

**MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**WEDNESDAY, 7 JULY 2021 AT 2.00 P.M.**

**ORDER PAPER**

**EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

In the event of having to evacuate officers will be able to advise and be on hand to assist any people with disabilities.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The CHAIRMAN will make his announcements.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – MINUTES**

(Pages 5 to 14)

The CHAIRMAN will move and the VICE-CHAIRMAN will second:

‘That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 May 2021, 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 MRS HACK**

“The 22<sup>nd</sup> September is World Car-Free Day when all around the world towns, counties and cities allow people to experience streets free of motor traffic and as such aligns with and supports our environment strategy (tranche 2), our draft walking and cycling strategy, as well as supporting bids for future funding. Therefore:

1. Will the County Council be taking the opportunity to support this and promote events around the day?
2. Would the Council consider particular promotions around County Schools where competition for road space and its accompanying hazards are at their most acute?”

**Reply by MR O’SHEA**

- “1. The County Council will be promoting World Car Free Day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September through a variety of communication channels including our Choose How You Move website <https://www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/>
2. There is an ongoing programme of active travel encouragement for individuals, schools and businesses. This work takes many forms such as personalised travel planning to give detailed advice to households about alternatives to car use, through to working with businesses to encourage modal shift away from car use.

School traffic continues to be a challenge in some locations and we continue to promote the development of school travel plans and encourage all forms of active travel and help facilitate this through school travel grants and partnership working to implement measures such as park and stride so that areas around schools are less congested.

We have plans to explore trials of a scheme called ‘School Streets’ which brings in varying car free measures as appropriate to school locations. The measures need to be tailored to suit individual site locations. It is anticipated that this work will be looked at during the next academic year.”

**Mrs Hack to ask a supplementary question.**

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 – 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**

The Leader will make his statement.

#### **LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

The Lead Member will make her statement.

**LEAD MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL PARTNERSHIPS**

The Lead Member will make her statement.

**LEAD MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**

The Lead Member will make his statement.

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

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6  
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION**  
(Pages 41 to 42)

Principal Speakers:-  
Leader of the Opposition (Mr M T Mullaney)  
Leader of the Council (Mr N J Rushton)

(A) **Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21**

MR MULLANEY will move and MRS PAGE will second:-

“That the information contained in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21, attached as Appendix A to this report, on its activities, be noted.”

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7  
REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE**  
(Pages 45 – 52)

Principal Speakers:-  
Chairman (Mr N J Rushton)  
Liberal Democrat Spokesman (Mr M T Mullaney)

(A) **Proposed Changes to the Structure of Overview and Scrutiny Bodies**

MR RUSHTON will move and MRS TAYLOR will second:-

“That the proposed amendments to the Council’s Constitution, as set out in the report of the Constitution Committee and Appendix A thereto, be approved.”

**AGENDA ITEM NO.8**  
**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
(Pages 53 – 82)

Principal Speakers:-  
Chairman (Mr T Barkley)  
Liberal Democrat Spokesman (Mr B Boulter)

(A) Proposed Changes to the Contract Procedure Rules

MR BARKLEY will move and MR RICHARDSON will second:-

“That the proposed amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules, set out in Appendix A to the report of the Corporate Governance Committee, be approved.”

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 - TO APPOINT MEMBERS OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.**

MR SHEPHERD will move and MR CHARLESWORTH will second:-

“That the membership of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out below, be approved.”

**Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Conservative (5)			Labour (1)		Liberal Democrat (1)	
1.	Mr T Gillard	Chairman Elect	1.	Mr Max Hunt	1.	Mr D C Bill MBE
2.	Mr K Merrie MBE	Deputy Chairman Elect				
3.	Mr R G Allen					
4.	Mr T Barkley					
5.	Mr C A Smith					

**Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Conservative (5)			Labour (1)		Liberal Democrat (1)	
1.	Mr T J Pendleton	Chairman Elect	1.	Mrs A J Hack	1.	Mr G A Boulter
2.	Mr M Frisby	Deputy Chairman Elect				
3.	Mr N Chapman					
4.	Mrs R Page					
5.	Mr B Harrison-Rushton					

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 10 - NOTICE OF MOTION**

With the consent of the Council Mrs Hack will move the amended motion below.

Mrs Hack to move and Mr O'Shea to second:-

#### **Improving the local highway environment**

“(a) That this Council notes:

- (i) Too much litter, including recyclable cans and bottles, continues to be thrown onto grass verges and pavements and is an increasing threat to the environment and wildlife;
- (ii) Despite the best efforts of the local authorities and other agencies, many Leicestershire roads contain signing clutter resulting from highways maintenance, contractors and other parties work on the highway;
- (iii) The importance of biodiversity on roadsides is under-recognised.

(b) That this Council also notes:

- (i) The safety of some footways and cycleways can be improved by better lighting;
- (ii) The need to maintain the highway network to a high standard includes footways and cycleways;
- (iii) The risks of tree foliage hiding lighting and tall grasses at junctions.

(c) That this Council will therefore:

- (i) Continue to work with the relevant organisations including utility companies and developers to ensure that temporary highway signage is removed and stored rather than being left at the roadside when works are complete;
- (ii) Continue to work with the organisations responsible for highway cleansing (district authorities and Highways England) to seek improvements as well as on campaigns to persuade the public to act in a more responsible way respecting the natural environment and so reducing highway litter and damage to the environment;
- (iii) Review the lighting of cycleways and footways in response to Government's commitment to active travel to support greater choice in how people move around the county safely when walking and cycling and in line with current operating procedure.

(d) That this Council further notes that the County Council's Tree Management Strategy and emerging Action Plan already recognise the significant role roadside grass verges could play in improving the ecology and biodiversity of the county by appropriate planting and maintenance focussed primarily on safety.”

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**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021**

**POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**Police and Crime Commissioner**

I would like to begin by placing on record my congratulations to Rupert Matthews on being elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Deborah Taylor and I met with him to discuss ideas for his policing plan and areas of mutual interest. These included county lines, Supporting Leicestershire Families, Domestic Violence and rural crime.

It is important that the County Council has a good working relationship with the PCC and I have invited him to an all-member briefing in October.

**East Midlands Global Gateway (Freeport)**

Members will be aware from a recent report to the Cabinet that the Government has approved an expression of interest for a Freeport based around East Midlands Airport, the current Ratcliffe on Soar power station and a site owned by Severn Trent close to the Toyota site in Derbyshire.

This is an exciting opportunity for the East Midlands and the Freeport will bring together a mix of industries at the heart of the country. An independently chaired interim Board comprising private and public sector representative has been set up and we hope to capitalise on our strengths in the areas of advanced manufacturing, automotive and logistics and build on emerging opportunities for green growth to create new jobs, aid the economic recovery from Covid and contribute to the levelling up agenda.

Linked to this I also had a meeting with Ben Bradley, the newly elected Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council. I am pleased that he is taking a keen interest on a number of regional matters such as HS2, the East Midlands Freeport and like us, is prioritising environmental and highway improvement/maintenance schemes.

### **Fair Funding**

Several members of the Cabinet recently held a Teams meeting with MPs Andrew Bridgen and Neil O'Brien to run past them the latest strategy and campaign ideas.

We hope to enlist the support of 20 low funded authorities and their respective MPs, into a new campaign to highlight the unfairness of the current funding system. Together with the MPs we believe this campaign can run alongside the government's "Levelling up" agenda.

I do not believe that we will be able to achieve a root and branch reform given the impact this would have on a large number of Authorities who are currently well funded. However, I believe that we could push for an additional injection of funds for local government to begin to right the historic wrongs.

### **Tree Strategy**

Last year we agreed a Tree Strategy and action Plan with the aim of significantly increasing tree coverage in the County. Leicestershire is one of the least wooded counties in the country and this will only get worse as we deal with the effects of Ash Die Back.

Our Strategy will make a significant contribution to increasing tree planting working with partners and landowners and help to deliver the manifesto commitment of planting 700,000 trees, one for every resident in the County.

A high level action plan is under preparation and I would urge the new Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee to contribute to the emerging Action Plan and monitor its implementation.

### **Covid Memorial Walk**

Finally, on 21<sup>st</sup> June I was privileged to be at the opening of the Covid Memorial Walk in Watermead Park.



The idea for the memorial walk was put forward by the County and City Council – particularly in our case by Pam Posnett when she was Chairman last year. Dozens of individuals and businesses supported the project through a crowdfunding campaign for which I am grateful.

58 trees have been planted along a 2.6mile route that links the city side of the park in the south to the county side in the north. The new trees including aspen, cockspur thorn, elm, hornbeam, maple, oak, rowan and silver birch now form a tranquil trail through the park.

Benches have been installed along the route to encourage people to use the space to relax and reflect. A small plaque on each bench has been engraved with lines of poetry, or a quotation from literature, to provide words of comfort or hope.

Covid-19 has been mentioned on the death certificates of some 2400 people in Leicester and Leicestershire and the memorial walk will last as a tribute to them and the thousands of key workers who risked their lives for others during the pandemic.

As we move out of lockdown, I would urge people to recognise that the virus is still prevalent and to ensure that we still take precautions.

**Mr N. J. Rushton**

**Leader of the Council**

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## COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

#### **SEND Provision**

Over the last three years we have invested £30million of capital to deliver nearly 500 new places for children with special education needs and disabilities in Leicestershire. The provision developed includes resource bases in mainstream schools, 3 new schools, a new post 16 provision in Loughborough, expansion projects for all existing Leicestershire special schools, 2 satellite classroom facilities run by existing special schools on nearby mainstream school sites, 1 new specialist pre-school in and the expansion of another specialist pre-school.

Further developments are planned for the forthcoming year to continue to develop high quality local provision to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities in Leicestershire.

#### **Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)**

I am pleased to inform Members that Leicestershire has agreed to join the voluntary national transfer scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. The new scheme will introduce a rota across the East Midlands where unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who arrive on the south coast will be placed in accommodation and supported by local authorities across the region. The County Council will take five children a year from the rota. In addition to this, the County Council will also be taking three unaccompanied asylum seeking children to support the critical position that Kent is currently in due to the number of children who have arrived and are currently in Kent and who urgently need placing in accommodation with support provided to them.

## **Foster Carers**

As Members will be aware, Leicestershire County Council has 112 inhouse foster carers and who provide a home and care for our children in care and 35 supported living providers who provide a home for our care leavers. Over the last 18 months these carers have gone above and beyond to provide support for our children and young people over the pandemic. This has included taking on additional responsibilities such as home schooling, managing contact virtually with children`s families and supporting them through this in addition to maintaining face to face contact where it was safe to do. I would like to express my thanks to our foster carers and specialist carers for all they have done over the pandemic.

Our Fostering Service not only provides high quality support and training to our foster carers they also work hard to recruit new carers. Over the last year, despite Covid, the team have successfully recruited an additional 13 foster families. Leicestershire Fostering Service is unique in that it also recruits and supports our in house Supported Lodgings Scheme, recruiting a further 11 carers despite Covid.

Another initiative that is supporting recruitment of foster carers is a Place to Call Home. This is a joint project of nine East Midlands Local Authorities led by Leicestershire County Council. This aims to place unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in homes in the county in which they arrived. The project came about following the growing recognition that a lot of these young people ended up in placements at a distance from the local authorities and social workers who care for them.

The project currently has over 20 carers in assessment, hopefully due for final approval in August and September. However, the project does need more carers to come forward to provide homes for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking children.

## **Voice**

In Autumn 2020 the children and Family services department launched the Voice and Influence Strategy that evidences the department`s commitment to putting

children and young people at the heart of all of its activities through involving them and their families in the decision-making, planning, commissioning, design, development, delivery and evaluation of services that affect their daily lives. The strategy was developed and influenced by feedback from children and young people. Over the last year the department has continued to engage with and seek the views of children and young people and whilst the Covid -19 pandemic has presented some real challenges to participation work across the department it has also offered some new opportunities to engage children and young people in different ways.

From this engagement activity we know that there have been a number of positives that children and young people have experienced during lockdown as well as the significant amount of challenges, most notably practical issues such as accessing dentists and other services, the impact of feelings of isolation and increased concerns about mental health.

Children in Care have been involved in the development of a Contact Expectations Statement and a Review of Arrangements Expectation Statement to improve the experiences of our children who have contact with their birth families and participate in their Review of Arrangement Meetings. They have also been involved in work to develop residential and fostering provision and in developing referral information used by all social workers for residential and foster providers.

Children and Families have been involved in the development of new practice standards for children in need and in feeding back their views on the work undertaken by the children and Family wellbeing service on how well they were heard and involved in the planning of work undertaken with tier family. 92.3% of families held the view they had either always or often felt listened to by their worker in a way made them feel that their family was really understood.

The Department continues to support the County Youth Council Leicestershire (CYCLe) members and the 3 elected Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) to progress their campaign activity on improving cancer care for young people, the environment and poverty. The MYPs have been supported to meet with members of parliament, local councillors and senior managers from the Council and organisations including Health to discuss their ideas and share their views.

**Performance**

Over the last year performance across the Children and Families Department has remained strong, in particular around the delivery of our services to children and their families through targeted early help and children's social care. I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff across the department for their work over this difficult year, they have worked tirelessly to support children and their families and show some real innovation in their approach to delivering services over the pandemic. I would also like to thank all staff who work in schools across Leicestershire for keeping children learning and engaged in education over this difficult year.

**Mrs D. Taylor CC**

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 7<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021****POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEAD MEMBER FOR EQUALITIES,  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL PARTNERSHIPS**

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce the Annual Report of work that has been carried out within my portfolio to support Leicestershire Communities over the past financial year.

It has been a year dominated by the Covid 19 pandemic which has presented huge challenges both globally and locally. The pandemic has however also provided very many examples of positive community spirit, the willingness of people to volunteer to help others, particularly those who are most vulnerable, and the value of what can be achieved from within our communities.

The County Council has worked to support and complement community action, and this has been the prime focus of work within my portfolio. This work seeks to help enable the further development of thriving communities where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities participate and help each other. It also provides inspiration for us all to continue with, and build on, the enhanced community networks and initiatives that have been established over the past year.

The Annual Report is available on the Leicestershire Communities website and on the Members Hub and brief highlights of some of the schemes and activities included within it are summarised below.

**Mrs Pam Posnett CC**

**The Leicestershire County Council Communities Fund**

The Communities Fund was launched on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020, following a decision made by Cabinet to establish a £1m fund to help VCSE sector organisations to continue providing services for vulnerable people during the Covid-19 pandemic. The grant fund was subsequently increased in value and extended through further rounds of funding to help voluntary groups to manage the impacts of the pandemic and to continue to deliver services for vulnerable and disadvantaged people and communities.

In total, over 3 rounds of funding, 379 grants were awarded, totalling nearly £2.6m of funding from the County Council.

### The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Resilience Partnership

The Resilience Partnership Team carries out a wide range of projects – for individual authorities, for authorities collectively and by representing local authorities across the multi-agency LLR Prepared Forum. During 2020/21 the Partnership has been primarily focused on coordinating and supporting the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has involved working within individual councils, collectively with LLR local authorities and across the wider Local Resilience Forum partners on a wide range of work including support for shielded residents, provision of PPE and arrangements for increased mortuary capacity. Later in the year support was also provided for planning for the recovery phase of the pandemic. The Team has also responded to several flood events and an avian flu outbreak as well as planning for/responding to the implications of the EU Exit Transition.

### Volunteering

Volunteering has been a key theme throughout the last year and one which the Communities Team has continued to co-ordinate, promote and support. A strategic volunteer advisory group was formed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and this has ensured that Volunteer Managers and their volunteers have been able to access consistent messaging and support for volunteering to safely continue and adapt to ever changing circumstances.

During Covid 19 volunteering has been critical to supporting vulnerable people and the vaccination programme and Voluntary Action LeicesterShire has worked closely with the County Council and other Resilience Forum partners to mobilise and co-ordinate the voluntary response.

### Armed Forces

The Communities Team and the Council were incredibly proud to be awarded the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) gold award in 2020, one of only 17 employers in the East Midlands to achieve this. The Ministry of Defence award encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same.

Through the last year the focus of work has been on:

- Supporting the regional Civil and Military Partnership Board covering Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to develop and deliver a regional action plan co-ordinating the work of local authorities, universities, military charities and our armed forces.



- Hosting a council armed forces employee network which supports forces family employees and explores ideas about how we can better improve service delivery to this cohort.
- Maintaining ties with the Ministry of Defence Employment Engagement Team including attending Partnering with Defence training and events.
- Commemorating several important remembrance events relating to previous conflicts including WW1 and WW2 events.

### Equalities

The Council adopted a new Equalities Strategy to cover the period from 2020-2024. The Strategy meets the Council's obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to set itself specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years. It was informed by engagement with the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group and a range of organisations representing protected characteristic groups.

The Strategy addresses workforce issues, service delivery issues and community engagement. Key achievements during the year include holding staff discussion forums on issues such as Black Lives Matter, access for deaf and hard of hearing service users, and support for transgender colleagues and service users. The Council commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day and celebrated diverse religious festivals. A new induction workbook for all staff on "Promoting Fairness and Respect" has been produced and is available on-line.

### Engagement

Following discussions with Members, officers and local communities, the Council's approach to engagement has been reviewed and refreshed and a County Council Engagement Strategy has been developed that will be progressed through corporate governance over the coming summer, accompanied by an Annual Report on engagement over the 2020/21 financial year.

The Council recognises that the pandemic has considerably changed how officers talk with local communities, and how they expect to talk to us. The last year has enabled the organisation to test new approaches, but also to develop a better understanding of how digital poverty, literacy levels and other barriers continue to prevent many people from getting involved.

In addition, the Council undertook a project specifically aimed at understanding the impact of the pandemic on communities that may not have had their voice heard. ['Conversations about Covid'](#) showed the value of informal interactions on broad issues and enabled key messages to be fed back into departments to improve how we communicate and deliver services.

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**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 2021****POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEAD MEMBER FOR  
HIGHWAYS****Members Highway Fund**

I am pleased to advise Members that Cabinet approved a new Members Highway Fund at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. This fund will provide each Member with a budget of £25,000 to use on small scale highway and environmental improvement works in their own divisions. We recognise how important small scale highway works can be to our communities and therefore we have allocated an additional £5m to cover a range of highway improvement works including: community speed management, gullies and drainage works, Public Rights of Way works, and signing and lining maintenance. The Members Highway Fund is one initiative to be funded from this additional money.

Over the next couple of months, a dedicated Project Manager will contact each Member directly to discuss the available options and offer support and guidance. We will also provide examples of effective and affordable scheme options with estimated costings and timescales for delivery to help Members consider how they want to spend their allocation. Such examples will include the provision of village gateway measures, flashing speed signs, vegetation clearing and minor improvements to roads and footways.

Officers will work with Members to get proposals developed over the next few months so the measures can be delivered in this financial year and the team is working hard to put in place the guidance and processes to support Members. An All Member Briefing has been arranged for 13<sup>th</sup> July where more details on the initiative and the application process will be available.

**Ozzy O'Shea**

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