

I know I keep on about Asian Hornets but this is the time of year to start thinking about them again. The Asian Hornets have been hibernating for the winter and producing queens. Once the outside temperature hits 12 degrees for two or more consecutive days the queens will wake up, look for food and fly off to start a new nest. Asian Hornets attack any predators not just bees so it's important that any sightings are reported at once either by using the Asian Hornet Watch App or by emailing alrtnonnative@ceh.ac.uk.

Although the final details are yet to be published, it appears very likely F&HDC will be reporting a balanced budget. This has been achieved without drawing from reserves. Many councils in Kent and nationally are struggling to report a balanced budget and the members and staff have worked extraordinarily hard to achieve this remarkable feat.

The Council has launched The Excellence in Volunteering Awards Folkestone and Hythe District to celebrate volunteers who dedicate their time and skills, and is calling for nominations for people doing good work in the area. The scheme, run by Kent Coast Volunteering on behalf of F&HDC, aims to raise the profile of volunteering and its benefits at a time when a national shortage of volunteers is making it difficult for charities and community groups to deliver their services. Details can be found at <https://www.kcv.org.uk/folkestone-and-hythe-volunteering-awards-2024>

The 'call for items' for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review is open. The consultation closes at 5pm on the 23rd February. Please submit scrutiny topics that you would potentially like to see on the forthcoming OSC forward plan. Please see [Council scrutiny | Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/council-scrutiny) for suggestions as to what makes a good scrutiny topic and for items which will not be considered.

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