



**ANNUAL REPORT FROM HILARY FRYER**  
**COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR QUORN AND BARROW**  
**2020-2021**

I don't think any of us thought at this time last year when our annual reports were written that a year later we would still be under restrictions due to Covid 19. It is a year that will go down in history nationally and internationally that is for sure.

I was delighted and very proud to have been re-elected to represent Quorn and Barrow as their County Councillor after the election on 6 May 2021.

The coming years are going to be very challenging for all of us. It is most unlikely that we will go back to life exactly as it was prior to March 2020. However one of the most important things to come out of the pandemic is how communities have worked so hard and pulled together.

We are still holding some meetings and briefings virtually and this is likely to become the norm. It does save money and time finances are of a major concern. The whole of the County Council – members and officers – hit the ground running once lockdown was introduced in March 2020. The response from all involved was amazing and very quickly we were able to hold meetings and briefings via Teams and Zoom. This all put great demands on everyone. As quickly as possible weekly briefings, for all councillors by senior officers and members of the cabinet were introduced. They are now reduced to two weekly briefings. Our Director of Public Health – Mike Sandys – and his team worked tirelessly on behalf of everyone in the county to put in place systems to keep everyone informed and also to be as safe as possible.

Working with all the district councils and Leicester City council vaccination centres were set up as soon as the vaccines were available. There was an amazing take up and now, except for a very few areas the majority of our residents have had at least the first vaccination.

From May 2021 our public meetings are now being held at County Hall, though to keep to Covid regulations this is not possible at the moment for the full council, which has been held at Loughborough University.

As one of the lowest funded councils in the country but with some of the highest performance figures it is important that our money and resources are used as efficiently as possible. The services we have to provide to our residents such as social care, children and families and highways are very costly.



I sit on the following committees and outside bodies. I am delighted to have been re-appointed as chair of Children and Families Overview and as a member of the Scrutiny Commission.

### **Committee Appointments**

- Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny
- Scrutiny Commission
- Children's Social Care Panel

### **Appointments to Outside Bodies**

- Quorn Townlands Charity – Trustee
- British Gypsum (Saint Gobain) Liaison Group
- Mountsorrel Quarry (Tarmac) Liaison Group

I also sit on various other bodies including:

- Rural Communities Council
- Leicestershire Rural Partnership
- Parish Councils of the Soar Valley Liaison Group
- Outwoods Management Committee
- Loughborough in Bloom Committee

The long term effects of Covid19 particularly on our children and young people are of concern and the Children and Families directorate have worked tirelessly to maintain contact with those in our care and the most vulnerable. This was in various ways including using virtual catch ups. The County Council arranged for free school meals to continue through the holidays before the Government did, and also issued many laptops to the children in our care.

It has been difficult to attend the parish council meetings of the three villages, Quorn, Barrow and Mountsorrel, as I would have prior to the pandemic. I normally send in a report. I only cover a very small area of Mountsorrel but try to keep their two Borough Councillors up to date on anything pertaining to the area.

It has not been possible to hold regular councillor surgeries, normally held with local borough councillors. Hopefully we will be able to re-commence them very shortly.

The Quorndon magazine has been able to be printed and circulated six times a year during the pandemic and I contribute with county news to each issue.



The usual problems of parking and flooding still affect all three villages. Fortunately the flooding has reduced during the past year and a lot of work has been done by the County to try and mitigate the problem, particularly in Slash Lane , Mountsorrel Lane and Granite Way. So much of the drainage and gully systems are quite old which makes flooding often more likely. Parking is likely to be always a problem. All three villages have thriving high streets and it is vital that they are maintained. However with recent developments and more in the pipeline it is difficult to reduce the traffic in the village centres. It is impossible to increase the available parking because of the age and existing infrastructures. It is not really reasonable for us to expect residents to do their shopping on foot when they could possibly be living up to half a mile or more away on new developments. All three villages are considered to be service centres for surrounding villages, which bring in more traffic.

We now have a Puffin crossing in Barrow High Street, which is a great success, the traffic flows much better and the crossing is safer for all residents. Many of our pavements have been improved as well, though there is still a lot to be done.

I work closely with the Borough Councillors for the three villages, and am also one of the borough councillors for Barrow. I work also with our MP – Jane Hunt – and her office. I have a good working relationship with our local police and the borough council. I attend as many training sessions as possible and nearly all the briefings.

I like to think that I also have a good working relationship with officers and my fellow councillors at County Hall. We have quite a few new councillors after the election in May so we are all looking forward to getting to know each other and working together in the quite challenging times ahead.

***Hilary Fryer***

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