

# County Councillor Annual Report 2017-2018

## Councillor Ted Parton. Loughborough South Division

### You matter.

At the core of everything a Councillor must do, you, you who are reading this report now, are the person that matters. And there are three methods in which, having been elected to the lifelong desired and serious position of community representative for the prestigious area of South Loughborough, one must ensure that you do indeed matter.

Firstly, the chosen sacrifice: A Councillor must make themselves available to all his / her constituents, regardless of whether that person decided to vote / not vote for them during the election for office and even if they chose not to participate in the ballot.

Secondly; others first, oneself second. A councillor must work to deliver what the constituents wish to see happen in any given area in response to a particular issue, not what they would prefer.

Thirdly: The Councillor must work, every day, to ensure that his / her area and its people are provided with the best opportunities and services. Value for money, given that it is the constituents money, in part, that is financing some of the local services one requires daily.

On 5 May 2017, the majority of constituents placed their faith and trust in myself to conduct these three key objectives. It was truly a humbling moment when one discovers that the tasks are now yours to complete, on behalf of the men, women and children that make up the area of Loughborough South.

Please find below some of the main work that has been conducted in the first twelve months of election to the post of Leicestershire County Councillor for the Loughborough South Division:

Main activities and impact during the first twelve months:

The first task upon taking office was to quickly ascertain what the priorities were for the Loughborough South Division (hereafter known as 'The Division').

These were considered and the key list was:

Establish clear methods of communication for constituents to make contact. This was the commissioning of two Freephone lines, an office address and a text line.

The second priority was to communicate what responsibilities the County Council has and this was done via leaflets delivered to every home in the Division and by speaking to everybody that made contact.

The third priority was to commence action on the most urgent issues that were evident in the Division. These were:

- The potential traffic issues caused by the Aldi retail park development at Ling Road / Allendale Road.
- Speeding issues in the division
- Grass verge damage in Shelthorpe
- Road condition at various locations
- The impact of potential closure of residential facilities at Maplewell Hall school
- The traffic problems on Frederick Street

Fourthly: To join committees at Country Hall (The headquarters of Leicestershire County Council) that would have the most use conjoined to one's talents, skills and interests.

The committees joined were:

1. Health scrutiny board
2. Adults and Communities board
3. Child protection panel
4. Development board
5. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Authority

The last twelve months have included vast amounts of time learning the subject matter of these committees listed above and making them relevant, not only to all Leicestershire residents, but moreover to the people of our Division. The paperwork received for these committees is long and at times, complicated. Due diligence therefore, is required to ascertain what are the most important pieces of information to understand first.

**Health scrutiny panel:** The Committee scrutinises the executive functions of the County Council in relation to Public Health and monitors the performance of the Health and Wellbeing Board in respect of those executive functions and any other partnerships as appropriate that are associated with the executive functions outlined above.

This Committee also has responsibility for monitoring the performance and activities of the following Health Service functions:

- (a) The exercise by health bodies of functions which affect the area of the County Council;
- (b) Arrangements for responding to consultation by local health bodies for substantial development of the health service or substantial variation in the provision of such services save where these are dealt with through a joint committee with other Social Services authorities.

**Adults and Communities panel:**

This body scrutinises the executive functions of the County Council in respect of the Adults and Communities Department. This department manages social care for all ages across Leicestershire.

It also monitors the activities of the Health and Wellbeing Board aimed at improving the integration of health and social care services.

**Development control board:**

The committee must consider larger scale planning applications such as quarries, excavations, roads and schools.

**Child protection panel:**

This small numbered committee discusses risks evident in Leicestershire that could / will impact children and looks at the solutions possible to solve / thwart such risks.

**Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Authority**

The role is to provide an efficient fire and rescue service in accordance with various legislative requirements. The **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** sets out the principal expectations for the service. Ministerial responsibility for fire and rescue policy now sits under the Home Office. The **Fire and Rescue National Framework for England** sets out the government's expectations and requirements for fire and rescue authorities.

### **Progress with the Division issue priorities:**

Aldi development and traffic issues: This has and is a controversial subject for many residents, who are still worried about the impact that this development will have on the already busy neighbouring road network. To that end, I have had several meetings with Highways at County Hall and this will be monitored once completion has taken place.

Frederick Street: A public consultation has taken place, led by myself. The results received have been fed back to the Highways assistant director and a short list of solutions are to be worked out, assessed, costed and scrutinised.

Speeding issues: In August 2017, we conducted the second Southfields and Shelthorpe speed watch scheme. We monitored road speeds on: Frederick Street and Shelthorpe, Ashby, Forest, Wallace, Ling and Allendale Roads.

In August and September we will be conducting an enhanced speed watch scheme (our third such scheme), with two weeks each in Southfields and Shelthorpe Wards.

Maplewell Hall school: Despite campaigning and petitioning the County Council and local MPs, the sad decision was taken to remove residential stays from the school from September 2018. It is hoped that the school will progress to an academy status, which will allow it to continue with residential stays, thus this critical part of these children's education will not be lost.

Children's Sure-Start Centre, based at the Beacon Academy site, Woodthorpe Avenue, Shelthorpe:

The County Council conducted a careful survey on whether closing this centre, BUT amalgamating the Sure-start provision into larger centres, along with increased home visits by workers was practicable. Currently, no decision has been taken. Whilst I have made clear to the leadership at County Hall my preference for the centre to be retained, I will be checking thoroughly that a bigger facility on Regent Street (Loughborough) and the home care visits will keep or even improve the service to those that require assistance the most.

Grass verge damage in Shelthorpe: This is a difficult issue to deal with, as the County Council does not possess the funds to remove grass verges and replace with hardstanding. We are working on a campaign to encourage users of vehicles to park on the carriageway of Shelthorpe Road, as it is wide enough to comfortably and safely accommodate cars. This has the added advantage of slowing through traffic down and discouraging such vehicles from using this now unclassified road as a shortcut to their destinations.

Road and pathway conditions in the division:

Much work has taken place over the year, including visiting the various offices responsible for the delivery of road and footpath network maintenance. This has resulted a building of working relationships with many staff of the Council, all of whom have been most helpful in hastening the rectification of the worst issues and the booking in of reasonable timescales for less urgent repairs. Two fine examples of this are the now complete (phased) overhaul of both the footpaths and roads on Ashby Road and the superb resurfacing of Forest road. Both routes are hugely busy arteries into and out of the Town centre and it is with great pride that we can now all feel safer on our journeys in these areas.

### **Membership of other organisations:**

As a member of Charnwood Borough Council in addition to Leicestershire County Council, I was privileged to become the Community and Charity Champion for the Charnwood area. This has led to some crucial networking meetings already; I have had the honour of discussions with Ken James, awarded the OBE for a lifetime of charity work, in addition to the Lions and Inner Wheel charity support groups. The main work now is to assess how the voluntary sector can both be better equipped and secondly, implement its work better in our Division.

Loughborough Town Team: As the County Council representative one will have the opportunity to deliver, on behalf of the taxpayers, much needed improvements to Loughborough Town Centre, much of which sits in the division.

Shelthorpe community association, Castledine Street Extension and Humphrey Close residents' group, Park Road association, SARG, KARG, Haddon Way / Grange Park association.

I attend these groups whenever they meet and provide regular bulletins on both current issues and ones which they would like action commenced on.

In May 2018, I was honoured to be the guest speaker at the Leicester branch of the Dialogue Society, a multi-faith organisation that seeks to promote better understanding between all sections of society.

### **Training courses undertaken:**

I continue to commit long distance study with Professor Conor Neill, of the IESE business school in Barcelona, on leadership, moving people to action, rhetoric and public speaking skills.

I am studying the excellent pioneering work of Professor Dalton Kehoe, of Canada, on 'Dialogue talk'.

I attend briefing mornings on all subjects at County Hall.

### **Plans for year 2 (June 2018-May 2019):**

- 1) All the current objectives remain live, therefore work continues.
- 2) To lead the third Southfields and Shelthorpe speed watch scheme and feed action requests arising to the police and Highways authority.
- 3) To survey residents on their experiences with hospital, doctors and ambulance experiences. This feedback will then be fed into the Health scrutiny meetings.
- 4) To survey residents on their experiences with social care and again feed this information received to the Council for action, improvement and rectification where possible.
- 5) To survey residents on the residents' preferential parking scheme and hear their experiences of it, then duly feed this to the Highways department for evolution continuation.
- 6) To ensure that all potholes and other road / pavement issues are taken up for repair as soon as is humanly possible.
- 7) To commence firm action and ensure that foliage is cut back against the public footpaths and also with overhanging trees onto the public highways. A swifter reporting scheme is currently being devised by an assistant and I. It is anticipated that this new scheme will be ready for the first week in July.
- 8) To run the Leicester half-marathon (during October), in aid of the new Shelthorpe Community Centre, to be built on the Grange Park Estate.
- 9) To ensure that every single service user of the Shelthorpe Sure Start centre will receive as good as / better service should the site at the Beacon academy re-locate.

Whilst you will daily observe issues / problems in the division that require attention, please be reassured that work is taking place, every day, to improve the area and deliver on your, the Council's and my priorities for the division in Loughborough and Leicestershire as a whole.

However out of the three holders of priorities, you are the most important stakeholder.

Thank you very much indeed for reading this report. Please do make contact and share your thoughts, experiences and issues.

### **You Matter.**

*UPDATE: Shelthorpe children's Surestart centre has **been removed from the list of centres that will close** and amalgamate with larger facilities. June 2018*

Councillor Ted Parton –June 2018. Leicestershire County Councillor for the areas covered by Southfields and Shelthorpe electoral boundaries -known as ‘Loughborough South Division’.