

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 25<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019****POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEAD MEMBER FOR  
EQUALITIES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL  
PARTNERSHIPS**

I am delighted to have this opportunity to report to the Council on the work carried out by the County Council with and by Leicestershire communities.

The prime focus of my portfolio is to create thriving Leicestershire communities where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities participate and help each other. Local people have the talent and skills to tackle the issues affecting their communities.

I am greatly indebted to the staff who work in the Policy, Resilience, Economic Growth and Communities and Wellbeing Teams. The quality of leadership and professionalism and 'can-do' attitude is a credit to all.

Work carried out with communities has included a focus on developing active, resilient and inclusive communities, helping to manage demand for services through prevention and early intervention and supporting communities to design and deliver services locally, sometimes with the support of grants and funding.

It is not possible to do justice to the tremendous work undertaken by the Teams in this position statement, so I would urge all members, in your capacity as Community Leaders/Champions, to look at some of the initiatives and projects highlighted in the annual report which can be found on the Council's website and consider whether these might be mirrored in your local areas. Brief highlights of a small sample of schemes and activities undertaken are set out in the statement for members to look through.

**Mrs Louise Richardson CC**

### Shire Community Grants

Provides small grants of up to £3000 and large grants of up to £10,000 for projects that improve the health and wellbeing of people experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage. In 2018/19 £367,588 was awarded to support 78 community-based projects.

### Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises

This year we have agreed a 'Partnership Statement' which sets out how the Council will work with the sector in a mutually supportive way to deliver continuing improvements to the quality of life of Leicestershire communities.

### Parish and Town Councils

Working with the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Parish Councils we continue to support parish and town councils in their role as community leaders and providers of community managed services. We have made good progress on the development of a 'devolution framework' which will guide our future working relationship.

### Neighbourhood Plans

Supporting communities wishing to develop Neighbourhood Plans. These Plans are a means by which local communities can take control and responsibility to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhoods and shape future growth and development. There are now 119 active neighbourhood planning groups in Leicestershire which have produced 33 Adopted Plans and 67 Designated Areas.

### Rural Partnership

A very successful partnership bringing together the business, voluntary and public sector to help improve services and support rural communities and businesses. Initiatives undertaken include supporting small and micro businesses, rural inclusion and skills programme and improving the physical and digital connectivity.

### Carillon Wellbeing Radio

A new community radio station which now takes Hospital Radio into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, out of wards and into people's homes, doctors' surgeries and care homes. Cheerful, dementia friendly music from six decades is mixed with quick tips to keep people well and happy and connected to their local community. Council support has included assistance with stakeholder engagement, health and wellbeing messages and grant funding.

### Green Plaque Awards

The Green Plaque Awards bring communities together to recognise and celebrate the county's rich cultural and historic heritage. The scheme invites residents and those associated with the county, to nominate and vote for the people and places they think are worthy of commemoration. To date, 23 Green Plaques have been unveiled to a balanced mix of people and places across the county.

### The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Resilience Partnership

The officers in the Resilience Partnership Team undertake a wide range of projects – for individual authorities, for authorities collectively and by representing local authorities across the multi-agency LLR Prepared Forum. This includes an emergency response first point of contact, support for communities and authorities in responding to, and recovering from incidents, training provision and community consultation.

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