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Subject: Monthly Report to Parish Councils - November/December

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FP

Dear All,

First, my regrets to Swanmore as I will not be able to attend the Full Parish Council Meeting scheduled for the evening of the 30th November.

I would imagine that all are aware of the Covid-19 Plan B plus that came into force last week end. To me it the message was two-fold

- Use a face covering in retail stores, on public transport, and in restaurant's/cafes.
- Take sensible precautions regarding entry into 'crowded' situations.
- take the opportunity to get your 'jabs' - that now includes a booster for all above 18 years old.

Your City Council has a number of face-to-face meetings e.g. Cabinet, Scrutiny, Planning, Health and Environment Policy Committee, and Business and Housing Policy Committee. These are 'balanced' by a plethora of Briefing Meetings that are on-line via MS Teams.

The Agenda for the face to face meetings are to be found at the City Council website under the 'Council Meetings' diary. Exempt papers usually related to Finance are available to City Councillors if they sign an Non Disclosure form.

A paper is being presented to the Health and Environment Policy Committee on Tuesday 7th December. It about the future Waste and recycling (HEO20). It was written before the Environment Act received its Royal Assent and suggests that WCC will introduce a collection of household food waste in the future. There is minimal information as to how it will be financed, but it represents a switch from trying to persuade people to reduce food waste to one where they wish to collect it to improve recycling rates (?). It would involve an extra 120 litre bin for each household, and the transport of food to a, so far unallocated' anaerobic digester producing methane, and compost. As methane is a major global warming gas and additional transport will be needed to transport the food waste (carbon miles?).

Local Plan:- We are expecting more details about the SHELAA sites that have been chosen for development. These are surely going to be controversial especially for those of us outside the SDNP but within the PfSH area. - - So far we do know that not all of the SHELAA sites will be chosen for housing; some will be for wildlife corridors, some for 'Open Spaces' some for business.

- The required Housing numbers are a little disturbing. PfSH especially Southampton has a 'shortfall' so far as Housing is concerned. We now know that this will mean a requirement of an additional 5,800 houses for WCC (outside the SDNP) plus the 2,600 that Winchester's allocation.

- City Councillors are told that the Strategic Planners are holding meetings with Parish Councils. Unfortunately your local councillors are not informed as to when, or where these meetings are held.

Central Winchester Regeneration:- Continues making very slow progress with few signs as to what, or when. We are advised that the CWR Special Planning Document still exists, and is a base document. This is on the City website under Special Projects. There has been some archaeological work done (bore holes, and a ground radar investigation) but as yet no report. The Kings Walk section is at one moment cancelled, at another being revitalised. The old St Clements Surgery site is being continued and to be developed as an 'open space' link between Friarsgate and the Broadway.

No progress on the Broadway. That is waiting for further progress on the Winchester Movement Study (WCC/HCC Project)

Recent Cabinet papers relating the Air Quality Management area suggests the reduction of parking in Central Winchester, combined with the introduction of variable parking fees designed to discourage high emission vehicles. So far Winchester has established 91 electric charging 'stations' Some are in Bishop's Waltham, some in Wickham, others in Alresford, and Denmead. Most in Winchester itself. Word of warning about the e-charging points related to blocks of flats. They will not work unless each has a sub meter to calculate the cost. Apparently in some cases the cost has been shared around all of the flats even if the resident does not have an e-vehicle.

I note via the media that there is an effort to encourage householders with off street Parking to lease their charging point to neighbours. Don't know how that will work. HCC has a trial running to attach charging points to lighting standards especially where there are terraced housing, or even flats.

Some of you will be aware that we now have an update to the Environment Act 1995. It is the Environment Act 2021. Information on the Government website suggest an impact on Clean Air, on Waste Management, on sustainable transport, and on Biodiversity, on water management, along with Planning. It is apparently unusual in that most Acts of Parliament are 'enabling Acts and we have to wait for Regulations following. This was a mixture of enabling, and regulations so in some cases Local Authorities will have to move to introduce measures quickly. The Act also establishes an Office of Environmental Protection (OEP) to supervise the introduction of the measures included in the Act. I understand that this is part of Defra but only time will tell as to who is in charge.

There is still no movement on the Station Approach Development. The cabinet has put that onto the 'back-burner'.

It is proposed that a free bus service from the Broadway to the new Winchester Sport and Leisure Centre.

You may have read in the Hampshire Chronicle about the controversy over the agreement with Southampton University School of Art that is located in Winchester relating to the old Leisure Centre at Riverside Park. It would seem that the Cabinet has signed a document giving them rights over 5 years, leading to a 150 year lease. It is not entirely clear what the Universities plans are but there is a suggestion that the Indoor Bowling rink will be given a new building and the skate-board park will also have a new site. A cultural Centre on site has been mentioned. Unfortunately there has been no consultation about the proposal, and the idea seems to be ignoring a Covenant that lays down that the site may only be used by the people of Winchester. That seems to exclude any University development as that will not be for local people!

As I 'sign-off' let me warn you to watch for the papers coming before Cabinet on December 8th, and the 15th. It would seem that little of non of these papers will be debated by Full Council in January.

Sincerely, Frank
Cllr Frank Pearson
Central Meon Valley Ward

