

County Councillor Annual Report

This report summarises the activities of the following member of the County Council during 2019/20

Name of Councillor **Louise Richardson**

1) Electoral Division activities **Enderby and Lubbesthorpe Division (incl. Thorpe Astley)**

Main Activities and the impact during the past year:

As Lead Member for Equalities, Community Engagement and Rural Partnerships I have been involved in setting strategic direction and policy of the council with cabinet and securing an equalities strategy that is both inward and outward facing. An action plan will be produced annually and I attend the Diversity Alliance, Disability, BAME and LGBT+ network groups as often as I can. As well as the various networks I also encourage joint events to focus on common areas where everyone can support each other. I also visit the council's Armed Forces network. I have included the Youth Council in equalities discussions and visited them also to get the views of younger members of our communities. I also chair Leicestershire's Inter Faith Forum at present as this goes through reform.

I liaise with voluntary organisations and charities with relation to education and skills, health, disability, faith, race, rural and cultural. This is both through organisations that are commissioned by us to delivery services on our behalf as well as those requesting grants. Contracts regarding services are also under review as we look to how we deliver services going forward. We have good relationships with our voluntary organisations and we have been able to increase our knowledge of some charities that we were not aware of through the Community Fund set up for Covid-19 mitigation. It has been very heartening to see the community spirit in all villages and towns due to Covid-19 and I do hope we can preserve this going forward. I am fully involved in Shire grant applications and we are looking at proposals for this year in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

As Armed Forces champion I have been actively involved in commemoration events, virtually and physically across the year. I have met with various organisations and have now attended a board meeting of LLR Armed Forces and will attend future meetings when available. I am working towards a volunteer project involving veterans and have also arranged for work experience within the environment and transport department. This is a very good forum to pick up issues such as housing and mental health issues of veterans.

Leicestershire Rural Partnership, which I chair, goes from strength to strength and engages Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, LLEP, Farmers Union, RCC, National Forest and others and now we are working on our Natural Capital evidence base and have been commissioned by LLEP for this work. This work will feed into many other areas including our council policy on being Carbon neutral by 2030. We will be setting up a link to the local Wildlife Trust to ensure cohesion across all areas on this. We have also submitted an application to LLEP for a LRP representative to be included on the LLEP, we are awaiting a decision. As the LLEP is working on the Local Industrial Strategy it is felt that representation is required on the LLEP regarding rural issues. Businesses and organisations are fully engaged in the work of the LRP and find it a very useful way of connecting and understanding the different areas that can be affected and in what way, as it connects with their areas of expertise. It also means that issues can be escalated to assist these organisations.

The Market towns group is fully supported from districts and enables work to be carried out such as fast broadband wifi for towns, working with businesses and looking at the offer presented to residents and visitors. We are also administering the Rural and Towns Business Support Programme due to Covid-19.

We are also involved in Citizens' advice and hardship fund for those in real difficulties and present the

Green Plaque scheme to celebrate Leicestershire's important buildings and residents that made a very significant impact on our societies.

In my division I have dealt with many issues for the area. I have been instrumental in bringing together a multi-agency group to tackle the issues caused by the travelling community, which are very complex. The MP has also been informed. Papers have been served but we now await the appeal which has been logged. Having had a baseball bat attack outside a school and shooting outside one of the sites it is a real concern for residents. I have also had a number of problems regarding traffic, accidents etc. Enderby has always had issues and problems have been taken up with directors in Environment and Transport and with the portfolio holder regarding Foxhunter Roundabout, Desford Road crossroads, Trinity Road and Mill Lane that runs alongside the primary school, leisure centre, allotments, the high school, tennis courts, bowling club and cricket club as well as residents. This area gets really busy and the safety of the children is a real concern. This is also along with general issues of parking and traffic within Enderby. Two traffic surveys have been conducted at my request but we must push on for the Enderby bypass to come online. Thorpe Astley has also experienced speeding and parking issues and I also spoke to traffic and now the entrances and exits of roundabouts have yellow lines, and these lines were extended up Murby Road to prevent the overspill of parking from the meridian Business Park. I also tackled pavement blocking in Meridian Business park by involving the police in the area,

A number of issues regarding overgrown footpaths and cycle tracks have been addressed. I have also received requests for assistance from residents regarding speeding, children with special needs, anti-social issues and problems with housing and have assisted where possible. I have also pushed the need for a cycle track from Lubbethorpe to Enderby to access the schools. I always try my best to help however I can never promise a satisfactory outcome for all.

Community Leadership Role

I work well with my fellow councillors both at district and parish and feel there is a good cohesion when it comes to issues that cross the sectors and attend all meetings where I can, including Enderby parish council, Braunstone town council and I am a Lubbethorpe parish councillor and was involved in the setting up of the council there. I share information and utilise social media to repost any comms released from county, especially needed during Covid-19 in letting people know about grants etc that they could access. My social media is carried out in a personal capacity and I do not have a county twitter, facebook or LinkedIn page.

I keep other councillors and councils aware of what is happening at county and signpost residents and councillors to relevant organisations and departments where appropriate. Bulletins from NHS re Covid-19 were also shared with all councils in my area.

I particularly made the effort to visit the travellers' sites in Enderby to speak with residents and also have met on a number of occasions a resident experiencing anti-social behaviour, elderly resident experiencing cars in her garden after accidents on the Foxhunter Roundabout.

I am pleased at the instigation of the multi-agency approach to try to address the issues with the travellers' sites in the area.

I am intent on trying to get more community cohesion in Thorpe Astley also and have been talking with residents and other councillors in the area.

Engagement with the Council, other statutory bodies and public utility companies (Water, Gas etc) about services in the area

I am a trustee at the RCC (Rural Community Council) and Leicestershire's SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education)

Priorities for the immediate future are:

Traffic
Car burglaries
Travellers
Pushing for Enderby bypass to be brought forward and solutions for improving speeding issues and road traffic accidents in the area.
Community issues in Thorpe Astley.
'Rabbit run' in Trinity Road.
Pushing for improvements at Foxhunter Roundabout.
And any other issues brought to my attention by residents.

2) Council Activities

Committees you serve on at County Hall

Cabinet
Full Council Meetings
LRP (Leicestershire Rural Partnership)
IFF (Inter Faith Forum)
SACRE

Local committees/Outside Bodies

RCC
SACRE
LLR Armed Forces Network
RSN (Rural Services Network)
Chair – District Planning Committee
Scrutiny Commission member at District Council including Finance, Performance and Income Generation sub-committees
ESIF Sub-committee
LEADER programme committees – East Leicestershire and North Warwick and Hinckley committees. Now awaiting details of what will take the place of these grants.
Lubbesthorpe Parish Council
Blaby District Council

Other bodies – School governors/community and charity organisations etc

Founder Trustee of Tumaini Jipya-New Hope both in UK and in Tanzania
Rotary International – Rotary Club of Blaby

3) Learning and Development

I attend all members' briefings and council meetings wherever possible. I undertake all mandatory training and also undertake any other training as seen to be appropriate at County, District and Parish level.

Communications

I am a member of a number of community pages on facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to be able to both share information but also to pick up on issues that are being talked about, to try to address issues early rather than for them to fester and nothing being done. I also try to correct misinformation and to let people know of anything I feel would assist in them understanding the system and why something may not be happening at that particular time. All my social media pages are personal pages.

I also give reports at parish meetings when I can attend and repost any messages from County Council. Information is also given by phone and in person however when we asked to do a surgery we were informed it would be too political to use a parish council building which I am rather surprised at as we are there for all residents regardless of party affiliation. We are investigating using other premises.

Signed by Councillor
Date

HLRichardson
24th June 2020