

County Councillor's Report September 2018

Crossroads Sign.

Costings have been sent to the Parish Council for agreement. I would very much like to give a big thankyou to County Highways for not charging any labour costs to put the signs up.

Cycle path updates.

Oakington to Girton - The cycling team have asked the contractor to price certain options, so they can ascertain the best way forward.

Oakington to Cottenham - There is insufficient highway width to accommodate a cycle path, so the team is currently investigating land acquisition from adjacent plots. All land owners on the southern side of Oakington Road have been writtento, with some responses being received. The process of procuring a Property Consultant is underway, so that land acquisition can be progressed further. This is quite a complex Project due to the number of land owners, so will take more time.

Support and services for young children in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough commended.

Energy and a strong commitment to putting children and families first have been recognised in a review of services for young children in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The Early Years Social Mobility Pilot Peer Review of Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council was carried out in July and led by Sarah Newman, Deputy Director Children's Services at Portsmouth City Council.

The review team were asked to focus on three key lines of enquiry in relation to early year's social mobility - Leadership; Wider Child Family & Health Services and Partnerships.

The strong leadership and effective multi-agency working across the two local authorities was praised and the commitment to prioritise early years, including speech, language and communication recognised. The report highlighted the positive culture across both authorities and a willingness to share learning and work together to improve outcomes.

Elected members are working well together to ensure there is an effective early year's offer across the two authorities. Although this joint working is relatively new there was a consensus that 'politics are left at the door and it is about children.'

The use of data and commitment to learning and improvement demonstrated by the literacy project Talking Together was highlighted <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/talking-together-to-boost-young-children-s-life-chances/>

The team also spoke to a childminder. The cohesive support and advice she had received from a range of early years services had proved invaluable in enabling her to confidently provide care for a child with complex needs over an extended period of time. Suggestions for further improvement included a greater focus on challenge and scrutiny, ensuring that managers' aspirational targets for speech and language development are shared with childcare providers and boosting the take-up rates for free childcare for eligible two-year-olds.

It is vitally important that children make progress ahead of starting school and, the County Council along with Peterborough City Council are committed to continuing to provide this crucial support.

Healthy Schools contract award.

A competitive tender for a new Healthy Schools Support Service has been completed with the contract being awarded to Everyone Health, the current Integrated Lifestyle Service provider in Cambridgeshire. The Service will provide all schools with bespoke information about the health needs of their school populations, evidence based interventions for creating a healthy school environment through direct contact, and a website. The work will link with and be complementary to the work of the County Council's Education and Wellbeing Team.

Council recognised for its support to our armed forces.

The County Council has secured a silver award in the Ministry of Defence's employer recognition scheme for showing support to the armed forces and their families. Launched in 2014 by the Prime Minister, the prestigious initiative was created to recognise and reward UK employers for their support and commitment to Defence. The County Council has been recognised for demonstrating its support for the Armed Forces community, this includes helping Reserves, Service leavers, Armed Forces veterans, the wounded, injured and sick, Cadets, military spouses or partners and their families.

The award scheme involves bronze, silver and gold awards for employers that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to Defence and the Armed Forces Community. By winning the Silver award the County Council has demonstrated their support by employing at least one person from the armed forces community and actively communicating and projecting a positive image of defence to their employees. They also support Reservists by giving them the flexibility needed to plan and fulfil their annual training and mobilisation commitments.

The County Council employs a number of staff who have connections to the Armed Forces. The authority is also a lead signatory to the Cambridgeshire Armed Forces Community Covenant, which ensures that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly within the community.

Having served over 40 years to date as a regular and reservist member of our armed forces, I'm very proud to be part of an organisation like Cambridgeshire County Council which is so passionate and dedicated towards our armed forces communities, and has the policies and practices in place to ensure that as an employer the council can create a supportive environment for ex- service personnel, serving families, and reservists. The council will continue to work closely with the military community to support them. The council will officially receive its award at a special ceremony due to take place at Emmanuel College in Cambridge on Thursday 8 November.

Peter Hudson
County Councillor
Oakington, Westwick, Longstanton, Northstowe, & Over