SPITFIRES have come to our rescue yet again.

Five of the iconic WW2 fighters fly from Solent Airport and fuel sales for pleasure flights are reaping thousands of pounds in revenue for the benefit of Fareham council taxpayers.

And wise business investment by the Conservatives is sparing Fareham households massive annual council tax rises.

Out of an annual Borough Council spend of £47m, less than £7m comes from council tax.

Council Leader Seán Woodward stressed: “So 85% of what we spend includes our trading activities, among them a portfolio of mainly local commercial property that brings in millions of pounds in rental. “For example, most units at Southampton Road, Park Gate (B&Q, Dunelm, Halfords, PC World, etc) belong to the Council. Without this income our council tax, currently almost the lowest in the country, would need to be far higher.”

Despite losing all its Government revenue support grant, Fareham will raise its share of council tax for 2019-20 by only £5 a year, representing just a penny a day increase for the average band C property. Band D properties will pay £160 per year or just 44p per day for all Borough Council services.

In his budget summary, Councillor Woodward was upbeat about lucrative ventures at Solent Airport@Daedalus, where around £30m has been spent so far on infrastructure and new commercial buildings such as newly-extended Fareham Innovation Centre, which is already 70% full. Airport operations provide a financial return to the Council, flight movements increased to 30,000 annually and hundreds of new jobs were created at what is the Solent Enterprise Zone.

The target over the 25-year life of the Enterprise Zone for new jobs is 3,500, 1,100 of those being on the Fareham part of the site, of which half the total has already been reached.

Land was transferred to Fareham College to build a Civil Engineering Training Centre (CETC) to teach young people skills they need to undertake civil engineering works in this area where there is a huge skills shortage. A £39m capital programme for future improvements includes:

- Ferneham Hall refurbishment £10m
- Spec build business units at Solent Airport@Daedalus £5m
- New council housing in Fareham, Portchester, Stubbington and Sarisbury £17.6m
- Phasing out single-use plastics by the Council
- Play area improvements £500,000
- Bus shelter replacement £300,000
- Holly Hill Cemetery extension £275,000

He added: “Setting a balanced budget without reducing services is more challenging every year. We have plans for another £1m of annual savings via efficiencies rather than service reductions.”

The Tigers donated cheques totalling nearly £4,000 to Wave 105 Cash for Kids and Sophie’s Appeal for cancer research. After dusting himself down, Seán Woodward said: “We are pleased to have the Rockets join in using the community facilities at Solent Airport.

“It is good to see 40 children learning the importance of teamwork, leadership skills and discipline while wowing the crowds with their performances and raising money for good causes.”
NEW RESIDENTS A DELAYED start for new housing North of Whiteley will affect the relocation of a Whiteley school. Cornerstone CE Primary School should have opened for the 2020-21 academic year. Councillor Sean Woodward said a decision had been taken with the school to reschedule the start of building and to open in September 2021. Despite the delay, the forecast for pupil numbers indicates there will be sufficient places for pupils at either Whiteley Primary or Cornerstone Schools for the 2020-21 academic year.

PHOTO: Sean Woodward with new InTouch team member Joanne Bull.

Joanne revs up to give us a Rocket boost

WELCOME to Joanne Bull who has joined our InTouch team. She has lived in the area for over 30 years, works in Whiteley and has two children, one still at a local school. In her spare time, she is involved with The Rockets Children’s Motorcycle Display Team, a not-for-profit community interest company comprising an enthusiastic group of youngsters who train every week and take part in events throughout the summer. Joanne says the emphasis is to encourage the children to understand, learn and develop the importance of teamwork, discipline and attitude.

“The children very quickly learn they are part of something of which they are proud. In turn, the children gain and build confidence, which leads to the strong interpersonal skills they will carry into later life.”

Slotting in J9 upgrade

ANOTHER component in the major programme to upgrade the M27 and its access junctions is ready to start fitting in. It’s the £22m project to improve junction 9 and Whiteley Way/Solent Hotel roundabout. The County Council scheme is designed to reduce traffic congestion, improve access and support future development. It includes:

Junction 9: Carriageway widening to provide an extra lane on both motorway off-slip roads, the westbound on-slip road and the Whiteley Way approach, plus additional lanes on the northern and southern sections of the circulatory carriageway.

Solent Hotel Roundabout: New, larger fully-signalled roundabout, with carriageway widening to provide additional traffic lanes on all approaches. Work ties in with other local investments, including £1.4m from Solent Local Enterprise Partnership to widen Whiteley Way from the Solent Hotel to the shopping centre, connecting Bluebell Way to Botley Road at Curbridge, extending Whiteley Way and the £244m Smart Motorway scheme now underway.

County Councillor Seán Woodward said: “The entire regional package of measures implemented on the M27 is a fundamental supporting part of the ‘improving access to Fareham and Gosport’ strategy which I introduced in 2015.”

Community fund launched

A £500,000 community fund has been launched by County Councillor Seán Woodward. Hampshire’s Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage says it will help local communities to thrive and organisations to be financially self-supporting. Small one-off grants from £1,000 to £3,000 will be awarded to boost community events and activities. He said: “For the first-time young people’s uniformed organisations such as Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts, as well as sports clubs, will be able to apply for funding.”

He hopes the fund will attract applications from hitherto unknown organisations which would benefit from extra support.

Leader’s vision results in the most stunning scout hut ever built

AN INSPIRED leader’s foresight paid off for 1st Sarisbury Scouts with an amazing new headquarters. Dr Toby King raised the possibility in 2016 of moving the group to a permanent home in Burridge. It took off from then and members spent the next year carrying out a massive fund-raising campaign. Their efforts resulted last year in the building of the most energy-efficient, stunning scout hut ever seen. Total build cost was £185,000, but on top of that were many thousands of hours of volunteer labour to complete the group’s dream of a home for future generations who will regularly use it. Councillor Sean Woodward said: “In the couple of years since Toby came to see me so we could discuss how a scout HQ could be accommodated at Burridge, the most amazing fundraising and volunteering project got into gear and the success is there for all to see. I was pleased to be able to facilitate a lease for the Fareham Borough Council site and also to agree grants from both Fareham and Hampshire Councils to enable this building to be created. “The 1st Sarisbury Scouts should be really proud of their achievements.”

Volunteers appeal

Helpers are needed for Whiteley Computer Club, which is for 7 to 11-year-olds with an interest in computers, robotics and programming. Members get hands-on with Scratch, Python, BBC Micro Bit and Minecraft Programming, LEGO robotics kits, stop-frame animation, 3D printing and much more in a friendly, informal environment. The club meets Tuesday evenings 7pm-8.30pm at Whiteley Community Centre. If you can help, please contact Huw Millington at WhiteleyComputerClub@gmail.com

Extra police tax hike

Hampshire Police Commissioner Michael Lane has responded to residents’ demands. 200 new officers will be recruited, plus 65 staff police investigators and training for new PCSOs. It will cost an extra £24m a year on Band D council tax bills. It is not known how many of the new recruits will be assigned to Fareham.

InTouch 3

SARISBURY, WHITELEY, SWANWICK, LOWER SWANWICK & BURRIDGE ARE SAFEST IN CONSERVATIVE HANDS

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We serve you all

Whether you voted for us or not, your Conservative councillors promise the highest standards of service to everyone in the community. Contact us any time and we’ll respond personally within 48 hours.

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Resident celebrate as developer’s Swanwick homes plan is rejected

SWANWICK residents are overjoyed after a planning inspector threw out a developer’s plan for 42 homes off Sopwith Way.

Reilly Developments appealed against Fareham planning committee’s refusal to allow the scheme.

The planning inspector said he shared residents’ concerns, particularly:
- Remoteness of the site from facilities
- Meaning occupants would have to use their cars
- The suburban appearance would have adverse effect on the semi-rural character of the area

The inspector added: “The development would be contrary to the relevant policies of the Council’s development plan.”

Councillor Seán Woodward said: “I am delighted that, despite the government massively increasing our housing quota, we can still successfully fight off planning applications and appeals on environmentally and environmentally important land.”

Suella BRAVEMAN MP for Fareham

Suella was delighted to hold the first ever Solent Festival of Engineering at Fareham Leisure Centre which was attended by over 1,000 local children and students.

The aim of the event was to showcase and bust the myths about engineering, technology and the sciences.

The UK faces an estimated shortfall of 20,000 engineering graduates every year and Suella is passionate about encouraging the next generation of innovators.

She brought together over 50 national and international companies such as Rolls Royce, Google, NATS, Southampton and Portsmouth Universities, and the Royal Navy and RAF to enable young people to learn more about the opportunities from further study and careers in the field.

From virtual reality, rocket cars, coding challenges, 3D printing, Lego building, drones, model railways, AI, learning about wi-fi, jet engines and gas turbines to life on Mars and deep sea diving, pet scanners, magic and ship tankers, attendees were not short of interactive engineering experiences.

Suella holds regular events open to the public. If you would like to stay up to date with her events and news, sign up to her monthly e-newsletter by emailing suella@suellabraverman.co.uk.

D-Day 0441 hours, June 6, 1944.

The first aircraft take off from HMS Daedalus to support Operation Overlord – the Normandy Invasion.

It was a pivotal moment in the history of the Fleet Air Arm base where 435 units – the largest to operate from any UK airfield on D-Day – were deployed.

The Fleet Air Arm was joined by RAF squadrons, Royal Canadian Air Force Typhoons and Mustangs and US Navy Spitfires, softening up Hitler’s Atlantic Wall and protecting the invasion armada.

That historic day which paved the way to victory over the Nazi regime will be recalled during 75th anniversary events commemorating the landings.

Plans are under way for a weekend spectacular at what is now Solent Airport on June 8 and 9, from 10am to 4pm, and residents are asked to diary the dates.

Vintage aircraft will play a key role and details of those taking part will be released soon.

There will also be children’s activities, market stalls and stage performances by local groups.

Sarisbury Councillor Jon Butts said: “Council officers are planning to make it a day to remember, so make sure you don’t miss what will be the biggest event of the year.”