

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

3 SEPTEMBER 2018

1. Hampshire pupils perform above average in exams

Once again Hampshire's pupils have performed comfortably above national averages in A Levels, Advanced Technical Levels and GCSE's.

The provisional average grade per A-level entry in Hampshire has increased from C+ to B-. The 2017 national average was grade C (two notches lower). Students following advanced Tech-level qualifications in Hampshire, which support progressing to occupationally specific careers, also improved their average grade to 'Distinction', an increase above the 2017 national average of 'Distinction minus'.

The new scoring system for GCSEs had its first results this Summer, with pupils scored on a scale from 1-9 with 9 being the highest grade. We are still awaiting results from a number of schools but it is already clear that Hampshire has performed well above the national average. We can be very proud of all our schools and colleges.

2. County Council plans better targeted NHS health checks

As part of a new £9million contract with health providers starting in April 2019, Hampshire County Council is aiming to increase the uptake of checks by Hampshire residents, particularly those most at risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

Rather pleasingly, local Petersfield surgery the Swan Medical Group has been chosen to pilot the new scheme.

The County Council is responsible for ensuring Hampshire residents aged 40-75 are invited for regular health reviews by their GP surgeries. Currently just under half of those invited take up the offer of a check. This is something we want to see improve, so through a new contract with GPs and other health providers, we are aiming to increase this, particularly among patients considered most at risk of cardiovascular disease.

HCC will be working with the Swan Medical Group in Petersfield to test a wide range of ways to increase participation. Learning from this trial will be shared with other health providers to help increase the numbers attending, particularly from high risk groups.

Health checks are normally undertaken by practice nursing teams. Once the health assessment is complete, those receiving a check are given appropriate advice to help them manage and reduce their risk of becoming unwell. This advice will be tailored to suit the person's individual needs. If necessary people will be directed to either County Council commissioned public health support services such as weight management support, or referred for a clinical follow up with their GP.

3. LGA launches its own Green Paper on Social Care

Parish Councillors will be well aware that local government finances in Hampshire are already being heavily impacted by the cost of caring for our ageing population – a situation which is increasingly becoming unsustainable. We are therefore more reliant than most Counties on the Government developing realistic and workable plans for the long-term funding of adult social care. The Government has twice delayed its Green Paper on this issue, which is now due in “the Autumn”.

Frustrated at the delay, the Local Government Association launched its own Green Paper this Summer and the consultation runs until 26 September. The proposals can be read at www.futureofadultsocialcare.co.uk . Interestingly the LGA has raised the prospect of extending National Insurance to people working beyond State Pension age as well as means-testing certain universal benefits for older people such as the Winter Fuel Payment and Free TV Licenses.

The County Council plans its financial position on a two-year basis. Through careful planning we are on track to deliver the £140m of savings needed by 2019/20. However, the challenges are far from over - there is currently a gap of £80m in the planning for the next two-year period to 2021/22. This is caused by demand pressures, cost inflation and further reductions in Government support grant. We therefore await the Government's Green Paper with considerable interest!

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers