



COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN –October 2022

It is difficult to describe the impact Her Majesty has had on each of our lives, not many of us knew her, or had met her, but for most of us she has been ever present throughout our lives – an example of how to behave, of quiet dignity and duty over 70 years – in short the very best of what Britain stands for.

A great many of you will have shed a few tears and prayed for her, the new King and her family. At times like this it can bring back memories of your own lost loved ones. In my case it was 8 years on 21st September when I lost my husband, but we did go together to a Queens garden party at Buckingham Palace back in July 2010. We were less than 10 feet away from Her Majesty and remarked on how small she was and what a lovely smile she had.

Special meeting of the Full Council on 13th September

A special meeting was held to allow the chairman and councillors to pay tribute to the late Queen and pledge allegiance to the new King Charles III.

Cabinet meeting 23rd September

This meeting was cancelled from 16th September due to the 10 days of mourning. There was a large agenda. The first item was Medium Term Financial Strategy – Latest Position – I had 3 items on the agenda which fell under my portfolio, Adult Social Care Reform – Market Shaping and Charging Reform, Extra Care Service Review and Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2021/22. In total there were 15 items down for discussion including a confidential item.

Huge Financial Challenge Detailed in Report

The report sets out the council's budget gap – which is set to grow from £8m to £28m next year and could surpass £140m by 2026. Global events (such as Covid and the war in Ukraine) rising inflation and the cost of living, plus growing infrastructure costs, and an unrelenting demand on services.

Inflation is expected to continue to rise despite recent interventions adding another £20-£30m every year, while service demand is expected to go up by £18m per year. The



nationally agreed pay offer alone, if accepted requires the council to find an extra £8m, whilst every 50p added to the National Living Wage costs the council over £10m.

The Leader Nick Rushton has commented to the media regarding the financial situation facing county. The cash strapped council is looking at reductions to bus services, road repairs, gritting runs, grass cutting, street lighting bills, public health support such as stop smoking programmes, access to day centres and respite services for adult with extra needs,

Projects in the pipeline including the Melton Distributor Road, and the A511 to Coalville could also be halted due to spiralling costs and the council is even considering selling Beaumanor Hall.

The Leader went on to say the decisions facing the council are frightening and the message that people are 'going to pay more and get less' is hard to share. Nothing is off the table.

Newhurst Incinerator site

The Newhurst facility is entering its commissioning phase. This involves multiple activities to test, calibrate and clean the plant, which will enable the facility to safely commence operations next year. Importantly, this is also in-line with Environment Agency requirements.

A vital part of the commissioning process is called Steam Blowing. This planned activity which was conducted on Friday 9th September. The main objectives of this activity is to heat up the boiler to generate high pressure steam, which is then used to clean the internal steam pipe work prior to connecting it with the facility's Steam Turbine at a later stage in the commissioning process. However on the 9th September a "huge cloud of orange/brown smoke" was reported, that was not smoke but steam.

The 9th September activity was the initial blow, so the steam quality was at its worst and this will get progressively cleaner as further steam blows take place. This was fully expected and is a standard process when cleaning boilers of this type

This is an essential activity which is required of all industrial boilers prior to the commencement of operations, as the steam blow removes any small debris and rust left in the pipe work, which might otherwise cause premature failures to the Turbines blades.



127 Bus

I am receiving a large number of complaints regarding this service, such as them not turning up, stopping before they reach Shepshed, even though it states on the front Shepshed as the end destination and in one case where a gentleman with sight problems was made to get off and wait for another bus which never arrived.

In all cases I have forwarded these complaints to county and the bus company. I am happy to receive any issues that residents have regarding this services so that a complaints sheet can be compiled.

Syston Library Celebration Event

I attended a celebration event on 8th September. The event marked the recent refurbishments of the library which included a permanent community work of art by children from the neighbouring St Peter & St Paul CE Academy. Monies to carry out this work came from S106 following recent developments in the area.

The children from the school attended throughout the morning to view their artwork.

2022 marked 100 years of the Rural Libraries Network. The refurbishment of the library sought to modernise the children's area to create a welcoming, fun, contemporary and inspirational space to provide vital support for education and wellbeing post pandemic and create a new generation of library users.

Children in care's book-inspired artwork reached the finals for two awards celebrating excellence in care of children and young people

In total 54 youngsters from across the county came forward to join the project. They have reached the finals in the National Children and Young Peoples Awards in the category of wellbeing. The exhibition and the year long-long project that led to it was developed and led by the County Council's Cultural Participation team which supports engagement with Heritage and Library services. The hard work of young people has paid off, showing just how incredible the children in care are.



The art was originally a pop up at the Highcross Shopping Centre, which I had the pleasure in visiting, and has been transformed by a panel of young people into a virtual exhibition which can still be viewed digitally at Culture Leicestershire's website. Libraries across the County are hosting pop-up displays showcasing the work.

The winners of the Children and Young Peoples awards will be announced at the international Convention Centre in Birmingham on Thursday 6th October.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO)

A TTRO is to be made for the following location Oaks Road/Charley Road. The purpose of the TTRO is to allow Leicestershire County Council to safely undertake carriageway patching works.

The duration of the restriction is not anticipated to exceed a period of 3 days commencing on the 31st October.

The works can be viewed on <https://one.network/?tm=GB130651023>

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 or 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