

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 10 JULY 2019

POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER

LGA Conference

It was good to see delegates from all parties of this Council attend the annual LGA Conference in Bournemouth between 2-4 July.

The annual gathering is an opportunity for elected members to network with their national colleagues, lobby government ministers and to meet local government professionals from other Councils in the Exhibition Centre, to share ideas of best practice.

This year's conference theme was #CouncilsCan – highlighting the unique role local government plays in shaping communities and making a positive impact for residents.

It also reinforces the message that Government needs local councils to deliver their policy agenda- and that they must be properly funded to do this work.

I have been re-elected as the County Councils Representative on the LGA Conservative Group Executive Board nationally and have good working relationships with the new LGA Chairman Cllr James Jamieson, Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council, and Cllr Izzi Seccombe, the new LGA Conservative Group Leader and Leader of Warwickshire County Council. These are important positions as they hold weekly meetings with the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government and his team.

Highlighting the importance of the LGA Conference, Boris Johnson MP and Jeremy Hunt MP, candidates to be the next Prime Minister, attended a hustings event organised by the LGA Conservative Group and gave their respective pitches to a packed audience, followed by a question and answer session.

Liberal Democrat leadership hopefuls Jo Swinson MP and Sir Ed Davey MP attended a similar hustings event for their members.

Very soon there will be a new Government and a new approach – hopefully Brexit will be sorted – and Local Government, not just in Leicestershire, must be ready to respond to the new policy agenda.

MTFS Consultation

Members should be aware that the Council has begun a major consultation exercise regarding the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Since 2010 the Council has saved approximately £200million but rising demand and costs coupled with uncertainty over Government funding means we need to save another £75million over the next four years which will be extremely challenging.

Through the consultation we are seeking the views of the public, businesses and stakeholders on our future priorities. A questionnaire has been circulated to all residents and key events will be held over the summer involving residents' focus groups, parish councils, NHS bodies and other stakeholders. There is also an interactive online budget tool which people could use to try and balance the council's budget.

I would urge members to encourage as many people as possible to participate and make their views known so that we can have the best possible information to help shape our priorities and take the difficult decisions needed.

Regulatory Excellence Awards

I am delighted to report that our Trading Standards Team was commended at the recent Regulatory Excellence Awards hosted by the Office of Products and Safety for their work at East Midlands Airport.

As part of the National Ports and Borders Project a small enforcement team has been working with the UK Border Force preventing unsafe goods entering the marketplace and that team has achieved the highest 'hit rate' compared to other port teams in terms of identifying and intercepting unsafe and non-compliant products.

Update on the 'Start a Conversation' Suicide Prevention Campaign

The launch of the website was successful in mobilising interest and support to tackle the impact of suicide in Leicestershire.

There have been over 27,000 hits on the website, with the most popular page after the home page being the 'Advice and Support' page.

There have also been 126 pledges of support from individuals and organisations.

The programme has reached out and engaged with a number of different individuals and groups including:

- Universities;
- Primary Care: Working with six practices locally where patients had died as a result of suicide;
- Rural Community Council (RCC):
- Survivors of bereavement by suicide;
- Armed Forces/Military including Veterans.

We are also planning a suicide prevention conference at Leicester City Football Club to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day, Tuesday 10th September 2019 and are in discussion with the football club to hold a suicide prevention awareness raising session to coincide with a forthcoming premier league.

Loughborough University

I was pleased to note that Loughborough was ranked fourth in the Guardian's University League Table for 2020 recently published, behind only Cambridge, St Andrews and Oxford. Loughborough University is ranked in the top 10 in each of the most recent national league tables; it is without doubt one of the country's leading Higher Education institutions and we are proud to celebrate its success, and work with the University as a trusted partner.

N. J. Rushton CC

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**POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN
AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Children’s Innovation Partnership

In December 2018 the Department entered into an Innovation Partnership with Barnardo’s to design and deliver cost effective outcome focused and creative service models for children across Leicestershire. The partnership is particularly focusing on young people on the edge of care, in local authority care and leaving care, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Early this year Barnardo’s was successful in its bid to the Department for Education for a grant to fund the local co-ordination of free holiday activities and healthy food for disadvantaged Leicestershire children. The grant will enable around 2500 children and young people to receive 4 weeks of free activities and healthy food over the summer holidays.

MISTLE (Multi-Agency Intervention Support Team Leicestershire)

I am also pleased to share with Members some positive outcomes from the MISTLE project run by Action for Children on behalf of the Department. Children placed in residential care are referred to MISTLE who then work directly with the carer, the child and parent to prepare them for moving back to a family based setting. The team is a multi-agency team, including CAMHS, Social Care and Action for Children, providing ‘wrap-around’ support to the child and their family. The project has now been in place for a year and I am pleased to share with the Council that three of the young people supported early on in the year have moved on, one back home and two into family based settings. Four more young people are now ready to move into family based settings once these have been identified. This is a significant achievement in improving the outcomes for these children and young people and demonstrates the positive impact of assertive, direct work with young people to support their move into family based settings.

Virtual School Children in Care and Care Leavers

The Virtual School monitors, tracks the progress in education of all children in the care of Leicestershire County Council and supports all stakeholders with advocacy, advice, challenge and training. Over the last year our children in care and care leavers have had a number of significant successes that we would like to share.

A 17 year old Leicestershire looked after child has been named “student of the year” for his Vehicle Technology course at Leicester College. This achievement is

particularly remarkable as the student had previously made little progress at school but since attending college has thrived. He has also taken another student who is struggling under his wing to enable that student also to achieve and progress.

Six Leicestershire looked after children attended a residential (Widening Participation) event at the University of Leicester attended by more than 100 pupils (not looked after) from schools across the region. One of our looked after pupils won an award for "Most Improved Student" on the Arts and Humanities programme, two of the girls (Year 9) are now thinking positively about going to university.

One of our first year university students has received her results for her end of year exams and achieved three Firsts and two 2:1s, giving her an overall 2:1 for the year.

Another student gained three merits in her college course which has enabled her to get into De Montfort University to follow a Fashion course.

Seven Leicestershire Care leavers have been appointed since June 2018 to apprenticeships with the County Council as a result of the ring-fenced apprenticeship scheme.

Mr I. D. Ould CC