

Win Some – Lose Some

Win – Notice of Motion proposing an urgent Corporate Peer Review by the Local Government Association

Cllr Russell Chadwick and I submitted a Notice of Motion to the December Meeting of Cheshire East Council. Whilst we weren't allowed to present/debate at that point we have attended three committee meetings since, promoting the importance of the council embracing a LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, particularly in view of the ongoing budgetary overspend.

We are delighted to report that at the 13 February meeting, members of the Corporate Policy Committee members unanimously supported our proposal and our successful call for a Corporate Peer Challenge facilitated by the LGA, offers CEC a valuable opportunity for an independent assessment of the council's governance, fiscal management and service delivery to our residents. The initiative will hold officers and councillors to account to ensure we are offering the services our residents deserve. It will also help the Labour/Independent administration to gain insight from experienced professionals in local government.

Lose – Call in request of the Car Parking Strategy

With the support of fifteen other councillors, I submitted a Call in Request of the decision taken by the Highways Committee on 25 January in relation to the Car Parking Strategy.

We were concerned at the number of errors/anomalies within consultation documents which remained uncorrected in both committee reports and verbal presentation, along with the failure to consider all Council Policies as part of the decision making process.

The Call In was considered last week and the Monitoring Officer of Cheshire East issued his written opinion earlier this week. Outcome: Call in Dismissed:

The MO felt the decision aligned with the council's Local Transport Plan and found no evidence to suggest that members of the committee did not take consideration of information or that comments of the public were not considered'.

I questioned 'proposed mitigation' to address potential displacement of vehicles, particularly the lack of a budget for this work, although potential cost also formed part of 'strategies'.

I was surprised to learn that, 'mitigation is unlikely to be in place when the new charging policy goes live in October, and is only likely to occur when there is hard evidence of displacement'.

Nevertheless, we continue to represent concerns raised:

Cllr Sue Adams, presented evidence of ownership in relation to the Disley Car Park, resulting in council officers offering to visit the village to consider concerns.

During the last week I have been contacted by residents, of grave concern is, 'the additional challenge this creates for residents with restricted mobility, without offroad parking close to home'.

Officers committed to work with communities as the expansion of car park charges is rolled out, which hopefully provides a good opportunity over the next few months for us to continue to raise awareness of 'issues' and hopefully achieve amelioration for our communities.

Thank you for your support

Cllr Rachel Bailey
Audlem Ward
23 February 2024