

### **Local Authority Funding**

Local authorities are calling for a “significant injection of funding” from the government, after a recent report showed that councils across the country could be facing a £51.8 billion funding black hole over the next six years. Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Southampton City Council (SCC) are asking for certainty over the funding they will receive from government in the future. This comes after a report published by the County Councils Network (CCN) revealed that only “bare minimum” services will be possible in the future unless extra funding is provided. CCN, which represents county and unitary authorities across the country, warned that in some cases even yearly council tax rises and making services more efficient will not be enough.

### **New study underway to encourage recycling**

Hampshire County Council is carrying out a study to find out more about what Hampshire residents are throwing away. It's part of a drive to increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste disposed of each year and to increase recycling. Hampshire has been criticised for lower recycling levels compared to other counties. Although the recycling figure is lower, Hampshire also sends far smaller amounts to landfill because of its partnership with Veolia to harness energy from waste.

### **More vehicle charging points for Hampshire**

Electric cars are sparking a green revolution in Hampshire. Hampshire County Council is speeding ahead with its roll-out of electric vehicle charging points, to help residents and visitors get plugged in. The latest Department for Transport statistics detail the number of registered electric or plug-in hybrid cars, vans and micro-cars called quadricycles in Hampshire. Over 2018, the number of registered plug-in vehicles in the area increased by 55%. At the end of 2017 there were 2,547 electric vehicles in Hampshire. By December last year, that figure had grown to 3,948, a jump of 1,401. To fuel the growth, over the next three months, 136 charging points will be installed across the area using the County Council's framework; an investment of almost £370,000.

### **Toxic caterpillars invade UK**

"Toxic" caterpillars are invading Britain and experts are warning that the insects could trigger painful rashes or deadly asthma attacks. There has been a sharp rise in the number of sightings of brown-tail moth caterpillars this spring, and children at one school have been banned from going too close to bushes infested with them. Many sightings have been reported across southern England, including Devon, Hampshire, Dorset, Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire. At Kimpton primary school in Andover, Hampshire, pupils aged four to 11 have been banned from going too close to bushes in the playground because of terrifying webs which are crawling with the ugly bugs.

**Cllr Roger Huxstep**

**Member for Meon Valley Division**

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