

County Councillor Annual Report

This report summarises the activities of the following member of the County Council during 2021/22

Name of Councillor – Deborah Taylor






1) Electoral Division activities

Main Activities and the impact during the past year:

May 2021

The first event of the year was the County Council Elections. It was a difficult time as we were still coming out of the national lock downs. This limited the ability to speak to my residents, so I held outdoor local surgeries in the villages within my division to enable residents to come and speak to me. In addition, we delivered leaflets across my division with information on my past work and my plans for the next four years.

The results of the election were:

Elected					
	Conservative candidate Deborah Taylor was elected.				
	Party	Votes	Elected	%	
	Deborah Taylor	Conservative	2486	Yes	66.5
	Dave Berry	Labour	631	No	16.8
	Philip John Edward Mills	Green Party	401	No	10.7
	Kate Tipton	Liberal Democrats	220	No	5.88
			3738		

Impact – visible to my residents.

July 2021

Leicestershire County Council are the lead authority for the region on a pilot project, 'Place to Call Home'. This is funded by central government, with the aim to recruit more foster carers for young asylum seekers in the East Midlands. We were supported with this project by East Midlands Councils.

There was a lot of media coverage, and I was delighted to be invited onto Channel 4's 'Steph

Packed Lunch' live television show on Wednesday 16th June, to join one of our foster children, Salman. Salman was a young refugee who was placed with foster carers in Leicestershire at the age of 12 after a tough start in life. Salman has achieved his dream of qualifying as an architect.

Salman is now supporting the work of 'Place to Call Home'. More details about the project can be found on the website: <https://placetocallhome.org.uk/>

Deborah Taylor

10.9K Tweets

Home project. Thank you to @PackedLunchC4 for looking after us so well 😊 we had a blast!

Steph's Packed Lunch @PackedLunchC4 · Jun 16, 2021

Salman Khan fled Afghanistan at the age of 12, before being found by police months later walking down the side of a UK motorway. Speaking no English and with no family, Salman was taken into foster care where he thrived. @ClrDTaylor | placetocallhome.org.uk | #stephspackedlunch



Impact – Under the pilot project eight foster carers have been approved and 15 supported lodgings providers. National media is a great avenue to spread the word about how we support young asylum-seeking children and enable them to achieve a great life for themselves.

July 2021

I deputised for the Leader of the County Council, at a campaign launch for 'Uncover the Story', held at the King Richard III Visitor Centre. The joint campaign, with Leicester City, was to promote Leicester and Leicestershire's tourism offer to national and international visitors. It explores the unusual and fascinating stories that lie behind some of our local attractions and unique places, using eye-catching artwork and 'teasers' to encourage the visitor to uncover the full story.

Further details can be found here: <https://www.visitleicester.info/uncoverthestory>



Impact – Raising awareness of tourism in the county; Partnership working with Leicester City Council.

August 2021

Charnwood Borough Council launched the public consultation on their local plan in July 2021. The site locations will have a huge impact for some of my villages within my division but mainly for Anstey. I held an open-air public meeting, with my fellow borough councillor, at the local recreation ground in Anstey, to enable residents to understand the Local Plan more fully. They were able to see the site locations and understand the impact of these sites, and to understand how to respond to the public consultation. This also provided an opportunity for residents to speak to us directly with their concerns.

Deborah Taylor @CllrDTaylor · Jul 26, 2021

Cllr Baines and Cllr Taylor will be holding an open-air public meeting on 4th August 2021 between 5.30pm and 7.00pm. We will be on the recreation ground, behind the Parish Office.....Charnwood Local Plan | Charnwood

bradgateconservatives.org.uk
Charnwood Local Plan

Impact – More responses to the public consultation were received and residents were fully informed about the proposed development in the village.

September 2021

Bus Stop Relocation, Anstey

I have continued to work and ask for dates for when the work to relocate the bus stop on Leicester Road to Staddon Road will be completed. I have now been updated by officers at the county council, that the work will be carried out in August 2022. The funding for the relocation has been sitting with the Parish Council for two years, after I secured £65,000 from the developers to carry out this work. This work was due to be carried out in 2020, but due to the pandemic, it was delayed for two years.

Impact – Reduce traffic congestion in The Nook and surrounding areas. This will also improve the air quality with fewer stationary vehicles in the area.

October 2021

Food Vouchers

I was very grateful for the support from my colleagues at County Hall who supported my request to offer food vouchers for eligible children during the half term. Thousands of Leicestershire families were struggling with the cost of living due to the pandemic, and these food vouchers helped in some way. School meal vouchers were made available for some 14,000 eligible children so their parents and carers could buy £15 worth of food for the half term break in October 2021, at a total cost to Leicestershire County Council of £240,000.

This decision was made before we heard that Leicestershire was to receive £3.6 million of Government cash from the Department of Work and Pension's Household Support Fund, to help support those most in need with their food, energy and water bills, as well as pressures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Impact – Supporting our most vulnerable families in the county. Ensuring our children are fed during the school holiday and ensuring that I am their champion and voice.

October 2021

Highway Fund

Each Councillor had been allotted a highway funding pot of £25,000 for the financial year, to spend in their local area on projects that would not be funded under 'business as usual' highway department work.

I contacted all my parish councils and parish meeting across my division to ask them to put forward some suggestions for projects.

During the summer of 2021, the parish councils sent in their 'wish list' of projects and improvements. I then reviewed all the suggestions and submitted my requests into the highway department at the county council.

This was completed in October 2021 and some of these projects have now been reviewed and costed and work is being programmed to be completed in the coming months.

Impact – making small improvements to my local area that have a big impact. Enables residents to be part of the improvements and they see local money being spent in their area for the residents' benefit.

November 2021

Wildflower Verges

Roadside verges across Leicestershire are receiving a biodiversity boost thanks to the county council initiative to turn them into wildflower areas. Over 40 parishes have already signed up for the scheme which involves volunteers giving up their time to make a difference by weeding, sowing seeds and developing new wildflower verges in their communities. I promoted this scheme across my division, and I'm pleased that many of my villages now have several wildflower areas.

Impact – Not only do these areas look lovely and attract all types of insects, bees and wildlife, the scheme is a key part of wider work to tackle climate change and the county's commitment to becoming a net zero county by 2045.

December 2021

Food Parcels

At our Family and Wellbeing Centres across the county we provided food parcels for Christmas for our vulnerable families. Much of the food was donated but the parcels needed to be put together. I enjoyed a morning at one of our centres, helping sort out all the parcels with members of staff and volunteers at one of our centres.



Impact – Vulnerable families were supported to have a family Christmas.

January 2022

F20

I supported and worked on the launch of the F20 campaign. This is a cross party group of the 20 lowest funded county councils in England. The group wrote to the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) proposing a short-term fix, to boost core funding for these councils. The cross-party group called for a £300 million temporary fix to level up local government finance.

Meetings were held with the Leaders of these councils to gather their support, gain agreement to the letter being sent to the Secretary of State for DLUHC and to request the injection of the extra money to support the very lowest funded authorities in the country.

You can read more details on Fairer Funding by reading the UK Onward Report:

<https://www.ukonward.com/reports/fair-funding/>

Impact – to raise awareness of the financial risks with the 20 lowest funded county councils in the country. This then has an impact on our residents as services are needing to make cuts and savings and therefore there are reductions in the support we can provide our residents with.

March 2022

Interviews

I led interviews to recruit two new independent members of the public to the Police and Crime Panel, which I chair. We found two great members to help provide scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). I was also part of the interview team, along with the PCC and the Deputy Chief Constable of Leicestershire Police, to recruit 10 new members to the PCC's new Ethics and Transparency Committee. This committee will help the PCC to ensure that the police force our held to account.



Impact – To ensure the public can clearly see the work of the PCC and the Police and Crime Panel.

March 2022

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

I promoted a host of special events being held both in the city and county this year to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, marking her 70-year reign as monarch.

The events included a garden party for people turning 70 in 2022 as well as planting of trees and an art competition for primary school children. There were also awards for businesses and communities for 70 organisations.

I published the webpage with all the information on, including how you could arrange your own community event or street party.

I also shared the 'Queen's Green Canopy' initiative. Anyone wishing to plant their own tree for the Jubilee can still access trees through schemes offered by the Woodland Trust:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

Impact – Ensuring residents were all able to join together to celebrate this historic event.

April 2022

Leicestershire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

Leicestershire County Council, working with Active Together, are co-ordinating the Department for Education funded HAF programme, across Leicestershire for the school holidays.

The Council is supporting Leicestershire schools, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and other out-of-school/holiday activity organisations, to deliver holiday club provision for school-aged children (5 to 16 years) living in Leicestershire who are eligible for free school meals.

The aim is that the children who attend the provision will be supported:

- to eat more healthily over the school holidays
- to be more active during the school holidays
- to take part in engaging and enriching activities
- to be safe and not to be socially isolated
- to have greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- to be more engaged with school and other local services.

I had the pleasure of attending one of these events over the Easter holidays to see how the funding works in the settings.



Impact – Supporting families and children during the school holidays. There is also the added benefit of making new friends and trying new activities. This then helps children when they are at school with their social skills and confidence.

April 2022

Ofsted

Leicestershire County Council's Children's Department received a focused visit from Ofsted. These visits are made in-between full inspections, to look at current progress against the improvements needed that were highlighted at previous inspections. I was interviewed for an hour by the lead inspector and then they spent two days speaking to the staff in the department, families who are supported by the department, and reviewing data.

A report was then published in April, following the visit in January. This was Ofsted's first visit since a full inspection was completed in 2019. During the Ofsted visit, officials examined performance data, quality assurance work, key policies and strategic documents and, most importantly, the quality of social work practice with children and their families.

We received very good feedback from Ofsted and the full response can be found here:

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80483>

I was really pleased for the whole team who have worked extremely hard over the past three years, in difficult circumstances, to make improvements to the service. Following the publication of the report, I issued the following statement:

“ We listened carefully to what inspectors told us in 2019 and have been working hard to make genuine improvements to the services.

Supporting children who need protection is one of the most important duties any council has and I'm really pleased that the inspectors looked thoroughly at the services we provide to some of the most vulnerable young people and recognised the progress we have made.

👤 Councillor Deborah Taylor, council deputy leader and cabinet member for children and family services

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Impact – Evidence for our families that we are working hard to ensure our services are fit for purpose and we are working hard to make improvements.

April 2022

Ukrainian War

The outbreak of the war in Ukraine has had a huge impact on many countries and residents. Here in Leicestershire, I was part of the very early discussions on how we could support Ukrainian refugees fleeing their war-torn country to seek peace in the UK.

The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) was set up very quickly, led by our Deputy Chief Executive. A core team within the council was set up, under my portfolio. A webpage and an email address were also set up as soon as possible, along with meetings with our district colleagues to ensure up to date information was available for all local authorities and partners.

Funding and support were put in place, and we were allocated funding from central government to set up a welcome desk at East Midlands Airport to be the first port of call for arriving refugees. This is still active and manned by volunteer staff from the council.

I visited the airport to personally thank the staff and film a piece for BBC East Midlands Regional news and speak live to BBC Radio Leicester.



Impact – This helped raise awareness of the support we were offering refugees and their sponsors and encourage other people to come forward and offer their homes to refugee families.

Community Leadership Role

Casework

I have dealt with many issues raised by residents that have affected them personally and also the wider community. I take on challenges daily and try to be fair with all parties concerned. I am not always able to find the perfect answers, but I always work to achieve a satisfactory compromise for all parties.

Impact – Working together with residents, partners and local authorities to find solutions and make improvements to my residents' lives.

Covid-19

During the past year I have continued supporting my residents throughout the pandemic. This has included getting help and support for vulnerable residents, including the essentials of shopping and medicine. I have been signposting residents and business owners to other support networks, helping residents and businesses to claim grants and access government support. I have also used my social media/written reports on a regular basis to share the government and local guidance/information. This has also continued with encouraging residents to take up the vaccination/booster when called.

Impact – Residents and businesses were aware of who to turn to for support and signposting.

Neighbourhood Link

I have been promoting the Police's Neighbourhood Link to all my residents via all my media channels and website. Neighbourhood Link is a community messaging service from Leicestershire Police that provides news and information about policing activity or initiatives, crime prevention advice as well as major incidents affecting their area.

Through this service you can receive messages from your local Neighbourhood Policing Team, local police or, in the event of a major incident or event affecting the whole of Leicestershire, from a partnership of agencies known as the Local Resilience Forum (LRF).

Impact – By promoting this service, it not only helps residents understand the issues within their area, but it promotes awareness of scams and crime related information. This in turn helps to prevent crime in the area and helps to share information that can identify suspects.

Local Pharmacy

I have worked with residents and the parish council to try and make improvements to the local pharmacy service. This has entailed multiple emails and telephone calls to the pharmacy's Head Office and continued pressure to ensure that a satisfactory service was provided and maintained for the community.

Impact – Head Office put in more resources and training to the local branch to ensure that the service was brought up to the required standard. This has now been maintained for several months.



Delivering leaflets to residents affected by proposed housing development



Litter picking with the Anstey and Cropston Litter Wombles



Laying my wreath on Armistice Day in Woodhouse on behalf of all the residents I represent in Leicestershire



Charity Trek,
supporting the Mayor
of Charnwood, raising
over £2,500 for Marie
Curie



Attending the Anstey Gala on
Saturday 4th September with
my fellow Charnwood
Borough Councillor



Partnership
working with the
local police beat
team.



Welcoming a young
person to County Hall to
see his flag design
produced and framed



Supporting the Mayor of Charnwood at his Living without Abuse Winter Ball to raise money for the charity



Attending the Midlands Connect Annual Conference on behalf of the Leader



Attending the opening of a new school extension with Neil O'Brien MP



Joining the Chairman of the County Council on a Burns Night event



Attending 'My Books, My Story' art exhibition in the Highcross Shopping Centre.

Over 50 children and young people took part, and their challenge was to choose a book that has had an impact on them and create a piece of art which expresses why



Speaking on BBC Radio Leicester to promote the 'Ask for Angela' Campaign



Wishing all our young people good luck with their exam results



Deborah Taylor @ClrDTaylor · Feb 23

I spoke at the budget meeting today @LeicsCountyHall on the support we provide for our most vulnerable residents and our children and families. Times are tough but we provide for our residents and we will continue to do so #children #families #costofliving



Speaking at the Budget meeting as the champion for children and families

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

- Contact with various departments and officers at Leicestershire County Council (LCC) for assistance with my case work. This has been via email, telephone calls and virtual/face to face meetings. I also deal with various departments at Charnwood Borough Council and Parish Councils within my division for case work. I also work with fellow councillors to solve issues
- Attended various information and catch-up meetings with officers from the Children and Families Service to gain information and advice and to move projects forward
- Dealt with developers regarding maintaining their estates whilst awaiting handovers to the relevant councils. This included rubbish, ground maintenance, vandalism and dog bins not being emptied
- Part of the Interview panel for new Academies to open new Special schools
- Contact with various utility companies to deal with local issues
- Contact with schools and businesses in my division
- Contact with Charnwood Police to deal with issues and prevent crime, deal with highway issues and Anti-Social Behaviour
- BBC Radio Leicester interviews
- BBC Politics Show interview
- Local Regional TV interviews.

Priorities for the immediate future are:

- Rural Crime, anti-social behaviour, and the future of neighbourhood policing
- Supporting all the Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within my division
- Have Community Speed Watch Schemes in all my villages
- Support the new Post Office as it opens in Anstey (this service supports some of the other smaller villages in my division)
- Support the new Loughborough Building Society as it opens in Anstey (this service supports some of the other smaller villages in my division)
- Continue to implement my local highway schemes through my Highway Fund.

2) Council Activities

Committees you serve on at County Hall

County Council: I have attended all meetings of the County Council during the year, and have spoken on several issues, including delivering my first Position Statement for Children and Families.

Deputy Leader: I was elected as Deputy Leader in May 2021. I have been honoured to serve in this role for the past year and was re-elected as Deputy Leader for the year 2022/23. This role involves supporting the Leader, Chief Executive, and senior officers in all matters and guides the direction of the council. It has been a very busy year and much of the time has been spent dealing with the financial pressures that the council faces as we are the lowest funded county council in the country.

We have also worked closely with the government and our MPs to look at securing a 'County Deal' for Leicestershire. This has taken up a large amount of my time and energy and continues into 2022/23.

I attend the Senior Co-ordination Group (weekly) with the Leader and senior colleagues, Cabinet Briefing, Cabinet, Growth Advisory Board, Corporate Asset Investment Fund Advisory Board,

Constitution Committee, Group Leaders' Meeting, CCG's Meetings, East Midlands Council's Leaders Meeting.

I represent the Leader as and when required. Lead the council in the Leader's absence.

Star Chambers – attended meetings to look at the forward finances for the department, in both the Children and Families Department but also the Regulatory Services that are part of my Portfolio.

Cabinet: Lead Member for Children and Families, Community Safety and Regulatory Services: I attend a variety of meetings with partners and officers at LCC within my role. I attend a weekly Lead member meeting with the Children and Families Director, Assistant Directors, and my Support Cabinet Lead Member. Other Heads of Service also attend some of these meetings to provide updates. I attend a monthly catch up with the Head of Regulatory Services, to discuss various service areas including Trading Standards, East Midlands Airport Import control, and Registration services.

As part of my Lead Member role, I attend:

Children Innovation Partnership Board (CIP) meeting; attended meetings with our partners Barnardo's. We have now progressed the partnership to form the ART Team (Intensive team around the family) and we have also progressed the partnership to acquiring and running small children centres to house some of our young people, including a parent and baby complex.

Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership; Also work alongside Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership Board. We also work together with both of the above and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Partnership and Leicester Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.

Police and Crime Panel (PCP); I am the representative on the PCP for the council, as the lead for community safety. I was elected Chairman of the panel at the AGM in June 2021. I took over as Chair at the same time that the new PCC was elected. Therefore, there has been a large change with the office of the PCC, and I have guided and supported the panel through this change.

We have also welcomed two new Independent Members and I led on their recruitment. We have also had the retirement of the Chief Constable in March 2022 and the Deputy Chief Constable has moved into the role on an interim basis. The retired Chief Constable very sadly passed away a few weeks after his retirement and I supported the panel through this.

The panel has made vast improvements over the year and is working well with the democratic support officers and the Office of the PCC. I have also worked on getting training in place to enable the panel to fulfil their duties with much more experience and knowledge.

Prevent Executive; I am the representative on the Prevent Executive for the council. This is to ensure the council meets their prevent duty. I have also undertaken some training this year on Prevent.

I am a member of the Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance (RIIA) Executive Board Meeting, which looks at how government improvement funding is spent across the region.

Senior Management Group (SMG); A meeting of the senior leadership in the Children and

Families Department. High level issues are shared and discussed.

Star Chamber; High level budget meeting, I attend as lead member for Children and Families and Regulatory Services.

East Midlands Council Lead Members: I attend the regional meeting of Lead Member for Children and Families. Meetings are held to discuss regional issues affecting all the Local Authorities.

LEEP; Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership; Partnership for ongoing education excellence.

School Forum; A termly meeting with partners from the education sector to discuss budgets and improvements needed.

Head Teacher catch ups; A regular catch up with Leicestershire School Head Teachers, once a term.

Send and Inclusion Board.

Health and Wellbeing Board.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Children in Care Council.

Supporting Young People After Care (SYPAC).

Scrutiny Commission when requested.

KIT; Attended many 'Keeping in Touch' meetings within various sections of the department. This enables me to meet the staff and find out what is working well and what areas need further work.

DfE meetings at LCC; attended various meetings during the year with Department of Education representatives.

Defining Children Services for the Future; attended meetings to have oversight of the work.

As Lead Member / Chair:

Social Care Panel.

Children and Families Partnership.

Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board (LSCSB).

Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALPB).

Corporate Parenting Board (Co-Chair with a young person).

Local committees/Outside Bodies

- Bradgate Park and Swithland Woods Committee of Management
- Bradgate Quarries Liaison Committee
- Groby Quarry Liaison Committee
- Loughborough Town Deal Board.

3) Learning and Development

All Member Briefings Attended throughout 2021/22

- Adult Social Care Demand Pressures and System Reform Proposals
- Equalities
- Member Highway Fund
- Corporate Parenting
- County Council's response to supporting Afghan Refugees
- Suicide Prevention
- Business Intelligence Service
- Safeguarding (Children and Adults) and Covid-19 Update
- Media and Social Media Training
- Leicester City Council Workplace Parking Levy
- Covid-19 – Multiple Briefings
- Trading Standards
- Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic bullying in schools

- Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the refreshed Communities Strategy
- Leicestershire Adult Learning Service
- Ukrainian Refugees
- Operational Policing Issues

- Capital Programme Delivery, Risks and Challenges.
- Covid, Comprehensive Spending Review update and Household Support Grant
- Communities, Funding and Coordination
- Local Bus Service Challenges and Impacts
- Strategic Plan and Communities Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Other Training / Webinars / Conferences / Meetings / Briefings: -

- Various Induction Sessions for the new Council
- Violence and Young People: Understanding the Causes and How to Prevent
- The Safe & Together Model: Creating Domestic abuse informed practice
- Big Conversation - Public place violence against women and girls
- Political Leadership: a whole Council approach to Children's Services
- Liberty Protects Safeguards and Preparing for Adulthood
- LGA Leadership Enhanced Children's Services Programme; two-day training course at Warwick University
- Trauma Informed Training - Barnardo's
- Police and Crime Panels Regional Conference – Virtual
- National Children and Adult Services Conference - Virtual
- HS2 East Leaders meeting.

Communications

I write and publish a monthly report in 'Your Local' magazine that is delivered to all villages within my division: <https://issuu.com/norwoodpress> In addition I attend various coffee mornings and events within my division on a regular basis. Now that the pandemic restrictions have eased, these events have started to take place.

I have attended most of my parish council meetings and kept in touch by email and telephone calls with the Clerks.

I have held virtual video calls, telephone calls and in person meetings with my residents when

requested. I have been very active with all my social media platforms and website. I have shared important information and guidance for residents. This has also included promoting the uptake of the vaccine.

I have also produced a website (link below). This also includes my fellow borough councillors who are within my Bradgate division. I am promoting the website through my social media, by regular newsletters sent to subscribers and in my monthly articles in 'Your Local' magazine. This is to ensure that I am as visible as possible for my residents, they are able to contact me easily, and that they can obtain relevant up-to-date information as they need it.

Social Media

Twitter: @CllrDTaylor

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CllrDTaylor

Instagram: [cllr_deborah_taylor](https://www.instagram.com/cllr_deborah_taylor)

Website: www.bradgateconservatives.org.uk

For updated news scan here:



Signed by Councillor:

Cllr Deborah Taylor

Date: 20/06/2022