

MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 2.00 PM

DRAFT ORDER PAPER

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will make his announcements.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1A – TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER

The Chief Executive will present the report of the Returning Officer on the election of MR TOM BARKLEY to the County Council at the election held on 28th June 2018. Copies of the report were circulated with the revised agenda.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – MINUTES

MR O'SHEA will move and MR JENNINGS will second:-

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27th June 2018, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman will invite members who wish to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4
QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1) (2) &(5)

(A) Question by MR KAUFMAN

- a) What contingency arrangements have been made by the County Council in the event of there being no deal over Brexit?
- b) What arrangements have been made to inform members of any such arrangements?
- c) What contingency arrangements have been made with our partner agencies to mitigate the effect of the country leaving the European Union without an agreement?
- d) What arrangements have been made to inform the residents of Leicestershire?
- e) Would the Leader make a statement on the expected impact of Brexit to the next full Council meeting in December?

Reply by MR RUSHTON

“In response to a) to e) above:

The Chief Officers are carefully considering the risks arising from Brexit and are closely monitoring the situation as it evolves. Senior Officers are collecting information on their key services in order that, in the event of a no-deal scenario, appropriate actions can be taken. This includes collaboration with Partner agencies and other organisations such as East Midlands Airport. Elected Members and members of the public will be informed if any changes to service delivery or service performance are anticipated.

I will make a statement to Full Council at the most appropriate time following the conclusion of the national negotiations.”

(B) Question by MR HUNT

“English councils have spent almost £4 billion on redundancies for more than 220,000 staff in the past eight years, according to recent research by the Local Government Chronicle.

Could the Leader tell me:

- i) how much Leicestershire County Council has spent annually since 2010/11 on redundancies for staff directly employed by the Council?
- ii) the annual reduction in FTE staff from each council in the county from 2010/11 according to figures published by the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund?”

Reply by MR RHODES

- “i) The County Council has spent £34 million in the eight years since 2010/11. This is broken down as follows:

10/11 - £7.6m
11/12 - £9.4m
12/13 - £3.7m
13/14 - £2.0m
14/15 - £2.9m
15/16 - £3.9m
16/17 - £2.5m
17/18 - £1.7m

- ii) The pension fund does not publish this information. To obtain this information the other council’s in the county would need to be contacted individually.”

(C) Question by MR MIAH

- “a) How many members of the Council have produced and published annual reports for the previous council year?
- b) Which members, if any, have annual reports outstanding?
- c) Who is responsible for ensuring that members produce annual reports and what is being done to get them to publish a report?”

Reply by MR RUSHTON

- “a) In accordance with the Independent Remuneration Panel’s (IRP) 2017 report and recommendations forty four out of fifty three members produced an annual report for the municipal year 2017/18.
- b) The following Members have not submitted an annual report:-
- (i) Mr. Bill CC
 - (ii) Mr. Bray CC
 - (iii) Mrs. Broadley CC
 - (iv) Mr Galton CC
 - (v) Dr Hill CC
 - (vi) Mr. Mullaney
 - (vii) Mr. Welsh
 - (viii) Mr. Wyatt
- c) The IRP as part of its recommendations made it the responsibility of Group Leaders and Group Whips to ensure that Members of their Groups complete and submit an annual report. They were provided with a weekly update as to which Members of their Group had submitted an annual report to help them comply with this recommendation.

The IRP in all its reports has always had a strong view that Members should demonstrate their accountability to the people of Leicestershire via the submission of an Annual Report. The IRP in its September 2017 report advised the Council that it would meet in the autumn of 2018 to review annual reports. That meeting has been arranged for Friday 12th October following which a report will be submitted to the Constitution Committee.”

TO DISPOSE OF BUSINESS FROM THE LAST MEETING**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5**
REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE
(Pages 17 – 20)

Principal Speakers:-
Chairman (Mr N J Rushton)
Liberal Democrat Spokesman (Mr S J Galton)
Labour Spokesperson (Dr T Eynon)

(A) Review of Standing Orders (Meeting Procedure Rules)

MR RUSHTON will move and MR SHEPHERD will second:-

“That the changes to Standing Order 1 (the Meeting Procedure Rules), as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Constitution Committee, be approved.”

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 – TO RECEIVE POSITION STATEMENTS
FROM MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

(Note: Standing Order 8 provides as follows:-

- (a) A position statement may give rise to an informal discussion by the Council.
- (b) At the conclusion of the discussion a formal motion may be moved to the effect that a particular issue relevant to the statement be referred to the Cabinet, the Commission, a Board or a Committee for consideration. This shall be moved and seconded formally and put without discussion. No other motion or amendment may be moved.
- (c) The discussion of any position statement shall not exceed 20 minutes but the Chairman may permit an extension to this period.)

LEADER

- (i) The Leader will make his statement.
- (ii) An informal discussion may then take place.

DEPUTY LEADER

- (i) The Deputy Leader will make his statement.
- (ii) An informal discussion may then take place.

LEAD MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

- (i) The Lead Member will make his statement.
- (ii) An informal discussion may then take place.

LEAD MEMBER FOR HEALTH

- (i) The Lead Member will make her statement.
- (ii) An informal discussion may then take place.

**TO CONSIDER REPORTS OF THE
CABINET, SCRUTINY COMMISSION, SCRUTINY COMMITTEES,
AND OTHER BODIES**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

(Pages 21 to 26)

Principal Speakers:-
Chairman (Mr P Bedford)
Liberal Democrat Spokesman (Mr B Boulter)
Labour Spokesperson (Mr S Sheahan)

(A) Outcome of the Investigation by the Member Conduct Panel

MR BEDFORD will move and MR JENNINGS will second:

- “(a) That the unanimous decision of the Member Conduct Panel that Mr M H Charlesworth CC had breached the Council’s Members’ Code of Conduct in that his comments made at the County Council meeting held on 27th September 2017 which questioned the independence of three members of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) were ‘unwarranted, unjustified and personalised’, did not treat members of the IRP with respect, and thereby brought the Authority into disrepute, be noted;
- (b) That the response received by the Monitoring Officer from Mr Charlesworth to the findings of the Member Conduct Panel and his decision to refuse to apologise to the members of the IRP as ordered by the Panel be noted with disappointment and regret;
- (c) That in view of the fact that Mr Charlesworth’s conduct had brought the Authority into disrepute and his failure to accept the finding of the Member Conduct Panel and apologise the full Council be asked to agree an apology to the members of the IRP).”

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 - APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEMS 11 AND
12 OF STANDING ORDER 4**

(Pages 27 – 28)

(A) Parent Governor Representatives to serve of Local Authority Committees dealing with Education

MR SHEPHERD will move and MRS BROADLEY will second:-

“That Mr David Ryan be appointed as a co-opted member of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or other appropriate scrutiny committee dealing with Education) for the period ending May 2021.”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 - NOTICE OF MOTION**(A) A New Unitary Structure for Local Government in Leicestershire – Mr S J Galton**

MR GALTON will move and MR MULLANEY will second:-

“(a) That this Council:-

- (i) Notes with regret that the Leader’s proposal to create a single Unitary Council for the whole of Leicestershire was announced by email and press release 2 days after the last Council Meeting on 27th June;
- (ii) Expresses concern that the proposals are being drawn up by the Administration at County Hall without the involvement of all councils affected and not on a cross party basis;
- (iii) Believes it is essential that any reorganisation ensures Local Government remains local and does not create a democratic deficit;
- (iv) Believes that the preferred option being advocated by the Leader and the Cabinet fails to address the fundamental and historic underfunding of public services in Leicestershire;
- (v) Notes that one of the stated drivers for change is the need to create a Strategic Alliance for the East Midlands although it is not clear what level of support this has outside Leicestershire and what benefits would result;
- (vi) Notes that the 2014 Ernst and Young report commissioned by the County Council suggesting that savings of £31m could be achieved contained inaccuracies and that reorganisations elsewhere have failed to deliver the level of savings indicated in consultants’ reports;

(b) This Council therefore requests the Cabinet to reconsider the current process and commence a more open and inclusive process with representatives from all affected tiers to consider how Local Government can be improved in Leicestershire.”

An amendment will be moved by MR RUSHTON and seconded by MR RHODES:-

a) That this Council:

- i) Notes that plans for a unitary structure of government in principle for Leicestershire were drawn up after a positive endorsement by the Conservative Group at its meeting on 26th June 2018 and were communicated promptly and appropriately to stakeholders in the usual way;

- ii) has started a much needed and long overdue debate on the future provision of local government services in the county, which leaders of the seven district councils have recognised is in need of reform;
 - iii) recognises that continuing austerity and cost pressures for services are placing councils of all types in an impossible financial position, requiring Councils such as Leicestershire to consider a unitary structure;
 - iv) that plans for an East Midlands Strategic Alliance to counterbalance the West Midlands Combined Authority requires further work and agreement amongst regional leaders and stakeholders before a business case is submitted to the Secretary of State;
 - v) that the information to be provided in the Cabinet report will allow Members to undertake detailed scrutiny of the level of savings including savings that have been achieved by other Councils who have already undertaken local government reorganisation;
 - vi) recognises that Leicestershire County Council must be allowed to pursue its right to self-determination of policy via the democratic process and that this Council respects the rights of other local authorities to do the same.
- b) That this Council notes:-
- i) That in line with the decision of the Cabinet on 6th July 2018 proposals for a new unitary structure for local government in Leicestershire will be published in a report to the Cabinet on Friday 5th October;
 - ii) That the proposals will provide a basis and framework for Scrutiny Bodies, members and stakeholders to consider and make representations on the future shape of local government in Leicestershire;
- c) That recognising the need for member involvement a cross party group be established to consider the proposals and advise the Cabinet on the next steps including a timescale for consultation;
- d) That the Chief Executive be asked to include proposed terms of reference for the cross party working group in the report to the Cabinet on 16th October, 2018.

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COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26TH SEPTEMBER 2018

POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)

The LLEP remains a highly regarded Local Enterprise Partnership and I'm sure this will continue following the excellent appointment of Kevin Harris as the new LLEP Chairman. I would like to thank Nick Pulley of Santander for his chairmanship over the last four years during which the LLEP has consolidated its reputation. Kevin is joined by three new Board members:- Chas Bishop, Chief Executive of The National Space Centre; Karen Smart, Managing Director of East Midlands Airport and Neil McGhee, Director of Sempervox, who will bring valuable business and sector experience to the LLEP Board. Last night's LLEP AGM showcased much of the LLEP's recent excellent work. The LLEP is also responding to the recently published LEP Review. Yesterday the LLEP Board agreed that it supported the retention of the existing LLEP geography and also agreed recommendations which will see the LLEP established as a company and move towards having a more diverse Board

The important role of the County Council in supporting economic growth was highlighted at the recent announcement of the Council's investment in a major office development at Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park. These offices will be occupied by Tech giant, the Access Group, and will see the creation of 500 new jobs and the generation of £1.6m per annum for the County Council to support front line services. The launch was attended by the Secretary of State for Communities the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP and Sir John Peace of the Midlands Engine, both of whom were impressed by the strong partnership in place between the Council and Loughborough University, and by the Council's innovative approach to supporting economic growth and future service delivery.

Local Industrial Strategy

The LLEP has been invited by the Government to prepare a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) as part of a second wave of LIS development. Leicester and Leicestershire is one of just nine LEP areas (out of 38) invited to develop a LIS and the only one in the East Midlands. This is excellent news for the area and I would like to congratulate the LLEP Chairman, Kevin Harris, and the LLEP team for this achievement. The County Council is already working with the LLEP to develop a strong and robust LIS which will help us set out our economic vision and identify the things we need to do to grow our economy further. This can only help in our attempts to secure key infrastructure funding from Government.

I would also like to thank Neil O'Brien MP for his support to the LLEP in securing the LIS second wave invitation, and to congratulate him on his appointment as the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Greg Clark.

Strategic Growth Plan

Many years of work have gone into preparing the excellent Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire which provides a long term strategic planning framework for future housing and economic growth, and associated infrastructure provision, looking forward to 2050. This is a pioneering and complex piece of work which will help the area build and support better communities in the future, and help us demonstrate to Government that infrastructure provision in this area will contribute to meeting Government aspirations for housing provision and economic growth. The proposed final Plan will be considered by each of the nine partner Councils, and the LLEP, this autumn and I very much hope it will be approved.

I'd like to thank Trevor Pendleton who has very ably chaired the Members Advisory Group (MAG), Byron Rhodes and Peter Osborne who have represented the Council on the MAG, and to Pat Willoughby, the jointly appointed Strategic Planning Manager who has done a very good job in developing the SGP in a sometimes challenging political context. Pat will be leaving her role at the end of this month for a new job in the West Midlands. I would like to thank her for her excellent contribution and wish her all the best for the future.

Fostering and Adoption

I would like to congratulate and thank the Council's Fostering and Adoption Service for their outstanding work over the last year.

There are increasing numbers of children who are having to come into care and in order to ensure that as many of them as possible can be placed within families the service has significantly increased its targets for recruiting foster carers and adopters. It is well on track to achieve these and since April 2018 it has recruited 16 foster carers more than in the whole of last year with a further 34 families going through the assessment process. There has also been a major increase in adoption recruitment and so far this year 13 families have been approved with a further 55 families being assessed. This is a particularly significant achievement at a time when others are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit families and is testament to the hard work of our staff. The fact that families can see the extremely attractive offer and support that the Council will be providing has even seen some transferring from other agencies.

By increasing these very important services we will be able to keep many more children inside the County and within families where they will receive top quality care and support and have the best chance of achieving their full potential.

Children and Families Partnership Plan

The Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership was officially launched, with the signing of a charter on Thursday, 20th September 2018. I am sorry that I was not able to be there to support Ivan Ould as Lead Member.

Representatives from local councils, the police, schools, NHS, the Probation Service, the voluntary sector and other agencies attended the event at County Hall.

The partnership has a vision, which is to ensure our young people are safe and living in families where they can achieve their full potential. I believe that if we all work together on shared priorities we believe that we can make the difference that is needed.

Loughborough University

I am pleased to report that Loughborough University, one of our closest partners, has been named the University of the Year by the Times and Sunday Times. It is the only University to have won this prestigious title twice.

Loughborough also received its highest ever ranking in the Guide, rising two places to fifth. It is a tremendous and well-deserved achievement by the Vice-Chancellor, staff and students, and I would suggest the Council sends our congratulations.

'Start A Conversation' – suicide prevention campaign

Finally, I was pleased to attend the 'Start A Conversation' campaign launched on World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September. This is an important initiative and Pam Posnett will say more about this in her position statement.

N. J. Rushton CC

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26TH SEPTEMBER 2018**POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR
FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

The financial position for many local authorities is dire. Northamptonshire, Surrey and Somerset County Councils are in a particularly difficult position but there are many others who are not too far behind. Leicestershire continues to manage the position well, but the medium term position does look extremely challenging. Children's Services spending pressures are a major issue especially those related to special education needs and looked after children.

The Government has little flexibility to provide more resources to local government given the recent allocation to the health service. We believe that the core messages from our Fair Funding campaign have hit home, so we have some cause for optimism. However, it is clearly difficult for the Government to redistribute resources from a shrinking national pot. We will continue to push our message.

This Autumn we will refresh the MTFS and it is inevitable it will include more savings. As usual we will endeavour to maximise efficiency savings and commercial income as the scope for service reductions is limited given we are the lowest funded and spending County Council in the country. We aim to take the draft MTFS to Cabinet in December and then through the Scrutiny process in January.

There is some positive news. We will be submitting a business rate pilot bid with our partners. This if successful has the potential to bring a one off c£14m into the City and County and will help meet spending pressures including infrastructure for a growing population.

J. B.. Rhodes

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COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26th SEPTEMBER 2018

POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

Community Speed Enforcement

Work is nearly complete installing new average speed cameras to alleviate safety concerns across the county as part of a year-long trial. The speed cameras cover four villages and three key main and rural routes which have various issues and concerns around speeding and safety.

The switch-on started in Sharnford, Measham and Walcote last week, with other cameras in parts of Oadby, Groby, Woodhouse Eaves and Freeby becoming operational over the next month. The County Council is stepping up its campaign to retain some of the fines from the average speed camera trial, which would enable a further roll-out of average speed cameras across Leicestershire. Many communities have expressed a wish to also benefit from having speed cameras and this would help fund these. Once the capital costs of the cameras have been met, the fines would then revert to the Government. Currently, all the money collected through camera fines is retained by HM Treasury. The speed camera trial has also won the backing of county MPs.

School Keep Clear – Camera Car

I wanted to take this opportunity to advise members of the trial to combat the problems of inconsiderate parking on School Keep Clear Zig-Zag markings. We have set aside one-off funding of up to £500,000, to address concerns that parents, residents and teachers have about parking outside schools. We work closely with schools and colleges to improve issues around on-street parking as well as pedestrian and pupil safety and we invited schools to register their interest in the scheme. The work to make the zig-zag zones enforceable involves ensuring traffic regulation orders are in place by upgrading mandatory signs and lines so the zones are enforceable. A total of 32 schools that already have the necessary mandatory markings are taking part in the trial. Another 27 schools who have reported issues with parking also registered an interest, but are not yet eligible to begin the trial as further work is needed at these locations.

Using automatic number plate recognition technology, a camera car is being used by officers to monitor compliance and issue fines where necessary. The remaining schools across the county will be invited again to be considered for inclusion later this year.

Gully Cleaning

To tackle blocked drains, the authority is applying a new 'risk-based' approach to gully cleaning that includes increasing the number of roadside drains treated annually - from 64,000 per year to 92,000 – without costs rising. The change follows a seven-month trial to find a more cost effective and focused way of cleaning the county's 130,000 gullies. The trial found that it would be beneficial for the Council to make more regular visits to roads at high risk of flooding due to the drains filling faster with silt. Previously drains were cleaned on an 18 to 24 month fixed programme, whether the road was at risk of flooding or not. The changes are part of the Council's new highways asset management plan and will be rolled out across the county from early 2019.

Gritting In Summer and Storm Clean Up

The County Council's gritters have spread around 150 tonnes of granite to protect roads across Leicestershire which were melting during the heat wave.

Since the beginning of July, the highways team have dusted more than 25 locations across the county. It is the first time for a number of years the highway teams have had to carry out dusting using modified gritters. However, the impact of the joint hottest summer on record has caused longer term damage to our roads here in Leicestershire and throughout the country. We have assessed the level of damage and the treatments needed. We are also working with other highway authorities to make the case for additional central government funding, as was forthcoming after the last winter for potholes. However, recognising the need to address the most urgent repairs we are looking at bringing forward the 2019/20 allocation of £2.2million (the remainder of the £5million allocated in the MTFs) and look at the possibility of a growth bid to replace the £2.2million in 2019/20.

The weather continues to bring challenges with well over a hundred trees blocking roads and paths across the whole county in the last week. Our gangs have worked day and night clearing the debris and I would like to thank them for their dedication to keeping our roads safe.

Waste Treatment

I'm pleased to inform members that the authority has recently become a shareholder in the Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company Ltd. As a shareholder, the authority has secured increased waste treatment capacity at the energy from waste plant in Coventry increasing the resilience of the waste management service as well as a significant financial saving of over £0.5million by 2020.

Body Cameras

Staff within the Environment and Transport Department who work on the front line are unfortunately being subjected to increasing instances of abuse, threats and near misses. To support staff and provide evidence of criminal activity and unacceptable behaviour, the department is currently trialling the use of body cameras at two of the recycling and household waste sites, in the highways delivery service and in the infrastructure planning team. As well as providing evidence, it is hoped that the cameras will act as a deterrent to potential offenders. Depending on the success of the trial, the cameras may be rolled out more widely across the department.

Centenary Remembrance Events 2018

Finally, I am pleased to advise that Environment and Transport Department has continued to support numerous organisations holding Remembrance Parades and other events in this centenary year. We are providing support to over 60 events with everything from signs and cones, to advice sessions for volunteer traffic marshals. In addition over 300 Council vehicles will proudly display a Poppy in support of the British Legion to help raise public awareness of all those who have served.

B. Pain CC

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COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26 SEPTEMBER 2018

POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation

There is increasing evidence and awareness that loneliness and social isolation has an impact on people's physical and mental health, wellbeing and independence. This has led to concerns that loneliness and social isolation is having a negative impact on people, communities, and the demand for public services.

The Government have recognised this is a problem; responding to the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness they have appointed Tracey Crouch as the "Loneliness Minister" and are promising to bring forward a national strategy in the autumn.

Neil O'Brien, MP for Harborough has also been actively involved both as Vice-Chair to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Loneliness as well as running events in Market Harborough and Oadby to bring together people and organisations who are seeking to tackle loneliness in their local area.

Over the next few months the County Council will be working with the University of Leicester and other partners to:-

- Develop better understanding of the nature, extent and impact of loneliness and social isolation on people, communities and public services through collation of evidence from Council data and surveys and discussions with services, partners, and community organisations.
- Consider the role the Council can play in tackling loneliness and social isolation across Leicestershire such as leadership and coordination, communications campaigns and potential improvement to delivery of existing services.

The Council and our public sector partners are already doing a great deal: for example the day-to-day work of our social workers supporting vulnerable children, adults and families; the blue lights services working to keep people safe; our network of local area coordinators who are actively connecting people within communities; and our trading standards team working to protect vulnerable people being taken advantage of.

Every time we connect with someone it makes a difference. However, this is not something we can do alone and fortunately there are some amazing volunteers and community groups in Leicestershire that are already doing a huge amount of good work to tackle loneliness and isolation, including community connection projects for older people, good neighbour schemes, local groups to cater to a wide range of interests such as:

- The knitter and natter groups in places such as Enderby and Ullesthorpe,
- Age UK's men in sheds;
- Loughborough Leggo youth group for young people with learning disabilities; and
- Bottesford's Friendly Bench.

Our community libraries also provide great community facilities and spaces across the County.

However these activities can only ever be part of the solution if we are to address the problems of loneliness and social isolation. The solution needs everybody to be involved – making and maintaining connections with their neighbours, work colleagues, fellow students and all the other people in their communities. This in turn builds our own personal resilience reducing the chance of becoming lonely and isolated. Elected members as local community leaders have an important role to play.

'Start A Conversation' – suicide prevention campaign

Death from suicide has devastating consequences for family, friends and colleagues. There are on average 55 deaths from suicide each year in Leicestershire and it remains the biggest killer of men under 50 and the leading cause of death in young people.

Covering Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and working in partnership with a number of organisations from a variety of sectors from the community, the 'Start A Conversation' campaign launched on World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September.

The aim is to make sure that people are aware of the warning signs of suicidal behaviour and have an open and honest approach to conversations.

The campaign also seeks to:

- Remove stigmas and myths and make it ok to have conversations about suicide
- Provide information and advice to individuals at crisis point
- Build safer communities through awareness raising
- Help people maintain good mental health
- Support those who have been bereaved by suicide

Residents and business can support the campaign by making a pledge highlighting the steps they will take to sure that they always start a conversation.

To make a pledge and find out more visit www.startaconversation.co.uk