

## County Councillor Annual Report

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

### Name of Councillor – Deborah Taylor

#### 1) Electoral Division activities

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

Below are some examples of the projects I have been working on this year.

#### Bus Services within my Division

##### **Centre Bus 154**

In October 2018, Leicestershire County Council approved a new Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS) to ensure its passenger transport provision is fit for purpose, cost-effective and meets the essential travel needs of the community. The bus services that were assessed against the new policy in my Division was the Centre Bus 154, 18.25pm service from Leicester to Quorn, the Centre Bus 154 Saturday service and the Roberts 120 service. I attended a meeting at County Hall to discuss the Centre Bus 154, 18.25pm service with officers. This service was withdrawn, and I then communicated this to Parish Councils and residents affected.

*Impact – Good communication with residents ensured that the residents affected felt well informed and had the opportunity to make alternative arrangements to allow disruption to be kept to a minimum.*

##### **Roberts 120**

I held a meeting at County Hall to look at the review of the Roberts 120 service. I was informed that although the service was not being withdrawn, changes were being made. Plans were made to hold resident's engagement events to explain to residents the changes taking place. The event for residents in my Division was held in Anstey on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at Jubilee Hall, Staddon Road, Anstey, Leicester, LE7 7AY. I attend this public meeting. There were some very strong opinions and residents made it very clear that they were not happy about the withdrawal of some of the services. I took on board the comments shared and ensured that these were considered before the final timetable was approved. The decision was to merge two Roberts services, and this has now been completed.

I also advertised where residents could go for support and information.

*Impact – This was a difficult issue to deal with. It is the only bus service running through one of my villages and affected many residents. I ensured that the views of the residents that were expressed during the public meetings and sent to me via letter, emails and telephone calls were*

*fed into the review to ensure that as many residents were catered for and we retained a useable service. This feedback did alter some of the timings of the new service and I ensured there was a service available to residents to return home from work to the villages from Leicester City.*

### **Centre Bus 54A**

I received official notice from the Traffic Commissioner that Centrebus were changing their 54A service timetable and would no longer be serving Anstey. This was a commercial service and there was an agreement between Centrebus and Davidsons (who developed the Groby Road site in Anstey) that Davidsons would pay Centrebus to run the 54A through Anstey for 5 years. Those 5 years are now up and Centrebus have decided that it is not commercially able to continue with the service due to low passenger numbers. I contacted officers at Leicestershire County Council and they assessed the impact for residents of Anstey with the loss of this service. I highlighted that it would cut off one side of the village and leave residents isolated and unable to access employment and health care. Following an appraisal, the decision was taken not to provide any funding to continue this service and this has had a huge impact on residents, who used the bus service to get around the village and to socialise. Through my media channels and directly to residents that contacted me, I shared information about the Community Transport Scheme that operates in Charnwood. For people with mobility difficulties there is a community transport provision from John Storer, a Loughborough based independent charity serving Charnwood. The community transport provision receives support from Leicestershire County Council and residents with any mobility difficulties may book a journey by telephoning the provider directly.

*Impact – the removal of this service affected many of my older and less mobile residents. The service was regularly used to access shopping areas and journeys into the city. It was also regularly used by residents to travel to the village centre and to other amenities within the village. I did work hard to try and find an alternative bus service but unfortunately, I was unsuccessful. I will continue to look at other options and will grab any opportunity to get a bus service back to that side of the village. I also promoted the Community Transport that operates within Charnwood and would be available for these residents to use.*

### **Centre Bus 154**

Centrebus submitted changes to the Traffic Commissioners to take effect from 26<sup>th</sup> January 2020 affecting the Leicester to Loughborough and return service. The changes submitted were to alter the Monday to Friday service. Centrebus proposed to reduce the service down to 2 services a day in both directions from an hourly service. This was a huge reduction from the service currently offered. This affected most of the villages within my division and would have a huge impact on many residents trying to access school, work, shopping and health care. Leicestershire County Council assessed the impact of the reduction in the service against their Transport Policy but unfortunately, this did take a while due to discussions with the bus companies. During this period, I had over 100 contacts from affected residents. I was in constant contact with the 'Choose How You Move' Team at the County Council to try and gain some further information to try and reassure residents.

I attended a public meeting in Woodhouse Eaves on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020, where there were over 120 residents present. It was a difficult meeting for me as I was unable to share publicly the information that I had from Leicestershire County Council due to commercial sensitivity. I managed the meeting and was able to share further information within a couple of days. Thankfully, the

council agreed to support the service for the time being. I only received one extremely abusive telephone call from one resident about the bus service, the majority of residents were very polite and just wanted to ensure that I had heard their voices. I was able to reassure them that I was aware of all the issues and was fighting to save the service.

*Impact – The loss of this service would have a huge impact on several villages within my division. The removal of most of this service came out of the blue and caused many residents anxiety and stress. The public meeting was attended by many residents from all the villages affected. It was a highly emotive meeting with residents very unhappy and looking for answers. Due to commercial confidentiality, I was unable to share much information at the meeting, but I did reassure residents that I was working hard behind the scenes to find a solution. The day after the public meeting, I asked for an urgent meeting with the team dealing with this bus service to understand where we were in the discussions with the bus operator. Information was shared with me and a few days later I was informed that agreement had been reached with the bus operator and with a few changes the service was to remain. I was then able to share the information with all my residents.*

### Parking Issues in Newtown Linford

Over the Easter weekend, mobile cameras were in place around Newtown Linford. The data collection, undertaken in various locations, was carried out to help inform the Bradgate Park Trust Parking Review. I am also a Trustee for Bradgate Park Trust. This will hopefully provide further data for Newtown Linford Parish Council when they consider the village parking issues.

The first results have been presented to the Bradgate Park Trust, but further analysis of the data will enable the implications of the current and future parking/charging regimes on the wider local community to be considered. The first data shows that the majority of visitors stay for 1-3 hours per visit and many cars drive in and out of the Bradgate Park car parks within 15 minutes, even when the car parks are not busy. On street parking was also part of the survey. A further report is expected in September to fully understand the parking habits of people visiting Bradgate Park and the effect that this has on Newtown Linford residents.

I am continuing to receive emails from residents about continued issues with traffic and parking in Newtown Linford. Some improvements have been realised by the elongated H's put down in Grey Crescent which residents have reported to me, has made some improvements. I am continuing to work hard with other partners to try and solve as many of the issues that we can.

*Impact – this issue has been causing problems for residents for many years, before I became the local member for this area. I am now working, with Highways, to look at a blanket ban on parking around the whole of Bradgate Park and within the village. This will not only stop all the dangerous and obstructive parking within the village but produce more income for the Bradgate Park Trust from car parking to enable the maintenance of this important park.*

### Neighbourhood Link

I have been promoting the Police's Neighbourhood Link to all my residents via all my media channels. Neighbourhood Link is a community messaging service from Leicestershire Police that provides news and information about policing activity or initiatives, crime prevention advice as well as major incidents affecting their area.

Through this service you can receive messages from your local Neighbourhood Policing Team, local police or, in the event of a major incident or event affecting the whole of Leicestershire, from

a partnership of agencies known as the Local Resilience Forum (LRF).

*Impact – by promoting this service, it not only helps residents understand the issues within their area, but it promotes awareness of scams and crime related information. This in turn helps to prevent crime in the area but also helps to share information that can identify suspects.*

### Ofsted Report

LCC underwent an Ofsted Inspection in September/October 2019. The report stated that Leicestershire County Council has made improvements in many areas of its children's social care services. As Cabinet Support Member for this service over the last two years, I have seen personally the improvements that have been made. In the report published on 4<sup>th</sup> November, the regulator set out where considerable progress has been made by the authority since 2017, but outlines that improvements are still needed in some areas. I am now supporting the department to take forward the action to address the issues identified, which includes more consistent oversight of care plans and tackling the timeliness of assessments for children, who are not identified as being in immediate risk of significant harm.

*Impact – working through the actions required, enables the department to focus on their service areas and this in turn makes improvements to the service provided to our children and families.*

### Send Inspection

Early in February 2020 the department underwent a Send Inspection on our Local Offer. I was involved in the feedback meeting and I am supporting the department and health colleagues to ensure that action is taken to address the two main concerns identified.

*Impact – working through the actions required, enables the department to focus on their service areas and this in turn makes improvements to the service provided to our children and families.*

\*As Cabinet Support Member for Children and Families Department I have been involved with many aspects of the department. I have also supported the Lead Member and substituted where needed. I have listed some examples below\*.

- ✚ East Midlands Lead Member Meetings – attended regional meetings with colleagues
- ✚ Panel for Social Care Awards – Sat on the panel to select the winners
- ✚ Attended the Virtual School strategy meetings
- ✚ Attended the Safe-Guarding Board meetings
- ✚ KIT – attended many 'Keeping in Touch' meetings within various sections of the department. This enables me to meet the staff and find out what is working well and what areas need further work.
- ✚ Adoption Panel –Observed an Adoption Panel to understand further the work they are doing and to identify any issues
- ✚ Corporate Parenting Board – Co-Chaired with a young person on occasions and attended meetings

- ✚ Senior Management Group – attended meetings with senior leadership team
- ✚ Star Chamber – Attended meetings to look at the forward finances for the department
- ✚ Schools' Forum – Attended this meeting as a substitute for the Lead Member
- ✚ Children's Innovation Partnership Board Meetings – attended meetings with our partners Barnardo's and took part in the year one evaluation process
- ✚ Pride in Practice Event – Attended this conference
- ✚ DFE meetings at LCC – Attended various meeting during the year with Department of Education representatives
- ✚ Senior Co-ordination Group – attended many meetings during the year when items relating to the Children and Families Department were discussed
- ✚ Children's and Families Partnership meetings – attended all meetings
- ✚ Interviews for Assistant Director Role – involved in the recruitment of the Assistant Director for Education and Send

## Community Leadership Role

\*I have dealt with many issues raised by residents that have affected them personally and affected the wider community. I take on challenges daily and try to be fair with all parties concerned. I am not always able to find the perfect answers, but I always work to a satisfactory compromise for all parties. I have highlighted some of the large projects below that I have been working on over the year\*.

### Bus Stop, Anstey

I have reported to many residents in the past about the relocation of the bus stop on Leicester Road, Anstey. The S106 money has been transferred to Anstey Parish Council from the developers and the Parish Council agreed at their meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> August to ask Leicestershire County Council to go ahead with the public consultation to establish if the relocation of the bus stop to Staddon Road is supported by residents. The public consultations have been completed and the relocation has been agreed to go ahead. Due to Covid-19 the implementation has been delayed but is on the program of works.

### Highway Safety Issues, Anstey

I have been working with the Police Commander for Charnwood to address some highway safety issues. We needed to stop some dangerous parking in front of shops, as vehicles were reversing directly onto a pedestrian crossing. After working with the Parish Council, they agreed to fund the measures, a consultation has been undertaken and we are just waiting for implementation, which has been delayed due to Covid-19.

### Latimer Street, Anstey

There has been parking issues for residents on Latimer Street for several years. I have been

working on this issue for the last year and we finally got agreement from the Highways Department to look at the issues after I advised residents to produce a petition. LCC produced a proposed plan and the new proposals went out for public consultations. The residents have a resident only parking area that provides 12 parking spaces and runs for a length of 77 metres in total.

The new parking scheme was implemented in November 2019 and I have had no further complaints from the residents on Latimer Street.

### Flooding

Following the severe flooding experienced by many residents in my Division at the end of last year, I visited one family at their flooded home in Newtown Linford to understand further the issues and risks of flooding in the local area. These residents were flooded by the River Lin which is a watercourse and not a main river, therefore the watercourse is owned and maintained by the owner of the land through which the watercourse runs as riparian owners.

With the concerns raised, I contacted the Environment Agency (EA) to ask for some further advice about what maintenance work might be required to the River Lin. I attended a meeting at the local EA Office to look at the information and show them the photos I had from Newtown Linford Parish Council and local residents. The discussion with the experts explained to me what work could be done in the area and provided me with further information for residents on how to protect their properties from further floods.

The flooding that was experienced in my division was because the ground was saturated prior to the severe rain we experienced, and surface water run-off had nowhere to go but into the village and properties.

The advice they were able to give and which I passed onto the Parish Council and residents, was to ensure that all the drains and culverts were running clear (this work has been completed) and that residents look at property protection. I had followed this up several times since the floods to support residents and ensure any work needed is carried out by riparian owners.

### Welbeck

It was with great sadness that I received a telephone call from my MP, Edward Argar, to inform me that the Ministry of Defence have decided to close the Welbeck Defence 6<sup>th</sup> Form College in Woodhouse. The last intake of students will be in September 2019 with the closure planned for 2021. There are just over 300 boarding pupils at the college who will be allowed to complete their studies before the school closes. The college focuses on teaching pupils' science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) to provide graduates who are then likely to go on and serve in the armed forces. A petition was started to try and stop the closure, which I signed. I continue to keep pushing for further information about the future for this very large site.

### Speed Survey, Cropston Road, Anstey

Following continued reports of speeding traffic on Cropston Road, Anstey, I requested that a speed survey be carried out in the area. This survey was conducted between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019. During this period 28% of vehicles were exceeding the National Police Chief Council enforcement threshold.

This represents extremely poor compliance with the current 30mph speed limit on this particular

road and the police agreed to arrange for the Mobile Safety Camera Vans to be deployed at this site. This is a very busy road with many hazards and pedestrians sharing the space and vehicles need to slow down.

This survey indicates further the need for Anstey to have a Community Speed Watch scheme set up and I am working with Anstey Parish Council to try and get the scheme supported by residents and set up. This was started last year but has struggled to move forward. This continues to be an issue but there is little support from residents to become volunteers to set the scheme up. I continue to raise the issue through my media channels.

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

- ✚ Contact with various departments and officers at LCC for assistance with my case work. This has been via email, telephone calls and meetings. I also deal with various departments at Charnwood Borough Council and Parish Councils within my Division for case work. I also work with fellow councillors to solve issues
- ✚ Several dealings with MATU (Multi-Agency Travellers Unit) to deal with various travellers' sites within my Division and concerns over individuals
- ✚ Attended various information and catch up meetings with officers from the Children and Families Service to gain information and advice and to move projects forward
- ✚ Dealt with developers regarding maintaining their estates whilst awaiting handovers to the relevant councils. This included rubbish, ground maintenance and dog bins not being emptied
- ✚ Part of the Interview panel for new Academies to open new Special schools
- ✚ Contact with various utility companies to deal with local issues
- ✚ Contact with schools and businesses in my division
- ✚ Contact with the Charnwood Police to deal with issues and prevent crime, deal with highway issues and ASB

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

*Briefing Note This is an opportunity to recognise any issues which may be particularly relevant to the future well being of people within your electoral division.*

- ✚ A blanket ban on parking around Bradgate Park and sourcing funding for the project
- ✚ Implement of the new bus stop in Anstey
- ✚ Implementation of some highway safety issues within Anstey

- ✚ Taking over as Lead Member for Children and Families Department and learning more about the role and the department. This will also involve learning more and being more involved in the full running of the Council
- ✚ Continued support for residents due to Covid-19
- ✚ Supporting the Council as we move into the recovery phase from Covid-19
- ✚ Supporting local communities as they begin to come out of lockdown
- ✚ Rural Crime, anti-social behaviour and the future of neighbourhood policing
- ✚ Supporting all the Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within my Division
- ✚ Have Community Speed Watch Schemes in all my villages

## **2) Council Activities**

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

- ✚ County Council: I have attended all meetings of the County Council and have spoken on several issues
- ✚ Children in Care Panel (Chairman): Important to keep sight of the KPI's, where LCC were not performing well and the action being taken to ensure our children in care are safe, and action was taken when needed,
- ✚ Child Protection Panel (Chairman): Important to keep sight of the KPI's, where LCC were not performing well and the action being taken to ensure that all children were safe, and action was taken when needed
- ✚ Social Care Panel: This covers the minutes and work of both the Child Protection and Children in Care panels and considers what other issues might need looking into further. I have also chaired this meeting on several occasions
- ✚ Cabinet Support Member for Children and Families Service: I attend a variety of meetings with partners and officers at LCC within my role and attend a weekly Lead member meeting with the Children and Families Director, Assistant Directors and Lead Member. Other Heads of Service also attend some of these meetings to provide updates
- ✚ Promoting the welfare of children, promoting elected members Corporate Parent role, promoting Fostering and Adopting recruitment events

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

- ✚ Bradgate Park and Swithland Woods Committee of Management
- ✚ Bradgate Quarries Liaison Committee
- ✚ Groby Quarry Liaison Committee



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

Group Secretary for the Conservative Group at Leicestershire County Council

### **3) Learning and Development**

- ✚ Social Work Conference
- ✚ LGA Conference in Bournemouth
- ✚ Media Training
- ✚ Theory of Change Workshop
- ✚ Lead Member Training at Warwick University
- ✚ Children and Families Lead Member Training at Warwick University
- ✚ Mental Health Workshop
- ✚ Children's and Families Annual Conference in Bournemouth
- ✚ Digital Workshop
- ✚ Virtual School Conference

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

This year will be a learning curve as I take over as Lead Member and I will also be working towards being re-elected as County Councillor for the Bradgate Division in May 2021.

### **Communications**

I write and publish a monthly report in 'Your Local' magazine that is delivered to all villages within my division: <https://issuu.com/norwoodpress>. I attend various coffee mornings and events within my division on a regular basis

- ✚ I attend village shows and events within my division on a regular basis
- ✚ I attend various church services and Remembrance services throughout the year
- ✚ I hold regular residents' surgeries alongside my fellow Borough Councillor and our MP, also attending events with my MP
- ✚ I attend Parish Council Meetings and Parish Meetings within my division as often as I can and deliver a report of my activities relevant to their Parish

- ✚ I have attended public meetings within my Division when requested and try to respond to residents' issues and concerns
- ✚ I have attended events at LCC including the Flag raising ceremony for the Armed Forces, the Remembrance Service and Fostering Events
- ✚ I attend many events at Leicester Cathedral to represent LCC including the Armed Forces Day Service and Parade and the annual County Service

### Social Media

Twitter: @CllrDTaylor

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CllrDTaylor](http://www.facebook.com/CllrDTaylor)

**Signed by Councillor: D.Taylor**

**Date: 12/06/2020**