

MEON VALLEY GREEN NEWS



Councillors Danny Lee, Malcolm Wallace and Suzanne White

LOCAL SERVICES SAVED FROM COUNCIL CUTS TIPS & SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS SAVED; PASSENGER TRANSPORT CUT



Cllr Malcolm speaking against the cuts at the Cabinet decision meeting .

Like many local authorities across the UK, Hampshire County Council is grappling with budget constraints. After exhausting savings options, the council has been forced to reduce services to the minimum legally required level.

Earlier this year, a public consultation, 'Hampshire Future Services', outlined 13 potential service cuts. Following consideration, the Council has made decisions about which cuts will be implemented. Thanks to the efforts of Cllr Malcolm Wallace and other council members, several crucial services, including the Bishop's Waltham tip and school crossing patrols, have been preserved.

Commenting on the final decisions, Cllr Malcolm stated, "The council faces a difficult situation. Many

proposed cuts would have disproportionately impacted our rural communities and vulnerable residents. I'm pleased that we've been able to prevent cuts in several key areas. However, the reduction in passenger transport funding is a further blow to our already struggling bus services."

GOOD NEWS ABOUT WATER VOLES ON THE RIVER MEON BUT STILL MORE WORK TO BE DONE TO IMPROVE RIVER HEALTH

A recent survey by the South Downs National Park has found that water voles are thriving on the River Meon. Water vole activity was found across 27 sites on the river. This survey comes just over a decade since the reintroduction of water voles to the River Meon. Cllr Suzanne joined conservation volunteers to carry out a water vole survey recently in Droxford. She says: "We were pleased to find evidence of water vole activity in four places on this stretch of the river. Water voles are important for healthy river ecosystems but continue to be the UK's fastest declining mammal. It is, therefore, very encouraging to see them doing well on our river here."



Cllr Suzanne with River Meon volunteers carrying out a water vole survey

CHAMPIONING OUR MEON VALLEY BUSINESSES

The Meon Valley councillors recognise the vital role of our rural economy in providing local jobs and supporting a thriving business community. Cllr Suzanne says: "We have been assisting local businesses and organisations in grant funding applications. One example is the Hampshire Market Garden in Hambledon, who were successful in their application for a grant for a polytunnel to be able to expand their vegetable box delivery service. We are continuing to support a variety of other local businesses by linking them up with Council initiatives."



Cllrs Danny and Suzanne meeting Chris, manager of Hampshire Market Garden

VILLAGE HALLS: THE HEART OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY



Cllr Malcolm Wallace and the Mayor of Winchester with representatives of the Waltham Chase Village Hall committee

Waltham Chase village hall recently celebrated its 50th anniversary with an event attended by the Mayor of Winchester. Cllr Malcolm says: "It's great to see this village hall still going strong after 50 years, thanks to the work of the village hall committee and support of local residents" He adds: "These community hubs are more than just buildings; they're places for people to come together and combat isolation. By sharing ideas, we are helping village halls make more of their space and providing guidance on funding and energy efficiency upgrades."

HEAT THE PERSON, IMPROVE HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY OR BOTH?

As energy bills soar, living costs rise, and climate change intensifies, making smart choices about personal comfort and home energy efficiency is paramount. Cllr Danny Lee, speaking at the Winchester University's Green Week, says "Sustainable living and environmental stewardship are vital for a comfortable and affordable life within the planet's limits." For advice on home energy, keeping warm this winter and energy bills, see -

environmentcentre.com/home-energy/

Eligible households can get funding for energy efficiency improvements including insulation measures, see- tinyurl.com/WinchesterWarmerHomes

and/or tinyurl.com/InsulationSupport

For other tips and help to keep warm- tinyurl.com/Warm-person



Cllr Lee speaking at the Winchester Green Week event

WINCHESTER GREENS WORKING HARD FOR YOU IN THE MEON VALLEY

HOW TO CONTACT US

We want to hear what matters to you and to help where we can, so please do get in touch.

Councillor Malcolm Wallace

✉ Malcolm.Wallace@hants.gov.uk

Councillor Danny Lee

✉ DLee@winchester.gov.uk

Councillor Suzanne White

✉ SWhite3@winchester.gov.uk

Winchester Green Party

🌐 winchester.greenparty.org.uk

✉ contact@winchester.greenparty.org.uk



@winchestergreenparty



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SUZANNE, DANNY & MALCOLM: WORKING HARD FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY