

This week's news from Ben Bradley MP



Parliament's has been in recess, which means I've been out and about locally

Parliament was in recess this week, meaning I've spent the whole week up here. A nice change from London!

I spent the week doing all sorts, from finalising the County Council's budget to visiting local sports clubs and so much more. Parliament is back next week though and with issues like the Rwanda Bill and the Spring Budget coming up, it's going to be a big few weeks down in London.

Keep in touch!



[Join my constituents only Facebook group here!](#)



County Council Budget revealed

This week we revealed our budget proposals for Nottinghamshire County Council for the coming year. Whilst Councils all around us are under pressure, Nottinghamshire County Council is well placed to tackle these challenges and continue to deliver sustainable public services in the future.

As Labour at Mansfield District and in at the City Council are making huge cuts following high profile examples of their wasteful spending, the Conservative-led County is investing in those services, and continuing to deliver a major programme of school building and other capital improvements.

Whilst those Labour Councils have failed to manage their budgets effectively, and the talk in the city is now of a potential 15% Council Tax increase, in the County we've got a long term plan to reform and modernise our services that has made us sustainable, and means that we've never taken the maximum Council Tax rise in the three years that I've been the Leader.

The headlines from our Budget for 2024/5 are:

- we're going to be spending £43m more on key services like social care and helping vulnerable children.
- we're adding an additional £4m (almost a 10% increase) in to our roads funding to help get things back up to scratch, ahead of the introduction of the new regional Transport Fund under the Mayor.
- we're continuing to focus on prevention and early help, delivering more services in the areas with the highest levels of need.
- we're not cutting any front line services, and residents can be assured that they don't need to worry about those services disappearing.

What all of this shows is that, with good management and a long term plan, we can run a tight ship that offers ever-increasing value for money and can invest more in areas that residents want us to prioritise.

It also shows that if you want that locally, in Mansfield and in Nottinghamshire, you need a Conservative council!

[Read more on this here](#)



Mansfield Rugby Club

On Tuesday I visited Official Mansfield Rugby Club where Leicester Tigers were putting on holiday training camps right from u7s up to u16s.

You must know by now I'm a proper sports nut, so it's brilliant to see they've had 100+ kids down here already when I visited on Tuesday, with the girls sessions still to come, starting on the Wednesday.

Sport is a really powerful tool for helping young people develop, and Mansfield are a club with a proper community ethos, that is really making a difference.

I was down here not so long ago for netball too, where they're now working with England Netball to make more facilities and sessions available here. Loads going on.

Anyway, great too see so many lads out playing rugby today. Decided not to put my boots on in the end as I'd only have shown them up (and probably broken a million safeguarding rules).


Top sport. Top club. Well done



CHURCH SIDE

Large scale patching

[Give us feedback on this Improvement](#)

 Church Side, Mansfield, UK



Patching works across Mansfield

Here you can see an example of the road patching works that have been completed in Mansfield in recent weeks. As the weather improves, Highways teams will increasingly be able to shift away from emergency repairs and back to doing much more patching and resurfacing.

Last week the County Council announced a £4m increase in funding for these kinds of major repairs, and the full programme of work for the summer will be announced in a few weeks.

A lot of people have rightly pointed out that it's the main roads in Mansfield that need the major works. That is why main road resurfacing will be part of the capital programme for the summer, which will be announced in a few weeks.

**Keep up with our work on
Nottinghamshire's highways
here**



Mansfield Diagnostic Centre

There will be a dedicated information session next week for local people to learn more about plans to bring the second phase of building Nottinghamshire's first Community Diagnostics Centre.

The event is being hosted by Sherwood Forest Hospitals in the main reception of Mansfield Community Hospital on Stockwell Gate between 10am and 4pm on Tuesday 20 February.

The event is open to all. People attending can expect to learn more about the plans to deliver even better access to tests and investigations they need in one visit, reducing the time it takes for patients to receive an 'all clear' or diagnosis sooner.

The CDC project has already begun, with a huge increase in tests and scans already being made available at the Community Hospital, but the Government's plan is to deliver significant new space to grow this further, and the new Diagnostic Centre building will be delivered starting this summer.

[Find out more about the Diagnostic Centre here](#)

Water companies

MUST NOT

profit from *environmental
damage*


Plan
For
Water

Tougher penalties for water companies

This week Government set out plans to ban the bonuses for water bosses that fail to meet the requirements for protecting our rivers and watercourses.

This is one part of the Plan for Water, and one of various measures being rolled out to clean up our environment.

The proposal is for water company bosses to be banned from receiving bonuses if a company has committed serious criminal breaches.

[You can find out more on this
here](#)



Rail Forum and supply chain meeting

On Friday, I met with with the Rail Forum and supply chain businesses from the sector, to talk about the challenges and opportunities we've got going on, both nationally and locally. Hugely helpful to hear direct from the businesses that drive our economy.

Our region is among the world's biggest rail 'clusters' with a huge number and scale of businesses doing everything from making trains, to managing data, to working on the tracks. Massive industry

that supports tens of thousands of jobs here.



Stop! Think Fraud campaign

The government has launched a new campaign to tackle fraud and take the fight to the fraudsters.

Fraud costs the taxpayer about £6.8 billion per year and so it is vital that people have the tools necessary to avoid being victims in the first place

[Watch the campaign video here](#)

[Visit the campaign website here](#)

Meeting environmental groups



Also on Friday, I met with a coalition of environmental groups and campaigners today to talk about a range of issues, from public transport to housing, clean energy and investment opportunities. Really positive conversation and there are lots of opportunities to do things like improve our public transport network, or improve our energy mix and boost energy security, which are coming our way through the new Combined Authority this year.

Roads survey!

I need your support to ensure that we can deliver major new road investment with the



£1.5bn Transport Fund that I've secured for our region.

This is really important.

Please share your views on the roads using the link below!

[Fill in the survey here](#)

Our economic plan

The PM explains our plans for the economy, and tackling the cost of living!

Worth a watch actually.



Even Labour MPs don't know what Keir Starmer stands for

Rosie Duffield urged the party's leadership not to sit on the fence and give voters "a bit more clarity" ahead of the General Election.

Even Labour MP's say Keir Starmer has no idea and no plans...

[Read more here](#)



New Padel club in Mansfield

Brilliant news that the proposed Padel club at Mansfield Town Football Club has been approved.

Padel is a growing sport and one of the few that I haven't actually tried. When the club opens I'm going to make sure to get myself down and give padel a go and I'd encourage everyone in Mansfield to give it a try.

[Read more here](#)

The logo for Pharmacy First NHS. It features the text "Pharmacy FIRST" in green, with "FIRST" in a larger, bold font. To the right is a blue and green graphic consisting of three curved lines and a white cross. The NHS logo is in the top right corner.

**Pharmacy
FIRST**

NHS

Get prescription medicines
straight from a local pharmacy

Pharmacy First making a difference

Brilliant news that the Pharmacy First reforms that came into place in January have already begun to have a difference in Nottinghamshire. The reforms allow for qualified pharmacists to prescribe medication for common conditions like sore throats, ear infections and others.

This helps to ensure that GP's can deal with more serious issues and those with complex problems are able to access their GP.

There are more than 200 community pharmacies signed up to the scheme in Nottinghamshire so there are plenty of options all across the county should you fall ill.

[Read more on this here](#)



Clearing a couple of things up!

A couple of myths to bust this week, as residents are contacting me having got the wrong end of the stick.

MYTH 1: I absolutely haven't closed Mansfield Citizens Advice. I've seen the news, Conservative Councillors have been speaking with the CAB to try and help. The budget reductions that have happened have been as a result of Labour-run Mansfield District Council's budget cuts. Not me. The Labour Mayor of Mansfield and his Cabinet have taken this decision, not me.

Where I am responsible at Nottinghamshire County Council, we continue to support the CAB through our Local Communities Fund. I have also been to Government and secured more funding for Councils. Conservative Opposition Councillors on the District actually proposed an amendment to Labour's Budget that would have kept the CAB open, but Labour said no.

MYTH 2: Unfortunately I don't have the power to sack Councillors. Following Ashfield Independent Councillor Tom Hollis' further conviction and fines in court this week I have been asked why I continue to keep him as a Councillor. Unfortunately only the public can remove a Councillor, and the only way he can be forcibly removed is if he is imprisoned, goes bankrupt or resigns. I don't have the power to do that. I wish I did, but I don't.

I want to make clear that Councillor Hollis is not part of my administration, does not have any role in the running of the Council, and if I had the power I would have removed him long ago. Unfortunately I don't have that power, and the Ashfield Independent group continue to offer him additional responsibilities and allowances. I think that's wrong. I think he brings all Councillors in to disrepute. I've previously called on him to do the right thing and resign. Unfortunately I don't have any power to forcibly remove him. Hope that clears a few things up



Experience is absolutely key! Why am I standing to be the first mayor of the East Midlands?

If the election for the new regional Mayor for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire was a job application, then I'm the only candidate who would tick the boxes in terms of having the right experience and record of delivery. I'm the only one who is tried and tested, and that has proven they can deliver on the key things that the Mayor will be responsible for. The Mayor will be responsible for £4bn and building this whole new organisation from scratch. Experience is key.

There's nobody else in the country who has the experience that I do of our new devolution deal, of how it works and what is needed. I'm the only person who has been part of it since day one, from both the local side and also working on the national legislation. I negotiated and signed the deal, I helped draft the law that creates it, I'm already working on building the organisation. That experience is unique and can't be matched.

I already work on all of our region's major growth projects and opportunities, such as our Freeport, Investment Zone, Development Company and STEP Fusion Energy. I've been one of the people who has successfully secured these investments and brought them here - around £25bn in total, including STEP which is the single biggest investment in our region since the M1. For every other candidate these responsibilities will be totally new, but I've been doing it for years.

I've worked with Government to deliver major investment, I've successfully run one of the country's largest Councils that is among the most financially stable in Britain, I'm the only candidate that has run a Transport Authority, and I'm one of the people who finally got this devolution deal over the line after the region had been trying for a decade. If this were a job application, no other candidate gets anywhere close to this level of experience. That's why other candidates can only give you generic statements about 'making things better', whilst I'm the only one who can tell you 'what' and 'how'.

If we want to ensure that the new Combined Authority gets off to the right start, that plans are made well, the structure works and that we can deliver the best outcomes, we need a Mayor with the experience to manage it properly. We can't afford to elect someone

who is going to take a year just to 'get their feet under the table' and figure it out. If they get it wrong, then it could cause more problems than it solves.

Choosing the right person on May 2nd is absolutely key.

More questions about this role? Click here to read my FAQs page!

And finally... This week's column



'Great to see this investment in our area's sporting facilities.'

Thank-you for reading my latest update, I hope you have a great weekend!

Warmest regards,

**Ben Bradley MP,
for Mansfield & Warsop**



Keep up to date with my work



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