

Since my last report to you there have been several changes at Hampshire County Council. Earlier this year Cllr Roy Perry announced his decision to stand down as Leader of the Council and that role has now been taken on by Cllr Keith Mans. This has also resulted in a Cabinet reshuffle and I was very honoured to be asked by Cllr Mans to take on his previous Cabinet responsibility as Lead Executive Member for Children & Young People's Services. This is a large and extremely important Directorate which has now been OFSTED recognised as providing Outstanding services to the people of Hampshire: an achievement of which we are all very proud. I believe we are one of only two Local Authorities who have achieved this rating.



Children's Services are Outstanding

Ofsted's recent inspection of HCC Children's Services has resulted in a rating of outstanding across all areas – which means children in Hampshire's care are safe and well looked after. Inspectors reported how the County Council's social workers are highly skilled at building meaningful relationships with children and that children in care benefit from high-quality support, which is making a real difference to their lives. Alongside this, Ofsted credited the County Council's strong political and corporate support – and how the well-targeted financial investment has enabled the Service's leadership team to implement an ambitious transformation programme. All of which has led to strengthened services, ensuring that the right help is available at the right time from the right people.

The OFSTED report comes at a time when the County Council is working with over 10,000 children, young people and their families in need of specialist children's social care services.

Upgrade M27 Junction 9 and Parkway South Roundabout

An updated scheme which will see enhanced walking and cycling facilities as part of an upgrade to the Junction 9 of the M27 and Parkway South roundabout has been given the go ahead by Hampshire County Council. The M27 is a critical, strategic corridor in southern Hampshire which helps to keep the economy moving, but at peak times queues caused by congestion at Junction 9 can extend back several kilometres along the motorway. The project is essential to improve traffic flow and journey times in the area. We have secured extra funding through Highways England, to enable us to build the improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians as an integral part of the overall scheme being developed by the County Council.

At Junction 9, the works will involve carriageway widening which will provide an additional lane on both motorway off-slip roads, the westbound on-slip road and the Whiteley Way approach, together with additional lanes on the northern and southern sections of the circulatory carriageway. Work is due to start this autumn for approximately 24 months. The cost of the works will be funded from combination of Highways England Growth and Housing Fund, Highways England Congestion Relief Fund, Highways England Designated Cycle Fund, Local Transport Plan funding, and developer contributions. The total cost of the scheme is £23.128 million. For more information visit the scheme web pages:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/m27junction9>

Your Views Sought

Hampshire County Council has launched a survey asking people for their views on options to help the Authority to prepare its budgets for April 2021 and beyond. The County Council has successfully found ways to deliver services differently and more efficiently, securing savings of £480 million over the past 11 years. Due to growing demand for council services, further reductions in Government funding, rising costs and inflation, the County Council faces a further estimated budget shortfall of £80 million by April 2021. This means more decisions will need to be made about what the County Council can and cannot provide in future. The *Balancing the Budget* consultation presents a range of options that could contribute towards balancing the budget. The consultation opened on **Wednesday 5 June 2019** and **closes at 11:59 pm on 17th July 2019**.

People can take part in the consultation via the online response form on the webpage: www.hants.gov.uk/balancingthebudget. Paper copies can be requested by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk or calling 0300 555 1375, and will also be available from local Hampshire libraries.

Climate Emergency

Hampshire County Council has declared a Climate Emergency, joining more than 70 local authorities across the country in committing to put environmental issues at the heart of everything it does. The Climate Emergency

programme has gathered pace and profile at a rapid rate. The Government has announced a UK target of net zero greenhouse gases by 2050 and the County Council is committed to playing its part. It is clear that action on the scale required to meet the urgency of this global challenge can only be achieved if we all commit to lasting change. In Hampshire, this means not only building on our achievements in reducing carbon emissions in recent years, but also being absolutely clear on effective actions we can take to reduce our carbon footprint and make Hampshire more resilient to the effects of climate change already in the system. Our aim is to leave the County in a strong and sustainable position for future generations – and these issues are well expressed in the work of our Hampshire 2050 Commission, as well as elsewhere in existing strategies. Hampshire County Council has been tackling climate change issues for many years, taking active steps to respond, both in terms of making Hampshire more resilient to changes already coming, and also to mitigate future climate change through reducing carbon emissions.

Recycled Plastic Kerbing

Hampshire Highways teams are trialling recycled plastic kerbing as an alternative to concrete to reduce carbon emissions and promote more sustainable ways of delivering services to Hampshire residents. We are currently trialling small areas of recycled plastic kerbing in areas which see a high number of heavy vehicles, to test the resilience of the material. This innovative use of recycled plastic kerbing, which is durable but much lighter than the concrete equivalent, results in 40% less carbon during manufacture. It can be easily installed manually, reducing the need for mechanical handling equipment.

The recycled plastic kerbing contains 88% recycled material and is cut with hand tools which does not create crystalline silica dust, as working with concrete would do. These plastic kerbs have been BBA/HAPAS approved meaning they are manufactured to the highest standards for the Hampshire network. With its light weight features the Highways team can lay four times faster than traditional methods.

Hampshire's Rural Communities

With 85 per cent of Hampshire classified as rural, rural life in Hampshire is both a source of immense enjoyment and one of the County's biggest challenges, especially with the growing pressures on County Council services. To help local residents the County Council set up two community focussed investment funds; the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund, and the Rural Communities Fund. Progress during 2018/2019 is as follows:

- The Parish and Town Council Investment Fund was launched, and received approximately 100 enquiries within its first quarter of operation. Some 23 projects are already in active development, and a further 15 have been steered towards other County Council grants and funds.
- Direct investments from the Rural Programme include support for the Parish Lengthsmen Scheme, Village Agents and Men's Sheds, helping more small parishes to resource their own maintenance, and develop a mutually-supportive local community. It has also provided support to the Hitting the Cold Spots initiative, for people who struggle to heat their homes.
- The Rural Communities Fund, which offers small grants for locally-led initiatives, has awarded 27 projects investments in the last year, ranging between under £500 up to £10,000. Recent examples include investments in local village stores and community led social care initiatives which look to tackle social isolation.

News in a Nutshell

During the period 2013-2018 the County Council delivered 12,691 new school places and with projects programmed a further 5,870 places will become available by 2022

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