

# Report to Town and Parish Council from Cllr Ken Moon

## Member for Petersfield Butser Division

### November 2015

#### A new Chief Executive for Hampshire takes the helm of a modern business providing public services

Hampshire County Council's new Chief Executive takes up post on Monday 2 November - as the new Head of Paid Service for a local authority now widely regarded as a national leader in shared and traded public services, as well as for the quality of its services to Hampshire residents.

John Coughlan was appointed to the post earlier this month. In taking up the reigns as Chief Executive, he will be responsible not only for managing an overall annual budget of around £2 billion, a workforce of around 37,000 and for providing services for 1.3 million people across the county, but also a modern business operating as part of an 'extended organisation'

With public sector budgets expected to remain under pressure in the future, and the need for Hampshire County Council to deliver further anticipated savings of £98 million by April 2017, the Authority remains vigilant in bearing down on its costs and staffing. Senior management levels have been reduced by 25 per cent - with fewer people on the top salary scales, and personnel structures modified so work is covered at lower salary levels, and at lower cost. Voluntary redundancy has also been offered to staff as a way of keeping compulsory job losses to a minimum.

#### A Library Service for the future

Hampshire County Council is seeking residents' views on how [Hampshire's Library Service](#) can be transformed and modernised to meet the changing needs of people in the 21st century.

At his [Decision Day](#) on 30 October, the County Council's Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Heritage, Councillor Andrew Gibson approved plans for a public consultation on the draft Library Strategy which looks to develop a sustainable and vibrant Library Service for people who live, work and study in Hampshire.

Hampshire runs one of the largest library services in England with 48 libraries, an increasingly busy online service, as well as mobile and home library services.

The draft Strategy proposes a number of changes, backed by a four year investment programme, to make libraries modern and vibrant, developing staff and volunteers, installing self-service technology in all libraries, and improving public access to the latest technology. In addition, the Strategy includes suggestions for how the Library Service can be made more sustainable - through savings and investments.

Consultation will begin on Monday 2 November. The consultation questionnaire will be available [online](#), on the County Council's webpages, with printed copies available in all Hampshire libraries, and in mobile library vehicles. The closing date for feedback is Saturday 16 January 2016.

Hampshire residents will have the opportunity to comment on the Draft Strategy which proposes changes to the Library Service to be implemented over the next four years to:

- Place libraries into four different tiers to provide a standardised approach to services within each tier.
- Invest £500,000 every year, for four years from the £2 million Book Fund to make libraries modern and vibrant - making best use of new technology and digital systems.
- Permanently reduce the Book Fund by £500,000 from 2020 onwards.
- Review the costly mobile library service and investigate modern alternatives.
- Review the future viability of static libraries, using an agreed set of criteria.
- Increase the use of trained volunteers to support the work of paid Library Staff.
- Rebrand Hampshire's busiest libraries as Discovery Centres.
- Develop Library staff.
- Share library buildings with partner organisations for several services to be accessed in one visit.
- Phase a withdrawal of poorly used library collections (CDs, games, DVDs) and transfer other specialist collections to other providers.

## Hampshire agencies join forces to tackle domestic abuse

Changing the behaviour of domestic abuse perpetrators is at the core of a new approach to help combat domestic abuse and violence in Hampshire.

As part of a wider Domestic Abuse Strategy, Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Hampshire Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have worked together to develop a Hampshire wide initiative that aims to better identify and assess perpetrators and implement an improved programme of interventions.

Hampshire County Council are delighted that, by working closely with our partners, we have developed this new approach to tackling domestic abuse. We have listened to stakeholders and victims of abuse who, quite rightly, pointed out that, in addition to the support for victims, there is a real need to get to the heart of the problem and find ways to help perpetrators change their behaviour."

Led by the Hampton Trust, a consortium of local organisations will be appointed to implement the new scheme. The consortium will include Baseline Training Ltd and Aurora New Dawn who will bring an innovative focus to delivering support and helping all agencies achieve a meaningful change in addressing this complex and challenging issue.

The Hampton Trust has worked with domestic abuse perpetrators both in and outside the criminal justice system for the past 19 years. As part of the new service the Trust will:

- create and manage a single point of contact to receive and record information on perpetrators;
- deliver a range of (modular based) specialist support (both for groups and individuals);
- provide an advice line for front line services; and
- deliver a range of training to front line practitioners.

The contract for the new service will run from November 2015 to March 2017. The intervention will be independently evaluated by Southampton University.

## Keeping safe on Hampshire's roads as the clocks go back

As the darker nights draw in, Hampshire County Council is reminding everyone using the roads and pavements as they travel to work and school to think about being safe and being seen.

It is harder for motorists to spot others on the road or pavement in the dark, and accidents can happen when drivers do not see cyclists or pedestrians until it is too late. Please could I ask all our residents to prepare for the winter months by taking a few steps to stay as safe as possible on the road.

Top tips from Hampshire's Road Safety Team to help keep safe this winter:

- Wear brighter coloured clothing during the day, and something reflective at night.
- Drivers should take extra care to look for vulnerable road users.
- Drivers should watch their speed and be more aware of other road users, as its more difficult to see pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists as the evenings draw in.
- Check bicycles to make sure that reflectors are clean, as well as fitting new batteries to lights.

## Waste less and make the most of Halloween pumpkins with delicious recipes and an introductory compost bin offer

In the run up to Halloween, it's estimated that over one million pumpkins are purchased in the UK, ready to be carved, and placed on doorsteps and windowsills across the country. Unfortunately, after Halloween, pumpkins can share the same fate as other vegetables and become part of the staggering 62,000 tonnes of food each year which ends up being thrown away in Hampshire.

It may seem like a small thing, but throwing away a pumpkin and, indeed, any fruit or vegetables add to the volume of household waste which needs to be disposed of. Hampshire has an excellent record of diverting waste from landfill - only 6.6% of Hampshire's household waste went to landfill last year – but this can be improved.

Each month, Hampshire households throw away an estimated £60 worth of food that could have been eaten, and so everyone is urged to think about what they put in their bin and if there is an option to re-use, recycle or compost it

Hampshire County Council aims to reduce waste by encouraging residents to think about food and garden waste and has launched the [Smart Living initiative](#) to provide advice and tips to help everyone save money and waste less. Pumpkins, for example, are an excellent seasonal vegetable packed full of vitamins and minerals. Discover some delicious pumpkin recipes and if there is still some pumpkin left over, it can be turned into compost to protect gardens all year round.

Pumpkin leftovers placed into compost bin with a good balance of other suitable food and garden waste will rot down to produce environmentally friendly compost in six to nine months. When ready, compost can be used as a soil improver on all types of plant beds; suppressing plant disease weeds and help to retain moisture throughout the drier months.

To support residents who want to start composting, Hampshire County Council has teamed up with [Getcomposting.com](#) to offer home compost bins at the introductory price for only £17.98 plus delivery (RRP £39). There is also a buy one get one half price offer to purchase a second bin from only £8.99.

Visit [www.hants.getcomposting.com](http://www.hants.getcomposting.com) or call 0844 571 4444 for further information.

## **Hampshire County Council exceeds its carbon emissions reduction target**

Hampshire County Council has exceeded its ambitious target of reducing carbon emissions by 20 per cent that was set by Cabinet in 2010. Emissions have been reduced by more than 30,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over five years - a total saving of 22.8 per cent. The avoided cost of energy (at current rates) is around £2.7m, with a further £275,000 carbon tax savings this year alone.

This achievement demonstrates the success of the County Council's proactive approach to carbon reduction, resulting in energy cost savings and a healthier outlook for Hampshire's environment. It was a challenging target and we have exceeded it.

The emissions and savings achieved are thanks to an innovative programme of carbon reduction projects implemented across the County Council's estate, through the use of leading-edge technology. In schools and office buildings, maintenance improvements such as re-roofing projects and boiler and lighting replacements have contributed substantially to the saving. Carbon management is also a key consideration in all new building projects designed by the County Council's in-house Property Services designers and engineers - and is considered not just in new buildings, but in refurbishments and extensions as well. A major programme of street lighting replacement has also contributed strongly to the reductions.

The successful installation of 20 Solar Photovoltaic systems across the County Council's schools estate is now delivering efficiency savings of £20,000 per annum, generating 200,000 kWh of power every year. A successful pilot of solar photovoltaic energy generation on three of the County Council's corporate buildings added to the savings generated last year and a second phase of around 20 installations is now under way.

The 'Do your Energy Bit' behaviour-change initiative has also encouraged good energy habits among Council staff and the staff and pupils of Hampshire's 500+ schools, delivering reductions in energy usage along side innovative technical programmes.

## **Hampshire sees 300th broadband cabinet upgraded to superfast speeds**

The Hampshire Superfast Broadband Programme has reached a major milestone with the 300th cabinet in Hampshire now enabled with superfast broadband.

This means that an additional 72,000 Hampshire homes and businesses, which would not have been covered by the commercial market, now have access to new fibre-optic technology providing faster broadband, with most of these premises able to access superfast broadband speeds - i.e. internet speeds greater than 24 Mbps.

In Hampshire, the Government, Hampshire County Council and local partners are providing over £29 million of investment to ensure that more than 97,000 additional homes and businesses across the county can gain access to superfast broadband, once the programme is complete.

To find out which premises already have access to superfast broadband, or which areas are due to be covered by the Hampshire Superfast Broadband programme, visit: [www.hampshiresuperfastbroadband.com](http://www.hampshiresuperfastbroadband.com)

## **Hampshire's support for troubled families is 'promoting positive change'**

Independent, academic evaluation of Hampshire's Supporting Troubled Families Programme has found that it is 'promoting positive change in professional practice with families'.

This is just one of the key findings from a study by Professor Carol Hayden of Portsmouth University, presented at a meeting of the Supporting Troubled Families Strategic Group. The meeting was attended, for the first time, by Joe Tuke, National Director for the Troubled Families Programme at the Department of Communities & Local Government.

It is encouraging to see that the independent evaluation both highlights and emphasises the success of the Programme to date. We know that, one year on, four out of five of those families that we claimed a positive outcome for in May 2014, still have: improved school attendance for their children; reduced school exclusions, youth offending or anti social behaviour; and are remaining in work or training and no longer claiming an out of work benefit.

Among the findings of the independent evaluation, Hampshire's Programme has achieved:

- Substantial reductions in the prevalence of families with a child persistently absent from school;
- Reduced likelihood of children needing to be taken in to care or becoming an open case to Children's Social Services;
- Avoidance of costs to the public purse of £2.4m per annum (conservative estimate);
- Increased confidence among professionals in working with the whole family;
- Increased partnership working and inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation.

The evaluation also found that families appreciated the family centred approach and the personal qualities and enthusiasm of staff working with them.

Hampshire's Supporting Troubled Families Programme exceeded its Phase One goal to identify and engage 1590 (troubled) families - identifying nearer to 2000 families. The success of Phase One meant that the Programme was able to commence Phase Two, three months ahead of schedule.

Phase Two of the Programme aims to engage with a further 1,200 Hampshire families in 2015/16 and each year thereafter, up to 2020, including those where violence in the home and health issues (mental and physical) are a feature. Families who are most at risk of eviction, or who are struggling financially will also be supported.

## **Stay well this winter in Hampshire - get vaccinated against flu**

Hampshire County Council is encouraging those most at risk from catching flu to take up their vaccination this Autumn. Flu immunisation remains the most effective method to help protect against influenza.

The flu season usually starts in October. For most healthy people, flu is an unpleasant but usually self-limiting disease with recovery time taking up to a week. But people who catch the flu pass it on to an average of two people putting those most vulnerable at an increased risk, including those with long-term health conditions and pregnant women.

In addition to the flu vaccination, everyone can reduce their risk of getting flu or passing it to others through good hygiene. Using tissues when coughing or sneezing, binning these and washing hands regularly all stops infection spreading.

Hampshire County Council is providing free flu vaccines to its frontline health and social care staff who work with elderly or vulnerable groups. This protects those in the county's communities, most at risk, by helping them to stay well this winter, as well as those staff who support them.

The flu vaccine is offered free of charge by the NHS to those most at risk to protect them from catching flu and developing serious complications. Hampshire residents who qualify for this are encouraged to get vaccinated. This includes anyone who is the main carer for an elderly or disabled person at home.

This year also sees children in Hampshire school years 1 and 2 getting a nasal flu vaccination. Extending flu vaccinations to children will not only protect them from the illness but will also help to reduce its spread within families and the wider community. Children are the main source of transmission in the population.

Some people think the flu vaccine will not be effective. The vaccine is reviewed and updated annually by the World Health Organisation to match the main viruses expected to be circulating amongst the population. There is generally a good match between the strains of flu selected in the vaccine and the flu virus circulating.

### **1. Who is eligible for the flu vaccine?**

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. This is to ensure they are protected against catching flu and developing serious complications.

You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you:

- are 65 years of age or over
- are pregnant
- have certain medical conditions
- are very overweight
- are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- are a healthcare worker with direct patient contact, or a social care worker

## Rural Businesses urged to seize funding opportunities

The County Council is urging Hampshire's rural businesses to apply for European funding available to stimulate job creation and business growth.

Around 83% of Hampshire is classified as rural, so the success of rural businesses is vital to the county's economic prosperity. This is a great opportunity for businesses in the rural areas of central, West and North Hampshire, which are within the Enterprise M3 LEP area, to get a share of funding to help them grow their business. Funding could be available for a range of rural businesses from a farm wanting to diversify, to a new visitor attraction, or perhaps for a larger premises for food processing. I would urge all rural businesses in the area to take a look at this opportunity and explore how funding can support their investment plans and help them become more successful.

Grants of between £50,000 and £140,000 are available for businesses from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The funding is administered by Defra and there are three schemes businesses can apply for - rural tourism, food processing and micro or small business investment - to invest in new products, processes, technologies, equipment or premises. To be eligible, businesses will need to be in the geographical area covered by the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (the New Forest, mid to north Hampshire and South West Surrey).

**The deadline for applications is Friday 8 January 2016.**

For more information and an initial discussion around the eligibility criteria for the three funding schemes, please contact [jennie.pell@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jennie.pell@hants.gov.uk)

## Hampshire County Council begins early forecasting of the financial picture for 2020

Ahead of the Government's announcement at the end of next month on future funding for the public sector, Hampshire County Council is already on the front foot - looking towards the end of the decade.

Members of the County Council's Cabinet have approved the savings proposals that will close the budget gap to 2017/18, and are already looking ahead at the prospects for the Medium Term Financial Strategy up to 2020.

With Government needing to find billions more in savings to eliminate Britain's deficit by 2019/2020, it's widely expected that their Comprehensive Spending Review announcement on 25 November will set out more tough times ahead for the public sector. Therefore, it's essential we start preparing as early as possible for the financial picture ahead - taking into consideration the prospect of further likely cuts in our grant from Government, alongside the additional pressures we expect to face on our budgets, by the end of the decade.

On-going demand for social care to address the complex needs of growing numbers of older people, and vulnerable children and adults in Hampshire, continues to be a major factor in our financial considerations. As we head towards 2020, we must also bear in mind the future cost implications of the national living wage when it's introduced next year, particularly in the area of adult social care. With growing pupil numbers across Hampshire, the provision of secondary school places will also significantly influence our budget forecasts. Taking all these factors into account, it represents the greatest financial challenge we face yet, and coming at the end of a previous eight years of austerity in the public sector.

Hampshire County Council's grant from Government has more than halved in recent years and in response, the Authority began an unprecedented efficiency and change programme in 2008. To date, this approach has delivered £240 million of savings, it is transforming the way services are delivered and how the County Council works, and it has allowed Hampshire to maintain its share of Council Tax at the same level for six years in a row - at one of the lowest levels in the country.

Early and prudent financial planning is among Hampshire County Council's strengths, and we are already planning now, how we could close the predicted funding gap in 2020. This could involve building on the new, modern technology solutions we are putting in place as part of our current efficiency and change programme; selling and trading services with other public sector partners to generate income; as well as opportunities that may emerge from devolution if Government gives the go ahead for more powers to come to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

None of us can predict the future with any certainty, and indeed, not until the Government's autumn statement which will cover a period, many of us hope will be the final years of austerity for the public sector. However, as we head towards 2020, it's unlikely there will be any let up in the downward pressure on local government budgets that we have been seeing over the last decade. In the meantime, we have to stay focused on the first milestone the County Council must reach, which will be to secure anticipated savings of £98 million by 2017/2018.

The key actions and activities that aim to deliver the £98 million of savings to 2017/18, and on which the County Council sought residents' views this summer were approved by Cabinet. A final decision on the proposals will now be made by the full County Council on 22 October, followed by a number of further consultations with residents and stakeholders where necessary.

**Cllr Ken Moon**

**November 2015**