



COUNTY COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE RADFORD'S COLUMN

August 2018

As your County Councillor, I am always on hand to try and deal with any concerns you may have about services provided by Leicestershire County Council. Such as street lighting, highways, footpaths, overhanging trees and hedges into the highways, social services etc.

Camera Enforcement and School Keep Clear Signs

Cabinet have approved the release of £0.5m to provide funding to better manage school parking concerns, through enforcement mandatory "School Keep Clear" markings. Procurement for a camera car for enforcement of zig-zag markings is currently underway for piloting at the beginning of the 2018 academic year. (September)

Invites were sent out to 284 schools, 40 responses were received from schools who said they were interested in being part of the scheme.

This follows on from concerns right across the County about parking outside of schools. It is hoped that this will create safer access to schools and improve safety around school gates and reduce school gate parking/congestion, parking on pavements and yellow lines.

Rural Roads Initiative proposed speed limit reductions

The incidence of injury collisions on the rural road network in Leicestershire is an ongoing concern. Collision rates remain high on some routes despite an overall fall in collision on all other road types on the County's network.

Ongoing investigations are being undertaken on 38 routes which suffer from an injury collision rate that is above the national average of 197 injury collisions per billion vehicle kilometres travelled.

The proposal seeks to reduce the national speed limit, which is 60mph on eleven of these routes with the highest collision rate down to 50mph. A couple of these roads are near to Shepshed, B591 Copt Oak Road Charley and Oaks Road/Abbey Road Charley.



White arrows top of Charnwood Road

I wish to report that I had not been made aware or consulted on the new layout of the road at the junction of Charnwood Road with Ashby Road. I have received a large number of concerns raised about this new layout and have contacted County with those concerns. The junction has been altered so that the left lane only now turns left and the right lane goes straight over or turns right. Unfortunately some of the old markings are still in place causing problems.

I understand that an on line petition has been set up by Lisa Vann on <https://chn.ge/2NKUlgq>

Waiting Restrictions – Ring Fence

A proposal was put on Facebook about waiting restrictions for Ring Fence. A meeting took place between the MP, URGO and County some time ago, which I did not attend as I was holiday. The meeting was arranged following residents' concerns regarding lorries delivering to URGO causing traffic issues, hitting properties etc.

I have had assurance from County that consultations with residents will be carried out before starting any legal process to implement the waiting restrictions.

There does remain the fact that even if any waiting restrictions are implemented the lorries making these deliveries are of a significant size and are not particularly suited to these types of roads.

Children Centres Review

The County Council have carried out a review on the number of Children's Centres to be reduced from 36 to 18. The centre in Shepshed was originally proposed to be retained, however following consultation and further research it is now proposed to be closed due to it not being in the best location and it is a long walk from local communities. It is on a school site; therefore fewer drop ins and low footfall. The space available is small and inflexible, not suitable for the future service needs, and in comparison to other local centres it has expensive running costs of £19,720. Health work has never been carried out in this centre as it is carried out in a health centre at a local doctor's surgery. The majority of the children centres in the County had health work carried out in them, as this is not the case with Shepshed there will be no impact on this service.



Engagement on Smart Libraries

Smart Library technology enables customer self-access to library buildings without the presence of staff. Adaptations are currently underway across libraries including Shepshed.

To date six libraries have been adapted with another eight scheduled between August and December this year. It is anticipated that full operation will start in April 2019.

These libraries will provide a mix of staffed hours and self-service hours that combined will increase access to library sites by around 30 hours per week.

Self-access means that library members will be able to use their library card to access the building outside of staffed hours. During self-access hours, Smart Library members can:

- Borrow, return and renew library books using the self-service kiosks.
- Pick up and borrow reserved items awaiting collection
- Use public computers, photocopy, print and access Wi-Fi
- Access the public library catalogue
- Meet as a group free of charge in the open library space
- Hire a meeting room (pre booking required)

Local engagement in each community has commenced and will include an online and hard copy questionnaire outlining the proposed staffed hours for each site. Room hire customers and groups who meet in the library will be contacted separately to give them the opportunity to speak to local managers to discuss the proposed hours.

A copy of the survey and for more information, including the proposed opening hours, please visit <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/smart-libraries> or visit the library.

Grants available for school leavers

I have reported in the past about grants that are available from Thomas Harley Charity which I sit on as a County Councillor. Grants are available towards books,



accommodation etc. if your child is going on to University/College or if they are doing an apprenticeship for equipment such as tools for hairdressing, car mechanics, building trade, catering etc.,

Income of the family must be below £36,000 pa. Applicants need a letter from a tutor confirming they support them going onto further education.

Grants are looked at in March and September. You will need to contact the charities solicitors who are Mather Jamie on 01509 233433 and the solicitor is Mr. A. M. Ward.

Overhanging hedges

I would like to give a gentle reminder that owner/occupiers have to keep footpaths and highways clear of overhanging branches and hedges. This also applies to hedges/branches in the countryside where there is a footpath. But you must remove the cuttings and not leave on the ground.

I can assure resident where you have contacted me with problems I have contacted both County and Charnwood but it can take some weeks before the necessary works have been carried out.

County will write asking for hedges/branches to your boundary be cut back if occupiers do not comply then they will charged if County have to undertake this work.

Your help

Again I would like to thank the residents who keep me informed regarding issues around Shepshed, such as overgrown hedges, litter, dog mess etc., without your eyes and ears I could not get them reported and sorted.

For help and advice on County matters, I can be contacted on 502974 or e mail christine_radford@hotmail.com or christine.radford@leics.gov.uk or come along to my monthly Surgery on the FIRST Saturday of the month in the Town Council Offices, 47a Charnwood Road 10-11am.