



Dear villagers,

Welcome to my latest Hampshire County Councillor web newsletter for Bramshott and Liphook and my County Council Division. The previous issue was posted on the website of each village in my County Division and this time I have tried to make each one a little more personal to each village. I hope this makes the report a lot more personal to you.

In addition, I have started writing this on a two-monthly basis and I'll see if this is what you want. Do please let me have any feedback.

Don't forget I also publish interim newsletters in the same places on the web, if there is important news that can't wait, (such as the 18 'bus). On top of all this I also write a report to your Parish Council once per month in time for their Full Council meeting. I also attend every other Full Council meeting in person.

News for Bramshott and Liphook



Surface Dressing Liphook

I drive those roads several times a week in the course of my role as County Councillor and as far as I can see the road surface is now greatly improved. Many lessons were learned in that situation and I hope we won't have to live with those problems again.



Bohunt School

In the previous report I mentioned that I met with the Head and Deputy Head and we discussed issues that the school had with the County Council. It's worth bearing in mind that the school is an Academy and so has a high degree of independence from the County Council. Nevertheless I felt there were issues that would benefit discussion and so I organised a meeting between the three of us and the HCC Area Director for Children's Services.

It's not really appropriate to go public on all the discussion but we certainly made progress on;



1. Various funding issues, including the deployment of Developers' Contributions and the Government's funding changes for 2013-14, the result of which was that in future we should all be able to satisfy ourselves that the school has received the best deal available.
2. Ongoing relationships, with a programme of follow up meetings to ensure that the benefits of the Academy's independence are not compromised by a perceived distancing from the County Council and
3. Some procedural and reporting matters that needed clarification.

Working with local schools is not just interesting to me and a part of my job, but it's also greatly facilitated by my position as a member of the HCC Education Advisory Panel.

Lowsley Farm Development

You may recall that in my capacity as a District Councillor for Grayshott I am a member of the EHDC Planning Committee and I voted against the Lowsley Farm planning application. However the committee gave its consent and now as your County Councillor I am assisting local residents and councillors to deal with the consequences.

These consequences include drainage and sewage and the highway proposal for the new roundabout. I have secured a commitment from the Environment Agency that they will scrutinise the developer's proposals for drainage and sewage from the 155 dwelling development. This is essential as the heavy rain in late Spring and early Summer caused serious flooding on the site and in the drainage systems that the development would feed into.

The highway issue concerns the location and design of the roundabout. I'm satisfied that the officer's view that the design is adequate is correct, but it remains the case that in terms of safety, adequate is what it says and that is not "the best". A safer solution could be designed if the developer released land from the proposed development which improve sight lines and reduce congestion. This remains an option open to the County Council at any time.

Liphook Laundry

Another story covered by the Liphook Herald and BBC South, concerns grants made to Liphook Laundry. Shortly after I was elected as your County Councillor, the ladies who run the laundry approached me for a grant from my Devolved Councillor Grant. At the time I'd never heard of it. However I soon realised what a boon it was to people who had difficulty doing their own laundry.



My experience of that problem is with older people who are less able than they used to be but I know that the list of users includes other sectors of society. Last year I was pleased to make a grant of £500.00 from my County Councillor devolved grant budget and this year as Community Forum Chairman I was also able to approve a District Council grant towards the new washing machine.

Developers' Contributions

This story was given prominence in a recent edition of the Liphook Herald. It's another example of roles overlapping slightly because as a District Councillor, I chair the EHDC Community Forum for the area including all of the parishes in my Division, (plus Lindford and Bordon and Whitehill). Although these jobs are quite distinct, it seems silly to refuse to discuss my District role in front of the Parish Council when it affects the parish directly, even though I attend as County Councillor. So I take the common sense route.

Developers' Contributions are paid to the District Council by property developers when the development causes a loss of, or increased demands on, open spaces, transport, affordable houses and so on. The money is held until a suitable project under one of these headings comes along. The District allows the Parish and Town councils to come up with the ideas and

in the case of Bramshott and Liphook, the ideas are presented for approval at the Forum meeting I chair. However, the contributions can time expire if not used and may have to be returned to the developer. So it makes sense to use them fairly promptly and to take care if they are being saved for a long term project.

I am very aware of the needs of Liphook United FC and essential improvements to recreational facilities. The parish council also has some slightly smaller, (but still significant), projects which are faster to deliver and fit better to the money available today. So my advice was rather than save up the money for the bigger projects such as LUFC facilities, spend it on the smaller, faster delivery projects. The LUFC project is very large and may never be funded from developers' contributions, so I have suggested another way to secure the funding and make that project happen.

With luck, we can achieve all of the goals, use all of the money and achieve some near term results as well.

Bramshott Lanes

Another story you will have seen in The Liphook Herald is the campaign to calm the speeds and driving styles of some road users in Bramshott, especially in Tunbridge Lane, Church Lane, Church Road, Rectory Lane and Burgh Hill Road. I was made aware of this by one of your District Councillors, Angela Glass and since then I have engaged the services of a senior highways engineer to try and solve the problem.

So far we have completed traffic speed and volume measurements and are now working on provisional solutions. Speed limits along Tunbridge Lane are certainly justified but at 30 mph will need repeaters every 200 yards. That will be a debate for consultation. Slightly more in keeping would be rustic "gateways" at the entry points to this area, with picket fencing panels, speed limit and other cautionary signs and an information sign about the area being entered. The gateways are very effective at sending a clear message that in this area you need to drive with moderation.

This project is continuing but should be completed this financial year.

Other Highway Issues

Hammer Lane Bramshott

It's interesting how these issues come up in batches and I've been working on another school footpath problem in Bramshott. If you send your children to Woolmer Hill School, (which of course is in Surrey) and they walk or cycle to school, you'll know that there is a nasty bit of road in Hammer Lane with no footpath between the A3 underpass and the crossroads with Woolmer Hill Road. Several of you have written to me about this and I promised to investigate.

So, the first thing to confirm was which county was responsible for the road. It's a real squeak but from the Geographical Information System, (GIS, a sophisticated computerised mapping system), it looks like the road is in Hampshire even though the houses along the road are in Surrey.



I carried out two site visits, one with parents of a pupil at the school and one with a senior Highways manager from Hampshire County Council. We have agreed the responsibility for the road is with Hampshire and so I now have a small team working on a solution.

The footpath could go on either side of the road subject to land ownership issues. The open side is owned by the MoD and they have no objection. On the houses side it looks as though some of the highway has been encroached upon judging by the hidden street light, (!!!) and so it is also possible to put it there. Obviously the advantage of putting it on the houses side is that there is no requirement for pupils on foot to cross the road.

Once again, this assessment is being carried out in the school holidays. Although the school is in Surrey, at the school's request I am keeping them informed and I know that HCC Highways are also talking to Surrey CC Highways.

Portsmouth Road South, Bramshott

I have been asked to approach Surrey CC over the lack of a centre white line along the new Portsmouth Road South in Bramshott. The road is in Surrey and there nothing I can do *directly* but of course residents of Liphook, Bramshott, Grayshott and Headley all have good reason to use the road so I need to try.

When the tunnel project was designed Paul Arnold told me that this stretch of road would hardly ever be used because people would use the Hazel Grove junction. As a result they proposed to treat it as a quiet country lane with no lines or lights.

As we now know, it's one of the busiest roads in the area and we all get scared witless when we meet a careless driver coming the other way along the middle of the road! All I can do is contact Surrey CC and see if they will consider our concerns. The problem is that I suspect very few Surrey taxpayers use the road!!

Parking at Liphook Junior School

When I attended the Annual Parish Meeting last Spring, this was a hot topic of concern. At the time there was an embryonic voluntary scheme just commencing and it was hoped that this scheme would alleviate the problems significantly. I promised to hold off and allow time for that scheme to be effective and review it again in September.

So, next month I will be following up the progress made. I will need to assess if County Council involvement will be required. If you are involved with this voluntary scheme, or you are a resident of Avenue Road or a parent who drives to the school, please drop me a line with your views to help me decide what to do next. Thanks.

General Activities Covering all Three Parishes

The 18 'Bus

The final bureaucratic hurdle to ensure the funding for the 18 'bus has been surmounted. The service will now continue as is. In the meantime HCC will out the service out to tender to ensure it is operated at the best value for money. We just need to be careful that there is no attempt to reduce the service frequency.



East Hampshire District Council Community Forum

Yes, I know this is my County Council newsletter! However as a District Councillor for EHDC, I am Chairman of the Community Forum meeting for the north east of the District. This meeting covers all three parishes in my County Council division, as well as Lindford and Bordon and Whitehill.

As the chairman and partly influenced by my role as your County Councillor I have agreed with EHDC's officers that the agendas for these meetings will be "multi agency", i.e. district and county matters will be covered with officers from both councils and also any other agency relevant. So on the 17th July we had a meeting to discuss everything to do with HIGHWAYS including car parking, potholes and speeding. As a result we had the Police attending as well. Despite terrible publicity, we had a superb attendance and one and half hours of questions.

And that's the point of these meetings. I don't think you want to sit through endless "PowerPoint" slide presentations with someone droning on at you on a topic you don't find interesting. Much better, in my view, is to choose a hot topic, have NO PRESENTATIONS at all other than an intro and then let you ask any question on the topic you want to. My job is to assemble a panel that can cover the ground. Then, hopefully, the content will be very relevant to the audience because it will be driven by questions. I have a way of ensuring no one member of the audience can dominate, by the way!!



The next one is on HEALTH and is on the 16th October at 6.30pm at Lindford Village Hall. There will be District, County and NHS officers there at the very least. Unless you are lucky, it's the nearest you'll get to BBC Question Time locally. I'd love to see you there!!!

Whitehill and Bordon Master Plan; Its Effect on You

In the previous report I told you of my concerns about the suggestion from HCC's highway strategists that the B3002 and the B3004 should become strategic distributor roads from the enlarged Eco Town at Whitehill and Bordon. I'm very pleased to say that this seems to have been a case of misleading phraseology and at a meeting held in Winchester, the strategic planners assured me unequivocally that this would not be the case.



In fact, their plan is to actively discourage traffic from the town from using those roads and they will route traffic for the A3 via the A325.

Other Highway projects

Within each parish there are a large number of highway projects that I have on the go. They vary from "a glint in the eye" through to in progress and completed. I have now completed the construction of a project management spreadsheet and I update it for every Parish Council full council meeting. It's available to the public and in some cases you will be able to see it on your local parish website. Otherwise I or your parish clerk can send you a copy.

Engagements

I've enjoyed some wonderful meetings lately.

I attended the Annual Presentations Assembly at Grayshott Primary School and I was honoured again to present the certificates for effort and achievement and also to present the Jon Hills Trophy, (a cup which I donated), for outstanding community service.

I've also attended the opening of the refurbished Grayshott Sports Pavilion, a protest demonstration and photoshoot in Bramshott for safer lanes, a cheque presentation to Liphook Laundry and another cheque presentation for the Heatherlands Forever garden scheme at Woodlands Hall, Headley Down.

County Councillor Devolved Grant

You may recall from previous newsletters that each County Councillor is allocated a grant budget called the Devolved Grant budget. I am able to make grants with immense freedom, although there are a small number of policy exceptions. The County Council policy and the relevant forms can be found here;



<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/grants/county-councillor-grants.htm>

As you know, I apply an annual focus to grants I make from the general budget. This helps to spread the sum of money a little wider. For 2012/13 my focus is to be Children and Young People, (last year it was Deprivation). As always, it has to be a grant for a project or a tangible item; I prefer not to make general grants towards "running costs". It must also benefit people within my division, exclusively, (within practical limits of course).

So, if you think you have a good idea for a project that benefits children and young people in my County Council Division for about £500 to £750, please get in touch with me before filling out the form. My email address and 'phone number are at the foot of this newsletter.

In addition, the new "Environment" devolved grant is likely to come into effect in September. At an annual rate of £10,000 there will be £5,000 available for the remainder of the civic year. I'm still awaiting the definition of what "environment" means in this context, so please don't apply to me just yet!

Rural Broadband

As you know, I am the lead councillor on this project for Hampshire County Council. The tender is all ready to go and the funding promises are all in place. However there is a small bureaucratic snag called "State Funding". Broadband is an international service and this project can only progress with funding from the British Government. That falls foul of EU regulations about unfair state aid to industries expected to be internationally competitive, (but let's not discuss Air France shall we?). The result is that the British Government has to obtain a dispensation from the EU to release this funding to us. When they do, the tender can be submitted and we can start the evaluation of possible vendors of the service.

Roll out is still expected to begin next Spring.

News from the other Two Parishes

Grayshott

Grayshott Primary School

I'm working on a project to provide a footpath in front of the school to make it safer for pupils on foot to get into school from the Pottery direction.

Woolmer Hill School

See above, I'm working on another footpath project along Hammer Lane, Bramshott to make it safer for pupils walking to school from Grayshott, Bramshott and Hindhead, (Surrey).

Hill Road Street Lights

The road is bumpy and very dark at night, so it's dangerous. I have secured provisional funding for two street lights and am in the process of raising £20 for the annual maintenance cost that EHDC, incredibly, are refusing to pay. (Yes, that was twenty pounds).

Crossways Road

The consultation responses for the £100,000 traffic calming project are being evaluated prior to commencing work later this year.

Headley

Headley Down Community Association

Over the past month or so I've been investing a great deal of time here to ensure the vitality of this crucial community organisation. The Community Association and the Woodlands Hall complex are vital to the local and the wider community and I will report to you in due course on the improvements I have made.

Highway Issues

Recent matters are as follows;

Birch Road.

Since the recent accident, a multi-agency working group including the Police, has been formed to assess the safety of the road and its junctions. This will be holistic and although Birch Road is on the project control spreadsheet, this accident-based project will override any specific initiatives that we had on the list already.

Mill Lane/High Street

I have received several complaints about high speed manoeuvring at this junction. There is support from the County and the Police for the improved white lining and attention to the road surface. The accident history over the past three years is just one. The suggestion is to do the lines and road surface and see how it goes. If speeding is still a perceived or actual

problem we can consider a central refuge/traffic island in the High Street at the junction with Mill Lane.

Devolved Grant

I was pleased to award £500 from my Devolved Grant budget to the 1st. Headley Scouts for camping equipment.

And finally.....

I'm continuing to get along to alternate Full Council meetings for all three Parish Councils and I provide a written report to every single Full Council. As you know, this newsletter comes out roughly every two months, so the next one should be published week commencing 15th October.

In **Grayshott**, please go to www.grayshott.com and look under "News" and then "Newsgroups" to read my two-monthly public newsletters.

In **Headley** please go to www.headley-village.com/parish Look under "Council Meetings" and then "County Council" for my monthly reports to the Full Council and at the top of the home page for my two-monthly public newsletters.

In **Bramshott and Liphook** please go to <http://bramshottandliphook-pc.gov.uk/newsletters> for my two-monthly public newsletters.

If you want to take up any County Council issues with me, please contact me on ferris.cowper@hants.gov.uk or on 01428-609858.

Enjoy the sun!

Cllr. Ferris Cowper,
Hampshire County Councillor for Grayshott, Headley and Bramshott and Liphook.