

County Councillor Annual Report

This report summarises the activities of the following member of the County Council during

Name of Councillor : Terry Richardson

1) Electoral Division activities

Main Activities and the impact during the past year:

It has been a privilege to continue to serve the residents of my Division over the last 12 months. I am fortunate that the Division falls within two Parish Council areas in Narborough and Whetstone. Having been a Parish Councillor in Narborough for the last 35 years I am very well known in that area and am frequently contacted by residents either at home or when out and about in the Parish. In respect of Whetstone where my Division covers half of the Parish area, I regularly attend parish meetings and liaise with the Clerk about all County matters relating to the area working with my fellow County Councillor who covers the rest of Whetstone.

Over the past year I have dealt with the usual range of queries from residents 90% of which I have been able to respond to without reference to County officers using knowledge gained since I became a County Councillor and also drawing on my long experience as both a Parish councillor and a District Councillor where my new ward covers over two thirds of the Division and where I am currently the Leader of the Council. Most of the issues raised by residents relate to traffic and highways issues, the public waste disposal site at Whetstone, school places and on rare occasions highly confidential issues relating children's and /or adult services. I continue to work closely with Portfolio holders, where appropriate, and thank them for the continued support and assistance they have provided.

I always endeavour to attend local events and I meet regularly with my local MP Alberto Costa and have a regular dialogue with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Rupert Matthews enjoying and excellent and close working relationship with both. The use of Microsoft Teams has aided communication with various groups and has allowed attendance at multiple meetings often on the same day. Whilst electronic communication does cause demands in respect of response time it has undoubtedly improved communication with residents as for the first time, I do not recall having received a letter in the past 12 months.

The scope of residents' concerns to address remain much as always.

- However significant planning applications especially the one for the proposed Hinckley National Rail freight interchange have caused major concern for my residents. This application will be determined by the Secretary for State sometime in September of this year but whatever the decisions I am content that County Council officers and my self have fully reflected both our own and our residents concerns in respect of the unwarranted application. I should like to thank our officers for the tireless work they put out in to looking at predominately the highways issues and for the way they presented the information at the public enquiry.

- In addition, issues facing both villages during the past 12 months continues to be focused on highway issues. With vehicle movements back to pre-pandemic levels what is interesting is that the anticipated two rush hours have now morphed into probably four as the incidence of home working remains high. Having said that cycling and walking levels, have I believe remained higher than previously which makes walking and cycling routes even more important. In this respect the gap in the combined foot path and cycle way joining Littlethorpe to Whetstone continues to be of great concern and I will continue to do all I can to work on its delivery. Speeding and static parking offences and how they are dealt with by the police continue to be a major issue and, in this respect, the serious accident on Huncote Road, Narborough, caused me to arrange for speed monitoring to be carried out. I had hoped that that I might be able to fund vehicle activated speed cameras on the stretch of road out of my member highway fund but this has not proved possible, however I am hopeful that the funding available later this year from the cancellation of HS2 may enable this to happen.
- In respect of the above comments, I have worked with the police, parish council and residents to try to address the 'car racing' issues that have and are continuing to occur in the Blaby by-pass and will continue to do so. I should like to thank Whetstone Parish Council for the pro-active way they are dealing with this issue.
- E-mails have tended to be the way most residents have communicated, and I have dealt with these in a timely manner hopefully managing residents' expectations about what it is possible to achieve especially with the financial constraints that the County Council has had to work under.
- I regularly issue written material to residents on a regular basis and door knocking' always gives a window on to residents' concerns.
- I believe I maintain an appropriate profile within the Division, residents have my home telephone number, e-mail address and my home address. I respond to all enquiries as soon as possible providing a holding note if I need to seek additional information.
- In the end nothing works better than walking around the Division and talking to those you meet on route. Visiting local shops and businesses is always very revealing and this enables me to see if there any assistance I can offer during what remain very difficult times.

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

I will engage with all bodies as required and always seek greater understanding a recent example illustrated above being the traffic survey currently taking place on Huncote Road.

Priorities for the immediate future are:

My priority is to continue to support my residents. The second priority is to work within the County Council to assist the wider Group in shaping policy going forward to provide an ever-better service where possible.

I know that the how and where houses will be built is a key issue to my residents and whilst I accept that planning is a District Council matter the provision of the necessary infrastructure sits squarely with the County Council who need the necessary resources to provide this. I always use

any opportunity to promote this case especially the need for fair funding for our County. I continually act as an advocate to residents to explain what a quality service they receive from the County Council despite our financial constraints.

2) Council Activities

Committees you serve on at County Hall

I am Chairman of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Panel where the volume of work is substantial and where now having to plan for CQC visits is putting an ever greater burden on the team. Pressures on the budget continue to grow as we have the need to ensure that our colleagues in other organisations accept their responsibilities in delivery of services. In this respect I believe that the Scrutiny we provide on numerous aspects of the Departments work provides my Cabinet colleagues with additional information to support the difficult decisions they need to make. I have an excellent relationship with the Portfolio holder, Christine Radford when we work extremely well together.

I am Deputy Chairman of Corporate Governance which plays a crucial role in ensuring the well running of the council and reducing the risks that we face and I am confident that I fully support the Chairman in what is becoming an area with ever expanding responsibilities.

I also sit on the Scrutiny Commission whose role is to hold the executive to account but in a constructive way to assist in the best decisions being made.

Local committees/Outside Bodies

As mentioned above I am a member of Narborough Parish Council where I have served for over 35 years. I have been a Blaby District Councillor for the last 12 years and have been the Leader of that Council for the past 9 years. I served as a Director of the LLEP which is heavily involved in seeking to obtain investment into Leicester and Leicestershire and determining how this should be spent until its functions were passed to both the County and City Council when I stood down. I am also Chairman of the Members Advisory group which is made up of the nine councils in Leicestershire and which seeks to provide a strategic direction for the development of the City and County promoting joint working across all members.

3) Learning and development:

It is crucial to keep up to date with what is happening in local government, and I therefore attend the regular briefings held at County Hall, read widely, attend conferences and seminars, and meet with my local MP on a regular basis.

Social Media

I use on a limited basis where appropriate preferring to leaflet residents and to do regular canvassing.

Signed by Councillor Terry Richardson

Date: 26th June 2024