

## KCC Councillor report - September 2019

Paul Carter announces he will be standing down as Leader of Kent County Council

This statement is to announce my intention to stand down as the Leader of Kent County Council. The Conservative Group will elect a new Group Leader at the Conservative Group AGM on 4<sup>th</sup> October. The new Leader will be appointed and take over at the County Council meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

After 14 years as Leader of Kent County Council, it is time to pass on the challenge to a new individual. This will enable the new administration to build on the successful track record of the County Council and prepare for success in the County Elections in May 2021. I will continue as a Kent County Councillor and intend to continue in public service, devoting my time and energy in two particular areas. In recent years, I have invested considerable time in health and social care integration, developing "Local Care": accelerated progress in designing integrated health and social care services that support patients in the community and their own homes and avoids hospitalisation wherever possible. Further to this, I would like to continue utilising my considerable experience in the education world. The post-16 education landscape needs radical change, greater choices and opportunities need to be provided to young people not destined to enter higher education. More vocational and apprenticeship pathways need to be developed alongside first class independent careers guidance.

Kent County Council staff and elected members should be proud of what has been achieved, particularly in the last 10 years of austerity. We have delivered extraordinary financial efficiencies and stretched public money to go further, improving and modernising the complex array of services that we provide day in, day out. We have protected many highly valued non-statutory services, such as preventative services that help and support the vulnerable, elderly and frail and continue with generous travel subsidises. Unlike so many local authorities that have reverted to the minimum "core service model".

It has been a great privilege to serve as Leader of the Council and I have enjoyed every moment of the last 14 years. I shall miss the challenge and the adrenalin that the job provides, but perhaps not miss the long hours that the role entails.

Finally, a few important thanks. I have been very fortunate to have been surrounded and supported by many excellent staff and elected members of all parties. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the support from the wider community, who work in partnership with us, particularly voluntary organisations. They all contribute so much to the rich tapestry that helps make Kent a great place to live, work and play.

Paul Carter, CBE  
Leader of Kent County Council

Geoffrey Lymer  
Kent County Councillor  
Dover West Ward