



## **Annual Report by Richard Shepherd for 2020 – 2021**

**I represent the Division of Sileby and The Wolds**, which is made up of the parishes of Burton on the Wolds, Cotes, Hoton, Prestwold, Seagrave, Sileby, Walton on the Wolds and Wymeswold. The range of parishes makes it a richly varied Division.

In my Report for 2019 – 2020 I noted that “The COVID – 19 pandemic and responses to it stand out as issues towards the end of the year under report”. **The year 2020 – 2021 has of course been dominated for all of us by the coronavirus pandemic. For the County Council that has meant responding to keep people safe and well, at the same time as rapidly changing ways of working for both councillors and Council officers.**

The Council’s response has included delivering emergency food supplies, supporting over 5,000 people through home care and other social care services, ensuring the 25,000 shielded people have support and care in place, if required, and creating a £4 million fund to support communities.

The Council moved 90% of office staff to working from home, moved some staff into other roles so as to be able to continue to deliver vital support, and has been working with the emergency services, other councils and the NHS to deal with the pandemic.

**As a Local Member** part of my role has been passing on information, giving details of online reliable sources of information, and drawing attention to the risks of Covid-related scams and unreliable information.

Parish Council meetings moved online and I was able to join them by that means. I continued to present reports and respond to enquiries, as detailed in the minutes of the Parish Councils. I have also responded to enquiries from members of the public. Matters of local concern have included highways issues such as blocked gullies and overhanging vegetation; speeding traffic; and flood mitigation.

I have contributed articles giving County Council news to two local magazines, one circulating in The Wolds and the other in Seagrave. They adapted to online versions because of the restrictions caused by the pandemic. For Sileby, the

Parish Council kindly post a blog I write on their website, and that is also streamed on social media.

**Looking ahead**, I shall continue to offer Parish Councils and residents all the help I can, and work with local Borough Councillors. Bearing in mind the significance of highways issues I am pleased that the County Council is making some more money available to tackle them, including some money for which Local Members will be able to decide the use. We shall have to see how far the funding available stretches.



**Turning to my wider Council involvement,** I have served on the Council's Cabinet for the last four years, working with the Lead Member for Resources, and continue to do so. I also serve on the Constitution Committee, the Employment Committee, and the Local Pension Board. My further role as the Conservative Group's Chief Whip involves assisting in the efficient running of the Council.

The Council has important work to do in the coming months and years, and I look forward to playing my part in that. The work includes, among other things, supporting recovery from the pandemic, developing a greener future for the county, and continuing to protect vulnerable children and adults.

**I am appointed by the Council to three organisations:** the East Midlands Shared Services Joint Committee, the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation Management Committee, and the British Gypsum (Barrow Project) Liaison Committee.

**I am also a member of Charnwood Borough Council.** The Ward I represent on that Council is a different geographical area from my County Council Division, and that contributes to my knowledge. I am appointed by the Borough Council to the Mountsorrel Quarry Liaison Committee.

**I have benefited from opportunities for learning and development** provided by the County and Borough Councils. The regular briefings by County Council officers about events and actions concerning the pandemic have been much appreciated.

Richard Shepherd

July 2021