

## Barry Champion CC

### County Councillor for Market Harborough East

(incl. the parishes of East Langton; Great Bowden; Thorpe Langton and West Langton)

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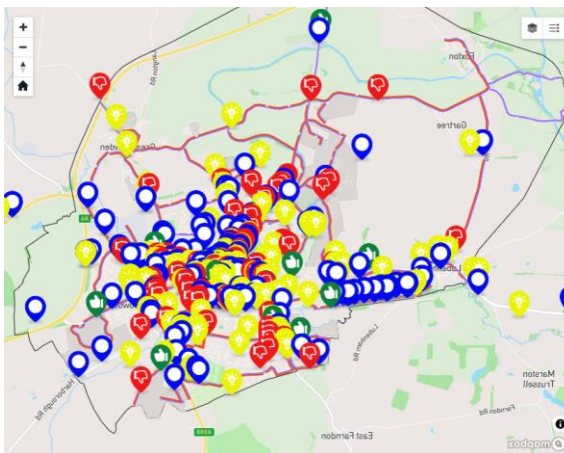
The inflationary impact of the cost-of-living crisis may be coming to an end, but its effects are far reaching and will be long lived.

The 2024 Councils budget has been noted as it's 'toughest ever', but still the Council has been able to maintain a balanced budget, steering well clear of the dreaded 'section 114' bankruptcy notice that so many other councils face.

A great deal has been done this year to look at how the Council runs itself and how it spends your money. We have been able to continue to ring fence money spent on the most vulnerable in our community and Leicestershire County Council continues to be one of the most efficient councils in the country, despite receiving the lowest funding.

### Electoral Division Activities and Committees

Highways continues to attract a great deal of interest from my residents, especially relating to cycles and paths. A new initiative at LCC is the 'Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan' otherwise known as the LCWIP.



These plans set out both the vision and priorities for cycling and walking improvements to create practical and convenient cycling and walking networks, this in turn encourages people to travel more sustainably.

Market Harborough is in a unique position to maximise this initiative through the allocation of developer contributions (£106 million) from all the construction work in the area. This has ensured that unlike many areas undergoing the LCWIP process, we will actually be able to make it happen.

There is an on-going public consultation and as can be seen in the graphic on the left. Market Harborough residents are making their views known.

I am actively working with the new Neighbourhood Forums to ensure we make the most of this initiative.



I have continued to work with LCC Highways on a One-Way system for Clarence Street, that so many residents have been asked me to pursue.

It is a very long process and currently being assessed by outside consultants to see if it can be included in the Harborough Transport Strategy. The outcome from this consultation is anticipated very soon

I will continue to monitor the situation and press the resident's views.

Another area that has caused a great deal of concern relates to the place children use to cross the road outside Little Bowden School on Scotland Road, the photo on the right shows this location.



Cars are often parked opposite the school entrance, making it difficult for passing motorists to see the children as they wait to cross, several near misses have occurred, with the school's staff having to chaperone the children every morning and afternoon to ensure their safety.

I met with the school's head just before Christmas to access the situation and followed up with a meeting with Highways to find a solution.

A public consultation is now taking place with a view to adding additional 'KEEP CLEAR' markings opposite the school and remarking the existing markings.

I sat on a special committee earlier in the year to assess the future of several of the County's Recycling & Household Waste sites. The Market Harborough site was targeted for closure, with the newly improved site in Kibworth being considered as the alternative.

With such tight budgets and such close proximity between the sites, it was difficult to justify keeping both sites and it looked like we would lose the Harborough site. The public consultation received overwhelming support to keep the site and fortunately after an unexpected last-minute influx of additional government funding, the site has been saved.

I have often heard residents say that they feel decisions are already made and public consultations a waste of time. It's pleasing to see that when funds are available, resident's views do count and are acted upon.

I will continue to work with the Neighbourhood Forums and Parish Councils within my Division to help them interact smoothly with LCC and ensure that their and their residents views are heard.

I have always believed that a councillor's job is to represent the views of their residents whilst simultaneously upholding the standards and integrity of the Council.

A glimpse at some of the work that I do within the community is shown above. It is the scrutiny at committee that ensures the second aspect.

The committees on which I sit encompass a wide range of the council's activities from scrutinising how we help and protect the most vulnerable in our community through the Adults & Communities committee, how we undergo and manage change in our structure, incorporating new ways of working at the Employment committee, how the council manages its business and finances through the auditing process within the Corporate Governance committee and finally how our excellent Fire & Rescue service operates.

It is only through the detailed scrutiny and assessment that I obtain from these committees that I can feel assured that we have a well-run, financially adept and caring council, trying its very best under very difficult circumstances to serve the community in which we all reside.

### **Council Committees and outside bodies I serve on**

- County Council
- Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Employment Committee
- Corporate Governance
- Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority
- LLRCFA Employment Committee - Chairman

Signed by Councillor Barry Champion

Date: 03<sup>rd</sup> July 2024