

County Report Feb 2014 John Reynolds

Connecting Cambridgeshire

The Connecting Cambridgeshire superfast broadband roll-out is now underway. By the end of 2015, more than 500 new green cabinets will be live with high speed fibre broadband. In the first phase of the roll-out, 75 new green fibre cabinets are due to be installed by Openreach contractors in locations around the County of which the first 23 had gone live by the end of January 2014. The Connecting Cambridgeshire website [‘my area’ pages](#) now link to an interactive map showing cabinets that are live and coming soon.

Destination Digital Supplier Event

[Connecting Cambridgeshire](#) has secured extra Government and European funding of over £4.5m to help hundreds of small and medium sized businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough afford better broadband connections and make the most of digital technologies. The new Destination Digital business support scheme will be officially launched at a high profile event on Monday 24 February with high tech innovator and entrepreneur Dr David Cleevely as the keynote speaker. Businesses can find out more about applying for grants and free support at www.destinationdigital.info or talk to an adviser by calling 0800 917044.

Over 60 suppliers attended the recent Destination Digital Supplier Event to find out how they can support and benefit from the scheme to help Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) get better broadband connections and use digital technology to increase productivity, profitability and innovation. Held at the SmartLife Centre, the event was delivered by Cambridge Wireless with speakers from Connecting Cambridgeshire, the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and YTKO Group. Businesses can find out more and register for the [scheme](#) or call 0800 9177044.

Digital Inclusion Symposium

Cambridgeshire has recently hosted a Digital Inclusion Symposium for all the East of England counties to contribute to the new Government Digital Inclusion Strategy. Liz Stevenson from Connecting Cambridgeshire and Rebecca Morgan from Adult Learning and Skills gave presentations highlighting our current digital inclusion strategy development and our ten-year record of delivering excellent digital inclusion programmes for people across the county. Cambridgeshire Libraries were also represented.

Making Assets Count

The Joint Venture Project has been set up as part of the MAC programme to optimise use of real estate and surplus real estate, owned within Cambridgeshire by public sector bodies through shared use and occupation where viable and creating a pool of surplus assets and a critical mass of properties for sale, development or regeneration. The MAC Programme Board (18 December 2013) agreed that the timescale for delivery of the Joint Venture project should reflect work, skills and partner involvement/endorsement to ensure it is established properly and effectively. This decision was endorsed by the MAC Member Reference Group on 16 January 2014. The likely completion date for detailed work on this project is June - August 2014.

Northstowe Phase 1 - Success

After many years of plan preparation and negotiation, the first phase of development for 1,500 new homes, a primary school, employment land plus a Community Centre was granted planning permission in February. The planning permission was supplemented with a legal agreement which secured a Section 106 worth £30m for necessary infrastructure to cover the capital cost of the primary school and first phase of the new secondary school, together with transport improvements as well as public open space. The County Council will recover a proportion payment for the up-front investment made in the Guided Busway. In addition 20% of the new homes will be affordable homes.

Northstowe Phase 2

Early work has started on Phase 2 of Northstowe. The Homes and Communities agency have appointed consultants to work towards the submission of a planning application in June 2014. Informal consultations have begun with key stakeholders and public consultation events are being scheduled for the final week of February. The application is likely to comprise up to 2800 dwellings (numbers to be confirmed), town centre and southern access roads. The application will need to provide for the development of the secondary school (also funded through Phase 1) and two primary schools.

Alconbury

The resolution to grant outline planning with accompanying Heads of Terms for Section 106 requirements for 5,000 new homes was granted on 9th December. Work continues, to agree details and drafting of S106 agreement between the County Council / Huntingdonshire DC and Urban and Civic. The County Council's emphasis is on education and transport. The Secretary of State has not requested this planning application be "called in" for his determination.

Local Plans

Cambridge City/South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are both aiming for submission of the Cambridge City/South Cambridgeshire Local Plan at the end of March. The County Council has a holding objection pending the outcome of the Cambridge East secondary school and waste management issues.

Major Infrastructure Projects:

Cambridge Science Park Station Interchange

The resolution to grant planning permission was subject to the signing of a number of planning obligations which are currently under negotiation with the three local authorities involved. Once the Section 106 has been completed the planning decision notice can be issued. A number of pre-commencement planning conditions need to be approved by the Planning Committee before works start on-site.

Ely Southern Bypass

The submission of further supplementary environmental information to complement the project's Environmental Statement is expected to be submitted to the planning authority shortly. This will then be advertised and be the subject of a further round of consultation before an officer report and recommendation can be presented to the Planning Committee on a date to be confirmed.

Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

The final draft of the Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire will be considered by the Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning group on the 6 February, before going to Cabinet on 4 March for final approval. The strategy represents 18 months of close work with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to develop a transport strategy that supports the development aspirations set out in their respective Local Plans. Over 76% of respondents agreed with the strategy's overall approach of increasing the use of sustainable transport while maintaining traffic levels at a similar level to now when the draft strategy was consulted on in summer 2013.

Highways Capital Projects Delivery

The Member Panels are assessing the 146 applications from local communities for Local Highway Improvements (LHI). The LHI process allows communities to apply for County Council funding to support their own funding to deliver small highway improvements in their community. Communities will be informed of the results later this month

Parking Review

The on-street parking charges informal consultation took place for an extended 5 weeks during December and January. Responses were received from businesses, business member groups, visitors and regular users of the on-street parking facilities and charity organisations representing our more vulnerable groups. The responses are being collated and will feed into the review of parking provision in Cambridge, Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots after which a formal consultation will take place on the recommendations.

Streetlighting

Works commenced in Cambridge City on 31 January. Engagement has taken place with all Councillors for areas where substantial works are taking place and designs have been influenced and informed by local Members' knowledge.

The County Council and Balfour Beatty teams have reviewed all communications literature and the new material will be used from February. Balfour Beatty have also appointed a new Communications Manager, Keeley Russell, who will commence work on the PFI on 24 January.

The new consultation process is working well and we are implementing a monitoring tool to measure its impact. An "Attachments Policy" is being formulated to govern the process for seasonal decorations, such as Christmas Lights and hanging flower baskets being attached to Street Lighting columns.

Highways Maintenance Strategy

Asset Management Strategy for the County Council has continued. The strategy outlines an approach to highway maintenance focussed around taking a long term view to maximise the resources available to sustain the condition of the County's highway assets. It is intended to take a draft Asset Management Strategy and Options Appraisal to SMT, Spokespersons and Cabinet during February and March. The Strategy will inform the 2014/16 Transport Delivery Plan, which sets out the works programme and is due to go to Cabinet on 15 April.

Household Recycling Services

Consultation is currently underway on the Councils new Household Recycling Service Strategy, which is scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 15 April.

Introduction of Equal Civil Marriage

Legislation has been approved that will see same sex couples able to give notice of marriage from 13 March 2014, with the first marriages taking place from 29 March 2014. There will be a further phase later this year to allow same sex couples who are already in a legal Civil Partnership to convert that into an Equal Civil Marriage, the process for which is yet to be determined.

Melbourn Library Access Point

Melbourn Community Hub is set to open on Saturday 1 February. The hub, located on the High Street, is the new home of the volunteer run [Melbourn Library Access Point](#). More information about the new community facilities can be found on the [Melbourn Community Hub website](#).

Community Hub Developments for Sawston and East Barnwell

Subject to Full Council approval in February 2014, CCC's Effective Property Asset Management (EPAM) board has allocated £2.5 million to develop community hubs in Sawston and East Barnwell. Both projects provide the opportunity for the County Council to consider best use of multiple sites, facilitating the disposal of assets whilst also improving service delivery through co-location in key areas of need.

£1.25 million will fund a new hub in Sawston adjacent to Sawston Village College's Marven Centre site, creating a building to accommodate the Library, Locality Team and Children's Centre, as well as flexible space available for community use. EPAM's £1.25 million, plus external grant funds, will contribute to a total project budget of circa £1.8 million towards regenerating East Barnwell's community centre into a community hub, to incorporate Barnwell Library, South City Locality Team, See Saw preschool and flexible community space for hire.

eMagazines and eNewspapers Services Launched

Library members can now enjoy [digital magazines and newspapers free of charge](#). These new services launched on 15 January and allow Library members to read and download 40 top magazine titles and a number of daily national newspapers straight to their computer, smartphone or tablet. The eMagazines and eNewspapers services sit alongside the popular eBook and eAudio book provision.

Improvement in Children's Section

Youngsters across Cambridgeshire are benefiting from exciting new additions to their library services. The service has invested in new stocks of board and picture books, updating the junior information collections and increasing the selection of children's books in e-format.

"Read it Again!" The Cambridgeshire Children's Picture Book Award

The 9th ['Read it Again!' Cambridgeshire Children's Picture Book Award](#) launches this month. Run by Cambridgeshire Libraries, the 'Read it Again!' award is for a picture book where the words and pictures are the first published work of one individual. Children will read, discuss and then vote for their favourite book from a shortlist of eight outstanding titles, all published during 2013. The book receiving the most votes will be declared the "Read it Again!" winner at a special ceremony to be held in early summer 2014.

Brokerage

The County Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) spend £54 million p.a. on residential and nursing care for older people. Additionally in Cambridgeshire approximately 50% of residential and nursing care places are purchased by self funders, who, at best receive inconsistent support and advice. This mixed market can result in unhelpful competition between purchasers resulting in higher costs.

Following exploratory discussions with CCG, a formal project board was established by the County Council in November 2013 to develop a joint single purchasing unit for Independent sector services, including residential care, nursing care and domiciliary care. There is also an aspiration to extend this service to self funders.

A workshop was held with stakeholders from a range of disciplines within the NHS and the County Council. The outcome was the development of a redesigned business process, and a detailed project plan. The approach agreed was a phased implementation beginning in the Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire areas (Addenbrookes catchment area).

It is anticipated that the full implementation will be completed by June 2014. The first stage of implementation commenced on 20 December 2013 with a 'soft launch' focussing on individual discussions concerning joint purchasing intentions with all residential and nursing care providers.

Accident and Emergency Four Hour Target and Implications for the County Council

Demographic pressure has resulted in greater demands and waiting times in Accident and Emergency departments. Since early autumn, this issue has received considerable national political and media attention, culminating in the Prime Minister providing personal assurances that the four hour waiting target would be met for 95% of patients. However, in the four acute hospitals that serve Cambridgeshire residents we have seen unprecedented numbers of attendances and admissions of older people (e.g. in Addenbrookes, we have seen in excess of 100 over 85s admitted each week since September.

This is a 10% increase on the previous year). The County Council has been called upon to do all within its powers to support NHS colleagues to manage the flow of patients from the acute hospitals into the community. The Council has been praised by the CCG Clinical Lead for maximising its efforts, and for the positive impact this has had. For example, bed days lost to delayed transfers of care have been reduced by 24% in the Addenbrookes system in the current year, compared to the previous year.

Winter Pressures Funding

Addenbrookes and Hinchingsbrooke Hospitals have both received one-off additional funding to meet costs of 'winter pressures'. The Council has been working in collaboration with NHS colleagues to agree what that funding could be directed towards and agreement has been reached about increasing capacity in a number of schemes such as 24 hour care, reablement, expanding community bed capacity and funding additional social work posts for a time limited period.

The intention is that these will help to prevent unnecessary admissions and increase capacity for appropriate discharge from hospital into the community. It is important to note this is one off money, has to be spent by a certain time and the initiatives funded will cease once the funding ceases. The accountability for this funding sits within the NHS but the Council assists wherever possible to ensure that it is put to be best possible use as quickly as possible.

Safeguarding and Standards Unit (SASU)

The number of children in Cambridgeshire currently subject to a child protection plan is 393. This number is continuing to increase, but less significantly than the increase in numbers seen from September to December last year. SASU are working hard to understand the increase in numbers. A 12 week overview of the child protection conference, looking at the whole process from the time the conference is requested to the outcomes for the child, is being undertaken. Focus will also be given to understanding the impact of the signs of safety conference model and what differences this has made to the plans we make for children. This will start on 17th January 2014. Information from this review will be shared within children social care and the LSCB. The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) is also seeing an increase in referrals. At the current time up to four complex strategy meetings a week are being held, where information of real concern is presented regarding adults who are in a position of trust with children. Telephone consultations are also increasing. In the main, the LADO reports many referrals are progressed, meaning the referrer has identified a concern. Given the current media interest in cases of high profile celebrities who have been accused of child abuse, an increase in LADO referrals was to be expected and is positive.

Reviews in the Learning Disability Partnership and Physical Disability Service

The new Adult Information System (AIS) IT system has now been implemented across the above service, with staff having received training around best practice and on the system itself as part of this roll out.

The initial feedback from services is that the system itself is easier to use and it is more convenient to capture information, however, with all new systems it is taking time for staff to become familiar with it. As part of the implementation of the system all service users who are receiving services and who would have had an annual review will instead have a full re-assessment in order that the AIS system has the most up to date information accurately recorded. The learning from the implementation in these services and the impact that roll out has had on the review performance indicator is being shared with the older peoples service who will be the next service to "go live" with AIS.

Adoption Service

A formal 30 day consultation on proposals to restructure Cambridgeshire's Adoption Service was launched on 6 January. These arrangements are significant and mark the proposal that the Adoption Service moves to unit structure, mirroring the wider Children's Social Care structure. This will necessitate a change of posts within the Service - whilst the overall number of qualified staff remains the same, the post of Senior Social Worker will be lost and replaced with Social Worker and Consultant Social Worker posts. This proposal has been driven by the pace of the government agenda for change and the need to ensure closer management oversight and capacity to continue to deliver better and improved services at a faster pace. The proposal also suggests a separation of functions such as Adopter Assessment, Family Finding and Adoption Support; the latter proposal is generally supported by staff. The adoption management team are working to support staff during the consultation period whilst ensuring that services continue to be delivered in a timely way.

Adoption Scorecard

The Governments Adoption Score Card was published on 14 January. Cambridgeshire is one of only a few local authorities in Britain to meet demanding targets for speeding up the adoption process for children needing a permanent placement. 16% of Cambridgeshire's children leave care to be adopted - this is above the national average of 13% and 55 % of our children were placed within 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. The Scorecard is based on a very narrow cohort however this performance is encouraging going forward and highlights where we need to strengthen performance.

Consultation on Adult Disability Service Administration Structure

This formal consultation document was launched on the 20 January and will last for 45 days in line with the section 188 notice. The consultation affects administrative posts in the Learning disability Partnership (LDP), Physical Disability and Sensory Services. Currently across these services there are five administration teams all providing financial, business and general administration support. The consultation document outlines proposals as part of the directorates 2014/2015 business plan to create a new central administration team that will work across these services and will be responsible for the finance and business administration functions. In addition resources will continue to be available to provide general administrative support to practice and locality teams. It is intended that this model of working across services will produce efficiencies meaning the number of posts in the services can be reduced whilst the capacity to complete all functions remains. The consultation period is due to end on the 5 March 2014.

PinPoint

Pinpoint, the organisation that leads on participation and feedback for parents in Cambridgeshire has been funded by the Council since October 2008. It has been hosted by Younglives, the St Ives based voluntary organisation. Younglives ceased trading in December 2013 with no prior notice given. The Council has notified the company responsible for dealing with the liquidation that it is a creditor. The work of Pinpoint is important and temporary arrangements have been made for it to be hosted within Children's Links, the voluntary organisation that is commissioned by the Council to provide infrastructure support to the third sector in Cambridgeshire. Work is taking place to support Pinpoint to become a constituted stand alone organisation.

Homecare Apprenticeship Programme

In partnership with Health Education East of England, the Workforce Development Team (Adults) are currently recruiting job seekers interested in working in adult social care to our exciting and unique apprenticeship. Our one year homecare apprenticeship offers the chance for caring and compassionate people to 'earn while they learn' by supporting them to get a job with one of our local homecare providers, develop their skills and understanding of adult social care and gain a variety of vocational qualifications, whilst being paid the standard rate of a care worker. This is an exciting opportunity available to everyone, regardless of their age or background. If someone wants to make a positive difference to people's lives then this apprenticeship can support them to turn a worthwhile job into a rewarding long term career.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Suicide Prevention Board

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Suicide Prevention board recently submitted a bid on behalf of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to the East of England Strategic Clinical Network (SCN) Pathfinder Programme to develop and deliver a multi-partnership suicide prevention project. Our bid was selected for funding and will be supported to the sum of £50,000 to develop our vision for suicide prevention in this region.

The bid was developed by Kathy Hartley - a public health registrar at the County Council with dedicated support from colleagues at Peterborough City Council, Cambridge and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Data on suicides in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2008-2010) highlight that Peterborough City, Cambridge City and Fenland districts have higher than average suicide rates, with suicide in men in Fenland significantly above the England and East of England rates. In addition, analysis of local data on suicides is providing us with evidence of groups at higher risk of suicide.

Digital Services

Even more services are being offered through the Council's website as a way of providing accessibility and reducing the Council's costs. Recent additions include:

*Concessionary bus passes;

*Adults social care professionals change form - to speed up the notification of changes to care packages between professionals

Council's New Website

The council will be launching its new website in early March. Previews of the website have been given to staff and Councillors, to enable early feedback before the formal launch. The website has been specifically designed based on customer needs, focusing on their key information and services requirements. The new website will be fully mobile device compatible

Sports Relief - 21 March 2014

Following 5 successful years of providing a call donation centre, Comic Relief, has once again asked the Contact Centre to provide this service. Over 80 volunteers from across the organisation will be staffing the phones from 6.30pm - 12.30am on the evening of Sports Relief. Interestingly, the number of call donations centres have decreased, as more of the public choose to donate online, however, our excellent performance has meant that we have once again been selected.

Marketing of Castle Court

Notice boards to [market Castle Court](#) are now up and this has understandably started to generate some interest, although it does not mean that a move is imminent. We are working with colleagues across all services to plan the moves and determine an approximate timescale.

"As your County Councillor I welcome hearing from you on these and/or any other issues that affect our community."

Yours John Reynolds

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