



County Councillor Max Hunt
Annual Report 2019/20

I welcome any questions from residents

Formal Council Committee work

This year I was reappointed to the **Environment and Transport Committee** which oversees and scrutinises the county's transport policies and programmes as well as wider environmental services. These include recycling and treatment of residual waste collected by the District and Borough Councils, our climate change and carbon reduction programme, tree management and mineral extraction planning policies.

Like all councillors I attend the full **Council Meetings** where I speak on local matters and on policies related to the Transport and Environment.

These meetings and other information is recorded and [webcast](#) for you on You Tube channel Leicestershire County Council.

I also serve on the **Local Pensions Committee** which oversees the fund which benefits all staff who retire from service in the County and City councils, those in all District, Parish councils, as well as university and other public services in the city and county. This is quite specialist and I am one of the more experienced members in this area.

Local bodies and groups with which I am connected:

I attend all the residents' organisations when I am invited or offer to attend for a specific local matter. These are:

The Loughborough Campus and Community Liaison Group. This is a forum to address town/gown matters

Ashby Road Estates Community Association (ARECA) which runs the Hut community centre and represents residents.

Thorpe Acre Community Association which has kindly taken on the responsibility for the Thorpe Acre Trail which we created for the Millennium.

Stonebow Village Parish Meeting which is a new organisation created to serve residents in the Garendon Estate. The Meeting chose not to set a Parish Rate, and, by virtue of their independence, they are relieved of paying the Loughborough Special Rate.

Main Activities during the past year: excluding Coronavirus

Strategic issues concerning the County Council

Carbon reduction: For some time, I have highlighted the confusion of policies and targets relating to Climate Change and Carbon Reduction. I was pleased to propose a motion in Council to declare a Climate Change Emergency. As a result, the LCC Environment Policy has been updated. I will continue to ask pertinent questions about both adaptation and mitigation and press for a greener transport policy.



Clean Air: This is related to the climate change agenda. It concerns NOx emissions as well as Sulphurous gases and particulates from the road. In July my committee received a paper on this and I am now looking forward to the publication of a Needs Analysis for Leicester and Leicestershire which will spell out recommendations for action.

Public Health and Transport: I am promoting ways in which these two departments can coordinate more closely. Active travel seems to me to be the Cinderella when it comes to funding and putting ideas into practice.

Children in the Care System or Fostered: I am monitoring the rising number of children in care with increasing concern as well as the reduced support for young people in the community occasioned by the reductions in the youth service.

Public Open Space: I continue to write and inform against the practice where houses are sold freehold but with a covenant compelling them to pay for maintenance of local areas of public open space. This is dubbed 'fleecehold' by the campaigners, since it imposes a cost like ground rent on leasehold properties.

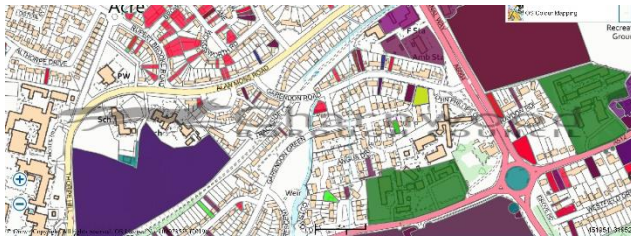
Street Traffic Wardens: I have made representations to increase the flexibility of the street warden service. This is contracted by LCC to Districts. We badly need the Wardens to include traffic around primary schools as well as enforcing the law against vehicles idling.

Pensions: I have supported the 1% increase in employer contributions and the move to pooling transactions through LGPS Central. I remain concerned that financial considerations overlay all Environmental and Ethical decisions which may not give enough cover for very rapid environmental changes in the investment market leaving some assets stranded.

Council Tax: I am very much aware and regularly discuss with residents of the rising rate of county council tax which is becoming out of proportion to within family budgets. The rise this year of a further 2% plus 2% on adult social care highlights again the urgency of rebalancing the costs of adult social care across the sectors.

Coronavirus: Covid-19 Emergency. I am in touch with all local and county services, monitoring activity and have identified local buildings for emergency use. I am not at high risk personally and remain ready to help where I am able.

Local Issues for residents and individuals



- Pressed for full publication of details behind S106 Agreements relating to P/14/1833/2 West of Loughborough development (WoL SUE). I have reported twice to the new Stonebow Village Parish Meeting.
- HMOs: Pressing for complete embargo (0%) on further HMOs. This will be decided by Charnwood BC within the Draft Local Plan
- Campaigning with residents for improvements to the maintenance of Booth Woods and the Old Railway Path.
- Getting repairs done to the Thorpe Acre Trail. I am assisting TACA to acquire grants from CBC and the University.
- Campaigned for a Loughborough Town Council: a Loughborough Area Committee has been established as a result.
- Monitoring grant settlement of the Community Transport grant for John Storer House.
- Represented Booth Wood Primary, Charnwood College and Delisle RC College concerning on-going traffic safety concerns on Thorpe Hill.
- Organised a visit to the Division by the Police & Crime Commissioner. Discussions included the use and sale of narcotics.
- Succeeded in getting the new Hall of Residence named after a woman – Claudia Parsons. All previous Halls and Buildings on campus were named after illustrious men – from William Morris to Robert Bakewell.
- Mediated for tenants on Garendon Estate at Stonebow Village Parish Meetings
- Represented the area to the Loughborough Town Deal Board.
- Requested three new Bus Shelters for Sharpley Road area
- Presented local views on Bedford Square and Science Park Consultations.
- Ran speed poster campaign on Buckingham & Sandringham Drive
- Addressed various very local matters: Old Ashby Road (grass verges), Blackbrook Road (parking), Cotswold Close (HMO), Litter and Fly tipping (Railway Track), Tree felling (Garendon Estate), Garendon Green (Parking) and Campus developments (planning), Gisborough Way (planning issue), Blackbrook and Shortcliffe brook (flood prevention), including meetings with police and campus officials.

Priorities for the future are:

- To minimise the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic and build back better in the aftermath.
- Ensure Social Care services are at their best and have the staff they need to care for vulnerable people under the pandemic
- Promote the Loughborough Growth Strategy Town Centre Highways project YP97
- Sufficient high quality school, pre-school and childcare places in the area I represent.
- Promote carbon zero measures beyond internal operations.
- Monitor detailed plans for West of Loughborough/Garendon Park development as they emerge, particularly via Conditions and Sections 106 agreement to P/14/1855/2.
- Explore new ways to mobilise street wardens to control parking and improve safety outside schools in the Division I represent.
- Disseminate the messages of county's public health work - currently on Active Travel and the Coronavirus.
- Better information to families about services for elderly people and people with learning difficulties.
- Support voluntary organisations and try to ensure that grants and participative budgeting is directed towards social priorities.
- Campaign for better funding for the NHS. Never take great performance from our acute services in UHL, mental health in LPP and GP services for granted.
- Improving bus services (Kinchbus in particular) and learn more about the pros and cons of Demand Responsive transport.
- Introduce road safety improvements where possible and further community speeding interventions to reduce casualties.
- Continue to campaign with others to reduce casualties involving cycles and pedestrians. Support safer cycle routes.
- See the Garendon High School Building used to the full for educational purposes.
- Campaign for closing the loop to extent transport to post 16 students of special schools for SEND pupils.
- Sufficient high quality school, pre-school and childcare places in the area I represent.
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Although it came at the very end of the period covered by this report, this year and next will be remembered for this terrible virus. My colleagues and I raised issues for discussion and resolution with County Officers through the lockdown and copied from my diary at the time.

Public Health

Problems with testing. For example. People being given appointments to attend tests sites only to discover when they arrive that the site is not up and running Contact tracing – is LCC Public Health Dept going to be appropriately funded for this new work?

Social Care

Sixty care homes have had outbreaks so managing outbreaks in care homes is live issue.

Homecare: concerns about capacity to meet demand, PPE issues – individual cases in homecare

Demand for Social care remains dampened due to NHS scaling back activity. As they build up elective care we will see increase demand for residential and domiciliary social care.

PPE supply via LRF. 8-12% of carers/homes have low PPE stocks. (improving picture)

Children's Services

Children attending school 220-230 schools open. Increasing numbers attending to 1700

Increase in number of vulnerable children attending from 250 to 360

Concern from DfE – vulnerable children – eg at risk, or in need, EHCP, open to CFWS - only 5% nationally attending – similar here.

All vulnerable children have been risk assessed. Balancing health risk of going in to school vs not.

Concerns about disparity of disadvantage and how this is being dealt with.

We asked if LCC Traded Services were charging schools for the school meals they have not taken up.

Waste Disposal

The Household Recycling and Waste Sites have been closed but some are due to be re-opened on 18th May. Will we need more than specified initially (One per District). Can traffic be managed.

Recovery

Plans splits into three sections for transport when restrictions are released.

Return to work

Public Transport, as we know, is an essential service but most problematic. We are short of solutions.

Without public transport and a very heavy reliance on Home Working it's likely that car usage and congestion will rise. For this and other well-rehearsed reasons we need safer, quicker pedestrian and cycle routes.

Return to School

Travel Advice from all Schools Needed using existing Plans. Attention to bunching at Crossing Patrols.

Town Centre resuscitation

Districts have an interest in this, but also in boosting car parking revenues, where we also want to encourage walking and cycling. How do we manage distance for outdoor markets thoroughfares?

Finance

We had concerns about the ability of some households to pay bills. We asked how many people have not been able to pay their Council tax in May or completed 2019/20 payments?

The government funding allocations show there is clearly going to be a shortfall. We need to know how we are going to close the gap in our funding. Council needed to publish a revised budget (MTFS)

Some matters raised personally in Full Council

Some of the formal Questions and matters raised personally at Council

15/5/19: Successfully proposed: Climate change Emergency

25/9/19 Questions on Local Transport Plan & Stats: Cycling and Walking

4/12/19 Questioned Traffic management of A5212 & non-motorised user audit.

22/2/20 Questioned Cabinet member on lack of vision for county transport

Obviously, a variety of strategic business is put before each full Council meeting, but it is also an opportunity to question the executive publicly and on record.

Here is a somewhat historical example when I wanted to put more pressure on the County Council to relieve the congestion don the A512.

“1. The public have been told the A512/J23 Major Highways Scheme will affect traffic through Junction 23 throughout 2020 and into 2021. Can the authority take further action to reduce congestion at peak time?”

Unfortunately, when carrying out improvement works on the highway there is inevitably some disruption, particularly when traffic levels are at their highest during morning and evening peak. Whilst construction works are programmed to minimise lane closures during peak times, it is only possible to reopen closed lanes where it is safe, and the surface is suitable. In addition, the installation of traffic management of the scale needed around J23 takes several hours to put in place under a full road closure and therefore it is not possible to install/remove the restrictions during peak times. The impact on the travelling public is constantly reviewed and every effort is made to reduce delays where possible. Any changes that can be made safely whilst still facilitating the works will be assessed and implemented.

2. Is it possible to provide information of time delays from week to week so that people can time their journeys better?”

There are many different reasons for traffic levels to fluctuate from day to day and across the peak period; including incidents elsewhere on the network. Several weeks of data would need to be collected by officers driving the routes to provide average delays. The possibility of using commercially available data such as Google Maps will be explored. Information on the works programme and restrictions can be found on the dedicated webpage for the project along with contact details for the contractor Morgan Sindall’s Public Liaison Officer.

[https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-maintenance/m1-
junction-23-and-a512-improvement-scheme](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-maintenance/m1-
junction-23-and-a512-improvement-scheme)

Can you tell if my questions were successful? Things did get a bit better and the contractors are publishing better information.

Some matters raised personally in Environment Scrutiny Committee

Scrutinising the future plans of the Executive – the Cabinet.

Most members sit on one Scrutiny Committee. This year I was appointed to the Environment and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This is my third year on this committee and I am familiar with all the business we conduct. In particular, I asked written questions as follows:

On 6/6/19: About our Clean Air Strategy and air pollution in Loughborough

On 7/11/19: Growth & Housing Fund, planning ahead. Tree Planting

On 16/01/20: Concerning the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Preparing for Committee:

In addition to formal questions, I occasionally put complex questions to officers in advance such as below:

On the Environment Strategy and carbon pricing in general

Are any activities of LCC liable for any Carbon Emissions Taxes and if so what would they be?

What do we know about future liability for such taxes and carbon pricing in the future?

On the Environment Strategy and EfW in general

Do we estimate the carbon and other Greenhouse gases from EfW plants either used or permitted by the authority?

What impact would a plant of the size and scale of the Newhurst plant, which went through our planning process, have in that respect?

Do we attach carbon emission measurements to our current residual and recycling contracts?

On Item 9/10 and 12: Carbon emissions from the existing Network and the Highways & Transport Capital Programme.

What are the estimated carbon emissions from our current Network? How do we estimate the carbon emissions from major road projects and how will updated DfT guidelines with respect to Carbon Net Zero impact on our major roads programme when they are implemented.

I have attended a number of presentations and Training events.

This year they have included

- Medium term financial strategy
- Strategic Planning

- Customer Services and Digital Strategy
- Weekly (remotely) Q&As on services response to Covid-19

I have also attended a course on Advanced Scrutiny of Council Finance and a Local Government Pensions Scheme webinar on the effect of Covid-19

Visits that I have made and some Events I have attended

- Delisle College 14-18 RC school
- Charnwood College 14-18 school
- Care Home (Thorpe House/Rushcliffe) & Gala Day
- Sir Robert Martin Court (Sheltered flatlets)
- Hanover Court (Sheltered flatlets)
- TARA (now TACA) by invitation (15 Jan 2020) and ARECA
- Remembrance Sunday ceremony at Queens Park
- VE Day in Thorpe Acre preparations (now deferred)
- Stonebow Village Parish Meeting
- Victorian County History (contributed to study of public health in 19th C)
- CBC Planning Committee: listening to discussion on Science Park
- Work in support of Compensation claims

I respond to many people with personal problems that have a bearing on public services.

Communicating with Residents

Newsletters

I've written three newsletters and personally delivered them house to house through the Division. Amongst all the residents I have one big fan. He distributed the latest leaflet to his friends in his home town of Berkovitsa in Bulgaria writing, roughly translated...

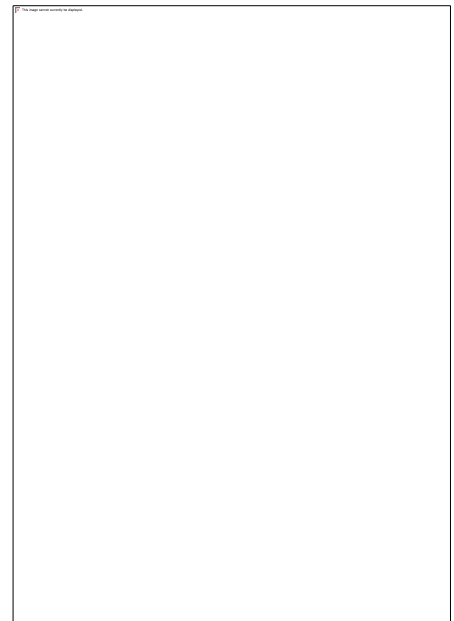
"You see the Spring report of one of the councillors in my city, Max Hunt, from the Labour party.

In this report, apart from the good results achieved on people's tasks, he wanted an excuse for what he didn't handle.

On Page 2 he explains why a tax increase that every house pays monthly to the municipality will be required.

*That's how it's done! There is communication. I know him personally. He came to my home on a bike to meet me because I wrote to him and had questions for him about *Ноевине Berkovica*."*

Wish best wishes to all residents of Garendon and Ashby Wards in North West Loughborough.



Signed: *Max Hunt.*

Max Hunt CC
May 2020