu jabs as soon as possible. Respiratory viruses such as Coronavirus and 'flu spread more easily in the colder, wetter winter months and Prime Minister Boris Johnson has issued a call to arms urging everyone over 50 to get their booster jabs when they get the call.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/271021winterimmunity>

County Council agrees steps to improve bus services in Hampshire

Hampshire County Council has made two significant decisions geared towards improving bus services in the county. Firstly, approving a countywide Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for submission to the Department for Transport and, secondly, adopting a policy that will enable the County Council, as the local transport authority, to take action when unauthorised vehicles are found using bus priority measures.

The Authority's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) sets out the vision and the proposed steps that would be taken to achieve higher standards in bus travel in Hampshire. It aims to achieve a substantial increase in bus use across the whole of the county by creating the conditions that will both attract investment for bus services and infrastructure, as well as grow the number of passengers.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20210111busserviceimprove>

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County Council's first Climate Change Annual Report published

A detailed overview of Hampshire County Council's work towards tackling Climate Change - over the 12 month period since the launch of its Climate Change Strategy - has been reported to the Authority's Cabinet Members (12 October).

This first [Climate Change Annual Progress Report 2020 – 2021](https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20211012ClimateChgAnnualRept) sets out the significant progress that is being made across the county to reduce carbon emissions and ensure that Hampshire is prepared for the impacts of climate change. The work is focused on key areas like reducing emissions from transport, making homes more energy efficient, generating local renewable energy and protecting and enhancing our natural environment. The report also highlights how the County Council is working with partners to support residents and communities to take action and make their contribution to tackling climate change.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20211012ClimateChgAnnualRept>

Closing the budget gap - Hampshire County Council Cabinet considers options to address £80 million revenue shortfall by April 2023

At their meeting on 12th October, Hampshire County Council's Cabinet has weighed up a range of proposed options for closing a budget gap of at least £80 million faced by the Authority by April 2023.

Following Cabinet members' consideration of proposals for individual service areas last month, together with Hampshire residents' responses to this summer's Balancing the Budget consultation on options for addressing the anticipated revenue shortfall and the potential impacts, the Cabinet as a whole, has now approved the Authority's medium term financial strategy and financial savings programme to 2023. Recommendations will now go before the full County Council on 4 November for a final decision, following which some proposals may then be subject to further, more detailed consultation.

By law, the County Council must deliver a balanced budget. Every County Councillor is alert to the extent of the financial forecast and it will be for all Members, when they meet at the start of November, to reconcile a sustainable way forward. Based on the outcome of that meeting, Hampshire County Council will prepare the Budget for determination, next February, including next year's level of council tax.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/12102021Cabinetbudgetproposals>

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