



## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN – April 2022**

Spring is truly here, snow drops have been and gone and the daffs are dancing in the warm sunny days and gardeners are getting the grass cut and vegetables planted. I am dealing with a number of issues, such as over grown hedges causing problems to residents being able to walk on pavements and blocked gullies.

I am attending regular briefings at county and recently ones regarding how we can support the Ukrainian refugees. County have set up a small group to deal with how this can be achieved. I have been supporting requests from residents in answering any questions they may have about how they go about housing these people.

### **Full Council – 23<sup>rd</sup> February**

Most of the meeting was taken up with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). I spoke as Lead member for Adults and Communities about the growth in demand for services, such as the increased numbers of service users and number of high cost care packages, in particular those related to older adults and learning disabilities. This amounts to £35m over the next four years.

The overall number of service users being supported across Residential Care, Home Care, Supported Living, Direct Payments and Community Life Choices from January 2020 through to October 2021 has significantly increased.

Typical growth would be approximately 1-1.5% per annum, however the current number of service users supported shows growth of around 5%. I went on to mention other facts resulting in overspend of this financial year. I expressed my thanks and gratitude to officers of the council and all those who work in adult social care across the county for their continued dedication and commitment in the face of significant adversity.

### **Book-inspired art work created by children in care showcased at exhibition**

An exhibition of artwork created by children and young people in the care of Leicestershire County Council went on show at a pop-up gallery in Highcross Leicester, from 30<sup>th</sup> March until 24<sup>th</sup> April at the former EE store in the upper Mall, opposite the Apple Store. I did manage to visit the exhibition and found it very enjoyable and interesting in seeing the books they had read.

The exhibition and the year-long project that led up to it was devised and led by the county council's Participation team, working closely with colleagues in the Libraries and Fostering teams. A total of 54 youngsters between four and 18 chose a book they enjoyed and then created artwork inspired by the book.

Anyone interested in finding out more about fostering are asked to visit [www.fosteringleicestershire.com](http://www.fosteringleicestershire.com) or call 0116 305 0505



## **Carers**

Please find below information on the carers support groups provided by Voluntary Action Leicestershire. There is a group in Loughborough which meets on the fourth Monday of each month at Gorse Covert community centre 2.30-4 pm. An online evening group is 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 7 pm – 8 pm and for those who have signed up for a carer's passport you can get a free drink at the Meet and Eat cafe in the Hall Croft in Shepshed.

You can find other information on their website <https://www.supportforcarers.org/>

I hope you find this information useful and please remember as a carer you must look after yourselves as well as those you are caring for.

## **Shepshed Library**

Shepshed library is now fully operational in Smart (customer self-access mode). The doors have had an enhanced locking system added which should hopefully prevent any further unauthorised access to the building. The library is fully operational so is open its full pre-Covid opening hours.

## **Shepshed Cancer Support Group**

The group is now meeting at the Glenmore Centre in Thorpe Road the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month between 1-3pm. Please join them for a drink and a piece of cake on 12<sup>th</sup> April. Volunteer group shortlisted for national museum & heritage award

A group of women who have been working with Leicestershire County Council since 2019 to share their South Asian culture, stories and memories with diverse audience across the county have been shortlisted for a prestigious national volunteering award.

The stitching Traditions exhibition and the ongoing project leading up to and following on from it has been a revelation, both for the women of the Anand Mangal group and the museum professionals who worked on it with them. They are up against five other volunteer groups and individuals, with the winner being announced on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

## **Pupils and staff move to new school after flagship St Botolphs school revamp**

Pupils and staff are settling into their new state-of-the-art premises which include two libraries, a science lab and an art studio. I joined the Cabinet Lead for Children together with the Director for Children on a tour and was amazed at the change and how colourful the school is now.



The former High School building has undergone a renovation and remodelling to make it suitable for younger children. The school has been brightly decorated throughout. It also boasts two halls, two full-sized rugby pitches and outdoor play equipment.

The new school will now be able to gradually increase places in the next six years from 280 to 420 pupils, before increasing further to 630 in the following few years.

At the time of the proposed refurbishment I did ask that the vehicular access to the site be improved, but unfortunately this did not happen.

### **Illegal Encampment on Fairway South**

Regarding the recent Traveller Encampment over the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> March. I am pleased to report that the police acted very quickly in getting them removed by the 22<sup>nd</sup> March with a Section 61 Public Order notice. The police operation was successful and temporary measures via a local haulage company having allowed two of their HGV trailers to block the car park entrance to prevent further issues.

The police kept the residents of Brendon Close informed during this incident.

### **Your help and support – my contact details**

Without your help in keeping me informed regarding issues around Shepshed, I would not be able to do my job. For help and advice on County matters, I can be contacted on 01509 502974, or 07796 544817 or e mail [christine\\_radford@hotmail.com](mailto:christine_radford@hotmail.com) or [christine.radford@leics.gov.uk](mailto:christine.radford@leics.gov.uk) , my monthly surgery, is held on the first Saturday of the month in the Town Council Offices, 47a Charnwood Road, (opp. Tesco) You do not need an appointment; I will be there from 10-11 am