

County Councillor Annual Report

This report summarises the activities of the following member of the County Council during 2021/22

Name of Councillor

Mr Blake Pain CC

1) Electoral Division activities

Main Activities and the impact during the past year:

In addition to my primary role as the elected County Councillor for the Bruntingthorpe Division, my main activities throughout the year have been as a Member of the LCC cabinet, serving as the lead member for the Environment and Green agenda. This is a relatively new portfolio, created in May 2021, focussing on the Council's commitment to take action on climate change and deliver the County Councils aim to be carbon neutral as an organisation by 2035 and wider Leicestershire by 2045.

Towards the beginning of the year, the COVID 19 crisis continued to have an impact upon the programme of work at LCC. More recently, the consequences of Putin's unnecessary invasion of Ukraine has added to existing resource and financial pressures. Such pressures now include a steep rise in inflation, a surge in the cost of providing services and, in addition, for many frontline public services (such as waste and recycling), there is real difficulty in recruiting staff due to a variety of factors. There is most definitely a 'cost of living' challenge facing many households. Similarly, the County Council is striving to address its own brutally pessimistic and 'frightingly' worsening financial position. In all candour, this is likely to result in significant reductions in expenditure in the future, if the Councils finances are to balance.

The Council continues to work hard, in partnership with district councils and others, to provide a warm welcome to those fleeing the Ukraine conflict. 1000 visa applications relating to sponsor addresses in Leicestershire have been received. Of these, 500 people have already arrived in the County of which 29% relate to properties in the Harborough District.

As a portfolio holder (and in addition to my community and case work) much of my time during the past year has been working with lead officers in responding to pressures that affect the operational running of the services.

I have chaired and participated in various internal and external meetings dedicated to co-ordinating the Councils Environment and Green agenda which seeks to reduce LCC's and Leicestershire's wider Carbon. I have also played an integral role in shaping a new strategy to realise a greener Leicestershire by planting 700,000 trees, one for each resident of Leicestershire and a new Net Zero Environment Strategy which is currently out for consultation until July 21st 2022.

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/netzeroconsultation

I have proactively engaged and helped support and/or resolve concerns that have been raised with me by my divisional constituents relating to some of the following issues throughout the year:

- Better Bus services and better Bus stop provision
- Highway Closures and Traffic Regulation Orders across the division
- Road Condition and Improvements
- Speeding Traffic Concerns
- Street Lighting
- School Admissions
- Passenger Transport
- School Transport and Parking
- Road Traffic Accidents
- Highways Maintenance
- Flooding
- Land Contamination Problems
- Tree Maintenance and planting
- Environmental Concerns
- Grass cutting
- Condition of road verges particularly during the winter
- Gulley Cleansing
- Wildflower verge planting
- Awards of Leicestershire County Council 'Shire' Grants
- Blue Badge Misuse

Community Leadership Role

In addition to the above, I am aware of and continue to be actively engaged with the following areas of concern that have been raised with me by residents and businesses:

- The Tarmac scoping and possible future application for a Quarry at Misterton
- Inappropriate Industrial related development within areas of open countryside
- Large inappropriate residential development that will materially impact existing local communities
- Flooding risk and actual flooding episodes resulting from unsatisfactory utility company consultation and/or local engagement
- Land use and Contamination concerns and the Enforcement of these concerns
- Dilapidation of local footpaths along the public highway from years of non-investment

I am pleased to report that concerns that were noted in last years' report relating to Highways and Verges have started to be partly or fully addressed through my 'Members Highways Fund':

Over the past year I have been able to fund some of the following improvements:

- A VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) in Willoughby Waterleys to help reduce speeding in the area
- A gateway treatment in Shawell and in Peatling Parva to improve signage and advise caution as motorists enter the village
- The purchase and implementation of an MVAS (Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign) in South Kilworth to help reduce speeding in the area
- Contribution to infrastructure works at a children's playground in Arnesby to support local residents
- Cutting back works in Husbands Bosworth to improve the visual look of the area

- Implementing bollards to support traffic calming and reduce dangerous driving and parking in the area

Leicestershire County Council have launched their second year of the Members Highway Fund for 2022/23. Applications are now being accepted so I wanted to take this opportunity to invite you to apply for any funding you may need to complete schemes in your area.

I am aware that I am the County Council Member for over 20 parishes and want to ensure that I represent the widest possible area in terms of schemes so please do make an application (especially if you did not last year) as I would like to support as many Parishes and areas in my division as possible.

If you would like to submit a request, please send them through to the Members Highway Fund email address: MembersHCF@leics.gov.uk

The deadline for all requests is 31st August 2022. Unfortunately applications received after this date cannot be considered. This is to ensure that all works can be programmed within the year.

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

I have engaged with Severn Trent water about Flooding Concerns in North Kilworth
I have engaged with Western Power distribution about power cuts in Shearsby

Priorities for the immediate future are:

My main priority is to ensure that residents of the Bruntingthorpe Division are properly represented at County Hall. I'm very proud to lead LCC's ambition to reduce our carbon footprint, take action on climate change and become a carbon neutral organisation by 2035. I will endeavour to ensure that the Authority build and put in place satisfactory infrastructure and systems so as to enable the residents and businesses of Leicestershire to know why the Environmental agenda is so critical; what we are doing about it; and, how people can play their part in helping our County to become Greener and more sustainable.

2) Council Activities

County Council Committees you served on

Cabinet- Lead Member for the Environment and Green agenda

Cabinet Briefing- member.

Cabinet Strategy & Co-ordination Group- member.

Local committees/Outside Bodies

Charnwood Forest Regional Park Steering Group

Cotesbach/Shawell Liaison Committee

Local Authorities National Forest Advisory Group

National Forest Charitable Trust Board

3) Learning and Development

I always look at ways to better my understanding and appreciation of issues and the people affected by the decisions we take at the County Council. I continue to learn from experience and undertake training and seek advice as and when needed. In January 2021 I undertook an LGA led university leadership course on the Climate Emergency.

4) Other Matters:

Briefing Note

This gives an opportunity to include anything else which you think is relevant.

Leicestershire's funding position remains the worst of any county council in the country. Whilst we work hard to maintain great services and have achieved the award from *Impower* as the most efficient and productive upper tier local authority in England for the past 3 years, we cannot become complacent. The COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent global events has changed our lives forever. I shall work hard on your behalf to support and protect people and our communities as best I can.

Communications

Virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams/Zoom/Google Meets with constituents and other stakeholders.

I have set up a 'Bruntingthorpe' data base where I forward important notification

Leicestershire Matters

www.facebook.com/LeicsConservatives

Twitter- @LeicsCC_Cons or @blakepain

Instagram- @blakelewispain

www.leicestershireconservatives.org.uk

Signed by Councillor

Date June 2022