Peterborough City Council's legal services department has been judged Local Government Legal Team of the Year at a national awards event.

The Lawyers in Local Government Awards, which took place on Friday 20 November, singled out the council's legal team for the important role it played in devising the city's Empower Peterborough scheme, whereby local residents benefit from free solar panel installation and, additionally, its leadership in Child Protection Law.

Kim Sawyer, director of governance for the council, said: "We're delighted that the team has been recognised nationally in this way. The Empower Peterborough scheme has been highlighted for its innovative approach, because not only does it save residents money, it helps the environment and creates funds for community initiatives.

"The legal services team is a vital part of council operations and not just for Peterborough, as it also supports Rutland County Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council. The team plays an essential role in generating income for the city council, particularly when we're able to lead the way as we have with Empower Peterborough."

Peterborough City Council is seen as a national leader for Child Protection work. In the words of the Designated Family Judge for Peterborough, the team have become 'experts' in this area.

Another notable success for the team in recent months was an important case linked to new neighbourhood development planning. The legal services team uncovered an important point of law which was upheld by the High Court, and has subsequently informed many other cases nationwide.