

Leicestershire County Councillor Richard Shepherd's Report – February 3rd 2025:

Flooding:

On 7th February the County Council's Cabinet will consider a Report about flooding. The whole Report is available to read on the Council's website. It is Item 9 on the Agenda for the Cabinet Meeting on 7th February and is headed "Flooding in Leicestershire in January 2025 and implications for Lead Local Flood Authority and Local Highway Authority". Its purpose is described as "...to provide information on the impacts of the unnamed storm which affected Leicestershire on 6 January 2025, highlight the County Council's ongoing work as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), and set out proposals to support the LLFA's statutory duty in managing local flood risk. It also outlines the discretionary efforts by the County Council to aid local residents and businesses, and updates on the activities of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) regarding recent flood events and proposed actions to manage increased pressure on highways assets and resources." (The words are quoted from Paragraph 1 of the Report.) The County Council is of course the LHA as well as the LLFA.

Some points in the Report are:

During the storm "...significant rainfall led to the worst flooding event in recent history in Leicestershire. This is measured on the number of properties (both residential and business) that were subject to internal flooding. To date, an estimated 1000 properties across the LLR region and a confirmed 702 in Leicestershire have flooded internally; it is likely this number will increase." (Paragraph 24). The LLR is the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Resilience Forum (LRF).

Despite the severe impact of the storm on Leicestershire "...the impact was not so severe across the rest of the country. This has meant that the National Flood Recovery Framework has not been activated. Leicestershire County Council will continue to lobby the Government to provide support to affected communities;..." (Paragraph 4).

(A media release referred to below, headed "Fresh budget proposals factor in major flood clean up", outlines some actions proposed by the County Council.)

"Where the number of properties flooded hits the relevant thresholds, the LLFA is required to undertake a formal investigation under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. As a result of the above, many Section 19 investigations were triggered. Whilst investigations have been undertaken and reports completed or in progress, there remain several others that still require significant work. In addition, the LLFA is progressing business cases to seek funding from the Environment Agency for a number of flood alleviation projects." (Paragraph 29).

"The role of the LLFA during a flood event is supporting the response through engagement at multi-agency meetings, as well as attending the various enacted incident cells. The other key role of the LLFA during the incident is the coordination of internal flooding records used to inform the Government."

There is a lot more information available in the Report.

An appendix to the Report, also on the website, is a strongly worded letter to the Minister for Water and Flooding, Emma Hardy MP. The letter is signed by the Acting Leader of the

County Council, the Leader of Rutland County Council, and the Leaders of all seven Borough and District Councils in Leicestershire.

The letter sets out forcefully the situation people are facing locally. Among other things, the letter calls for:

“Immediate funding support to affected local agencies and communities to deal with incident and immediate aftermath,”;

“Additional funding accessible to a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to enable investigations, adaptation and project identification to happen at pace rather than over a number of years – and drive the delivery of small-scale alleviation projects, quick wins that can make a big difference”:

“Review of role of LLFA to provide powers over risk management authorities to enable delivery of solutions where multiple parties involved”.

The letter also says that “Current regulations and funding mean we are doing a major disservice to those many devastated communities up and down the country.”

Bus service LC8:

I have previously referred to an oversight concerning the timetable issued for the new bus service LC8. The oversight was the removal of the 17.40 journey from Loughborough to Melton Mowbray. A County Council officer has since confirmed that the Centrebus timetable effective from 13th January includes the reinstatement of the journey.

Recent information:

I should like to draw attention to some of the media releases and other information which I have recently forwarded. They are:

A media release headed “New 2040 transport blueprint for Leicestershire goes live”, forwarded on 29th January 2025.

Information from the Environment Agency about updated flood risk maps, also forwarded on 29th January 2025.

A media release headed “Fresh budget proposals factor in major flood clean up”, forwarded on 30th January 2025.