

County Council Report for Parish Councils

November 2017

Cllr Roger Hickford & Cllr Kevin Cuffley

Representing the villages:

*Babraham, Great Shelford, Harston, Haslingfield, Hauxton, Little Shelford,
Newton, Sawston, Stapleford*

General News

Last month was dominated by the Children Centre debate at Full Council (see below).

All the Committees have begun their budget setting process for next year.

The A10 works is still on progressing. Roger and Kevin worked with Highways officers to get the timescale for the works cut drastically, and are hopeful it may even be completed slightly ahead of the revised schedule.

Children's Centres

It is disappointing the irresponsible way certain political parties have chosen to portray the Children's Centre proposals to residents, which in many cases has been a gross distortion of the truth and has frightened people into believing that they will lose frontline services in their local area. The day before the County Council debate on Children's Centres both Roger and Kevin received many emails which stated, "Please vote against the closure of Sawston Children's Centre..."

As stated last month, the opposite is happening, where Sawston will have more provision than before. It will result in more sessions for more people in more locations meaning more local access and more opportunity for staff to work with new families.

The plans aim to take out unnecessary running costs of buildings, but **will not result in loss of children's centre sessions and services to residents**. This is about maximising contact with families, not spending money unnecessarily on managing buildings. The funding of front line delivery services, which are the actual Children Centre sessions and outreach services, are increasing from £2.56m to £2.63m, which means more sessions in more places for more families.

Residents should be reassured that their children's centre sessions will continue and that for many residents they will may also be able to access sessions in new places closer to where they live.

BOATS (Byways Open to All Traffic)

I have been investigating on behalf of Hauxton PC the possibility of closing a BOAT within the parish. There has been some confusion as to whether a PC can close a BOAT, or indeed has the powers to do so. Please see below comments from a Rights of Way officer to another PC on this very subject. It is clear that should a PC wish to investigate the closure of a BOAT, then there is a mechanism to do so. You do not necessarily require the support of the Rights of Way officer, or indeed any officer, but you do require the support of the community via consultation.

We have been informed by our colleagues in Policy and Regulation that it may be possible for a Parish Council to seek a Third Party Funded Traffic Regulation Order. Local consultation will need to be undertaken by the Parish to ensure that there is support for the changes in the community. Once a community has gained support and funding for their project, the County Council will work with them to make the improvements.

The Third Party Funded TRO Application Form which can be found on our website. It is difficult to provide an accurate timescale for the making of a TRO because each Order will be different, and the timescales are inevitably connected to the number and nature of objections received to each proposed TRO. In general terms, and where a TRO is relatively simple and attracts few (if any) objections, the process should normally take approximately 3 months. If the proposals are more complicated, and particularly where the proposed TRO attracts significant objections, the process may take significantly longer, and will also be governed by the decision making timescales in operation at the time. Please note that, at this time, as the Public Rights of Way Officer who's duty is to make sure Public Rights of Way are open, unobstructed and suitable for their intended use I would submit an objection to such an order on this particular Public Byway.

Local Highways Improvement Scheme (LHIS)

All applications are now in and PC's will be hearing from Highways officers very soon, if they have not been contacted already.
