

County Councillor Annual Report

This report summarises the activities of the following member of the County Council during 2020/21

Name of Councillor James Poland

1) Electoral Division activities

Main Activities and the impact during the past year:

The Syston Fosse Division includes the villages of Cossington, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Thrussington, Rearsby, East Goscote, Queniborough and part of the town of Syston. The most important part of my role as a Councillor is working for any residents who need my help. In the past 12 months I've been involved with a wide range of issues, these include:

Flooding in Cossington

A section 19 investigation has been completed into the causes of flooding in Cossington. Flooding is an issue in a number of villages in the Division, but particularly so in Cossington where flooding has caused damage to property and blocked roads.

Following an in-depth investigation into the causes of flooding in the village, Leicestershire County Council (LLFA) has agreed / has already undertaken the following actions:

- To continue to coordinate the actions of the RMAs and feedback to the community.
- Engaged with the riparian landowners to make them aware of their riparian responsibilities.
- Attended a community meeting following the flood event for the impacted residents.
- To investigate the appropriateness of a catchment study for the community to gain a greater understanding of the hydraulic nature of the event and the factors which contributed towards the flooding for subject to other priorities and identifying/securing funding. This should include the consideration of the appropriateness of a flow gauge for the community.
- To issue guidance notes to all affected residents to help those affected improve their resilience to flooding.

Leicestershire County Council (Local Highway Authority) has agreed/has already undertaken the following actions:

- In August 2020, investigative works were completed into the condition of the highway drainage system and the required maintenance works were completed.
- Installed additional gullies along Main Street near Derry's Nursery, completed ditch clearance and conducted remedial works south of Main Street at the junction with Syston Road.
- To work with all RMAs to understand the flooding mechanisms and identify ways to help mitigate future flooding.

I will continue to work with Leicestershire County Council Flood Team, Highways and partner organisations to ensure everything possible is done to reduce the risk from flooding and where it

can't be prevented mitigate the impact.

Defending Syston Fosse's rural nature

Whilst some development is inevitable over time, when it happens I'm strongly of the view that it should be in keeping with the existing communities and shouldn't risk changing the nature of those communities. To that end I've opposed developments in Cossington, East Goscote and Queniborough which have threatened to do just that.

Coronavirus response

I've continued to support both Leicestershire County Council and Charnwood Borough Council's response to the coronavirus crisis. Measures have included:

- Grants to 3,000 local businesses
- Financial support for 138 pubs
- £2.6 million for 390 community groups
- £250,000 to Charnwood's Citizens Advice Bureau
- £500,000 for free meals during school holidays for 12,000 children
- Launching the Charnwood Community Action to deliver over 20,000 welfare parcels, helping 3,962 families
- Spending an additional £60 million on Children's Services and Adult Social Care
- Charnwood's offices being used by the NHS as a vaccination centre

Community Leadership Role

In the past year I have continued to be available to every resident who needs my help. In addition to that I have:

- Regularly attended Town and Parish Council meetings to report on my work and pick up anything they need my help with
- Written articles for a number of community magazines keeping residents up to date with what's going on locally
- Created a Facebook page for residents to be able to quickly disseminate important information to residents (<https://www.facebook.com/Cllr-James-Poland-111083980585480/>)
- Hold monthly online surgeries (which were in person before covid and will hopefully go back to being in person once its safe to do so).

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

I work have a close working relationship with the 7 Town/Parish councils with Syston Fosse, attending their meetings regularly.

I work closely with Ed Argar MP and the four Borough Councillors who also represent parts of the Division. I represent four villages in Syston Fosse on Charnwood Borough Council myself (Cossington, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Thrussington and Rearsby).

I work with the Police on a range of matters (including anti-social behaviour and speeding).

In the past year I have also worked with Severn Trent, the Environment Agency, and the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) amongst other organisations.

Priorities for the immediate future are:

My priorities for the immediate future include:

- Work with relevant authorities to ensure flood mitigation measures are progressed
- Prioritise Highways improvements and work with partners to further improve Air Quality
- Continue to do what I can to ensure Leicestershire remains a productive council and supporting economic recovery
- Supporting the County Council in arguing for a fairer funding formula from central government
- Supporting local residents with any individual issues I can help with.

2) Council Activities

Briefing Note

Please specify any particular issues of note that you have been actively involved in connected with the following bodies.

County Council Committees you served on

- Environment & Transport Scrutiny Committee - We are involved in scrutinising a wide range of matters, in the past year this has included the parking outside schools, subsidised bus services, road safety, road maintenance and a range of environmental issues (such as the environmental impact of the County Council's activities). I served as Vice-chairman of this until May 2021.
- I also served on the Adults & Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Governance Committee (both also until May 2021).
- Since May 2021 I serve as one of four Scrutiny Commissioners for Leicestershire County Council (responsible for overseeing the entire scrutiny function – monitoring performance of the organisation, examining items coming for executive decision and helping to improve policy)

I also serve on the Constitution Committee which looks at the County Council's constitution (the document which governs how the County Council is run and how Councillors operate).

Local committees/Outside Bodies

- Charnwood Borough Council – I have served as the Charnwood Borough Councillor for the Wreake Villages since 2013. I currently serve on the Cabinet as Charnwood's Lead

Member for Public Housing.

- Brooksby Quarry Liaison Committee

Other bodies – School governors/community and charity organisations etc

- Outwoods Management Committee
- Equality Action (Charnwood)

Communications

Facebook: Cllr James Poland

<https://www.facebook.com/Cllr-James-Poland-111083980585480/>

Surgery: First Saturday of every month from 10-11am (online at the moment, but usually held at Syston Community Centre). I also do quarterly surgeries in Queniborough (these are advertised in the Queniborough Gazette and on my Facebook page)

Community magazines: I write articles for the Rearsby Scene, Queniborough Gazette and Long Furrow magazine (East Goscote)

Signed by Councillor: James Poland

Date: 22nd June 2021