

County Councillor Annual Report

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

Name of Councillor: Nick Rushton

1) Electoral Division activities

Main Activities and the impact during the past year:

In addition to my duties as Leader of the County Council, I'm also a councillor on Northwest Leicestershire District Council and sit on Ashby Town Council. I like to attend all my parish councils within my Electoral Division when I can, these being: Ashby-de-la Zouch, Belton, Breedon on the Hill, Coleorton, Isley cum Langley, Long Whatton, Normanton le Heath, Osgathorpe, Packington, Staunton Harold, Swannington and Worthington. With the continuing Covid restrictions, most of these meetings have been held virtually via Zoom or Teams.

The Covid pandemic has continued to dominate everything we do. I'm very proud of our staff who have maintained all frontline services despite the major difficulties we have been faced with. I'm particularly proud of the way our staff and keyworkers have worked alongside our colleagues in the NHS and other partner organisations, to keep people safe, deliver community support and care services to vulnerable people.

The county council has played a major role in the roll out of testing and trace services and supporting vaccinations in our communities. This work is ongoing until we defeat this disease. We have also provided over £7M support to communities, businesses and community groups to assist them through the tough times and we stand ready to do even more.

2021 saw the Conservative administration returned for another term, with the largest ever majority in the history of the County Council. Our manifesto includes pledges to make the county cleaner and greener, to plant 700,000 trees, that's one for every resident, to continue to protect children and adults' social care, investment in infrastructure, to take measures to reduce our carbon impact promote biodiversity and invest extra resources to improve our highways and environment. As leader, I continue to pledge to always use your council tax prudently to provide frontline services and make our communities stronger and safer.

I've continued to hold regular meetings with all our MPs, in particular my local MP Andrew Bridgen. We're currently working on an update to our fair funding work, which we will continue to lobby government for a better deal for Leicestershire.

Community Leadership Role

I'm particularly proud of the way LCC staff has supported work within my Division to tackle the Covid pandemic, supported test and tracing services and supported the rollout of vaccinations to keep people safe. I've taken a personal interest in providing over £7M in direct support to businesses, rural pubs, and community/voluntary organisations to help them with their services for people within the Division. As leader, I'm committed to see the county council continue its great work, doing what we can to protect people and the communities in which we live and work.

Throughout the year, I work with my parish councils with the issues they raise with me, for example, their planning concerns, dealing with issues of serious local flooding in Long Whatton, Diseworth, Breedon and Packington, highway repairs and maintenance, clean signage and gulley cleaning.

We are also seeing major investment and development within the Division. LCC provides most of the infrastructure needed to support this new development to support vibrant communities and much needed housing. HS2 remains a big issue for local people as does the huge Jaguar Land Rover development on the A42/M42. Northwest Leicestershire is the epicentre of job growth and inward investment for the county, but I'm determined to protect the rural character of our villages and communities in which we live.

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

N/A

Priorities for the immediate future are:

- Continue our great work combating the Covid pandemic and work flat out to vaccinate everyone- the key to defeating Covid.
- Prepare our work planting 700,000 trees across the county, making Leicestershire cleaner and greener.
- Fighting for a fairer funding deal from Government.
- Extra investment in our highways and environment services.
- Continue to protect vulnerable children and adults.
- Promote healthier and safer communities.

2) Council Activities

County Council Committees you served on

Leader of the County Council
Cabinet - Chairman
Cabinet Briefing - Chairman
Cabinet Strategy & Co-ordination Group - Chairman
Constitution Committee - Chairman

Local committees/Outside Bodies

Conservative Councillors Association - Member
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Combined Fire Authority - Chairman
Midlands Engine - Steering group member
Midlands Connect - Executive Board member
East Midlands Councils - member
Bradgate Park & Swithland Woods Committee of Management - Chairman
Northwest Leicestershire District Council - elected member
Northwest Leicestershire District Council - Cabinet member
Ashby Town Council - parish councillor

Other bodies – School governors/community and charity organisations etc

N/A

3) Learning and Development

Learning never stops and there's always an opportunity to improve everything you do. I've found using Teams and Zoom has transformed the way we interact and work, and I'm sure this new way of working will continue for the foreseeable future.

Personally, I think virtual meetings have been a good thing, promote flexible working and offer new choices for staff and elected members alike in how we interact. It also offers a great way to reduce our carbon footprint, via less need to travel to meetings and conferences.

I'm keen to improve my online skills, including chairing virtual meetings. I'm always looking at new ways of working to improve the services we deliver to residents.

4) Other Matters

My number one priority remains to do everything we can to ensure a full recovery from the Covid pandemic. It has affected everything we do as a council and affected every part of our lives. This is why we've invested over £56M in direct and government support. Despite our strong financial track record, we remain the lowest funded county council in the UK, so we must continue to work with our MPs to guarantee a fairer funding deal not only for Leicestershire, but the wider East Midlands region.

Huge planning and development in the county over recent years has meant the county council has to find around £600M for capital investment in infrastructure (mainly roads and schools) to support this and deliver communities people want to live and work in.

This will be no mean feat and by no means guaranteed, so it means we must work with government, developers, and partner agencies to secure this vital funding.

Communications

www.facebook.com/LeicsConservatives

Twitter- @LeicsCC_Cons and @nrushton

www.leicestershireconservatives.org.uk

Skype, Teams and Zoom meetings with local parish councils.

Signed by :



Nicholas Rushton CC

Date: 1/7/21