

## " County Councillor Annual Report

This report summarises the activities of the following member of the County Council during

### Name of Councillor

Mr N J Rushton CC

### 1) Electoral Division activities

#### **Main Activities and the impact during the past year:**

2017 began with new electoral boundaries for the Valley Division.

My new Division now has the following parish councils : Ashby-de-la Zouch, Belton, Breedon on the Hill, Coleorton, Isley cum Langley, Long Whatton, Normanton le Heath, Osgathorpe, Packington, Staunton Harold, Swannington and Worthington.

I try to attend all parish councils on a regular basis through the year. I deal with a lot of issues raised by the parish councils and residents. The majority of these include planning and development control, speeding traffic, highways maintenance, superfast broadband delivery, passenger transport and social care.

Regular meetings are held with the local MP Andrew Bridgen and we work very closely to try and resolve the casework raised.

As Leader of the County Council, my role is to represent the strategic interests of all the residents within Leicestershire. We all use the roads, our rubbish needs disposing and recycling, we need to invest in our transport and infrastructure and we need to promote Leicestershire to the wider world as a great place to live, work, visit and bring up a family.

Austerity has not gone away and we still need to prioritise our finite resources. This means we have to make tough decisions and strike a fine balance between the council tax you pay and the services we provide or commission.

This is why we are fighting at the very highest levels for a fairer funding formula for Leicestershire. Despite being the lowest funded county council in the country, we continue to provide excellent services, and this can only be achieved by planning ahead and making the right decisions.

#### **Priorities for the immediate future are:**

Northwest Leicestershire is one of the fastest growing areas in the country- in terms of economic growth, employment and in housing development.

All this growth puts extra demand on the services we provide, so we are planning ahead to make provision for it, working with our partners not only in Leicestershire, but with neighbouring authorities and government agencies to provide funding for the infrastructure that will be needed to support all this economic activity.

Whilst this is welcome in terms of jobs and much needed new housing, we have to work with non-governmental organisations like the Midlands Engine for Growth and the Midlands Connect transport groups to make sure these plans are a success.

We will also have to plan for the arrival of HS2- currently going through parliament for approval. We fought long and hard to ensure the route's impact was minimised to residents and businesses. I will continue to keep an eye on HS2 and I want to see some gain, rather than the pain it has caused thus far.

Despite the gloomy financial outlook for the Council, we have plans for £290M of capital investment in infrastructure. This includes £4m for school expansion in Ashby and much needed improvements to J23 of the M1 and the area around it. We will also invest in a corporate asset investment fund that will generate income to support service delivery and we have just signed up to the UK100 group of councils and businesses which promotes clean energy use and cleaner, greener communities.

## **2) Council Activities**

### **Committees you serve on at County Hall**

Leader of the County Council.

Cabinet- Chairman.

Cabinet Briefing- Chairman.

Cabinet Strategy & Co-ordination Group- Chairman.

Constitution Committee- Chairman.

### **Local committees/Outside Bodies**

Local Government Association General Assembly- member.

Local Government Association- Executive Board member (East Midlands.)

County Councils Network- Executive Council.

County Councils Network- National Finance spokesman.

Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Combined Fire Authority- Chairman.

Midlands Engine- Steering group member.

Midlands Connect- Executive Board member.

Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership- member.

East Midlands Councils- member.

## Other bodies – School governors/community and charity organisations etc

N/A

### **3) Learning and development:**

You are never too old to learn new things and I always look at ways to better my understanding and appreciation of issues and the people affected by the decisions we take at County Council.

### **4) Other Matters:**

A new role I was appointed to earlier in the year was the national finance spokesman for the County Councils Network. This is the national body promoting the interests of upper tier local authorities and I want to ensure that Leicestershire's voice is heard loud and clear in Westminster and the Government. To do this I need to further understand the complex issues presented by reforming local government finance.

I've also taken on a greater involvement at the sub-national level in working with other council leaders in the West and East Midlands, primarily in my work with the Midlands Engine for Growth and Midlands Connect. This is vital, as the East Midlands continues to lose out in funding per head for all services and is the only English region not to have received any form of Devolution Deal from the Government.

I want to work with other like-minded partners in the County and beyond, including businesses and local authority leaders, LEPs, Universities and the third sector to bring this absurd situation to a close. The East Midlands needs to get its act together to counterbalance the power of the West Midlands Combined Authority, redressing the funding imbalance between the two regions.

### **Social Media**

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[www.leicestershireconservatives.org.uk](http://www.leicestershireconservatives.org.uk)

**Signed by Councillor Nick Rushton**

**Date 24<sup>th</sup> May 2018**