2017:
The year so far...

It has been a really eventful year and the last three months have seen positive developments in a number of areas which demonstrated real partnership working.

There have been many well-deserved recognitions with awards highlighting successes involving schools, children and young people and many of the town’s individuals and groups. We were recognised for our work to improve animal welfare and recognitions also went to Luton Adult Learning for its high standards for learners. Finally, we were shortlisted for two Local Government Chronicle awards including ‘Council of the Year’.

There have been a number of developments and new projects announced which will benefit local people by offering low cost homes and we also achieved a real milestone when our new Local Plan was approved at Full Council. This sets out a vision and framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design.

It has also been a busy time for the airport – not just with increased passenger numbers but also with the announcement of its vision for growth over 30 years.

Finally there were a number of popular events that took place in this period which were well attended and were a chance for communities to come together. We had the popular half marathon in October, the fireworks in November and to round off the year, the switch on of the lights which attracted thousands.
October

■ Luton Access held an event with over 30 voluntary community sector providers from across a range of services to expand the working partnership. These include employment and training, mental health and wellbeing, welfare and financial advice. The aim is to create a single gateway providing customers with multi-agency support where required.

■ Metro Bank officially opened.

■ A ‘Tidy Up Day’ was organised in Sundon Park. Local residents and businesses tackled littering, fly-tipping and other environmental issues. The Council’s street cleansing team provided litter pickers, shovels, brushes, gloves and bags and a considerable amount of rubbish collected during the morning was removed. The pest control team supported the effort by carrying out a site visit, identifying issues and advising people on how to minimise problems. An abandoned car was also removed with three more earmarked for disposal.

■ Fostering Network’s Sons and Daughters Month celebrated the crucial role that the children of foster carers’ play in caring for children in need. Thank You cards were sent out with gift cards to foster carers’ children to acknowledge their input in making foster care a success for many children and young people in care.

■ Work began on the site of a former public house, The Roman Way, in Lewsey Farm to build 17 flats and three bungalows for the people of the town. The bungalows will be convenient and suitable for wheelchair users. To protect the environment and reduce energy costs for the tenants the properties will be built with solar panels, mechanical ventilation and heat recovery systems to reduce heat loss, improve energy efficiency and make the homes some of the most innovative in Luton. The project is being delivered by Building Technical Services and those working on the project are all local employees. The scheme will be completed in April 2019.
Love Luton Half Marathon celebrated its 5th Year with the addition of a 10k race. More than a thousand runners signed up for the event, which was supported by more than 150 volunteers led by the local homeless charity Signposts. Community groups from across the town rallied together to marshal the event, manning water stations, setting up road blocks, registering entrants and cheering on the runners. The half marathon and 10k will return on Sunday 28 October 2018.

Local businesses gave their support to a campaign to recruit more foster carers to look after vulnerable children and young people at the Celebrating Fostering event, which highlighted the invaluable work of foster carers and the experiences and achievements of young people in care.

Key speakers included a foster carer and a young person sharing their journey with the audience and Adina Keeley, founder of Fashion Show LIVE Academy who showcased the support her organisation gives to care leavers.

It was announced that the Luton and Dunstable Hospital was the only NHS Trust in the country to reach its targets for managing patient care over 12 months. The three key targets are identified as:

- Four hour Accident and Emergency waits
- 62 day cancer care
- Planned operations and treatment

Luton and Dunstable was the best performing hospital in the country for treatment targets in Accident and Emergency.

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School was awarded the British Council’s prestigious International School Award in recognition of its exceptional work in international education.

Pupils at the school have taken part in several activities in order to achieve this award including: learning French, sending French Christmas cards to schools across Europe, writing to pen pals in Atlanta, learning about cultural traditions, starring in videos showcasing their own renditions of French songs and poems and learning about different religions. Children also learnt about different cultures at a multicultural celebration day held at the school. They also had the opportunity to taste a wide variety of food and traditional dishes from the many cultures represented in the school.

Following a previous consultation on a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Luton town centre a further consultation was held on the proposals based on feedback received. The order will deal with a range of anti-social behaviours such as street drinking, begging, and dog fouling/dog control. If introduced, the PSPO would enable accredited police and council officers to impose a number of measures including fines. By addressing these issues it will help improve the quality of the area for people to enjoy. A decision will be made in early 2018.
Luton Access held a very successful event which was attended by 23 voluntary and community sector organisations. The event showcased the partnership working already taking place between the core partners of Luton Access. Real life case studies illustrated how operational and resource sharing leads to much better outcomes for people when it is co-ordinated. Further organisations expressed an interest in joining and others are in the process of joining. The expansion of the partnership and the opportunity to deliver more Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services and support will make Luton Access even more relevant to the people of Luton.

Luton’s Revoluton Arts was awarded a further £905,100 by Arts Council England through the Creative People and Places programme to engage Luton’s diverse communities, empowering them to lead, participate and enjoy grass-roots arts activity in the town. This new three-year funding will allow this inspirational work to continue and develop further over the coming years to create a more inclusive arts landscape for all in Luton.

November

- The University of Bedfordshire held the first TestBeds conference. A Sense of Place: Arts, enterprise and place making, an interdisciplinary conference, featured arts workshops, performances, guided walks through Luton, exhibitions, installations and a trip to the Luton fireworks spectacular, as well as a talk from Hedley Swain from Arts Council England and Trevor Holden, Chief Executive of Luton Council.

The event brought together art funders, policy makers in local and regional government, artists and academics.

TestBeds is part of the Arts Council England Luton Investment Programme, a £1.5m investment over three years to develop arts and culture in Luton, bringing local, early-career creative practitioners together with internationally-renowned artists.

Luton adopted a new 3 year Community Safety Partnership Plan.

Luton’s Airport’s 43rd consecutive month in October recorded another record month in October welcoming over 1.5 million passengers - an increase of 3% from last year and the airport’s 43rd consecutive month of growth.

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SEMLEP launched the strategic economic plan for the South East Midlands area. The plan sets the ambition and strategic economic direction for the South East Midlands to 2050, focusing particularly on the next 10 years. This provides detailed economic evidence that explains the long-term strategic priorities.

Lighting up Luton for Christmas took place, in partnership with Luton BID and The Mall Luton, with performances organised by Luton in Harmony, including arts and crafts, and carol singing. A special appeal was given with donations made to Luton Food Bank. Competition winner Maryam switched on the Christmas lights.

The shortlist for the 2018 LGC Awards was revealed. The Council was nominated for two awards: Council of the Year and Team of the Year. Winners of the LGC Awards will be announced in March at a prestigious ceremony at Grosvenor House, London.

The demolition of the Purley Centre commenced which paves the way for the building of a further 93 low-cost homes. The project is scheduled for completion in December 2018.

Councillors, senior council officers, ENGIE Regeneration staff and local school children visited the site to see some of the heavy machinery brought in to demolish the Purley Centre.

Students from Whitefield Primary School also took part in one of Honor Goodsite’s ‘Big Build’ Challenges which promotes the construction industry by encouraging young people to get involved in designing and building a model structure out of recycled materials.

The Council attended the RSPCA Community Animal Welfare Footprints (CAWF) awards where they were recognised for the work carried out by the Dog Warden Service. The awards honour organisations for their first class initiatives to improve animal welfare. In addition to winning the Gold Footprint Award they also received the Special Recognition Award which acknowledges the Dog Warden Service and its commitment to identifying and supporting the thousands of responsible dog owners in Luton. Luton was only one of only three Councils to win this award.

LLAL sponsored the Fireworks Spectacular held at Popes Meadow.
Ofsted inspectors released their report in which Luton Adult Learning was commended by a government inspector for its “high standards and good outcomes for learners”; this followed a two-day inspection in September. Adult Learning service has retained its ‘good provider’ status, awarded in 2014.

Arriva’s Luton depot was recognised for its commitment to the town at the 2017 UK Bus Awards, a prestigious national industry awards scheme. The Luton team was presented with the ‘Bus and Community Category’ title for their dedication to connecting different ages, groups and cultures, not only by delivering quality local transport services, but by also proactively partnering with other people and organisations throughout the town.

The depot in Luton has supported Love Luton events and provided transport for events run by Keech Hospice Care, supported charitable choirs, Dementia Awareness Week, amongst many other activities.

Members approved the new Luton Local Plan 2011-2031 at Full Council. The plan sets out the Council’s proposals for much-needed homes in the borough, as well as jobs to meet local needs and policies to protect the environment. Luton’s Local Plan aims to facilitate the growth of the local economy and will be used to guide decisions on planning, development and regeneration activity over this period including all development proposals which form part of the Luton Investment Framework.

The Business Education and Skills Partnership project (BESP) was launched. In collaboration with five Luton Secondary Schools, guests from business and education heard about the benefits of engaging with young people to support the development of their knowledge and skills for the world of work.
The schools will work with the Council to create a business breakfast model where employers engage with students in year 10 and 11 who are interested in their sectors of work. As part of the programme, students and employers will take part in activities such as speed networking as well as discussions about career pathways, progression routes, and opportunities for apprenticeships.

Work started on the oldest listed hat factory in Luton to deliver much needed emergency repairs to protect its fragile fabric. The windows of this historic property were opened for the first time in more than ten years as part of the treatment of infestation and severe damp. This work is to ensure that no further deterioration occurs prior to the planned redevelopment works. Luton Culture is working with Royal Institute of British Architects on the appointment of an architect and design team with expertise in heritage conservation so that we can celebrate the historic features of this beautiful old building.

Love Luton closed its event programme with their annual Luton’s Best awards.

The awards honour the outstanding achievements of many of Luton’s individuals, groups and organisations. These people are often unsung heroes who willingly give up their time to help others and contribute to the community. The Luton’s Best Awards is the opportunity to thank them for their outstanding efforts.

The exceptional nominees were from all walks of life, age groups and cultures within our diverse community and are all superb ambassadors and representatives of what makes Luton a great place to live, learn, work and have fun. The host for the evening was Andrew Castle.

December

■ Neville’s, a local firm was appointed to strip out the interior of Hat House, in preparation for the newly appointed Fleet Architects to start on site. As principal designers, Fleet will look to develop the site into a high quality development for established creative businesses to cluster. The high quality provision shall be spaced over three floors, with the ground floor being used for creative and cultural retail and the large basement used for food and beverage space. The strip-out has revealed and opened up windows in the basement inner courtyard which has created a light and very desirable space.

■ New retailers opened in The Mall Luton during October, November and December.

Kiko Milano and Scotts Menswear are both located in Waller Street and Feast Street eateries expanded with KFC, Cake Box and Quiznos.
Luton has been deemed one of the most attractive places to develop homes in the country following a visit and evaluation by the Housing Finance Institute.

Luton was rated as an “outstanding council” in their Housing Business Ready review, making it one of only a small number of councils in the country to be recognised in this way.

As part of the assessment the team visited a number of sites in the town, such as Roman Way, Napier Park and the regeneration area of Marsh Farm.

The team from the Housing Finance Institute was particularly impressed by the commitment to housing delivery as part of the wider Luton Investment Framework, and how this connects to our economic growth.

The first of three taxiway extensions was completed ahead of schedule. Construction of Taxiway Bravo began in March 2017.

The 565 million extension to the eastern end of the runway is a crucial part of LLA’s redevelopment, enabling the airport to manage aircraft more efficiently and help minimise delays.

The work was part of a £7 million contract awarded to Luton firm Ryebridge with the final stages of work completed at night, when the runway was closed.

Luton in Harmony’s new community mediation scheme was launched with a number of local people coming together to become the inaugural group. This new resource has been set up to help promote positive messages and diffuse conflict in the town. The mediation training was attended by 20 volunteers, who were taught about the Luton in Harmony values as well as techniques which will allow them to use conciliatory language and negotiation to respond to incidents.

Luton in Harmony mediators will be supported in their work by Bedfordshire Police, who will allocate a police officer for every three mediators in the event they are called out to work in the community.

Hillborough Junior School Girls’ table tennis team retained their title at the county competition held at Lincroft Academy this followed them retaining their title at the Luton schools’ competition, where the boys’ team came second. Table tennis, one of the many sports clubs available to children free of charge, has proven to be popular with pupils and they have continued to dominate competitions.

The girls will now represent Bedfordshire in the zone finals which will be held in January at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, Lincolnshire.
Central Bedfordshire College celebrated the success of summer 2017 Public Services graduate Dominika Grzeszczak, for winning a Young People of the Year Award (YOPEY) for her outstanding work for the Luton Victim Support charity. Dominika began her volunteer work with the charity which provides 1-1 support to crime victims, at the age of 19 whilst studying her 3 year course with Central Bedfordshire College. She has shown great skill and maturity and has already provided support to 4 victims of crime in the Luton community.

The service includes:
- talking therapies
- healthy lifestyle advice
- interventions that promote healthy weight management, helping people stop smoking and to motivate people to take control of their health

The new integrated model helps people to access all these services via a single point of contact reducing waiting times. This enables a wider range of needs to be catered for and offers links into many more health promoting opportunities.

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Under its Vision for Sustainable Growth 2020-2050, passenger capacity would go from 18 million to 36-38 million passengers per annum, and the airport would accommodate 240,000 annual air traffic movements.

London Borough Council joined forces with the Luton Clinical Commissioning Group to commission new accessible services to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of people in Luton. It was announced that the social enterprise and registered charity Turning Point was successful in bidding to deliver an integrated health and wellbeing service for people locally.

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Luton in numbers

22 MINUTES
BY TRAIN FROM LONDON

23 MILLION PEOPLE
WITHIN A TWO HOUR REACH

10 MILES FROM
THE M25
EXCELLENT TRANSPORT
LINKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ONE OF THE
5 MOST
AFFORDABLE
TOWNS IN THE COUNTRY FOR COMMUTING TO LONDON

UK’S 5TH
BUSIEST AND
FASTEST-GROWING AIRPORT
100+ DESTINATIONS
ACROSS FOUR CONTINENTS

LONDON LUTON AIRPORT CONTRIBUTES
£2,000 EVERY MINUTE
TO THE UK ECONOMY

18,500 NEW JOBS

CATCHMENT WITH
HIGHEST LEVEL OF
RETAIL SPEND
IN THE UK

MORE THAN
£1.5 BILLION
PRIVATE INVESTMENT

RICH CULTURE AND HERITAGE
122 LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS,
AWARD-WINNING MUSEUMS AND PARKS

92% OF CHILDREN ATTEND
GOOD OR EXCELLENT
SCHOOLS
PLUS HALF A BILLION POUNDS SPENT ON IMPROVING EDUCATION FACILITIES

8 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES
ENGINEERING, INNOVATION,
EMPLOYMENT, LEISURE,
RETAIL, OFFICE ACCOMMODATION
AND HOUSING

ENTERPRISE ZONE
STATUS

TOP UK CITY
FOR BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY
97.6% OF ADDRESSES CAN CONNECT TO
SUPER-FAST BROADBAND

MUSEUMS AND PARKS
AWARD-WINNING
LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS,
RICH CULTURE AND HERITAGE

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