



County Councillor Betty Newton Annual Report 2021/22

The past 12 months have been a very busy time and have meant having to develop new ways of working and integrating with the community due to the challenges of COVID. Nonetheless, I managed to maintain a full programme of work including attendance at meetings (via zoom) and in person when possible.

In my role as a County Councillor, I hold a number of important and challenging positions including the following:

- member of the Employment Committee
- member of the Member Conduct Panel
- I also sit on the Combined Fire Authority
- Vice-Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee of the Combined Fire Authority
- Chair of the Strategic Equalities Group.

Full Council: Children and Families Scrutiny Meetings/Briefings.

As the Labour spokesperson for **Children and Families**, I attended all the meetings and briefings plus MTFs (Medium Term Financial Strategy) meetings. These included Care Leavers meetings where the topics under discussion included education, housing, finance and employment along with a session on the Dark Web. I also attended a Health Scrutiny briefing and asked a question about the role of elected members in ensuring children's health and well-being.

I attended (via zoom) meetings of the **Children's Social Care Panel** where there were discussions about bullying in schools and transphobic behaviour. This has become an important issue in recent years and at one meeting I tabled a question here about how robust teacher training was in dealing with the issue.

The plight of **Young Carers** has long been a concern of mine and I was pleased to be able to contribute to the Children's Scrutiny Committee discussion on the surrounding issues.

The tragic situation in **Ukraine** has been much to the fore in recent months and it was good to see it high on the agenda at briefings and meetings. There was much discussion on what we could offer in a positive way to those refugees seeking a new life here in the East Midlands. I contributed to an **All Member Briefing** on the plight of Ukrainian refugees.

Corporate Parenting is another issue I have long been involved with and I welcomed the opportunity to contribute to discussions on this topic at briefings and meetings. Corporate Parenting is the collective responsibility of the elected members of Council for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children in their area.

Submission to Cabinet

Along with another Councillor, I did a submission to Cabinet on the A6 North/A6004 route from Hathern to Loughborough in relation to traffic congestion along this road.



All Member Briefings to which I attended and contributed were:

- the Strategic Plan
- the pressures on Adult Social Care
- Trading Standards
- Corporate Parenting
- New Ways of Working.
- Policing issues

Training:

- I participated in an ICT workshop. (Information, Technologies and Communication)
- Engaged in social media training session
- Attended Oracle training
- Member Training on new members' Code of Conduct plus all member briefings.
- Combined Fire Authority Diversity training.

Combined Fire Authority

I have attended the regular monthly meetings of the Fire Authority working with the Equalities team there. I also attended briefings and meetings in my role as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee. These meetings are joint meetings with members from the City of Leicester and one member from Rutland.

As a member of the Combined Fire Authority, I have worked as the Equalities Champion. We have won an award for our work on equalities. Also, attended a meeting to encourage more women to join the Fire Service.

I attended regular meetings of Sedip, a working group of Fire officers. I'm the Vice-Chair of the Committee on Fire Corporate Governance.

I always read the papers on behalf of the Labour Group and brief members on the issues and encourage them to ask relevant questions.

I was on the interview panel for the post of Chief Fire Officer as well as on the panel for deputy Chief Fire Officer. I even attended a Pension meeting when the Group Leader couldn't attend! I have held several briefings with the Chief Fire Officer to discuss important matters arising from meetings and as well as other issues.

Surgeries

I carried out my regular street surgeries, knocking on doors, when restrictions permitted. In addition to the street surgeries, I also carried out surgeries at the following locations:

- Gorse Covert Community Centre
- Stonebow School
- Hathern School
- Hathern Club
- Hathern Library
- Three Closes (off Warwick Way)
- Plus other street surgeries at various places in the division.

Meetings attended

Disley Residents' Association Meetings
Loughborough Camus Liaison meetings
Hathern Parish Council meetings (mainly by zoom until restrictions were lifted).
Garendon Park Community Liaison Group Meetings

Some Community Events

I took part in litter picking and the cleaning up of areas in Dishley and Storer – including one with members of the Disley Residents' Association. I intend participating in future 'picks'.

Also attended events at the 'All Together Place' including Patch Walks with the local police in the Warwick Way area.

I have worked closely with the local police in relation to 'clean-ups' in particular areas of my patch.



Ongoing Priorities for the future

I will continue to support plans for safer routes to school so that parents will choose to walk rather than drive their children to school.

Work for cleaner, greener and safer living environment'

Encourage initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of Loughborough North residents.

Continue my good attendance record at Hathern Parish Council meetings.

Continue to work with the local Police Inspector and his team to deliver a safer living environment.

I shall endeavour to do all I can to ensure that local Community Centres such as those at Gorse Covert, Dishley, Hathern and Storer, continue to provide a meeting place for local people to come together. I will continue to support their excellent and essential work. i



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