

Report to Sparsholt Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 18th April 2018 from Cllr Caroline Horrill

I have been privileged to be the councillor for Sparsholt since 2014. Since the boundary changes in 2016 I have represented the Wonston and Micheldever Ward which includes the villages of Sparsholt, Crawley, Littleton, South Wonston, Micheldever, Sutton Scotney and Wonston. I am the portfolio Holder for Housing in the Cabinet and for the last year I have been the Leader of Winchester City Council.

The Conservative Group continues to lead Winchester City Council with 24 of the 45 councillors. We have elections on May 3rd when one third of the Council will stand for re-election.

We represent over 250 square miles across the District and are aware that although the city of Winchester is a key focus, over 80% of the District is rural and so we are concentrating on the entire District by ensuring we conduct our engagement and consultation exercises in our market towns as well as Winchester itself. Understanding the wants and needs of all our residents is crucially important to the work of the Council.

We are also responsible for taking Cabinet on the road with alternate meetings being held around the District. This is in our effort to better represent our 120,000 residents in the 45 Parishes, market towns and City and I am hoping Sparsholt will be able to host us over the coming year.

We have spent the last year focused on defining our strategy and developing our major projects.

Our Council Strategy has 4 core strategies all developed using an entrepreneurial approach.

- We are developing quality housing
- We are committed to making the District a premier business location
- We are delivering services that encourage residents to lead healthy and fulfilling lives
- We are also protecting and enhancing our unique environment

Housing is one of our key achievements. We have over 5,000 council homes and 91% of our tenants say they are satisfied with the service provided by the Council.

We are also committed to building 600 new affordable homes by 2021 and driving down homelessness in the District. We are very keen to ensure that affordable houses are also built in rural communities, so that our villages remain sustainable.

Delivering economic growth in the District is a key part of our strategy.

Supporting tourism is a major focus and with over 5 million visitors each year it plays an important part in our business success.

We are working locally to improve infrastructure with our partners at the County and jointly sponsoring a Movement Strategy for greater Winchester. Of interest locally will be the potential new Park and Ride on our side of the City and the discussions taking place about the decision to close or keep open the Andover Road.

We have also recommenced the Station Approach project which is focussed on providing Grade A offices for the city.

Our beautiful environment is a key part of making the District such an attractive place to live so protecting our heritage and landscape, enhancing and increasing use of open spaces is a key element of your work. Sparsholt is a designated Conservation area and we should protect that status.

We have also invested in our flood resilience across the area, an important part of maintaining our environment. Importantly in Sparsholt we need to make sure we resolve with HCC, who are the highways authority, the two flood areas on Woodman Lane that continue to trouble us.

We are building a new Sport and Leisure Park at Bar End in partnership with the University, the Pinder Trust and with funding from HCC. The facility will open in 2021 as part of our healthy living focus and we are continuing to support the tens of events and festivals across the District such as the Hat Fair, which make Winchester such a great place to live.

We were delighted Mr Mayor (the current Mayor is the 818th for the city) supported the village this year by opening the Fete and by judging the much-acclaimed Scarecrow competition. All part of our vibrant and active community in the village.

Planning and enforcement are a key focus for the Parish and I have sought to support the Parish Council in their views on specific applications. The Council has recently reviewed these services and will be announcing improvements post the election. The Sparsholt College AD will be of keen interest to residents over the coming weeks, as the applicant seeks to make amendments to the previously agreed planning application. I will be supporting the Parish Council in ensuring the revised application is positive for the village.

I believe Winchester residents can be very proud of what their Council is doing on their behalf, but our work is never done. Please do let me know if I can further support the Parish and the residents of the village.

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