



COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN – OCTOBER 2020

I do hope that this still finds you in good health as lockdown has eased, and life is slowly getting back to normal. The schools are back, some of you may be glad and relieved not to have to do any more home schooling. I know when looking after my granddaughter I found the maths hard as I did not understand how it was taught, but we got there in the end.

I have held a number of virtual meetings and also managed to visit residents to see problems they have and discuss with them at a safe distance. These can be as varied as flooding, anti social behaviour, speeding traffic, overgrown hedges. I have also visited another Independent Supported Living Accommodation County are building.

Covid-19

As of 15th September, Oadby and Wigston were 2nd in the Country for Covid positive cases and Blaby are 29th.

There are 14 Care Homes listed as having Covid cases mostly these are due to increases in staff testing positive. Residents are tested monthly and staff every 7 days in ALL Care Homes in the County.

Schools – due to the increase in positive Covid cases, schools are asking that parents wear face coverings whilst standing at the school gates when they bring and fetch their children from school and remember to social distance. County have provided signs which are in position outside of schools reminding people to distance themselves.

Council in for the 'long haul' in fight against virus

The county council says there remains a rising trend in the number of positive Covid-19 cases across Leicestershire.

However, the latest data shows, as of 22nd September, Oadby and Wigston's rate has dropped to 94.6 per 100,000, but there have been increases in Blaby district to 72.7 and in Charnwood where figures are 42.7.



In parts of Charnwood (Lemyngton & Hastings, Shelthorpe & Woodthorpe wards and University area) and Blaby, the council is now delivering thousands of leaflets to people's homes and businesses as well as contacting GP surgeries to highlight the need for people with symptoms to get a test.

Shepshed is at the time of going to print, is not in an area of concern. BUT it still means that residents must abide by the rules. The clear message still remains that it's up to us all to fight this virus. We are in it for the long haul and it's in our hands around reducing the infection rate.

We all need to wash our hands regularly, use a face covering when social distancing is not possible and try to keep your distance from those in your household.

In contrast, cases in north-west Leicestershire and Melton continue to be on the decline while the position in Harborough appears to be stabilising.

Adults and Communities overview and scrutiny committee 7th September

A virtual meeting of the above committee took place on 7th September, where there was a full agenda to discuss.

A report was given regarding the departments strategy 2020-2024. This sits under the County Council's Strategic Plan for 2018-22 'Working Together for the Benefit of Everyone' and aims to set out how the Department will contribute to the delivery and achievement of the Council's five strategic outcomes.

It will support the delivery of the County Council's statutory duties for libraries and museums under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and for adult social care under the Care Act 2014. There is also national policy and statutory guidance as defined by the Department of Health and Social Care, policy requirements for the integration of health and social care, the national programme of change for Learning Disabilities, and requirements that come with the receipt of Education and Skills Funding Agency funding for adult education.

The draft Strategy provides a framework for policy on, investment in, and delivery of services by the Department, working with its partners.



This follows on from a formal consultation which commenced on 16th December 2019. The aim of the consultation was to gather feedback on the proposals set out in the Strategy. The consultation was specifically interested in:

- Views on the proposed principles of future delivery of services, especially the increased focus on wellbeing
- Support or opposition regarding the different elements of the model;
- Views on the Department's ideas about delivering the model.

The consultation outcomes and final Adult and Communities Department Strategy 2020-2024 will be reported to the Cabinet in September for approval.

Safeguarding Adults Board – 14th September

I sit on this Board as the representative of County, there was a very full agenda. We had a briefing of work being undertaken in the Agnes Unit. The Agnes Unit is a 12 bedded inpatient unit which provides assessment and treatment for adults with Learning Disabilities who cannot be supported safely in the community.

We had a paper on Shielding and Hidden, which focused on domestic abuse of adults with care and support needs, how well we are recognising and recording domestic abuse. It was noted that there has been an increase in domestic abuse and abuse to the elderly. Abuse to the elderly has been noted when the patient came into hospital for other reasons.

We had a second paper on Financial Abuse regarding the elderly and vulnerable adults. We then went on to discuss and were given an Overview of Modern Slavery locally, followed by consideration of those with care and support needs in the context of Leicester Textiles.

Secondary school place applications for next year closes on 31st October

Parents and carers with children due to start secondary school in Leicestershire in September 2021 need to apply by 31st October 2021.

Last year over 95 per cent of Leicestershire's children secured a place at a preferred school, so I would like to remind parents to maximise their opportunities by applying for three schools, including their catchment school. There is no automatic entry for



any school, so it is very important for applications to be submitted before the closing date.

Independent Living – Billa Barra

I was invited to attend a 4 bungalow complex being built by the County at Billa Barra near to Markfield and Coalville and see how the progress was going. The complex is made up of 3 one bedroom units and a two bedroom unit for a resident who needs 24 hour support.

The complex also has staff accommodation with a large area for outdoor activities. The units are for people who need support and give them independent living.

The projected opening date is March 2021. 20 staff will be working on site. The scheme is a partnership between Affinity Trust, Leicestershire County Council and the NHS England's transforming Care initiative.

The policy of the County is to increase the facilities with supported living for adults with a physical disability, a learning disability, autism or mental health problems.

Supported living takes people out of residential care or family homes and gives service users their own place to live, with the support they need, they can choose where they live, who supports them, their extra circular activities and increases their independence whilst becoming part of a community.

Over the past 12 months, around 90 adults have moved into supported living services from residential care or hospital. County are committed to building the safest, most fit-for-purpose homes for residents. County are developing housing for older people living in suitable accommodation as it is vital for a person's wellbeing.

Leicestershire Business Recovery Fund

Small businesses are getting a helping hand to bounce back, thanks to a new fund – with over £100,000 already awarded. Leicestershire County Council's launched the £750,000 pot this summer and so far has given grants of up to £10,000 to 16 companies to help them recover from the effects of coronavirus pandemic.

Businesses from across Leicestershire in sectors covering agriculture, tourism, hospitality, creative and retail have benefitted from the match funding grant, so far,. Small business are still being urged to apply for their share of the £750,000



Leicestershire Business Recovery Fund – to find out more and apply visit <http://www.oakleaves.org.uk/leicstershire-business-recovery-fund.html>

Applications can be made for grants between £2,000 and £10,000, to ensure business recover, through projects to help the business diversity, improve skills, or new technology or equipment. All small businesses from every sector are encouraged to apply including those from the tourism, retail, agriculture and creative sector. Businesses who apply will initially talk through their business plans with an advisor who will be able to assist with the application.

There is currently no deadline for applications, but businesses should apply as soon as possible as funding will be allocated at a first come first served basis.

'Lighthouse Lab' facility is to be created in Loughborough

A new 'Lighthouse Lab' facility will be established in Loughborough to increase the UK's Covid-19 testing capacity, in an investment of creating 400 jobs.

The UK Department of Health and Social Care's Lighthouse Lab at Charnwood Campus is a partnership with global diagnostics company PerkinElmer.

It will be the seventh major lab supplementing NHS labs, processing tests across the National Testing Programme, and the first facility in the East Midlands. It was set to reopen at the end of September.

The Lighthouse Lab network has been established to increase the number of Covid-19 tests that can take place each day. The labs receive samples from care homes, Covid-19 testing centres and home testing kits, which are then processed by a skilled work force from across the scientific community.

The Lighthouse Lab at Charnwood Campus aims to process 50,000 tests a day by the end of the year and will be delivered and managed by PerkinElmer.

Advance Notice of a Temporary Regulation Order (TTRO)

If I received notification of road closures in time I will keep you inform, but in a number of occasions the closures would have taken place before you received this magazine.



Just a reminder about the TTRO on Loughborough Road, from 19th October for 3 days 09.00 till 15.00 each day.

The road will be closed between Market Place and Church Gate.

There are ongoing road closures on the A512 near to the M1, to get information sent to you regarding these road works please contact 07779 417695 or you can email A512improvements@morgansindall.com

Police

I am pleased to report following concerns raised by residents regarding speeding traffic in Shepshed, the police were out on Wednesday 9th September doing speed checks on road in Shepshed.

Scams

Scams have been on the rise during Covid, such as phoney police. You might receive an unexpected call from the police who informs you they are investigating fraudulent activity on your bank account and need your help to convict the criminal.

The police will never ask you to disclose your bank and PIN over the phone or ask you to withdraw cash to give to a courier.

A caller claiming to be from the NHS Test and Trace scheme says you have come into contact with someone suffering from Covid-19. You are told you need a test in the post and asked for your home address and bank details so you can pay for it.

Described by the local Government Association as a ruthless scam, this is difficult to spot. The genuine number used by Test and Trace is 0300 0135 000, so a call from any other number is fake. The simple rule to remember is that testing is free. You will never be asked for bank details.

You are contacted by email, text message, via social media or in person by someone who says they work for Jobcentre Plus. They offer to claim 'free money' on your behalf, which they say is linked to Universal Credit or an advance payment of the benefit, but they deduct a fee of 40 pc or more for their services. They claim to be able to fast-track your application.



Don't let anyone apply for Universal Credit on your behalf. You can do it for free. It will also affect the amount you receive in future or you could be asked to pay it back, including the fraudster's fee.

If you need any help applying, then contact Citizens Advice on 0800 144 8444.

If you receive a call or home visit from a 'sales person' flogging face masks, pills that cure coronavirus or hand-sanitising gels. You are asked for an upfront payment over the phone or an advance cash payment in person but no goods or services will be delivered.

Never give your bank details to strangers over the phone or pay in advance to receive products or services. Do not deal with any doorstep salespeople peddling anti-Covid-19 measures. Only buy medical goods from trusted sources such as pharmacies.

Libraries

During libraries week, (5th – 10th October) County promoted children's titles on social media, reminding users which services are or aren't available. Special Libraries Week themed Wriggly Readers at Home which is a virtual session every Tuesday on Facebook.

Reading for pleasure amongst children has increased during lockdown – how to build on this as a parent, positives of reading for pleasure for children (especially important for those who missed out on school for so long)

Residents can now browse virtually, but there has been further easement on restrictions, but Shepshed Library is one of the libraries that is offering bookable visits but as with other libraries, there are some services that are currently unavailable. All visitors to the library will have their details recorded in line with Gov Tract and Trace programme.

You will need to book a time slot to visit the library. For more information and details on how to book your visit

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-communty/libraries/book-a-library-visit>.



Dementia Pilot

County are working closely with district councils on a project to support vulnerable people with dementia. One way is to get a greater insight into people's need is to involve them as much as possible.

County are looking for 50 people with dementia, and their families, to 'road test' assistive technology. The people taking part in the trial will use technology, such as sensors, a smart plug and sleep sensor and their family follow this via an app. This will also identify an area of concern.

County are keen to explore how effective some of the new digital technology could be in supporting people with dementia and their carers.

County hope the volunteers who come forward, the trial is free, will give an honest opinion of how the technology works for them and that will help in the future development of other tech. If you are interested in taking part, please email assistivetechologydementiapilot@leics.gov.uk or telephone 0116 305 0017.

Regeneration of Shepshed

There is an ongoing public consultation about the regeneration of the centre of Shepshed.

This shows improvements to the Market Place, Hall Croft, Field Street and The Bull Ring. The display boards are situated in the windows at the library in the Hall Croft.

I understand that people are concerned about the loss of parking in the Market Place. There is still going to be same amount of parking spaces but in a different position. The reason for them being moved is to enable a larger pedestrian area in the Market place which can be used for events, such as Christmas markets, carol services and even our weekly market, which has now grown to 5 stalls, (currently next to the library) which could increase in the future.

I ask that you take your time to look at these proposals. The money can only be spent to regenerate the centre and not for anything else such as a leisure centre.

To view the video of just the Market Place please go to <https://vimeo.com/458618380/abab6ae756>



Your help and support

Again I would like to thank the residents who keep me informed regarding issues around Shepshed, such as overgrown hedges, litter, dog mess, inconsiderate parking (on pavements, yellow lines, outside of schools) etc., without your eyes and ears I could not get them reported and sorted.

If for some reason you do not receive your copy of the Eye. I now have my information posted on my web page at County. This will also help you to keep track on road closures etc.

For help and advice on County matters, I can be contacted on 01509 502974 or e mail christine_radford@hotmail.com or christine.radford@leics.gov.uk or due to the lock down I will not be able to have my regular monthly Surgery on the FIRST Saturday of the month in the Town Council Offices, 47a Charnwood Road.