

County Council Report - January 2013 - County Councillor John Reynolds

Service User Experience Survey

The annual Service User Experience Survey will be issued to a sample of service users across Adult Social Care in January, in line with statutory requirements issued by the Department of Health. The survey has been developed to learn more about whether services received by service users are meeting all outcome needs. In particular we want to hear about how services have affected their quality of life. The survey is also used locally to inform service delivery and to monitor and develop standards.

Inspection at Larksfield Transitions Unit

A County Council support service which helps adults with learning disabilities move on to more independent living has been given top marks by Government inspectors. The Larksfield Transitions Unit in Wisbech provides supported-living services to nine people. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) recently carried out a routine inspection and found the transitions unit was meeting all the required standards of care and support. CQC inspectors spoke to service-users and staff, and looked at all aspects of the service, including involving and respecting people who use the service; care and welfare; safeguarding; and support arrangements for staff and service users.

Warm Homes Funding

This year Cambridgeshire has this year again successfully secured Department of Health funding to mitigate the effects of winter on the health of older people and other vulnerable groups. A project promoting available help is aiming to ensure that the most vulnerable people can secure appropriate support for their needs. This may range from small financial grants to heat their homes during the winter months or boiler repairs, to help with shopping or providing appropriate information about how to maintain their health during winter. These additional services are provided by community and voluntary organisations, district and city councils and the County Council. The voluntary organisation Care Network is co-ordinating the project and will oversee the referral system to ensure that access to services is quick and efficient.

Home care contract

The new home care contract has now been operational for six weeks. In the last briefing it was reported that whilst the contract was generally working well, there were some problems with late calls and a very small number of missed calls. The contracts team has worked hard to challenge these incidences of under-performance. The situation is continuing to improve as a result of these interventions but there is a possibility that isolated incidents may still arise. The contracts team is continuing to monitor the situation closely and address these problems as they arise.

Transitions Team

The Transitions Team has been awarded a partnership award by Pinpoint (Parent Support Organisation) for their work with parents in identifying the need for and developing a Year 9 leaflet on the Transitions process. This involved partnership working between Children's and Adult Care that has led on to the current 14-25 strategy work for young people transferring to adult services. Money is now being linked between Adults, Carers' Support and Children's resources to support ongoing parent/carer participation.

Timebank Cambridgeshire

Timebank Cambs has been awarded Department of Health pilot status. We will be working with two GPs' Surgeries in Hunts and will focus on supporting older people to remain in their homes for longer. The GPs will work with Timebanks to meet low level needs within the community through social prescribing. This forms part of a larger project with Timebank UK and the Department of Health which will look at developing learning across the country and supporting GPs.

A14

We have been working closely with DfT and local partners on the A14 study which has now been completed and the final stage is due to be published imminently. Much work is still required to finally define the scheme, decide how it will be procured, by whom and what role the Local Authorities will play in its delivery. Nevertheless there are steps which can and should be taken to expedite delivery. We have initiated early discussions between Local Authorities and LEPs in the region to explore how far they can support the financing of the scheme from future locally-controlled revenue streams.

Cambridge Science Park Station

The new station will have multiple benefits, including improved access to the railway network from the north side of the city, improved access to the key employment centres at the Science Park and other business parks on the northern fringe, direct interchange with the Busway, and opening up a significant area of land for economic development.

The design of the new station is being developed in partnership with Network Rail and the train operators and the formal Option Selection report was submitted to Network Rail at the beginning of November. The public have been asked for their input to the emerging designs to allow a final design to be developed for submission of a planning application in the New Year.

There has been a delay to the franchise process as the issuing of the invitation to tender for Thameslink due in October has been delayed for three months by the DfT following the review of the West Coast Main Line tendering process. It is not anticipated that this delay will have any impact on the delivery of the station at this stage.

Ely Rail Crossing

There is a common agreement that action needs to be taken to resolve the growing congestion at the level crossing. The selected bypass option is currently felt to be the best solution when all factors are taken into account. The impact on Ely Cathedral has been given due consideration alongside the other factors: reduction in congestion, severance between the railway and the town, future traffic growth and cost benefit. The suggested 'hidden bypass' presents some significant technical challenges, but to demonstrate that all options are being properly considered this proposal is now being subjected to a full technical evaluation comparable with those undertaken for the other options. To allow this to take place the public consultation has been deferred until June 2013.

Northstowe – A Modern Garden City

The planning application for the first phase of 1,500 homes at Northstowe was supported by the Joint Development Control Committee (Planning Committee) in October. On 30 January 2013 this Committee will meet to consider the Section 106 legal agreement and associated planning conditions, which will establish the infrastructure and phasing requirements. Since October the Local Authorities have worked with partner organisation to look very closely at the infrastructure requirements and the planning conditions required to ensure the planning permission delivers a very good standard of development. This work has also been mindful of the frontloaded costs associated with this project and considerable care has been taken to ensuring the project remains viable.

In parallel with this ongoing viability work the local authorities have approached the Department of Communities & Local Government to secure a government loan in order to deliver some of the infrastructure components early, and bring the delivery of phase one forward. On 15 January 2013 Cabinet will consider a report on the necessary infrastructure costs and seek to prioritise these in formulating the S106 and planning conditions.

Alconbury Weald

An outline planning application for up to 7,000 new homes, schools and other mixed uses has been submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council. This planning application will require a number of revisions, not least given that there are serious concerns relating to the location of the secondary school and the fact the planning application for housing takes land away from the designated Alconbury Enterprise Zone. The District Council is looking to determine this application after the publication of their Local Plan consultation document which is due to be published in May/June 2013. Cabinet will consider the county consultation response on 5 March 2013.

Local Plans - Planning the “blue print” for Cambridgeshire

Early in the New Year all five District Councils will publish their revised Local Plans for a further round of public consultation. It is anticipated that at least four District Councils will publish their plans in January/February 2013. This will require a considerable amount of work by the Growth & Economy service to manage the different service replies to produce timely responses.

South Cambridgeshire DC will shortly complete their consultation on the detail of the sites to be included in their draft Local Plan. The next version of this will be subject to a further round of public consultation in January/February 2013.

Cambridge City Council has recently consulted on the detail of the sites to be included in their draft Local Plan. The next version of their Plan will be subject to a further round of public consultation in January/February 2013.

East Cambridge DC will be undertaking the next round of public consultation on their Local Plan in January/February 2013.

Huntingdonshire District Council – Local Plan consultation is expected to start in May/June 2013.

Local Majors Schemes Funding

Ministers have announced their intention to devolve funding for local major schemes to Local Transport Bodies for the period from 2015 -2019. Funding is likely to be in the order of a total of £21m for the whole area of our proposed Local Transport Body (LTB) which is to encompass Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland and include the LEP. The intention is that local bodies will decide on priorities and the programme for delivery to 2019, in line with Government guidance and locally agreed criteria.

In order to secure the funding, Government has asked us to submit an Assurance Framework setting out governance arrangements, process and criteria for assessing schemes by end of February. Priority schemes will then need to be agreed by and submitted to Government before end July 2013. A draft assurance framework is expected to be considered by Cabinet ahead of submission to Government.

Better Bus Area Fund (BBAF)

Good progress has been made with the BBAF Programme to date with delivery of a number of projects well underway:

Bus priority equipment has been installed at all sites and a programme to commission the equipment and establish trigger points for each site has now commenced.

Stagecoach service extensions linking Ramsey and Chatteris with The Busway are now in operation.

Construction on the Babraham Road Park & Ride extension is well underway and expected to open before Christmas.

A number of other projects are currently being developed through detailed design work, procurement and engagement with stakeholders. The project to reduce delays to buses on St Andrews St has seen two very productive workshop sessions, with a clear steer being given by stakeholders on the preferred option to take forward to public consultation.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

The LSTF Programme for 2012/13 is well underway and good progress has been made. A key focus in the first few months since the funding was awarded (May-November) has been recruitment and most of the new LSTF-funded staff are now in post. Another key area of focus has been preparation (feasibility, design, procurement and related stakeholder engagement) for infrastructure related projects, and the focus will now switch to delivery of these projects during the period from December to March. Some key projects including solar studs lighting for the guided busway between St Ives and Histon, and the Thicket path are expected to be implemented in the New Year. The projects should help to improve cycling and walking in key corridors.

Cycle Safety Fund

The Department for Transport announced the availability of £15 million to provide capital support for safety improvements at junctions identified as having a record of cyclists being killed or seriously injured. Local highway authorities were invited to submit applications for the Cycle Safety Fund. Sustrans has been appointed by DfT to coordinate the funding and process the proposals. Cambridgeshire County Council, in consultation with cycling stakeholders, has submitted 5 applications seeking a total of £1.5 million from the Cycle Safety Fund towards the total cost of £2.6 million. The 5 schemes are: Catholic Church Junction (Cambridge), North Cambridge Radial Network, Perne Road (Cambridge), March South, and Whittlesey to Peterborough. Schemes are selected for proposals to meet the DfT assessment criteria of deliverability by the end of 2013 and innovative design solutions.

£106 Funding in Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire

Some 20 new schemes are proposed for funding in the Cambridge and South Cambridge area. Most of which, have been put forward to the County Council by local communities to help improve safety and accessibility on the network.

Over £2million has been secured from developers to pay for the improvements to the Cambridgeshire road network, necessitated by growth. This funding has been secured by the County Council in order to make improvements to infrastructure in line with the objectives of the Area Transport Corridor Plans. Included in the proposals are major projects such as; lighting along The Busway maintenance track at Trumpington, Histon and Impington; improvements for cyclists and pedestrians to Cherry Hinton High Street; traffic calming for Tenison Road; a cycle route from Milton to Landbeach; improved traffic calming for Fen Road; and a shared use path named Ring Fort Path, from Orchard Park to the A14 intersection at Histon, providing a shorter route for cyclists.

If approval is granted, schemes will be designed and built over the next 5 years as part of a wider programme of improvements being delivered across the area. This funding is being recommended further to Cabinet's earlier decision back in July, to approve over £1million worth of allocations from developer contributions in the City and South Cambridgeshire area for improving cycle ways, crossings, safety and junction improvements with the aim of enhancing accessibility.

Cambridgeshire Culture Partnership

Key areas of work being pursued include closer partnership working with Cambridge University and the Arts Council to the growth agenda and areas of deprivation, and a series of low key events designed to increase leadership capacity to support health and well-being and economic activity.

Waste PFI

The continued suspension of the MBT facility remains following the structural failure in September 2012. AmeyCespa are undertaking further assessments to determine the cause of the failure and to put a contingency plan in place. All other parts of the facility remain fully operational as before and stakeholders and communities have been informed. Until we have a detailed recovery plan from AmeyCespa and review its contents we are unable to determine the length of time the MBT facility will be out of action. AmeyCespa has made no claim against the Council and we are aware of no negative financial affects upon the Council as the terms of the PFI mean that the Council is protected financially in these circumstances.

Street Lighting PFI

The County Council has requested further details from Balfour Beatty as to how they intend to meet the Consultation requirements of the Contract. Balfour Beatty have written a letter to the Authority requesting they be paid for additional costs and delays the Council have instigated through instructing them to undertake additional consultations and suspending their works on cast iron columns in the City Centre. The Authority does not accept these claims and has written to Balfour Beatty requesting they provide evidence to substantiate their claims.

Area Joint Committees

Council has agreed a report considered by the Constitution and Ethics committee to change delegation for AJC decisions to go to the cabinet member for community infrastructure in liaison with local members. Decision making by an individual Executive Member has practical benefits in terms of the ease of arranging for the decision to be taken, which can facilitate decision making at short notice where necessary. The less onerous arrangements may also result in potential cost savings due to reductions in the administrative support required. There's potential for more transparent decision making due to the fact that there is greater clarity as to who is actually making the decision. The recommended process includes the requirement that proposed decisions are fully publicised in advance in order to ensure that interested parties have access to the proposals and the information which will be considered by the relevant Executive Member when they make the decision. Executive Members will be required to ensure that the relevant local elected members, both county and district tier, have been consulted and given the opportunity to input to the decision making process.

Revised Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Results

On 13 & 14 December the Department for Education published revised Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results. These confirmed the provisional headline national and regional figures and those for Cambridgeshire and its Statistical Neighbours as follows:

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage results improved significantly this year, with the proportion of children achieving a good level of development, rising by 4ppt and reaching unprecedented levels for Cambridgeshire (64%). Headline scores in Cambridgeshire are now in-line with the corresponding figures nationally (64%) and across Cambridgeshire's statistical neighbour authorities.

Key Stage 1 Results

A proportion of pupils achieving L2+ in Reading and in Writing improved, both by 2 percentage points to 88% and 84% respectively, with a 1ppt rise in Maths to 91%. In all three subjects boy's performance improved at a faster rate than that of girls.

Key Stage 2 Results

Key Stage 2 results show marked improvement this year, with the proportion achieving level 4 or higher in both English and Maths (79%) rising by 5ppt.

Primary School Performance Tables 2012

The Department for Education has also published the 2012 Primary School Performance Tables. The key changes are:

The 'disadvantaged pupils' data has been recalculated to include Pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) within the last 6 years

Performance data for pupils who have been in the school throughout Years 5 & 6 – 'Non-mobile pupils', and

Headline performance figures for boys, girls and pupils with English as an Additional Language. The tables now also include indicators showing:

The percentage of pupils achieving level 3 or below in tests;

Reading and Writing Teacher Assessment data

Individual school pages within the tables now contain graphs showing Level 4+ performance over time for the school, the Local Authority and for England and 'spend per pupil' over time at school level.

The Tables are at: [The Department for Education - Performance Tables - Local Authority results](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/download/StatementofIntent2012.pdf) with full details of changes and content at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/download/StatementofIntent2012.pdf>

Key Stage 4 Results

Headline results in Cambridgeshire declined slightly with the proportion of Cambridgeshire pupils achieving five or more GCSE grades A*-C, including English and Maths falling by two percentage points this year, to 56.9%. The fall is slightly larger than that seen nationally, but is in-line with the pattern across Cambridgeshire's statistical neighbours and partly reflects the impact of changes in GCSE English grade boundaries and the lack of improvement in GCSE mathematics..

However, the proportion of Cambridgeshire pupils achieving five or more GCSE grades A*-C, rose by two percentage points to 79.4%, bringing Cambridgeshire performance in-line with that across its statistical neighbours and the proportion achieving the English Baccalaureate (21%) is three percentage points above the national level and one percentage point above the level across Cambridgeshire's statistical neighbours.

Cambridgeshire performs well in national adoption scorecard

The Government has supported its focus on rates of adoption by publishing a scorecard showing the rates and timescales for adoption in each local authority area.

The scorecards have just been updated and key points for Cambridgeshire were:

The number of adoptions in Cambridgeshire was up from 25 in 2011 to 30 in 2012.

The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family has reduced by 21 days for the period 2009-2012 compared to 2008-2011

The average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and deciding a match to an adoptive family has reduced by 23 days for the period 2009-2012 compared to 2008-2011

Cambridgeshire outperforms against Statistical Neighbour and England averages against all 3 threshold indicators.

The scorecard covers the period to March 2012 but more recent local data shows our partnership with Coram continuing to deliver improvements and we expect the data for the rest of 2012 to show further improvement.

Apprenticeships across Cambridgeshire

Our current scorecard target is 4000 apprenticeships May 12 - Apr 13 as announced in April. In the first quarter (May-July 2012) we have achieved 893. However, it is worth noting that 3192 apprenticeships were started in the last three quarters of the previous period. The trajectories continue to be positive. Focus within the county is intensifying and CCC is supporting and funding a number of projects and initiatives to ensure the successful roll out of the 'raising participation' strategy of which apprenticeships are a key part.

Teachers Pay based on performance

At present teachers get automatic pay rises of around £2,000 a year up to a maximum of £31,000. To rise beyond that they have to take on additional responsibilities up to a maximum pay rate of around £57,000 a year.

But under proposals from School Teachers Review Body (STRB) which has been backed by the Education Secretary Michael Gove this will all change.

In future beyond the minimum starting salary of £21,804 for a newly qualified teacher schools will be free to award pay rises entirely on merit. This will be determined by annual performance assessment reviews and in certain cases linked to pupil's exam results. The proposals are now subject to consultation, and, if agreed, will be introduced in September next year.

New qualification to replace GCSEs

In September, Michael Gove announced that GCSE qualifications are likely to be scrapped in favour of a new English Baccalaureate system. The move, if implemented will build on the existing English Baccalaureate which is not a qualification in itself but recognises where pupils have secured a C grade or better across a core of academic subjects – English, mathematics, history or geography, the sciences and a language.

The new exams look likely to involve a drastic reduction in coursework for many subjects including English, although some coursework will remain in science and geography. The first pupils to take the new qualification will sit exams in English, maths and science in the summer of 2017.

FE Colleges enrolling 14 year olds

Further education (FE) colleges will be able to enroll 14-16 year-olds who wish to study high-quality vocational qualifications from September 2013. FE colleges will be able to set up their own "14 -16 centers". The new Centres will offer a combination of high quality vocational and academic subjects and aim to attract students of all abilities who want early access to practical and technical education. Only FE colleges which meet certain criteria will be able to enroll and receive Government funding for 14- to 16-year-olds from next year. Like all new education provision, the colleges will be subject to Ofsted inspection within two years of opening.

Children Centres

Children's Centres now have an increased focus on targeted work, and in Cambridgeshire are now required to allocate resources so that 30% of the total resource is allocated to provide a clear universal offer, and 70% is allocated for targeted services.

This requirement, taken together with centres preparing better for OfSTED inspections and improving recording of registrations and activities has resulted in an increase in the number of families registering at children's centres. This now stands at 48.3% of families with children under 5 in Cambridgeshire. A number of forthcoming environmental changes indicate that it is necessary to review the way in which children's centres are delivered in Cambridgeshire.

These changes include:

Demographic growth in Cambridgeshire requiring the LA to consider how children's centre provision will be made in new communities. There has been a net increase in the numbers of children under 5 in Cambridgeshire (17.5% from 2006-2011), and numbers will continue to rise over the next decade, despite a dip in the birth rate over the next four years.

DfE guidance makes clear that local authorities should concentrate on improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged children, young people and families. Their proposed framework for Payment by Results schedule makes it clear that measures will be put in place to identify how investment has supported children and families in greatest need.

The introduction of the Localism Act which provides a framework enabling individuals, communities and organisations the chance to bid to take over services.

Care leavers Charter

Cambridgeshire's Children's Social Care Management Team has endorsed the Government's recent Care Leavers Charter. Areas where Cambridgeshire already meets the charter and areas where we need to continue development have been identified. The Charter applies to the whole of CYPS and other directorates in the Council and is now built in to Cambridgeshire's Corporate Parenting strategy.

Participation Service

The outstanding achievements of looked after children and young people from Cambridgeshire have been recognised at the annual awards ceremony on 30 November 2012. The event took place at Burgess Hall in St Ives and was organised by Cambridgeshire County Council's Children's Social Care Participation Team. Over 300 children, young people, foster carers and social workers walked the red carpet and enjoyed an evening of entertainment and celebration with performances from young people.

The number of children and adults nominated and attending on the evening was nearly double that of the year before. Children and young people were nominated for awards in a number of different areas, including education, sports and hobbies, success in employment and other areas of their personal development.

The evening also provided an opportunity for the young people themselves to recognise those who have made a difference to their lives, and a number of outstanding foster carers, teachers, independent visitors and social workers were presented with awards. The evening was described as "a huge success and a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the outstanding achievements of children and young people in care."

Contact Centre Performance

The performance of the Contact Centre exceeded the corporate performance indicators in November. South Cambridgeshire District Council functions were managed as a separate entity leading up to the transfer of staff to the District Council on 1 December. As a result, the remaining Customer Service Advisors were further trained on services not previously delivered by them to maximise available cover for the County Council.

For county services, 94.7% of calls were answered against a target of 85% with 77.4% of these calls being picked up within 20 seconds (target 70%). Nine of the twenty county services delivered reached levels of performance exceeding the previously higher corporate targets of 2010. 28% of the total contacts received were non- phone contacts, originating from fax, e-mail and postal sources.

Comic Relief

Initial contact has been made with Comic Relief in relation to the Centre acting again as a donation centre for Red Nose Day on March 15 2013. The Contact Centre has successfully acted as a donation centre for the past 3 years. Early contact has been made with volunteers, including county councillors who have previously handled these calls and the response so far has been excellent. A small number of places remain for interested parties. Training to take place in the New Year, subject to acceptance of us as a donation centre.

The Gift of Reading

The Library Service has launched a 'Give the Gift of Reading this Christmas' campaign, asking members of the public to donate good quality fiction and children's books to the service to help boost stock levels and make use of unwanted gifts. Donations boxes are also being placed in all libraries.

Sawston Village College

Agreement has been reached with Sawston Village College to place a temporary library building on part of the site, until a permanent library building is reinstated. This is currently anticipated to open in early March, pending planning permission. The stop gap mobile library provision will continue up until that point.

Healthwatch

Work is progressing to create a new health and social care watchdog which will help inform and improve health and social care services in Cambridgeshire.

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire will be part of a new national Healthwatch network from April 2013, giving people a powerful voice locally and nationally. Locally the County Council has been working to create the local link in the national chain of Healthwatch groups.

Through the network, Healthwatch England will make sure the voices of all people not just those use health and social care services are heard by the Secretary of State for Health, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the NHS Commissioning Board, Monitor and every local authority in England.

Local Healthwatch organisations will:

have the power to enter and view services.

influence how services are set up and commissioned by having a seat on the local health and wellbeing board.

produce reports which influence the way services are designed and delivered.

provide information, advice and support about local services.

pass information and recommendations to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission.

act as an independent advocate for people who wish to complain about services.

Recruitment to key positions within Cambridgeshire Healthwatch has started and details of the vacancies can be found at: www.jobscincambs.com.

Public County Council meetings January

9 January 2.00pm **Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel** @ Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN

10 January 10.30am **Planning Committee** @ Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP

15 January 10.00am **Cabinet** @ Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP

16 January 2.00pm **Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board** @ Shire Hall, Cambridge
CB3 0AP

18 January 10.00am **Cambridgeshire Schools' Forum** @ Shire Hall, Cambridge
CB3 0AP

18 January 10.00am **Local Government Shared Services Joint Committee** @ Shire
Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP

22 January 9.00am **Cambridge City Council, South Cambs District Council and
Cambridgeshire County Council Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning
Group** @ South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne CB23 6EA

23 January 10.00am **Joint Development Control Committee - Cambridge Fringes**
@ The Guildhall, Cambridge CB2 3QJ

23 January 2.30pm **Audit and Accounts Committee** @ Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3
0AP

29 January 10.15am **Cabinet** @ The Boathouse Business Centre Wisbech PE13
3BH

30 January 10.00am **Cambridgeshire Children's Trust** @ To be confirmed

30 January 10.00am **Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee** @ South
Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne CB23 6EA

For regular updates please see

http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/democracy/Calendar_of_Meetings.htm.

County Councillor John Reynolds

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