



COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN

JULY 2020

First and foremost, may I take this opportunity to wish you and yours the very best during what has been an incredibly unsettling period for our community. I do hope this finds you in good health. Can I take this opportunity to apologise to a lady who telephoned about Shepshed Library I inadvertently cut her off and her number was withheld. Any up to date information will be posted on the door of the library.

Council life seemingly continues, in all weathers, irrespective of the times. I have still been doing County Council work and have regular meetings and updates via SKYPE/ZOOM/TEAMS. I am still answering emails and the phone, and have had meetings with residents, keeping our distance. At the time of writing this column, I am not sure when you are reading this column, how the COVID-19 is going.

During the pandemic I am sure you will be aware that the County Council has been obliged to stand down the majority of its public meetings. But rest assured that officers and Councillors have been working on your behalf. The Strategic Coordination Group and the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) in partnership of a range of public sector bodies covering Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland play a role in co-ordinating the response to an emergency.

Road Works – Iveshead Road

I have recently been made aware that the junction with the A512 and Iveshead Road will have to be closed as part of the works to widen the junction. The closure will be from 12th July to the 21st August. There will be a diversion route in place which will mean traffic having to go via Charley Road and turning left into Iveshead Road from that end. Residents living in that area will have been sent a letter from Morgan Sindall.

If residents wish to receive more information please contact A512improvements@morgansindall.com or contact Beth Miles (Morgan Sindall) on 07779 417695.



Covid-19

District Level Summary

Charnwood has the third lowest rate of Covid-19 cases in the county. It must be noted Charnwood has the smallest percentage of the population aged 65+ out of all the districts in the county but the second highest percentage of ethnic minorities. The pattern of cases replicated what is seen in Blaby with two peaks in April and a third smaller peak at the end of May.

The percentage of care homes that have witnessed an outbreak in Charnwood is 30.0% similar to the county percentage of 36.8%. Charnwood has the highest rate of care home beds per population aged 75+ however the percentage of covid-19 deaths (31%) in care comes is similar to the Leicestershire figure (31.2%).

The latest week's death shows five deaths were seen in Charnwood in week 23, which is the joint lowest count for the past ten weeks.

Shielding and protecting vulnerable people

- 25,067 Leicestershire residents identified as requiring shielding as at 17th June
- 14,419 people on the Shielding List are currently registered for support, of whom 5,183 are registered for support obtaining essential supplies and 1,176 registered with basic care needs.
- The County Council has made over 12,000 calls to people who have registered and district councils have contacted an additional 8,800 people of those responding to say that they had existing food networks and no identified care needs.
- 5,432 people have received a Government food parcel, with over 298 County Council emergency food parcels delivered. Some people who received food parcels have subsequently said they no longer wish to receive them and de-registered, but County are aware of a small number of people who say that their food parcels have stopped for no reason.
- 45 volunteers engaged by Voluntary Action Leicestershire (VAL) are undertaking activities including 'safe and well checks'



- The Department for Works and Pensions continue to attempt to contact people on the Shielded List who have not registered on the Government website. To date, County have received information on 6,950 residents who have not responded to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) letter. Of these 5,940 (85%) will remain with the County Council triage.
- New guidance is still expected on the Government's reporting requirements from local authorities, unless that is overtaken by changes to the Shielding Programme.

Facemasks and coverings in hospitals and other health sites

Visitors and outpatients attending any NHS hospital setting will now be required to wear a face covering to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and protect themselves. All hospital staff must also wear facemasks.

GP practices in Leicestershire are also encouraging their patients to wear face covering when visiting a surgery.

For patients who are deaf or hearing impaired, NHS staff may use clear masks where possible, as well as visual aids, speech to text apps and sign language.

Schools

The amount of children attending school is continuing to rise each week and in Leicestershire we are reporting one of the highest attendances in the country.

- On Thursday 11th June there were 13,482 children attending schools across Leicestershire of whom 4340 are children of key workers and 1,028 are children identified as vulnerable.
- The majority of primary schools in Leicestershire have been able to open for a wider group of children either from the 1st or 8th June.
- On 11th June 45% of Reception and Year 1 children were in school, and 56% of Year 6 children



- There are a few schools across Leicestershire who are still unable to open for wider groups of children, above the provision of places for children of key workers and vulnerable children. This is primarily because of the high numbers of children of key workers already attending, which means there is not the space to welcome safely more children back into school.
- On Tuesday, 9th June, the Secretary of State announced that the plans for all primary school children to return to school before the end of the summer will not go ahead. However, he would like to see schools who have the capacity to bring more pupils back in small groups to do so. Schools in Leicestershire will be limited in their ability to welcome back wider groups of pupils, in line with current Department for Education guidance, due to building space and staffing levels.
- From Monday 15th June, secondary schools will have year 10 children back on site for part of their learning. The majority of learning will still take place remotely. The flexibilities in the guidance for secondary schools means they are planning for this in different ways according to the needs of their schools and also the numbers of young people they are working with.
- 290 out of 859 early years setting in Leicestershire were open on 8th June 2020, this compares to 248 open on 1st June.
- 1958 children were attending Early Years settings on 8th June, compared to 1663 on 1st June. Of those, 789 children of critical workers and 135 children who are vulnerable were in attendance.

Recycling and household waste sites (RHWS)

- Traffic management at all sites has been removed as the booking system means we are now experiencing very little queuing
- Additional bins have been added to the seven sites to increase the materials they can accept and work is ongoing to reopen further sites
- The SHEPSHED RHWS reopened on Thursday 25th June, open for 5 days, including weekends. Slots have to be pre-booked



- Different types of waste/recycling will now be accepted, and cars with trailers allowed on site for the first time since reopening on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Visitors to sites will now be able to bring cardboard (if it cannot be left in their kerbside collection) and scrap metal.

Newhurst Energy Recovery Facility

You may not be aware; the Newhurst Energy Recovery Facility achieved Financial Close earlier this year. This marked the start of a joint venture project between Biffa, Covanta and the Green Investment Group to develop a state-of-the-art energy from waste facility at the former Newhurst quarry at the junction of the M1 Motorway.

Can I just remind residents, I have opposed this development since day one and voted against it when it came to County's planning committee. I represent County on the Liaison Committee which is due to meet sometime in July.

I will itemise details of this facility below sent out by the Construction Project Manager:-

- The Newhurst facility will use proven technology to provide up to 350,000 tonnes of annual treatment capacity for non-recyclable waste and will also generate up to 42 megawatts of electricity. To put this into perspective, this is enough to power around 80,000 homes.
- This facility will create over 300 jobs during the construction phase, they go on to say it will provide significant benefits to the local economy (not sure about that)
- Many opportunities will also be created for the local supply chain with a commitment from the project to purchase goods and services from nearby companies wherever possible. (local businesses please note)

On Monday the 15th June, Hitachi Zosen Inova (HZI) started mobilisation activities at the Newhurst site, which will see initial ground preparation works commence, alongside the installation of site safety features and construction welfare facilities.

I will keep you informed as and when I have further information.



New Round About – Tickow Lane/Belton Street/Oakley Road/Hallamford Road

The new roundabout has now been constructed at the above junction. This junction has always been a hazardous area, and I campaigned for years to get it improved. Very pleased that this has now been done, but unfortunately we had to wait for S106 monies from the developers who are building in this area.

I have already received concerns about how high some of the pavements are and I have written to ask if County can lower them to help residents cross safely near to this junction. I have also brought to the attention of County that some signs leading to this new round about are obstructed by vegetation.

Advance Notice of a Temporary Regulation Order (TTRO)

A TTRO is to be made for the following location: Pick Street. The purpose of the TTRO is to allow Severn Trent Water to undertake pipe renewal works in the carriageway. The duration of the restriction is not anticipated to exceed a period of 3 days commencing on 10th July 2020.

The below works are to allow Leicestershire County Council to safely continue with the A512 M1 J23 improvement works.

A TTRO has been agreed to the closure of Ashby Road, Loughborough West Bound only, on Wednesday 8th July for 1 night, 8pm till 6am. The road will be closed from the junction of Snells Nook Lane and J23 (M1)

Leicester Road, Shepshed will closed for 1 weekend, 11th and 12th July. The road will be closed between the junction of Fairway Road South and the A512 Road East.

Information I have taken from Leicestershire Police messages

Anti Social behaviour (ASB)

Off Road Bikes and Quadbikes – recently the police have had high volumes of calls from residents in relation to the ASB – involving off road bike/Quadbikes around the area.

Beat team officers have identified some perpetrators and they have been issued with a verbal warning or a Section 59 police warning for seizure of the suspected vehicle.



Some of the Bike owners mentioned that they have permission from the private land owners to use the area, which is currently being looked into by the police. I would like to encourage the residents to continue to report to the police on 101 if any Quadbikes or off road bikes are seen being used in public places.

Road Safety Partnership Message

Despite the easing of the current COVID – 19 lockdown the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership (LLRRSP) is reminding road users to stick to the speed limits.

Almost 1500 motorists (in Leicestershire) have been issued with speeding tickets despite a recent two week NPCC (National Police Chiefs Council) speeding campaign. The campaign saw Police officers and Special Constables reacting to community concerns by visiting problem areas and collision hotspots.

Police were out and about around Shepshed following concerns I raised regarding the increase in speeding traffic due to current traffic levels being much lower than normal.

As more road users take advantage of the lighter evenings and the summer weather it is worth reminding road users to share the road and drive more considerately around cyclist, pedestrians, horse riders and motorcyclists.

A few home security tips

Even if you are only popping out for 5 minutes:-

- Set your burglar alarm
- Make sure the side gate is locked
- Lock your shed or garage
- Lock your bike inside a secure shed or garage, to a robust fitting bolted to the ground or wall, like a ground anchor

Going away? Here are five tips to help you keep your home and belongings stay safe while you are away.



If you are off on holiday and wish to post anything on social media, make sure your posts aren't public and that they are only seen by your friends

- Leave lights and a radio on a time to make the property appear occupied
- Get a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on your property or join a Neighbourhood or Resident Watch Scheme
- Consider asking your neighbours to close curtains after dark and to park on your drive
- Remember to cancel newspaper and milk deliveries.

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Stay safe

Trading Standards Service

Scam Alert - Leicestershire County Council have received a report that people wearing a uniform are offering to buy groceries on behalf of the elderly and vulnerable who are self-isolating and instead are taking the money and not returning. This is theft.

We ask that you remain vigilant and take note of this basic advice, should someone call on your door.

- Try to only liaise with someone you are familiar with
- Only buy essentials in this manner, therefore the amount of money required is minimal
- Do not hand over a bank card- use cash only
- If the person says they are from a community group/organisation, ask for some ID or to verify their identity by calling the organisation directly

Please share this message with your neighbours, friends and relatives who may be vulnerable.



Scam Alert - Reports have also been received that residents are receiving telephone calls where the caller states they are from 'the council' and needs to book in an annual boiler service.

The caller then asks for the resident's bank details to set up a direct debit and has used scare tactics by saying that the resident could 'be in real trouble' if they do not agree. Councils would never ask for bank details in this manner.

If you are unsure if a call is genuine, take the caller's details and advise that you will check with your local council first, which you can find at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/find-your-local-council>.

Your help and support

Again I would like to thank the residents who keep me informed regarding issues around Shepshed, such as overgrown hedges, litter, dog mess, inconsiderate parking (on pavements, yellow lines, outside of schools) etc., without your eyes and ears I could not get them reported and sorted.

If for some reason you do not receive your copy of the Eye. I now have my information posted on my web page at County. This will also help you to keep track on road closures etc.

For help and advice on County matters, I can be contacted on 01509 502974 or e mail christine_radford@hotmail.com or christine.radford@leics.gov.uk or due to the lock down I will not be able to have my regular monthly Surgery on the FIRST Saturday of the month in the Town Council Offices, 47a Charnwood Road.

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