

COUNTY CLLR. KAREN MAY JUNE 2018 REPORT

A 1,500 tonne railway bridge extension over Worcester's Southern Link Road has been successfully manoeuvred into place in one of the biggest engineering operations to take place in the county.

Battenhall Bridge on the A4440 was moved into position by a team of engineers as work continues to fully dual the road from the M5 to Powick roundabout in Worcester.

In order for this work to be completed, a full shutdown of the railway line and the A4440 was necessary. After excellent progress, the road was reopened at 6pm on Wednesday 30th May, fully 36 hours ahead of schedule.

The installation of the bridge follows months of round the clock preparatory works to get the area ready and a 20 second time-lapse video of the project has been produced which can be seen here: youtu.be/P8kJtVgZlY

The next phase of work will see the construction of the highway underneath the bridge and work is in preparation for this.

The Council's children's social care improvement work continues. Ofsted has recently completed another monitoring visit and feedback has been positive. Inspectors were clear that there is more work to do but have recognised the continued progress. Inspectors described the Council's corporate parenting arrangements as a strength. They described the social worker workforce as increasingly enthusiastic and committed, demonstrating a positive culture.

The Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) area inspection by Ofsted and CQC has also recently been published. Although the inspectors recognised recent progress in implementing the 2014 SEND code of practice, they are clear that the local area - which includes the Local Authority, Health Services and Schools - has a lot to do to improve.

Partners are now required to produce and submit an action plan to Ofsted.

Worcestershire's businesses and residents are being encouraged to help raise awareness about mental health. There are several ways businesses and residents can do this, one of which is by signing the Time to Change Employer Pledge.

Signing the Employer Pledge allows businesses across the county to demonstrate their commitment to change how we think and act about mental health in the workplace.

Additionally, Worcestershire has been chosen as one of a handful of areas in England to change how we all think and act about mental health locally by becoming a Time to Change Hub.

Time to Change is a national campaign run by charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness. Time to Change hubs are local partnerships which demonstrate their commitment to:

- Putting people with personal experience of mental health problems at the heart of their work
- Embedding anti-stigma and discrimination work locally, whether that be local schools, workplaces or other community settings
- Proactively campaigning to improve people's attitudes and behaviours towards mental health.

For more information on getting involved with the Time to Change Pledge please visit:

<http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/get-your-workplace-involved>

Work has started to ease congestion at Worcestershire's worst traffic hotspots.

Worcestershire County Council has pledged £5m over the next 2 years to identify, investigate and deliver solutions to tackle congestion sites across the county.

Work has now been completed on the A442 Worcester Road just outside Kidderminster where there can be long tailbacks at peak times. An additional lane off the Hoobrook roundabout has improved traffic flows considerably.

The Council's list of hotspots to improve includes the A44 through Worcester where junctions will be upgraded as well as a complete redesign of the major City Walls Road/Sidbury/Commandery Road interchange, including new pedestrian crossings. The Croft Road zebra crossing is also on the list to improve.

In Redditch, improvements will be made to the junction of Icknield Street Drive and Warwick Highway where a section of the carriageway will be widened this summer.

In Bromsgrove, work to improve the free flow of traffic along a section of Worcester Road where parked cars currently cause pinch point congestion, which has resulted in an Air Quality issue for residents.

The Council is also working with Wychavon District Council to develop an Evesham Transport Strategy, to explore and pursue options to alleviate congestion in the town.

Councillor Brandon Clayton, one of the County Councillors representing Redditch North has been elected to be the new Chairman of Worcestershire County Council for the civic year 2018/19.

He becomes the first councillor from a Redditch Division to serve as Chairman since the County Council was reorganised twenty years ago. Born in Birmingham the 63 year old has lived with his wife Anita in Redditch for 37 years.

Peter Tomlinson, the County Councillor for Ombersley has been elected to be Worcestershire County Council's Vice Chairman.

The Council is once again supporting the Worcestershire Education Awards. The shortlist for Teacher of the Year 2018, which the Council is sponsoring, has been announced. Those shortlisted are:

Wes Davis of Worcester Sixth Form College, Greg Satterley of Bengeworth CE Academy in Evesham & David Green of Pitmaston Primary School

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk

