

County Councillor's Report January 2019

New-look Child and Family Centres get users seal of approval

Last April, against great opposition, the County Council changed and transformed the way Children Centre services were delivered. The County Council moved out of expensive buildings and into community buildings getting the services unto the heart of our communities concentrating on where the need is greater.

More than 9 out of 10 of people surveyed this winter said they valued Cambridgeshire County Council's new Child and Family Centres.

In the recent Child and Family Centre survey 93% of the people who shared their views online and at activity sessions agreed that provision - which was reshaped in April - was helpful. The survey ran from September to November 2018 to give families the opportunity to feedback on the new service, and to tell us how the transition period felt.

One respondent said they valued, "Being able to socialise and make new friends." Another said Child and Family Centres provided, "Somewhere to learn parenting skills for both new parents and parents who were experiencing difficulties". Another respondent said it was, "Useful to get advice and support from Family Workers and other staff."

The refreshed and redesigned Child and Family Centre services launched in April 2018 to better meet the needs of a growing and rural county. The new model delivers services for families with children aged 0-19, and allows buildings to be used more flexibly bringing services closer to the communities which need them via an improved outreach offer.

One of the changes put in place was to run events and activities from a wider range of venues in new locations. Of those surveyed more than a third (36.67%) said they have attended a session delivered by their Child and Family Centre in an outreach venue such as a sports centre or village hall. One respondent said, "Some different venues, but same staff who are all great."

The County Council made extensive changes to the Child and Family Centre offer in April 2018, and I'm really pleased to see that more than 9 out of 10 people surveyed are finding the range of events and activities that are offered helpful. It is also great to see that our outreach events are reaching both existing users and new audiences. It is also encouraging to note that 19 people who responded to the survey expressed an interest in volunteering in our network of Child and Family Centres.

Our brilliant new Child and Family Centre at the Pathfinder School in Northstowe is going from strength to strength, with requests for more services and new groups coming in from our friends and neighbours in all the local neighbourhoods and villages.

The top way for people to find out about our services was Facebook with 68.6% saying they found out information this way - almost twice as many as the next most popular choice –the 'What's On' guide. This was followed by those who received information from health professionals or word of mouth. The new look Facebook pages for each district were also launched in April and the redesigned 'What's On' publications were also praised with 66% liking the new design.

Respondents were asked if the changes to the way the services are delivered had affected them directly and 6 out of 10 (62%) said no, or that this question wasn't applicable as they only started using the service since April when the changes were made.

Innovative pilot scheme trials next generation technology

A ground-breaking pilot is being launched across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which could help adults stay safely in their homes for longer. Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council will be the **first** in the country to pilot this new technology on this scale, which will see 180 service users taking part.

Designed for the elderly, frail or disabled who live alone, the 'Next Generation Technology Project' pilot will see the installation of a new digital Lifeline system, with motion sensor technology, offering continuous monitoring and analysis of daily living routines.

Known as the Care@Home Pro, the technology will be compared against the standard Lifeline, to see if it helps to indicate early signs of potential health and daily living issues, before they become serious. Health and social care services can then intervene earlier with shorter and simpler interventions. Informal carers can access self-help and preventative services that supports the users overall sense of wellbeing.

The movement detectors can be placed around the house and magnetic contacts placed on the front door, fridge, or medication box etc. It can take up to 30 days to learn a person's daily living routine, and works by identifying significant changes in the user's normal routine, for example an increase in bathroom usage, could indicate a possible infection or reduced mobility detected before a fall.

Standard Lifelines rely on the person to press a button to trigger an alert, whereas the Care@Home Pro notifies the telecare call centre of any changes – who can then check on the individual, alert family members and relevant response services. There is also an app for family members who can check the welfare of their loved ones but have the assurance that they will be phoned if there is a need to visit.

The increasing use of Technology Enabled Care is integral to the Adults Positive Challenge Programme. This is part of the on-going transformation of the council's adult social care services - which aims to deliver the best possible outcomes for adults and older people and promote independence, whilst meeting the challenges of increasing demand and financial pressures. The pilot is being rolled out in December 2018, with installations to be completed by March and monitoring for a further 12 months.

This new project promotes independent living and keeping people in their own homes where they often want to stay, with their family and friends around them. The County Council is committed in helping people within our county to live well safely, whilst also reducing their need for care, and by piloting this scheme I hope it will offer us another way to provide care and spot signs of health issues before it's too late.

Peter Hudson

County Councillor

Longstanton, Northstowe, Oakington, Westwick and Over.