



COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S COLUMN – **January/February 2021**

Once again, we are living and working through unsettling and extraordinary events. It is important that we continue to do all we can to prevent the spread of COVID, to support our communities and to protect the most vulnerable.

If you can, you should continue to work from home. I hope that you and your loved ones are keeping safe and well and a Happy New Year to you all during these hard times of COVID. Keep safe everybody, keep following the COVID rules

It is very important that we all take care and protect ourselves as well as safely carrying on the great work we are in supporting our communities.

Covid-19

Average attendance varies from school to school.

Primary = 24%
Secondary = 5.5%
Special = 50%

DfE guidance sets out that there is no limit to numbers of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who may attend and schools should not limit attendance of these groups.

Heads are, however, undertaking risk assessments to ensure there are a safe number of children in site

Many schools have written to parents asking them to consider whether they really need an on-site school place

Testing in Schools

Secondary schools

Weekly rapid tests for all staff in secondary schools and colleges
DfE recommended – daily testing for students and staff, if they are identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive in order for those who test negative to come back into school.

Primary Schools

Home test kits are being sent out to all Primary schools to support the weekly testing of staff



Impact of school closures

A significant new development is the move to remote learning for all schools and colleges. Schools and colleges will remain open to vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers only.

The Department of Education has stated that children with at least one parent or carer who is listed as a critical worker are eligible for a school place. It is not necessary for both parents to be critical workers.

Early years and childcare services are expected to remain open if they can, and childcare support bubbles are in place.

Free School Meals

Universal Free School Meals are provided to all pupils in Foundation Years 1 and 2 (4-7 years)

Free school meals are available to pupils who meet the benefits –related eligibility criteria (12,300)

Responsibility for the provision of meals for its pupils sits with the School.

County are using the Covid Winter Grant to fund FSM over Feb half term and the whole of the Easter Holidays.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people

There is additional advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus. Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable will receive a letter from the Department of Health and Social Care identifying them.

If you are considered clinically extremely vulnerable, you should work from home.

Southfields

Residents raised concerns with me regarding parking whilst attending Southfields to have their COVID vaccination. It is expected that the NHS to be providing parking marshals who can support visitors. Customers visiting the site with mobility issues have been parking in the bays close to the site in the absence of the marshals. Officers are meeting with the NHS to establish if a more formal drop off zone would be preferable.

There are almost 1000 additional parking spaces within 200 yards of the vaccination centre for all other users who do not have mobility issues.



Residents have also been in contact with me asking when they will get called for their vaccination. Please wait for your doctors to contact you, Shepshed residents have already been called and attended for their jab.

Police

There have been some reports of burglaries in the area, the numbers are low but in this holiday period can I just remind everyone to keep your properties and vehicles safe, lock your doors, leave lights/radios on, and don't leave valuables in your vehicles. The ASB we had been experiencing has been reduced considerably with positive action the police have taken against a select few youths and the police continue to work with partner agencies to keep this so.

One aspect of policing is around Mental Health and wellbeing. The police have an excellent MH triage car that operates day and night until the early hours. This year has been particularly difficult for many, mental health is still a taboo subject for some and people feel ashamed to admit they have issues. Please don't there are support services that can help and I urge you to contact them if you are feeling low. Speak to someone; never think that a problem can't be solved. Samaritans – www.samaritans.org or 07725909090. Crisis Team (adult) has a single point access assessment team that operate 24/7 – contact can be found here – www.leicestershire.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing/urgent-help-with-mental-health and LRI A&E dept.

There are 2 new officers PC SO Julie Parker who is a permanent addition and she has been spending time getting out and about and PC Kara Thatcher who is not a permanent addition. If you wish to report any crimes please call 101 or 999 in an emergency.

Just a reminder of the team looking after Shepshed are:-

PS 4329 Catherine Collins, PC 1969 Matt Orton, PC 1806 Kara Thatcher, PCSO 6542 Viren Patel, PCSO 6552 Mo Musa, PCSO 6046 KELLY Davis and PCSO 6136 Julia Parker.



Scams involving coronavirus vaccinations.

Action Fraud has received a number of reports from members of the public who have been sent text messages claiming to be from the NHS, offering them the opportunity to sign up for coronavirus vaccinations. The texts ask the recipient to click on a link which takes them on an online form where they are prompted to input personal and financial details. In some cases the online form has looked very similar to the real NHS website.

The NHS will never ask for your bank account or card details, ask for your PIN or banking passwords, **REMEMBER THE VACCINATIONS ARE FREE OF CHARGE AND YOU WILL NOT BE ASKED FOR A PAYMENT.**

Please share this warning to protect others, especially the elderly. neighbours or vulnerable people.

M1 junction 23 and A512 road works – a reminder

For those who have not yet asked to be kept informed about the road works, when the roads are closed over night etc. You can find out more information about the scheme and how to you can keep up-to-date with the latest news by visiting www.leicestershire.gov.uk/M1J23, or you can call 07779 417695 or email A512improvements@morgansindall.com.

Tickow Lane

My emails always have residents contacting me regarding Tickow Lane and the speed of the traffic on the narrow section from Anson Road to the new section of road. The areas where K62 footpath crosses Tickow Lane and how this is situated at a blind bend. Also residents have concerns about the amount of HGV's travelling over the old railway bridge which might not be able to take such heavy traffic before it collapses.

I can assure you, I contact County on a regular basis regarding these issues but they cannot see that there is a problem. Let us hope nobody gets hurt or killed before something is done.

Support for community pubs

County recognise that rural pubs are at the heart of many Leicestershire communities – and as part of County's commitment to helping businesses during these tough times, pubs struggling during the pandemic will have the opportunity to apply for our new fund.



I have been working with local pubs as County are offering a one-off payment of £1,000 to support small village pubs which are unable to open their doors over the festive period.

Call for people to share memories of Loughborough Fair

People are being urged to share their memories of Loughborough Market and Fair as part of plans to celebrate its 800th anniversary this year.

The first fair was held in Loughborough on July 31st 1221 to mark the feast day of St Peter. It was in the same year that a charter to hold a market in Loughborough was granted to the Lord of the Manor. Both a market and a fair have taken place in some form in Loughborough since that date.

To mark the occasion, Charnwood Museum will host an exhibition to celebrate the milestone. People are being asked to share their memories, pictures, films and memorabilia for use in the exhibition and as part of an archive.

The exhibition is a partnership between Leicestershire County Council and Charnwood Borough Council, with Loughborough Local Studies Volunteers leading on the historical research.

Organisers of the exhibition want to hear from people of all ages who have memories of the fair – whether from many years back or much more recent. No memory is too small or insignificant for inclusion, as the organisers are hoping to include as much of the sights, sounds and smells of the fair as they can.

As well as sharing the memories in the exhibition, they will also be used to create a community film, add to the East Midlands Oral History Archive and catalogue in the archives at the Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Anyone who would like to get involved and share their unique connections to Loughborough Fair is asked to get in touch by email louise.sharples@leics.gov.uk.

My position at County which involves Heritage, I have been interviewed by both Fosse 107 and Radio Leicester about my memories of going to the fair, the smells, sounds and the sights talking about it brought back many happy memories.

County planning applications

2020/Reg3Ma/0174/LCC – Iveshead School Forest Street – Internal reconfiguration and refurbishment to the original Hind Leys College School building to provide all facilities for Iveshead Secondary School. To include new hard play areas with associated pathways, bin storage, cycle parking areas, new fencing, soft landscaping and car parking spaces. To include the internal reconfiguration and



refurbishment of the original Shepshed High School building to provide all facilities for St Botolphs Primary School. External alterations include new fencing, additional hard standing and a canopy structure to the play area .

2019/VOCEIA/0292/LCC/CS101 – Biffa Newhurst Quarry, Ashby Road East – submission of green commuter plan in pursuance of condition 10 – S73 Planning application to vary condition 2 of planning permission No. 2014/1440/02 to accommodate proposed changes to the design of the plant including materials used in the construction and the external appearance of the plant. The removal of the IBA maturation area and relocation of the car park into the IBA area. Rearrangement of external ancillary equipment and internal site roadways.

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.