

Economy – Transport

People and businesses need infrastructure that provides excellent connectivity that meets their every-day needs. Transport infrastructure is a key enabler providing access to opportunity and opening up sites for growth. We aim to ensure good connectivity within the county and across the UK through working closely with partners to realise the Midlands Connect Strategy. We also continue to progress delivery of our local transport priorities to help business recovery and growth, reduce congestion, allow safe travel and support more sustainable travel options.

Midlands Connect – the Midlands Connect Strategy outlines the region’s vision to become an engine for growth through investment in transport infrastructure. It proposes a 25-year programme of investment in strategic road and rail improvements to reduce congestion, improve journey times and support housing growth. We are currently involved in a number of Midland Connect projects that are directly related to the successful delivery of our Prospectus for Growth. These projects include improvements to rail services to places such as Coventry and Birmingham and upgrades to the A5 and A42. These projects will greatly enhance people’s ability to travel efficiently and safely around and through Leicestershire in the context of much needed houses and jobs to meet the demands of the area’s growing population.

Transport for East Midlands (TfEM) – through our involvement in TfEM we have set out our top priorities for transport improvements across the East Midlands including making the most of the HS2 development, securing a Midland Mainline fit for the 21st century, improving access to East Midlands Airport, the A5 Improvement Corridor and transforming East-West connectivity.

Strategic Transport Priorities – in February 2020 we launched consultations on a new 30-year transport blueprint for Leicester and Leicestershire. The Strategic Transport Priorities (STP) set out where the city and county will work together, particularly around tackling poor air quality and the effects of climate change, alongside continued support for the local economy and jobs and the delivery of new houses. Improvements in rail and public transport and better provision for walking and cycling schemes are among the priorities set out. The STP acknowledges a drive to attract greater numbers of car users on to public transport and on to cycling and walking routes. The ambition is to continue to encourage use of the commercial bus network, of electric vehicles and to increase the number of bus lanes and cycleways/pedestrian routes developed over the past few years. The county will develop its own cycling and walking strategy as part of the list of priorities. Another key thread of the STP is a big push to improve rail services. The report outlines that while services to East Midlands cities such as Derby and Nottingham are good, improvements are needed in reaching West Midlands cities such as Coventry and Birmingham.

Rail Strategy – developed with the City Council and LLEP it sets out rail priorities up to 2043. We have used it as a basis for working with Midlands Connect, who are developing business cases for the reinstatement of direct rail services between Leicester and Coventry and for the improvement of services to Birmingham, which would result in significant improvements in journey times to these places. We have used it also to inform our input into the HS2 project and the wider considerations of the Infrastructure Commission who have been asked by Government to consider an

integrated package of rail improvements that would be associated with delivery of the Eastern leg. Potentially this package could include completion of the Midland Main Line electrification, which we are continuing to push for because of the service improvements that it would deliver but also because of its carbon reduction benefits.

HS2 - will bring significant benefits to Leicestershire and the wider economy and radically improve connectivity to cities in the north. We are committed to playing an active role to ensure Leicestershire gets the most out of HS2 as well as mitigating its impacts. In January the Council considered work on preparations to manage the impact in Leicestershire of the proposed HS2 rail link. The benefits of pro-actively engaging with HS2 on many issues including developing opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses in Leicestershire to win HS2-related contracts; work with ecological and environmental partners to enhance the natural environment and minimise impacts of climate change; avoid proposed 12-month long road closures on key county roads, and seek adequate advance notification of disruptive work. Also, to seek a classic compatible connection of the Midland Mainline at the proposed high-speed rail station at Toton, giving more journey choices for Leicestershire residents and businesses.

Ivanhoe Line - we are providing our support, including financial, to the group the Campaign for Reopening the Ivanhoe Line (CRIL). CRIL are currently working with the Department for Transport to develop a business case to bring back passenger services on the line.

Major Road Schemes Supporting Growth

The Council has a strong record of securing funding to deliver transport infrastructure to enable growth, supporting the delivery of outcomes to promote a strong economy and ensure a supply of quality and affordable homes. We will continue to lobby to secure vital funds to invest in homes, regeneration and infrastructure across Leicestershire.

Coalville Transport Strategy - in June 2020 we set out work to support the delivery of successful growth and evolution of Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch, including a list of projects covered by the Coalville Transport Strategy.

Ashby Road, Coalville - in January we unveiled proposals to improve Ashby Road in Coalville. The proposed scheme involves improving the street scene and creating on-street parking to improve traffic flow. The £250,000 scheme, jointly funded with North West Leicestershire District Council, is also designed to create additional on-street parking facilities and improve vehicular and pedestrian access with the focus on vulnerable road users. The proposed scheme represents part of a wider initiative to invest in Coalville, including a revamp of Snibston Country Park.

Coalville – A511 - in August 2019 the Council's A511 Coalville Growth Corridor plans were included in a priority list for government funding by sub-national Transport Body Midlands Connect, with a request for £42m to deliver it. The scheme was among 11 in the Midlands submitted to the Department for Transport, as part of a £3.5 billion fund available for local road improvements from 2020-2025. The proposals include junction improvements at nine locations between the A42 Junction 13 at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the M1 Junction 22, some localised widening and a

new link road, connecting the A511 to Bardon Link Road, creating a new north-south link across Coalville. The proposals will help cut congestion and improve bus journey times, as well as support the M1 and M42 as a major gateway to East Midlands Airport. The proposals will also include improvements to the pedestrian crossings and cycle-ways along the road. Public consultation on the proposals took place in October 2019. It was announced that the Council had been awarded almost £1.3m in development funding for the scheme on 30 September 2019.

Loughborough A512 – in September 2019 work started on a £25m County Council road scheme involving improvements at Junction 23 of the M1 to improve overall journey times and road safety in the area. The scheme aims to reduce traffic on the A512 and some residential roads and support commercial and residential development in Loughborough, by increasing employment and providing new, more accessible development. A stretch of the A512 between Junction 23 and Snells Nook Lane, Loughborough, is changing from a single to dual carriageway with a new roundabout for two large housing and employment sites. The scheme is being funded by developers, with an additional £5m from Highways England and through a £12m allocation from the LLEP's Local Growth Fund.

Melton Distributor Road – we are continuing with work to deliver this multi-million pound project (which is key to delivery of nearly 4000 new homes and to addressing the town's existing traffic and environmental conditions), including recent publication of the necessary Statutory Orders for the Northern and Eastern sections. As part of work towards the Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy a broader package of measures will complement the distributor road, including possible improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure and the town centre highway network. The Melton Mowbray Distributor Road scheme took the top award in the Natural Environment category in October 2019 at the East Midlands Town Planning Institute. The collaborative work between the county council, AECOM, Natural England and the Environment Agency in developing the diversion for the River Eye was particularly highlighted during the ceremony. The planning application included substantial environmental mitigation including tree and hedge planting, ecological enhancement areas and sustainable drainage.

Anstey – A5630 and A46 - in September 2019 work commenced on the delivery of improvements involving a range of measures on the A5630 Anstey Lane and A46 to increase capacity and improve journey times. The scheme sees the existing single lane section of road between the A46 interchange and Bennion Road roundabout turned into a dual carriageway. Additional lanes will be created at the approach to the roundabouts at both junctions with new traffic lights installed. Pedestrian and cycling routes along the busy stretch of road will also be improved as part of the scheme. The improvements are designed to help accommodate extra traffic that will be generated by the 3,000-home Ashton Green development. It will also support growth anticipated from future housing developments in the north of Leicester and in the county. In March it was reported that the £10.7m scheme was progressing well and on track for delivery, with the scheme finished on schedule in July 2020.

Nailstone Junction – in October 2019 a £2m scheme to reduce congestion, provide improved transport links and manage the extra travel demand created by the new country park development at Nailstone commenced. The Council led on delivery of the scheme on behalf of the colliery developer, which saw a range of measures including new traffic signals, a new roundabout and traffic calming introduced at a

number of junctions linking the B585 with the A511 to the north. Improvements to these junctions provide access to homes and employment, and the new country park development site.

Hinckley - in October 2019 consultation commenced on £5m plans to improve Rugby Road and Hinckley town centre. Proposals include plans to improve both the Hawley Road and Brookside junctions. There are also plans to improve safety for pedestrian and cyclists in the Granville Road, Spa Lane/London Road and Coventry Road areas, introduce new traffic signals, signage, and a review of resident and town centre parking facilities. The £5m scheme aims to maximise the area's economic potential by reducing congestion and shortening journey times. It also aims to improve air quality by encouraging more people to walk and cycle. In March 2020 we approved improvements to Rugby Road and Hinckley town centre. The scheme will support growth and the economic performance in Hinckley, improve journey times and air quality, better cycle facilities and reduced congestion.

Lutterworth East - £2.4m to design highways improvements and provide access to proposed new housing development in Lutterworth. The programme was paused until further funding could be secured.

Fosse Park Improvements – in June 2020 we launched a series of road improvements to support the development of Castle Acres, a large expansion of Fosse Park on the site of the former Everards brewery. The area is one of the busiest routes in Leicestershire and will only get busier as Fosse Park develops. The improvements will ensure Fosse Park can expand and bring economic growth to Leicestershire without negatively affecting congestion and journey times.

Highways Capital Programme – in March 2020 Cabinet agreed a new highways capital programme and works programme. The highways and transport elements of the programme comprised of £267m of capital works over the four years to 2024. The transport asset management programme in 2020/21 has an indicative cost of £16.32m in 2020/21 for capital maintenance of roads and footways. Zouch bridge replacement construction and enabling works. Advanced design works include the Melton Mowbray transport strategy, Loughborough Growth Area Strategy and development of a Cycling and Walking Strategy with accompanying Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Traffic Management and Safety

Average Speed Cameras – *there are communities across the county who feel speeding motorists are having a negative effect on life in their local area. In order to help tackle this, seven pilot sites for our average speed camera trial were switched on starting from September 2018. The scheme aims to provide a deterrent to prevent speeding. The Council has committed £500k to the 12-month trial which provides funding for the cameras, equipment, staffing and enforcement action by the police. Since the cameras have been switched on just under 10,000 people have been issued a ticket for speeding, up to January 2019. Evidence also shows the cameras have been successful in lowering speeds at these locations. In September 2018 the Council stepped up its campaign with HM Treasury to keep the fines collected from the average speed camera trial which could then be re-invested in a further roll-out of the cameras across the County.*

Reducing Rural Speeds – in March 2019 we announced that we were expanding our speed reduction scheme to include a further 24 rural routes. The project sees stretches of roads with a speed limit of 60mph reduced to 50mph. The move follows a study in 2017 which found that around 60% of collisions which caused injury on rural routes involved motorists exceeding the 60mph limit and the routes chosen all had well evidenced collision reduction reasons to reduce the speed limit. The speed limit reductions also incorporate reviews of the existing road markings and signs to ensure that they provide adequate warnings of the road conditions.

Driver Education - we have continued to offer our popular pre-driver days in 2019 to promote safety and highlight potential risks. They include an introduction to driving and cover issues relating to speed, safety and also a practical driving session, accompanied by a qualified driving instructor. Our older driver scheme Safer Driving with Age (SAGE) has also continued. The scheme encourages safe responsible driving by providing older drivers with a practical driving assessment in their own car with a qualified driving instructor. Driver education is an increasingly important part of speed management and driver behaviour change. The council facilitates the running of national driver education workshops on behalf of Leicestershire Police. In 2019/20, 25,880 drivers opted to attend courses as an alternative to receiving a fine and points on their driving licence. The aim of the courses is to help drivers understand the adverse consequences of their driving behaviour and give tips and advice to improve compliance and improve safety.

School Keep Clear Scheme – in September 2019 schools across Leicestershire were encouraged to sign-up to a scheme to combat the problems of inconsiderate parking. The School Keep Clear scheme aims to address concerns that parents, residents and teachers have about parking during the school run by using a camera car to enforce mandatory zig-zag zones outside school entrances. A total of 68 new schools became enforceable in September 2019, in time for the new school term. Since it launched in September 2018, the scheme has seen 146 schools sign up, with a further 11 schools set to join the scheme later this year, subject to consultations. We know that inconsiderate and dangerous parking outside schools can be a real problem, and the School Keep Clear scheme has gone some way to alleviate concerns in communities. Since the beginning of the scheme, 22 warnings have been issued and 241 penalties have been processed to motorists parking illegally.

Parking Enforcement - with traffic levels rising, parking enforcement teams have been increasing patrols to keep vehicles moving and keep the roads safe.

Motorcyclist Safety - we remain supporters of The Shiny Side Up Partnership (SSUP) an East Midlands motorcycle safety partnership. Originally set up to try and drive down casualties relating to sports-bike riders, this has now broadened to include lower capacity scooters and motorcycles. The Council uses a variety of roadside posters at sites that have a poor motorcycle casualty history. These messages include Bike Crash Site Ahead and Think Bike. The roadside posters are bright yellow and have become a regular seasonal way of reminding riders and other road users to take extra care and look out for each other.

Community Speed Watch – this scheme continues to be a popular initiative which encourages local communities to get involved in identifying speeding motorists; and thereafter encouraging them to drive at more appropriate speeds. In 2019 there

were 13 schemes and the details of more than 2,000 speeding vehicles were passed through to the police who, where possible, wrote to the registered keeper of the vehicles reminding them of the dangers associated with speed.

Sustainable Travel

Choose How You Move – in January the Choose How You Move initiative, a joint venture between the Council and City Council, launched a new-look website to help the county and city travel smarter, through more sustainable and active methods. On ChooseHowYouMove.co.uk walking routes, cycling maps, bus timetables, and park and ride information can be viewed and downloaded, as well as finding out and signing up to cycling courses, and active travel events. Businesses have their own dedicated page where they can receive help and advice to introduce active and sustainable travel. Teams also work alongside schools to offer fun activities and competitions promoting active travel. They regularly visit schools to teach cycling skills, road safety, and encourage pupils to keep active.

Transforming Cities Fund and Air Quality – in October 2019 we supported proposals by the City Council for a bid to the Transforming Cities Fund in response to the Government's Air Quality Directive. They have been awarded over £32m, which will enable initiatives in Leicester to improve public transport, cycling and walking provision to improve overall air quality. This will benefit both city and county residents.

Active Travel – in September 2019 a free, family-friendly event promoting active travel took place at Watermead North Country Park. The Council's safe and sustainable travel team led activities including treasure trails, and competitions. The council aims to encourage and help more families take advantage of the benefits of active travel, including improving levels of physical activity, reducing stress, and helping reduce pollution levels. Getting children involved in active travel at an earlier age is also helping to support adults to stay healthy. In October 2019 businesses were urged to apply for funding of up to £5000 to help them implement active and sustainable travel initiatives in the workplace. The grants, which were available from the council and funded by the Department for Transport, aimed to help businesses increase levels of activity amongst their staff by promoting active and sustainable travel as part of everyday life. The council also leads the way in sustainable travel by offering staff car-sharing spaces, electric charging points, as well as an electric pool car and pool bikes to use to and from meetings, all of which helps the council meet its targets of lower carbon emissions.

In September 2020 we reported that Travel clinics were being held across Leicestershire to encourage residents to cycle or walk to work or school where possible. The Council held three free travel advice events to help more residents make the change to walking, cycling and scooting for everyday journeys. Free bike checks and security markings were available at the events, along with electric bike trials and travel advice. Since lockdown there has been a huge increase in people cycling, and we want to support them.

'Pop Up' Cycle Lanes – in the summer the Council started to introduce 'pop-up' cycle lanes and other measures supporting walking and cycling, fulfilling the requirements of the Government's £250m Emergency Active Travel Fund initiative as part of the response to Covid-19 (EATF). Funded by £335,000 of EATF monies, the cycle lanes were part of a mix of temporary and permanent schemes aimed at encouraging more people to walk and cycle rather than take public transport or a motor vehicle. The schemes introduced over an eight-week period, include Birstall – a 'pop-up' cycle lane on the A6 Loughborough Road in both directions. Leicester

Forest East – extending existing cycle lanes on the A47 Hinckley Road in both directions. Market Harborough – Kettering Road’s existing cycle lanes widened, and traffic flow improved by installing temporary traffic signals. ‘Park and Pedal’ sites – new facilities available at Enderby and Meynell’s Gorse park and ride sites and at County Hall with new facilities including secure, overnight bike shelters. The council is awaiting a Government decision on the award of a further £1.2m EATF monies to roll-out more schemes.

E-Bike Scheme - electric bikes for loan to workplaces across the county is another initiative by the Council to encourage active and sustainable travel to and from work. The loan scheme is already proving to be a hit at fashion giants Next, with 10 bikes now being used by staff at their Enderby base. The bikes are available for staff to use to commute to work as well as for travelling to meetings or events during the working day. The Council is encouraging businesses to take the opportunity to borrow the electric bikes free of charge.

Public Transport – the Council supports public transport in a variety of ways including by providing or supporting 100,000+ concessionary bus passes to help elderly and disabled pass holders travel free on local bus services. School transport is provided for 6,000+ school children, both mainstream and for those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Over 33,000 blue badge permits are provided to allow disabled residents to have preferential parking closer to their destination. Three park and ride bus services provide fast and frequent buses in to Leicester and around 30 supported local bus service contracts are provided carrying bus passengers where commercial operators do not operate. Over 40 demand responsive transport services as an alternative to buses are provided and we also support community transport providers across the County to provide services for those residents unable to use bus services or who are rurally isolated.

On Demand Travel - in April 2019 the first use of a Section 106 planning gain agreement was used to finance an on-demand bus service in Leicestershire. Bus operator Arriva began providing the demand responsive, ride-sharing service, named ArrivaClick at the New Lubbethorpe development. Passengers book journeys using an app showing their preferred pick up point and destination and are matched with others and provided a seat on a 15-seater minibus.

Passenger Transport Changes – since the adoption of its Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy in October 2018 the Council has been progressing a comprehensive review of all of its contracted bus services to make savings of around £400k per year. Proposed changes to bus services follows careful assessment of current bus usage in a bid to deliver value-for-money services. In addition, communities were invited to help find solutions to local transport issues that may either complement, improve or replace the council’s transport offer. Good progress has been made on the review with changes made to over 50% of the services to improve efficiency, provide better value for money and ensure access to essential services. The next phase of service reviews was due to commence, however, following the COVID-19 outbreak and significant impact on passenger numbers and provision, it has been decided to pause work on the reviews until Summer 2021.

Covid-19 School Bus Support - in September 2020 we announced extra funding to provide extra school buses across the county to help youngsters to socially distance on their journeys. Where students use ordinary public bus services to get to school

extra services were provided at the beginning and end of the school day so that demand can be met while still ensuring enough space for social distancing. Precautions are also being taken on the services run just for children by the Council and schools themselves. All public buses running in Leicester and Leicestershire have social distancing measures in place, with limited seating available.

Highways Maintenance and Management

The County Council faces significant challenges in looking after its highways' assets. Present levels of government funding are insufficient to maintain even Leicestershire's A roads in their current condition.

Highways Maintenance - a total of £14.9m was invested in highways asset maintenance including £12.5m on carriageways, £0.6m on footways and rights of way, £0.6m on bridge maintenance and strengthening, £0.4m on flood alleviation, £0.2m on traffic signal renewal and £0.6m on other activity. In July 2020 we announced that a £5m government funding boost would see major maintenance carried out on three key routes in the county in late autumn 2020. The cash injection through the local highways maintenance challenge fund was awarded to go towards improving the state of roads and support Covid-19 recovery efforts. Resurfacing work will be carried out on the A6 Market Harborough bypass on the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire sections; the A426 Blaby Bypass – including the four roundabouts; and the A47 Hinckley in two locations - the Dodwells Road section between the A5 and the Triumph roundabout and the Normandy Way roundabout with Wykin Road. Footway and cycle track improvement work will also take place. The Council also continued with vital road maintenance works across its 2,789 miles of road to take advantage of the reduced traffic levels during the Coronavirus lockdown and ensure minimum disruption. All our highways teams observed Public Health England guidelines on social distancing, hand sanitising and safe working guidelines where possible.

Flood and Storm Response – in September 2019, crews were called out to more than 88 reports of flooding across Leicestershire and we dealt with 250 calls across highways, police and fire. Our crews were out distributing sandbags, clearing gullies and closing flooded roads following a period of heavy rain. Police and fire crews attended badly affected areas. Areas particularly affected included Stoney Stanton, Earl Shilton, Loughborough, Sileby, Mountsorrel, Barrow-on-Soar, as well as Hugglescote and Worthington. Extra staff were called in overnight to deal with flooding issues. In February 2020 the Council's highways teams again worked round the clock in response to the effects of both Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis. Extra gangs had already been drafted in ahead of the storms to support the clearing-up efforts – with five teams dealing with forestry work while highways and street-lighting teams also supported the response.

As a result of storm Ciara, highways responded to 170 call outs, mainly for fallen trees and branches. Storm Dennis saw heavy rainfall and high winds with a total of 82 call outs. The Highways Control Room remained open throughout the weekend, with 13 gangs responding to 124 incidents. Increased rainfall resulted in 65 residential properties and 9 commercial properties flooded. 33 roads were closed due to floodwater. In order to address the impact of severe weather events an additional £550k was allocated to the highways budget for the coming year. Government has included in its manifesto £4bn for a new flood defence programme

over five years and we continue to press the government to maximise funding to help us address the substantial flood related issues across the county.

Winter Gritting – during the winter our gritters and drivers were out treating key routes to keep the county moving, spreading approximately 312 tonnes of rock salt across 3900 miles of road to combat the drop-in temperature. Keeping the county moving and motorists safe is our top priority each winter. Our gritting crews are on standby 24 hours a day, seven days a week – including Christmas and New Year – and ready to respond to the forecasts. We monitor the weather constantly and if freezing temperatures are forecast, our fleet of gritters go out at night to treat major roads and key routes which equates to almost half of the county's road network. The Council has a fleet of 23 gritters available, three of which were recently replaced with new state of the art vehicles. The other twenty vehicles have also been fitted with the latest sat-nav technology, to ensure all routes are gritted correctly. This year, the council's grit barns were stocked up with 18,000 tonnes of rock salt.

Snow Wardens - in addition to winter gritting, there are also a number of snow wardens based in communities across the county who grit paths, as well as farmers who during deep snow, fit ploughs to their tractors and assist the council in clearing roads. The authority is working with parish and town councils to train and encourage more people to sign-up to its Snow Warden Scheme to help keep the county moving during the winter. The council also has a team of carers and health visitors who can reach their patients if there is prolonged heavy snowfall.

Grass Cutting - the grass-cutting season commenced in April 2020 with the council's teams mowing the equivalent of 532 football pitches each month. The authority maintains nearly 3.8million square metres of urban grass in residential areas. Residents who want to find out when verges are scheduled to be cut in their area can use the council's interactive grass-cutting map. Work is also ongoing with communities around areas to be maintained as wildlife verges rather than being cut.

Gully Cleaning - to tackle blocked drains we are applying a new 'risk-based' approach to gully cleaning that includes increasing the number of roadside drains treated from 64,000 per year to 92,000 without costs rising. The change follows a seven-month trial to find a more cost effective and focused way of cleaning the county's 130,000 gullies. The trial found that it would be beneficial for more regular visits to roads at high risk of flooding due to the drains filling faster with silt. Previously drains were cleaned on an 18 to 24-month fixed programme, whether the road was at risk of flooding or not. The changes are part of our new highways asset management plan and were rolled out across the county from early 2019.

Parish and Communities Fund – our Highway's Parish and Community Fund was a one-off grant scheme made available to parishes and communities to help support them on issues with social distancing and active travel due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As part of this fund we gave parishes and communities the opportunity to apply for a grant of between £2,000 to £10,000 dependent on population, which they could use on variety of projects, specifically relating to areas that supported village recovery including the installation of temporary road closures; temporary speed restrictions in urban areas; the creation of pop cycle lanes; additional signage; and the removal of overgrown vegetation, that would not normally meet our criteria for

maintenance. As of the end of September over 90 parishes and communities had applied to take advantage of this fund.

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