



DATE: 8 May 2018  
MY REF: MIS/CCouncil  
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Dear Sir/Madam

I summon you to the MEETING of the LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL to be held at COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD on WEDNESDAY, 16 MAY 2018 at 2.00 p.m. for the transaction of the business set out in the agenda below.

Yours faithfully

**Chief Executive**

### **AGENDA**

1. To elect a Chairman.
2. To appoint a Vice - Chairman.
3. Chairman's Announcements.
4. Report of the Returning Officer. (Pages 5 - 6)
5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 March 2018. (Pages 7 - 22)
6. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this agenda.
7. To answer questions asked under Standing Order 7(1)(2) and (5).
8. To receive position statements under Standing Order 8.



9. To make appointments in accordance with items 11 and 12 of Standing Order 4.
  - (a) To appoint the Leader;
  - (b) To note any changes to the membership of the Cabinet made by the Leader;
  - (c) To appoint Cabinet Support Members as the Council considers appropriate;
  - (d) To appoint members of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees (including the naming of Spokesmen/Spokespersons).
  
10. To consider the following notice of motion:
  - (a) NHS Finance and Sustainability - Mrs A Hack CC
    - a) That this Council notes:-
      - i) The demographic and central government pressures on the NHS and Social Care;
      - ii) The combined financial savings target in 2018/19 for all Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Groups is of the order of £60million;
      - iii) The quality improvement and performance targets for all LLRCCGs are challenging and that West Leicestershire CCG has publicly acknowledged that its target for 2018/19 is significantly higher than that planned or delivered in 2017/18.
  
    - b) That this Council notes with concern:-
      - i) That the realignment of Community Hospital beds is still being considered at a time of significant bed pressures across the local health system;
      - ii) That no agreed and financially sustainable transformation plan is yet in place to meet the challenges facing the local health economy despite the known on-going significant financial pressures;
      - iii) The impact on NHS and local authority services of the CCGs' financial savings targets;
      - iv) That whilst the three LLR CCGs have agreed to work together this is only at the level of a senior joint management board and not a full merger of the three CCGs;

- v) That there is a lack of democratic accountability in the NHS decision making system.
- c) That this Council therefore calls on the Cabinet Lead Members to work closely with their counterparts in Leicester City and Rutland Councils:-
  - i) To challenge the strategic direction of the financial and service plans for all LLR CCGs;
  - ii) To work to protect NHS community hospitals and district nursing services;
  - iii) To engage in national discussions on a medium term financial settlement for health and social care with the aim of achieving genuinely sustainable, adequately funded, integrated health and social care system for the LLR area.
- d) That this Council welcomes the decision of the LLR CCGs to accept the need for an externally led governance review of the NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.
- e) That this Council welcomes the decision of the LLR CCGs to accept an invitation from the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to explain their proposals for a joint management board and request the Committee to explore why a full merger of the three CCGs was not pursued as this has the potential of reducing bureaucracy, management and administration costs; and to explain the consequences for services of their savings targets.

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**COUNTY OF LEICESTERSHIRE****REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER****ELECTION OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR THE STONEY  
STANTON AND CROFT ELECTORAL DIVISION – 3<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2018**

To report that the person elected was as follows:

<b><u>Name and Address</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
Maggie Wright Teena, Croft Road, Thurlaston, Leicestershire LE9 7TB	The Conservative Party Candidate

**John Sinnott**  
Returning Officer

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 21 MARCH 2018**

**PRESENT**

Mrs. J. Richards CC (in the Chair)

Mr. P. Bedford CC, Mr. I. E. G. Bentley CC, Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC, Mr. R. Blunt CC, Mr. G. A. Boulter CC, Mr. S. L. Bray CC, Mr. L. Breckon JP CC, Dr. P. Bremner CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. J. G. Coxon CC, Mr. B. Crooks CC, Dr. T. Eynon CC, Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC, Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. T. Gillard CC, Mrs. A. J. Hack CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Dr. S. Hill CC, Mr. Max Hunt CC, Mr. D. Jennings CC, Mr. J. Kaufman CC, Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC, Mr. J. Miah CC, Mr. J. Morgan CC, Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC, Ms. Betty Newton CC, Mr. L. J. P. O'Shea CC, Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC, Mr. P. C. Osborne CC, Mr. I. D. Ould CC, Mrs. R. Page CC, Mr. B. L. Pain CC, Mr T. Parton CC, Mr. A. E. Pearson CC, Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC, Mr J. Poland CC, Mrs. P. Posnett CC, Mrs. C. M. Radford CC, Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC, Mr. T. J. Richardson CC, Mrs H. L. Richardson CC, Mr. N. J. Rushton CC, Mrs B. Seaton CC, Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC, Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC, Mrs D. Taylor CC and Mr. G. Welsh CC

**42. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

**Brian Roberts**

The Chairman reported that Brian Roberts would be retiring from the County Council at the end of this month after more than 12 years as Director of Corporate Resources. He had previously worked as the Deputy Corporate Director (Finance) at Staffordshire County Council. Prior to that, he had worked in Merseyside and Hampshire.

Brian had led and overseen significant changes during the last 12 years and had made a major contribution to modernising and transforming the shape of the Council. The County Council had reaped the benefit of Brian's considerable energy and drive and he had led on a number of really successful major change programmes such as the implementation of the Council's accommodation strategy, and the creation of East Midlands Shared Services.

He had always ensured that robust financial management arrangements had been in place, and that the Council maintained a focus on medium term financial planning. This had placed the Council in a far more secure position that would otherwise have been the case and Brian deserved huge credit for this.

He had also ably led the Corporate Resources Department, reshaping key support services, and had been instrumental in creating and driving the Council's ambitious transformation programme. Brian had acted as Deputy to the Chief Executive. Overall and in every way he had made a significant corporate contribution to the leadership and reputation of the Council and was well respected by members and officers.

In 2016/17, Brian was President of CIPFA, which not only provided him with national and international platforms to discuss key public sector issues, but also helped to raise the profile of the County Council.

Members joined the Chairman in wishing Brian a long and happy retirement.

### **Record Office Accreditation**

The Chairman reported with pleasure that the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Records Office officially received its Accreditation award.

Accreditation was the standard awarded by the National Archives to services which demonstrated competence and excellence in core areas such as collections management, access and outreach. Less than 5% of archive services in the country had met the standard so this was an achievement to be proud of.

Members joined the Chairman in congratulating the staff at the Records Office

### **Visitors**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting all visitors and guests of members and anyone who was viewing the meeting via the webcast.

## **43. MINUTES.**

It was moved by the Chairman, seconded by Mr O'Shea and carried:-

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 February 2018, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

## **44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No such declarations were made.

## **45. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1)(2) AND (5).**

### **(A) Question by MR HUNT**

“1. Could the Leader advise:-

- a) Whether the conversion of Loughborough's pedestrianised shopping area into a Pedestrian and Cycle Zone is supported by a county wide policy, Manual for Streets or equivalent, and if so where can it be accessed?
- b) Has Leicestershire Police been consulted and, if so, what view



of the change has the Force reflected to the County Council?

- c) Is Charnwood Borough Council a partner or a consultee in the project and what do we know about its view?
2. Is the Leader aware of the significant concern in the town concerning the conflict between cycles and pedestrians and does he consider this the best way to resolve this conflict?
  3. Does the Leader consider that the County Council is sufficiently in touch with shoppers in Loughborough and understand their needs?"

### **Reply by Mr Pain**

- "1. a) A pedestrian and cycle zone is an option available under the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, the legislation that regulates traffic restrictions across the country.
- b) Leicestershire Police has been consulted – no comment has been received. Prior to consultation the Police raised concerns over the existing ambiguities with the various orders currently in place with regard to cyclists through the pedestrian areas.
- c) Charnwood Borough Council is both. Borough Council officers have worked with the County Council over the past year to develop a single pedestrian and cycle zone. They approached the County Council in the first place wanting to resolve the ambiguities with the current orders and with a view to expanding the market place. Charnwood Borough Council is also a statutory consultee. At the time of the proposals going to consultation Borough Council officers were supportive.

Once the consultation period began, Charnwood Borough Council objected to the proposals.

- 2.&3. To reiterate, this work was initially instigated by Charnwood Borough Council. It also provided the County Council with the opportunity to review and consolidate the existing confusing traffic regulation orders along with addressing concerns raised by the Police and a recommendation of the Loughborough Pedestrianisation Public Inquiry. After over a year's worth of work with both Charnwood Borough Council and Loughborough BID a proposal was agreed by all parties and put out to consultation which closed on 14 March. Officers have now considered the responses to that consultation and in view of the U-turn by Charnwood Borough Council on this matter, along with the comments raised, I have decided in consultation with the Leader that the County Council will no longer be pursuing any changes to the current situation in central Loughborough. I have now requested that the costs the County Council has incurred to date in pursuing this abortive initiative are discussed with Charnwood Borough Council with a view to seeking appropriate recompense."

**Mr Hunt asked the following supplementary question:-**

“Can I thank the Lead Member for this most illuminating answer indicating that, after over a year’s work with Charnwood Borough Council, proposals which have come forward, which all parties agreed to, are now withdrawn by Charnwood Borough Council. I would simply ask the Lead Member:

1. Can we in future give more credit to proposals from members as opposed to Borough Councils who are going to let us down?
2. Doesn’t this speak volumes for unitary authorities when one authority is instructing another authority and then withdrawing those instructions?”

**Mr Pain replied as follows:-**

“Can I thank Max for his supplementary question?

1. In terms of member involvement, consultations exist for all parties to communicate and submit their thoughts on all proposals and I think that is a satisfactory process.
2. In terms of the unitary authority comment, that is not for me to answer and so I make no comment.”

**(B) Question by MR HUNT**

“Could the Leader explain what he knows about discussions which may result in East Midlands Trains to the capital being slowed down to allow another train operator to speed up its own service for commuters?”

**Reply by Mr Pain**

“The County Council is aware of the publication of the new East Midlands Trains timetable that will come into effect in May 2018 and run until December 2018. This is part of a normal process of timetable review conducted by the train operator and the Department for Transport. It is important to note that the review process includes no element of consultation with service users or stakeholders.

These timetable reviews normally result in little or no change to train service operations to stations in Leicestershire (or elsewhere). In the case of this particular review, however, my understanding is that it has been affected by the Thameslink programme and track availability on the Midland Main Line south of Bedford. It appears that there was a choice to be made between Midland Main Line trains continuing to stop at Bedford Station, which would have had a potentially dramatic impact for services to Leicestershire stations through time penalties on services and potentially loss of some services, or to remove stops at Bedford, with a very much more limited impact for train services in Leicestershire.

I am pleased to note that the review has adopted the latter position, i.e. to remove Bedford stops. Whilst I understand that this will still result in some Midland Main Line trains to and from London being slower than the current

timetable, some services will be quicker as a result of not stopping at Bedford and overall the impacts are broadly neutral. I understand too that there will be capacity improvements as a result of the new timetable, meaning that there should be more seats available for rail customers to and from Leicestershire.

Whilst I understand that those whose rail journeys may become slightly slower will feel frustrated, rest assured that officers will continue to engage with the current operator, East Midlands Trains, and through the refranchising process for Midland Main Line services, to lobby for improved rail service provision for Leicestershire residents.”

**Mr Hunt asked the following supplementary question:-**

“Again this is a very useful response which tells us a lot about how the contracts are running between London St Pancras to the benefit of Leicestershire. It strikes me from reading from this that this is not a problem which is going to end this year, it is a problem which is going to continue, and so the question is: Are we adding commuter trains and through trains to the list of concerns we have and the investment we want to see in the Midlands Mainline?”

**Mr Pain replied as follows:-**

“Once again, thank you for the supplementary question. I am not an expert in these matters; officers are far more learned than I. However, I will refer members and Max to the response which says that the process and the timetable review involves no element of consultation with service users or stakeholders. We will do what we can as a Department to influence these proposals where we can but the actual process does not involve consultation.”

**46. POSITION STATEMENTS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.**

The Leader gave a position statement on the following matters:-

- Fair Funding;
- Local Industrial Strategy;
- Midlands Engine/Connect;
- Housing Infrastructure Fund.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Family Services gave a position statement on the following matters:-

- Child Sexual Exploitation;
- Foster Carer Recruitment;
- Improved Placement Stability;
- The “Ask for Angela” Community Safety Campaign;
- New Toolkits for Schools;
- Annual Achievements of Children in Care Awards Evening.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Environment and Transport gave a position statement on severe winter weather.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing gave a position statement on the following matters:-

- Leicestershire Food Plan;
- Pensions for Women Born in the 1950s.

Under Standing Order 8(3) it was moved by Mr Charlesworth, seconded and carried unanimously that matters relating to the pensions for women born in the 1950s be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

A copy of the position statements is filed with these minutes.

#### **47. REPORT OF THE CABINET:-**

##### **(a) Acceptance of Delegation from Rutland County Council - Functions under the Care and Mental Health Acts.**

It was moved by Mr Rushton, seconded by Mr Blunt and carried unanimously:-

“That the County Council accepts the delegation of certain statutory functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 and Section 13 of the Mental Health Act 1983 on the basis outlined in the report.”

#### **48. REPORT OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.**

##### **(a) Pay Policy Statement.**

It was moved by Mr Rhodes, seconded by Mr Shepherd and carried unanimously:-

“That the County Council’s Pay Policy Statement 2018/19, as referred to in the report of the Employment Committee, be approved.”

2.00 pm – 3.36 pm  
21 March 2018

CHAIRMAN

## COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018

### POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

#### **Fair Funding**

Over recent Council meetings I detected a hint of scepticism that our Fair Funding campaign will be successful. I too understand the scale of the task and the powerful forces that are rallied against change from the status quo. We have put our head well and truly above the parapet, and will continue to do so given the gross unfairness of the current system.

The Deputy Leader, Byron Rhodes along with Officers, met with Rishi Sunak Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. I am also very pleased that Neil O'Brien, MP who is leading on Fair Funding for all Leicestershire MPs also attended. At the meeting the unfairness of the current distribution of funding, especially for low funded authorities like Leicestershire, was explained along with the Leicestershire model.

The meeting was very useful and the discussion was wide ranging. Byron continues to put considerable drive and energy into this campaign and it feels like we are making progress in putting our case to Government. It now seems accepted that London authorities are very generously funded and things need to change.

The recent Fair Funding Government consultation is evidence of this with a lot of the comments mirroring the work we have done.

#### **Local Industrial Strategy**

The County Council is full square behind the development of a local industrial strategy for Leicester and Leicestershire, as advocated by the Government This Strategy, which is being developed through the Leicester, Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, will showcase our ambitions for supporting growth in the County by setting out the need for up front funding for the A46 Expressway and accelerated housing as well seeking sector deals for the following key industries:-

- Life Sciences
- Logistics
- Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing
- Space/Data and Digital Technology
- Textiles: Design, Manufacturing and Technology.

I met with Neil O'Brien MP last Friday who shares our ambition and has agreed to champion our case with other Leicestershire MPs and key figures in Whitehall and Parliament. His support will be helpful in getting to the front of the queue when our proposal is submitted.

I am aware of the interest of the Scrutiny Commission on this issue and I look forward to constructive engagement with them in the development of the Strategy.

## Midlands Engine/Connect

The County Council is fully supportive of Midlands Connect and is an active Member of it. Officers are currently involved in a number of Midland Connect projects that are directly related to the successful delivery of our Prospectus for Growth, including improvements to rail services to places such as Coventry and Birmingham, and the A46 Expressway, which is also a key element of the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan. These projects will not only greatly enhance people's ability to travel efficiently and safely around and through Leicestershire, but will also enable the provision of much needed houses and jobs to meet the demands of the area's growing population.

It is crucial, however, that we move as quickly as is possible from thinking about projects to their delivery on the ground. This is why we are also fully supportive of Midlands Connect becoming a Sub-national Transport Body, with a current target date to achieve this in 2020. Government is increasingly seeing such Sub-national bodies as having a key role to play in influencing its future spending decisions; thus Midlands Connect becoming such a body will strengthen its hand considerably in influencing and shaping Government decisions on future investments in the Midlands transport infrastructure, to the benefit of Leicestershire residents and businesses. Officers are continuing to work on the details of the proposals with their Midlands Connect colleagues and I look forward to being able to provide further updates on this matter.

I attend the Midlands Connect Strategic Board and was pleased to hear Sir John Peace emphasise the need for Midlands Connect to up its game in clearly demonstrating to the Government its ability to collaborate effectively and deliver to drive forward our growth agenda. On a similar note, the HS2 Strategic Board on which we are represented by Blake Pain, is currently giving serious consideration how we, as the East Midlands, drive delivery of the HS2 Growth Strategy for Toton thus again demonstrating our collective strength.

My final point on this is to draw to your attention the recent publication by TfEM setting out our top 6 priorities for the East Midlands. These are:

- Making the most of HS2
- A Midland Main Line fit for the 21st century
- Improving access to East Midlands Airport
- A46 Growth Corridor & Newark
- A5 Growth Corridor
- Transforming East-West connectivity.

Only by work collaboratively and with one voice, will we be taken seriously or even heard by Government.

## **Housing Infrastructure Fund**

I am pleased to advise Members that today we have had confirmation from Government that they would like to work with us to develop schemes that will help unlock planned housing growth in Leicestershire. The draft Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire has a housing need of 118,000 homes by 2036 along with significant infrastructure investment, including roads and schools. Today's announcement is a positive step forward in helping us secure the necessary funding to deliver the key infrastructure required.

We are pleased that Government have recognised Leicestershire's commitment to delivering growth in a sustainable way. Opportunities such as the Housing Infrastructure Fund are an important part of enabling local authorities to be proactive and prepare for growth rather than reacting to speculative development. We welcome Government's support on this and look forward to working collaboratively with them.'

**N. Rushton**

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**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018**  
**POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR**  
**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

My position statement covers a number of areas of work across the Department including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Foster Carer recruitment, developments in social care around support for children with complex needs, two new tool kits for schools, a community safety campaign and our Children in Care Achievement Awards.

National CSE awareness day took place on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March to highlight and focus on the vulnerability of young people to sexual abuse and exploitation. To mark this the multi-agency CSE, Trafficked and missing HUB based at Wigston police station held an open day to publicise across agencies the work that is taking place across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to raise awareness, prevent CSE taking place, to protect victims and prosecute perpetrators.

The work of the multi-agency CSE HUB has been recognised and praised by OFSTED. We know that as a result of the robust joint response with the police and other partners we have not only seen the identification of young people at risk increasing but we have supported children through successful convictions of perpetrators and individual work with victims to move forward positively.

The HUB has also taken a lead on identifying and supporting young people who go missing and overseeing the completion of return interviews, undertaken independently by staff within our Listening and Support Service. Over the last few months we have seen reductions in the numbers of children and young people reported missing, alongside better planning and support to young people who go missing and place themselves at risk.

Like other local authorities Leicestershire has seen the number of children in care increase significantly over the last few years. Leicestershire currently has 552 young people in our care. As part of the MTFs strategy, the Department has been working hard to increase the number of foster carers, recruiting carers for specific groups, for example parent and baby placements, and importantly to retain carers once they foster.

As a result of this work enquiries from prospective foster carers (and adopters) continue to grow and this year we are on track to meet our target of an increase of 25 carers this year. In January we launched our revised website “We are Family”, alongside our recruitment and retention activity that has seen use of social media, our Children in Care (CIC) making a film and being part of foster carers training, our improved offer to carers (including training and support), listening to what carers tell

us, play schemes and foster carers and birth children events. These activities make our direction of travel positive.

To support our children in care who experience the most challenges we have worked hard to improve placement stability, leading to a significant improvement for children so that this year we have had 8% of placements disrupted compared to 15% last year, which exceeds our regional comparators. One reason for our success has been the establishment of the Dedicated Placement Support Team, who wrap around a young person and carers to provide intensive support to help stabilise placements and work towards positive outcomes for the young person. Over the last 12 to 18 months the team, working other staff have supported young people to remain in placement, to move successfully from residential to a family type placement, and for others to return home to family or on to live independently.

In February, the County Council's Community Safety Team supported the roll out of the "Ask for Angela" campaign that enables people who might feel uneasy on a date in pubs and clubs to discreetly approach staff and request assistance. The initiative aims to provide customers with a way to remove themselves from an uncomfortable situation while on a date and be supported by staff in the venues involved in the initiative. This is an excellent initiative that is part of a national campaign and is being delivered in Leicestershire in partnership with the Police.

In the last month two new toolkits have been launched for schools. The first is an emotional wellbeing curriculum pack, developed by the young people on our County Youth Council for Leicestershire. The pack has been launched to Leicestershire Secondary Schools as part of their Mental Health Awareness campaign and includes a variety of activities for work with young people aged 11 to 18. Earlier this year I attended a launch of the Trans Inclusion Toolkit for Schools, which is a joint City and County initiative developed in partnership with the Young Transgender Centre of Excellence. The toolkit provides information and guidance to schools and colleges on how to support more effectively transgender and gender-questioning pupils and prevent transphobia.

And finally, in February the Department held the annual Achievements of Children in Care award evenings. This took place over two evenings and was attended by over 300 of our Children in Care to recognise their achievements over the last 12 months. This was a wonderful event for our children in care.

**I. D. Ould**

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018****POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR  
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION****Severe Winter Weather**

The recent severe winter weather has been a particularly challenging time for the County Council's highways gritting team.

Since the beginning of November, 21 gritters and drivers have been out in sub-zero temperatures a total of 107 times, spreading 19,788 tonnes of rock salt on more than 128,000 miles of road. During this winter we have completed 1,443 night runs to date – a 57 per cent increase on the total number of runs last year.

Some of the conditions have been some of the most challenging in recent times. Road surface temperatures have been as low as -8 degrees.

The weather also caused one snow plough to overturn on an icy country lane between Church Langton and Tur Langton. Thankfully the driver was unhurt and he was back at work the next night helping to keep the county moving.

The council's five gritting depots are being restocked with 1,500 tonnes of rock salt, in case temperatures plummet again, with crews continuing to go out as required.

Farmers and snow wardens have also been making a difference. By way of example on 28 February 20 tractors went out clearing roads affected by heavy snow, while a number of snow wardens have been clearing paths and spreading rock salt on pavements for residents. Last weekend a further 8 farmers cleared snow and our crews deployed twice on Saturday night, 3 gritters responding during Sunday and again full runs on Sunday night.

I have passed on my thanks to our highways team for the work they've done but I am sure that the Council would join with me in recording our appreciation to the gritting team but also to the farmers, snow wardens and volunteers who worked tirelessly to keep our roads gritted and accessible over the winter and over the next few weeks.

**B. Pain**

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## COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018

### POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CABINET LEAD MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

#### **Leicestershire Food Plan**

Healthy foods are fundamental to good health and community vitality. The food system - from agricultural production and processing, to transportation and marketing, to shop purchases and waste disposal, influences our ability to buy healthy foods and affects our society in profound ways. But food is not just about obesity. Food also has widespread economic implications. The food and drink manufacturing sector in Leicester and Leicestershire's economy is worth £600m – the second most important economic contributor after non-food manufacturing. Food is also important for tourism in Leicestershire, with Melton Mowbray designating itself as “the Rural Capital of Food “.

It is important that we take a strategic approach to managing the food system and I am delighted to advise the Council that we are developing a Food Plan for Leicestershire. The Plan will provide a focus for our work to address the rising health, care and productivity costs of ill-health due to overweight/obesity, to reduce food waste costs/environmental impacts and to strengthen our very important local food manufacturing sector. It will also mean that Leicestershire can become a member of the national “Sustainable Food Cities” (SFC) network which in turn would open up funding opportunities and support from national experts in this field. We will be taking a two-strand approach to Leicestershire's food plan, with a county-level strategy developed in tandem with community-level plans at district, or equivalent level.

A county-wide food plan also fits well strategically with the development of the Council's single outcomes framework, given its cross-departmental nature, and will contribute to outcomes around A Strong Economy, Wellbeing and Opportunity, Great Communities and Keeping People Safe. It will also contribute to our waste reduction set out in the Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

#### **Pensions for women born in the 1950's**

As part of my previous role, I met with a delegation from the campaign group WASPI to listen to their concerns about the impact of the decision taken by the Coalition Government to bring forward the date for the equalisation of the retirement age for men and women.

Whilst it was accepted that the retirement age for both men and women should be the same the WASPI concerns centred on the timing of and information provided to

women born in the 1950's who already made retirement plans and would now face a significant reduction in the pension or would have to wait longer for their pensions.

One of the main concerns was in relation to the notification of the changes and the Work and Pensions Committee of the House of Commons concluded that 'more could and should have been done' to communicate the changes. The responsibility for communicating these changes rests with the Department of Works and Pensions and any women who feel that the DWP have failed in their responsibility to do so can and should take the matter up, firstly with the DWP, and failing which raise the matter with the Ombudsman.

The Government's position is that the changes proposed by the Coalition Government were debated extensively in Parliament and a concession was made prior to the passing of the Act which reduced the delay that anyone would experience in claiming their State Pension, relative to the previous 1995 timetable, to 18 months. This concession will cost approximately £1.1billion. To meet the demands of WASPI would cost an estimated £30billion - a cost which would have to be borne by working age people.

I have considerable sympathy for the WASPI campaign and for those women whose retirement plans have been adversely affected. An all-Party Parliamentary Group has been set up and I am pleased it has taken up the campaign on behalf of WASPI. That is the right forum for such action as this is a matter for central government.

At the meeting with WASPI it was clear that there was a need for more information on pensions generally and following that meeting Ian Howe, the Pensions Manager, offered to speak to the local WASPI group about pension taxation to expand their knowledge and understanding on the clear understanding that he;

- a) cannot offer any financial advice
- b) is there totally by invite and not to influence or support WASPI in any way.

Ian has also offered to speak to those in the Local Government Pension Scheme who are also affected by the changes. I think this is a practical way in which we can help such women.

**Pam Posnett**