

Leader of the Council – Councillor Alex Rennie

- Council performance against corporate strategy
- Regeneration, including the Hayling Island Seafront Strategy
- Communications
- Armed Forces Covenant
- Economic Development and Levelling up Priorities

Policy development, lead for inter authority relations, engagement with Government, community, and key stakeholders and communications

With the new Corporate Strategy in place Cabinet have been working on the key priorities to be delivered over the coming year. Our key priorities will focus on improving the health of our communities, protecting our natural environment and building for the future.

We continue to closely monitor the latest development in central government policy to ensure we can effectively implement any opportunities that arise and that will help us to deliver our priorities.

Since the last meeting of the Full Council, we have continued with campaigns and launched new ones. Key campaigns and communications coverage have included:

- [CCTV boosts safety in Waterlooville](#) including supporting artwork and signage
- [Council shows support for Srebrenica Memorial Day](#)
- [Bikers of the borough – we need your voices!](#)
- [Swinging into action as work begins on new play park](#)
- [Havant Borough Council highlights actions underway over residents' sewage concerns](#)
- [Havant Borough Council makes a racquet about its new tennis partnership!](#)
- [A Plan for Chichester Harbour](#)
- [Everything slides into place for Front Lawn's new play area](#)
- [New discounted women's boxing course is a knock-out!](#)
- [Flying the flag for our Armed Forces](#)
- [Havant Borough Community Lottery awards more than £7,000 to local good causes](#)
- [Infant school children get hands-on experience in gardening with new allotment patch](#)
- [Havant to host first Dementia Festival](#) including supporting artwork and signage
- [Havant borough businesses offered a boost to grow](#)
- [Supporting residents who need help to pay their council tax](#)
- [Veterans muster to mark Falklands Memorial Day](#)
- Get up and Go – Women's boxing
- Work begins at Bartons Triangle
- Water Quality content
- Partnership projects relating to housing
- Waterlooville public meeting
- Party in the Warren – working with PCC

- Warning and informing – Avian Bird Flu

On our website the most searched for items including recycling centre, bin collection, jobs, planning and pest control. On social media our top post was the refurbishment of children's play area at Bidbury.

Council performance against Corporate Strategy

With the finalisation of the corporate priorities to deliver the Corporate Strategy the quarter one performance information against the priorities is currently being collected. Going forward, each quarter progress of the priorities will be reported alongside our usual performance monitoring information of key performance metrics.

End of year 2022-23 performance information has been collected and showed a strong performance against our key performance metrics as detailed below.

Key Performance Indicator	2021-22	2022-23
Business Rates collection rate	90%	97%
Council Tax collection rate	95%	96%
Major planning applications decided within 13 weeks or agreed extension (over 70%)	88%	95%
Minor planning applications decided within 13 weeks or agreed extension (over 65%)	85%	86%
All planning applications decided within 26 weeks (above 98%)	99%	93%
Full Building Control plan applications checked within 15 days (over 90%)	88%	95%
Customer Service calls answered within 20 seconds (above 75%)	82%	tbc
Homelessness interventions (above 600 for the year)	825	655
Affordable homes delivered.	73	154
Freedom of Information requests responded within statutory deadline (above 95%)	95%	97%

Economic Development

The new Head of Economic Development has now started with the Council and is focussing on producing a Business Plan that will the Council to support businesses and improve the skills and employment service.

The Council have also developed a new insight tool that allows the Council to understand the borough in terms of business intelligence, demography, housing and skills as well as other key socio-economic measures, this will allow the Council to target the right interventions to improve the economic performance of the Borough.

Youth Hub

The Youth Hub is currently supporting 185 young people from across the borough working closely with Havant and Cosham Job Centre.

To date, 87 young people have been supported into paid employment. Roles include travel agent, hospitality and health care support worker.

Throughout June we were joined by partner organisations to provide wraparound support and opportunities to young people attending the hub. This includes:

- Princes Trust to promote their Explore programme which supports confidence building through outdoor activities and employability skills.
- Safe New Futures to promote their virtual course which uses CBT to support anxiety and build confidence.
- Kooth ran a first Stress and Anxiety Workshop with us. 10 young people attended and worked through coping mechanisms and triggers for stress. The course was a success and we look forward to working with Kooth again in the future.
- Community First ran a wellbeing and prep for work course. The course focused on supporting young people to realise their ambitions and how to reach goals whilst looking after their wellbeing.

We also held a second mock interview day with the support of the HBC community team. 20 young people were invited to a mock interview to practise their technique and work through questions. Since the mock interview session, one young person has secured an apprenticeship with the NHS in a GP surgery.

Our current target is to build and sustain a caseload of 200 young people by August 2023 and we would like to see 100 young people moving into paid employment for the first year of the project (end of July 2023).

Business Support

I reported last month on the UKSPF funded business support programme commissioned from the LEP specifically for Havant businesses with growth potential. This is now being jointly promoted by the LEP and the Council. 4 businesses have already signed up for a September start. The aim will be to have at least 8 businesses participating in the 1st cohort with a further cohort to follow early next calendar year.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Havant Borough Council submitted the required annual return to Government in early May. This outlined good progress in spending the 2022/23 allocation despite limited time. This included CCTV for Waterlooville, engagement with town centre businesses in Waterlooville and the business support programme referenced above. The Government has now signed off the return and confirmed the 2nd year allocation will be paid in full, including a modest underspend that has been carried forward from last year.

Havant Town Centre

Havant is one of the town centres that has been selected to receive fully funded support from the High Streets Task Force (HSTF). In the first instance this involves a diagnostic site visit and stakeholder workshop which would then be followed by tailored advice and support to meet particular local needs. This initial stage took place on the 16th of March with the HSTF expert Dr Jo Morrison.

The 3-hour workshop facilitated by the HSTF was attended by a broad range of stakeholders, as well as councillors and senior officers. The resulting report was received in late April and identified the lack of an organisation or group to take responsibility for the town centre as the main barrier to transformation in Havant. Recommendations focused on addressing this key issue with an offer of further mentoring support to assist.

We met with Consultant from the High Street Task force last week. This was to organise a stakeholder engagement group that is likely to take place in Autumn 2023. The Consultant will provide support for this and to establish a Town Centre Partnership and will facilitate the make-up of that group that should include, Councillors, residents, traders, business owners as well as other stakeholders.

Regeneration

Bulbeck Road

Environmental site investigations have started and are due to be completed by Mid-August 2023. Once these investigatory searches have been completed, a pre-application will be submitted to the planning department for the demolition. There will be an extensive programme of engagement with those in the vicinity of the site who

will be impacted by the works to provide information and address any issues of concerned, and this will feed into the pre-application.

We are also working with consultants on the financial viability of a residential development. It's key that before we go out to residents to consult that we are able to demonstrate that there is a reasonable expectation of a financially viable development at that site. This work is due to be completed at the end of August.

Havant Plaza Area

The Council is working closely with LCR and at present regarding the Plaza site and the area around Market Parade and reviewing a programme plan, which is separated into workstreams. The next meeting with them is on 05th July 2023.

In order to understand parking requirements, particularly around the Plaza area, LCR and HBC will be tendering for a car parking study with the plan this will commence very soon. Further communication to follow.

The Council have also met with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Horizon Leisure Trust in relation to options around the future siting of the Police Station and Leisure Centre and these talks are ongoing.

Waterlooville

Waterlooville continues to be an important priority for us and with the appointment of a dedicated Regeneration Officer to focus solely on the town centre and provide the capacity we need to accelerate progress. Work is currently underway to look at both short term actions and the development of a masterplan to guide longer term change.

We are currently working on a package of short-term interventions that can be implemented over the next 18 months. A full business case is being prepared looking at lowering vacancy rates and increasing footfall as well as bringing vibrancy and animation to the area and deterring ASB.

We are currently developing an Invitation to Tender (ITT) and specification for the work on vision and master planning, which is planned to be launched for procuring the specialist service required at the end of July 23. The plan will be to have the visioning and master plan work completed by Winter 2023/24.

There is also an opportunity this would work well if the call for Levelling Up Fund (LUF) round 3 bid is launched later this year as anticipated.

We attended a public meeting with residents from Waterlooville with the MP for Meon Valley on the 6th July. The event was very well attended by Members and residents from Waterlooville and surrounding areas. I delivered a presentation that focussed on the delivery of the Masterplan a supplementary planning document that will help to shape the future of the Town Centre.

Hayling Island

Regeneration of Hayling Island remains a complex project. A meeting was held with Officers and the Cabinet Member for Hayling Island to come up with a plan that will help bring forward Regeneration to the Island and specifically the sea front.

Its clear that in order to carry out any regeneration in the sea front area the Council needs to first understand the natural environment and what it can do to control it. The erosion of West Beach remains a concern and officers from the Regeneration Team and Coastal are working together to formulate options that best protect the seafront as it remains.

The other barrier to development is understanding the Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) and its scope. Natural England visited the Island with officers from the property team and we are still awaiting their response as to the extent of the SSI.

Freeport – Dunsbury Park Tax Site

As we know Dunsbury is the most advanced of the Freeport Tax-Sites with development underway and future investment potential. There continues to be close liaison with Portsmouth City Council as landowner and developer. In the latest phase of development three new units were completed in April and negotiations with potential occupiers are already underway for all of these indicating strong market interest. Further details will emerge if these negotiations progress to contractual commitment.

One of the key incentives for eligible businesses to invest at Dunsbury is the availability of 100% business rates relief for 5 years and it will be the Council's responsibility to administer this relief. To facilitate effective and timely dealings with potential investors the Council has now developed an on-line application form and associated guidance.

Local Authority Housing Fund

The Council continues to progress the LAHF programme to purchase at least 15 properties for the purposes of housing Ukrainian and Afghan Refugees. The Council has concluded the Invitation to Quote (ITQ) for an agent to acquire properties on our behalf. We are evaluating the quotes and will appoint by 7th July. At the end of July, we will be advertising an Invitation to Tender for the management of tenancies and maintenance of these properties, with a plan for a contract in place by 2nd October 23. Once this is completed, we can start to acquire properties.

The Council have also submitted an expression of interest for the next round of Local Authority Housing Fund monies. This next stage allows the Council to purchase properties for Afghan's and Ukrainians but also to house those currently in temporary accommodation.

It is therefore key that we're able to show that the model we're employing for the first 15 properties works as this can then be replicated into this new wave of funding.

Armed Forces update – July 2023

ERS (Employers Recognition Scheme) award

We submitted a gold ERS (Employers recognition Scheme) award to the MOD early this year. The application was assessed, panel members have approved our application and have awarded us with a GOLD award. This is a huge achievement for the Council, it proves that we actively support the Armed Forces community. The leader will receive a letter of congratulations from the Minister of state shortly. There will be an award ceremony on board HMS Warrior on 5th October 2023.

Stakeholder group

The Havant Borough Armed Forces Stakeholder group meeting took place on 26th June at the Plaza. This meeting was attended by 16 representatives from various charities, community groups, Housing providers, Hampshire Constabulary, local businesses, Veteran groups, Community First, Health, Hampshire County Council, Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire and The Mayor of Havant.

Key subjects discussed:

- The Court Diversion Scheme - supporting Veterans will mental health needs
- The Forces Connect app - a free app that lists support for Veterans and their families (20,000+ downloads so far)
- Hampshire Constabulary - need support with signposting and funds to help house people during out of hours
- Drug and alcohol issues
- Domestic and sexual abuse amongst the Armed Forces community
- Mental health support for Veterans
- Local Veteran support groups
- Future Armed Forces events
- Terms of reference – members feel the group needs to meet quarterly to discuss key issues instead of twice a year

Events

As part of Armed Forces week, we attended the Hampshire Constabulary Armed Forces event in Netley. This involved a short service in the memorial garden followed by several guest speakers.

We held a flag raising event at the Plaza, this was led by the Mayor of Havant. Attendees were invited to join the Mayor for tea and cake afterwards.

Falklands Memorial Day was commemorated in Havant, with the unveiling of a memorial bench in the Meridian Shopping Centre, followed by a wreath laying and a minute's silence at the War Memorial.

Armed Forces staff support group

The group will meet again on 29th August, to talk, share information and seek advice. This group is open to any employee who has served or has links with the Armed Forces community.

Partnerships

Havant Borough Council have been invited to be a member of the Solent Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board. We attend monthly meetings and will work closely with Southampton, Portsmouth, Gosport and IOW Council.

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Officers recently met with the Welfare officers at Thorney Island and local Reservist Centre. The meetings were very much appreciated, the Army are keen to support community projects and initiatives.