

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011

agenda item number **7a ii.**

## REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

### Purpose of the report

1. The report seeks to update Members on matters which fall within the Deputy Leader's portfolio.

### Health & Wellbeing Board

2. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June, at the invitation of Nottinghamshire Healthcare, I attended the official opening by the Secretary of State for Health of the new David Wilson Unit for the High Secure Learning Disability Service at Rampton Hospital.
3. On 24<sup>th</sup> June lead members for Adult Social Care and from Health & Wellbeing Boards across the East Midlands met at the Leicestershire County Council offices in Glenfield, primarily to discuss the latest developments in relation to the Health & Social Care Bill.
4. The Health & Wellbeing Board has met twice since the last meeting of the County Council and on each occasion there has been a presentation and in depth discussion of a major subject area to inform the development of a health strategy for the County. On 6<sup>th</sup> July the focus was upon health issues relating to children and young people and on 7<sup>th</sup> September upon the issues surrounding dementia.

### Grant Aid

5. On 4<sup>th</sup> July I met a representative of Nottinghamshire Community Foundation to discuss the potential of Localgiving.com as an online donation site to enable donors to find and support local charitable organisations, an initiative of particular importance at a time when support from public bodies is under considerable pressure.
6. The all-party Grant Aid Member Reference Group met for the second time on 22<sup>nd</sup> July to give preliminary consideration to the shape of the County Council's grant aid budget for the next financial year.

## **Localism Agenda**

7. On 12<sup>th</sup> July I attended a second meeting with leading members of Southwell Town Council to discuss the scope for devolution of responsibilities and resources from the County Council to the Town Council. I was accompanied on this occasion not only by members of the County Council's Localism and Partnerships Team, but also by a representative of the Highways Department, that being the sphere of activity of most interest to the Town Councils. A further meeting is planned for October, by which time it is to be hoped that the Highways Department will be in a position to quantify the current cost to the County Council of services in which the Town Council has expressed interest.

## **Customer Services**

8. *Registration Services:* since July the Customer Service Centre have been handling general enquiries and, more recently, making appointments for registering a birth or death on behalf of Registration Services. Initially this covered the Mansfield/Ashfield and Bassetlaw Registration Districts. This will now be extended over the next two months to cover the remainder of the County. By freeing up the Registrars' time this gives them capacity to take on additional activities such as Tell Us Once.
9. *Tell Us Once:* the introduction of the single notification system to securely share the registration details of a birth or death with central and local government services is the subject of a separate report. The Customer Service team will play a major frontline role in the project, handling all enquiries and appointment booking for the Registration teams across the County and managing the resulting "back-office" requests relating to internal services areas (collection of Occupational Therapy equipment, cancellation of home care packages, Blue Car Badges and meals at home etc).
10. *The Handy Persons Adaptation Scheme:* this scheme is now delivered countywide with two new aspects to the service having been absorbed into the Customer Service Centre over recent months. These are:-
  - The Hospital Discharge Scheme which provides service users with adaptations at home following a discharge from hospital, working to a 48-hour service level agreement. It is believed that early intervention will reduce falls in the home and negate the need for further hospital admission or treatment
  - Home Security Checks which are provided in conjunction with Nottinghamshire Police and Fire and Rescue services. The scheme enables the provision and installation of security and safety equipment within the homes of vulnerable people who have been identified as being at risk from fire and burglary.

11. *Blue Car Badges*: work is currently in hand, working closely with colleagues in the Highways Service, to fully assess the implications of the Blue Car Badge Reform Bill and ensure that revised processes, new documentation and systems are in place in preparation for the “Go Live” date following the introduction of the new legislation and awarding of a central government contract to a new provider for some aspects of the service.
12. *Payments*: a new payments system is being introduced on a phased basis across the Council to make debit and credit card payments easier and more efficient. The Customer Service Centre is in the first phase of the roll out programme which will result in further streamlining of processes at the Customer Service Centre which involve customers making a payment.
13. *The new Business Management System*: the Customer Service Centre will take first line calls and inquiries during the initial post “go live” period which will help ensure service continuity for staff and customers.
14. *Instrument and Music Teaching*: from 5<sup>th</sup> September the Customer Service Centre will operate a telephone payment service and enquiry handling covering literature requests and event booking, which was previously undertaken by an external provider. Overall the transfer to the Customer Service Centre will enable service delivery levels to be maintained at a reduced cost to the service area.

### **County Councils Network AGM & Council Meeting**

15. There was a very substantial agenda for the Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September, covering current developments in relation to local government finance, the future of local public audit, the implications of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Government’s Open Public Services White Paper, a range of topical health and adult social care issues and the timetable for the planned investment in the UK broadband network.

### **Greater Nottingham Partnership Board**

16. The final meeting of the Board took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, when the directors signed a declaration of solvency and resolved to place the company in voluntary liquidation.

### **Grantham Canal Partnership**

17. At a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> July the Partnership was advised that approval had been obtained for stage 1 of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to help finance the restoration of Woolsthorpe Locks. The meeting was also

reminded by the representative of Leicestershire County Council that restoration of the Canal for navigation was not universally popular in the communities along the route. The proposed installation of swing bridges to replace road crossings where the Canal is currently culverted was reported to be a subject of particular concern

**COUNCILLOR MARTIN SUTHERS**  
**Deputy Leader of the County Council**