

Ringwood Town Council Meeting 25th March 2009
– a Report from District Councillor Chris Treleaven

1) District Council – Annual Audit Report 2007/8 by Audit Commission.

The main messages from the Audit Commission review of last year's performance are:

- Good progress on priorities – majority of key objectives achieved
- Improvement in over half key performance indicators – half in best 25% nationally
- Unqualified approval of financial and value-for-money statements
- Performed well in use of resources
- Further improvement needed on aspects of risk management

2) District Car Park charges – comparison with other Districts/Boroughs

At the request of the Planning and Transportation Panel, a comparison of our town centre and amenity car park charges with those of both neighbouring and nationally similar local Authorities has been conducted.

Whilst pay-and-display charges turned out to be broadly similar for both types of car park and for both long and short stay parking, the NFDC Clock schemes are vastly cheaper than comparable season tickets everywhere else. The differences are up to many hundreds of pounds p.a.!!

It is worth noting that the District receives about £1million p.a. in parking charges from the 37 NFDC car parks across the District, and spends approx. £1.4million p.a. on transport and traffic management measures.

3) Council House Rents – HM Government reverses its “guidance” (=decision)

The previously announced 5.7% increase in tenants rents for the coming year has – as a result of local Authority including NFDC lobbying – now been halved by Central Government. Which is considerably welcomed by our Council Tenants.

4) Spring Clean-up – Litter pick up throughout the District

Once again, a successful and largely voluntary effort to clean up our much valued environment has been carried out. It is interesting to see how many of our rural villages and communities organise and conduct the work themselves as a group effort. Those in Towns seem to write letters to newspapers complaining about litter instead.

5) National Park Management Plan/Core Strategy

Apparently, the National Park is delaying the publication of the final version of their proposed Plan until July. On-going working parties are contributing to the necessary re-working of the original. I am not aware of any democratically elected local representative being invited to these reviews.

(crt24thMarch)