

REPORT TO FAWKHAM PARISH COUNCIL AGM 4th April 2024

We are delighted to be writing our District Councillors' report following our successful election in May 2023

Cllr Harrison sits on and is Deputy Chair of Housing & Health Advisory Committee, and is Chair of the Health Liaison Board, also sitting on Development Management Committee and the Homelessness Review Board. Additionally she is a Sevenoaks District Council representative on the Sevenoaks District Access Group and the Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust Stakeholder Council.

Cllr Bulford sits on and is Deputy Chair of People and Places Advisory Committee and sits on Housing & Health Advisory Committee. She is a Sevenoaks District Council representative on the Sevenoaks District Arts Council

Cllr Malone sits on the Development & Conservation, Finance & Investment, Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committees and the Audit and Development Management Committees.

Cllrs Harrison and Bulford both attend Brand Hatch liaison meetings.

At least one of us endeavours to attend all Fawkham and West Kingsdown Parish Council meetings, though sometimes this can be problematic if they clash with Sevenoaks District Council meeting commitments.

First and foremost to that we are committed to being active in the community of Fawkham and West Kingsdown, helping residents in the past year with local planning matters, neighbour disputes, dog fouling, potholes, housing association problems, lawful planning and more.

One particular area of focus for us this year has been enforcement matters. Working hand-in-hand with Fawkham PC we have helped to resolve such matters and been in contact with the relevant officer at Sevenoaks Council to ensure that enforcement cases remain on their radar and are appropriately dealt with.

Where Fawkham PC has had objections to planning applications we have worked with them to understand their concerns and either have these addressed by the Sevenoaks District Council Planning Officers or object to them. Whilst we haven't always been successful in arguing the case, we've consistently done our best to do so.

We continue to work with KCC to help improve traffic speed and improve the road surfaces including the potholes which are constant, due to poor road surface patching and volume of traffic.

Several residents have required sign posting to other agencies - the Community Cupboard food bank being one of them as residents struggle with inflation and cost of living increases - this service has been even busier in the last year and continues to support residents in Fawkham, West Kingsdown and further afield.

We have been working with FPC and liaising with Brands Hatch regarding the night lights that cause light pollution and the size and impact of the annual fireworks display. The discussion around lighting is ongoing and we will continue to make the argument to reduce the level of light pollution.

At the broader District level the two principal focus areas in recent months have been the Council Budget and the Local Plan.

Whilst Sevenoaks is undoubtedly in a far better financial position than many Councils around the UK, the Council has still had to make some cuts in services to ensure a balanced budget. At all times our

focus is on ensuring that the services that matter most to Fawkham residents are maintained to the fullest extent possible.

The Local Plan – which will set out how Sevenoaks intends to meet its housing needs in the period to 2040 – is currently in the midst of its consultation process. Whilst Fawkham is not directly impacted with any proposed new developments under the Local Plan, we remain conscious of the need to protect Fawkham from the impacts of over-development both locally and further afield.

In the months ahead we look forward to supporting Fawkham PC as it continues the development and finalisation of its Neighbourhood Plan.

The next Council elections are not until May 2027, so we look forward to continuing to work for residents of Fawkham and with the Parish Council for the next three years at least.

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