

---

# Council



**Forest Heath**  
District Council

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Leader's Statement</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>COU/FH/17/012</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>14 June 2017</b>

---

## **Single Council**

We hosted a special joint cabinet here in Mildenhall to discuss looking at the benefits of a creating a new single council. As you may know it was a unanimous decision by both cabinets that the councils now look at the proposals. We already work together well, having saved £4 million a year under shared services. Members believe there are real benefits for our communities and it means we can work much more closely with them. It also will enable us to better play our part in delivering the strategic goals and benefits shared by all public services in Suffolk. Vitally it means we will continue to be financially stable to meet the challenges ahead but able to grab opportunities to create jobs, while continuing to deliver high quality services.

## **Tech Corridor**

I met with the Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council Councillor Peter Topping to discuss closer ties between our area and councils in Cambridgeshire. We share many of the same issues and ambitions and agreed there is much we can do together to help drive jobs and continue to encourage industry, such as high tech and agri tech, to our areas.

## **Mildenhall Hub**

I am pleased to say that after several years of work and local engagement the planning application for the Mildenhall Hub has been submitted. If approved, it will revolutionise the future of education, leisure and public services in Mildenhall.

## **Volunteers' Week**

Last week was national volunteers' week and I would like to publicly praise not only the hundreds of volunteers we work with but the army of community heroes that make our area so special and make a real difference. We recognise this also in the new ways we are working as part of our communities and family work. We have worked with residents across west Suffolk to invest £155,877 in 349 community led projects. The results of working with communities and the impact volunteers and groups have speak for themselves.

## **New Mayors**

I hope you will join with me in congratulating Councillor Andy Drummond who returns as Mayor again at Newmarket Town Council where I know he will continue to do an excellent job.

Also I would like to pass on our congratulations to Councillor Terry Clements who was elected mayor of St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

In addition I'd like to extend our congratulations across the border to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the election of their new and first mayor James Palmer. We already have a good relationship with James, as former leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council, and I know we will continue this into the future as he understands the shared issues we face.

## **Tributes**

I also have the sad duty of reporting the death of our dear friend and respected colleague Councillor Bill Sadler. I am sure you, like me, were shocked to hear the news of his passing and he will be sadly missed both by us and the communities he served in Newmarket for more than 50 years. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

Equally it was sad to hear of the passing of St Edmundsbury Borough Councillor and colleague Angela Rushen and Waveney District Council Leader Colin Law. Both were dedicated to the communities they served and will be sadly missed.

## **Manchester and London**

I want to briefly mention the tragic events in Manchester and London. We were all moved by the dreadful stories and pictures we saw following that cowardly act of terrorism and held a minute's silence at our joint Cabinet meeting. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those involved. But what was clear was how the communities and complete strangers as well as public and emergency services came together.

We are told Communities beat terrorism, by being vigilant and by working together. Here in Forest heath and west Suffolk we pride ourselves with working with communities. It is our way to welcome people into our communities and look out for one another. I know we will continue to do so. I would also like to thank our local emergency and public services for making sure our communities have been able to go about our normal lives during this time.