

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

4 October 2023

Council speaks out against ‘war on motorists’

Fenland councillors have vowed to reject proposals to introduce “anti-motorist” schemes in the district that are “deliberately designed to force people out of their cars”.

At a Full Council meeting of Fenland District Council on Monday (2 October), members agreed a motion against the introduction of initiatives such as road charging, congestion charging, ‘20-minute cities’, and traffic reduction measures, in and around the district.

Members said such measures being proposed or supported by Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority were widely perceived as “war on motorists”.

They also stressed that they would not work in a rural area such as Fenland where people rely on their car to carry out their daily lives.

The motion was put forward by Cllr Dr Haq Nawaz, district member for Whittlesey East and Villages.

He said: “We are aware of the negative impacts of cars on the environment and share the concerns, as well as the noble objectives, of achieving net zero carbon modes of transport. However, to do so too quickly, too drastically, too punitively, without having viable alternatives, would be too disruptive and, in some cases, constitute an existential threat to individuals’ wellbeing.”

Supporting the motion, Council Leader Cllr Chris Boden said: “They are trying to make car journeys as difficult as possible for people so that they will no longer travel by car. What sort of mentality is behind trying to punish individuals who are merely trying to get to work, get to the shops, get their children to school? What’s appropriate to Cambridge city is not necessarily appropriate to Fenland and places like Fenland. We all know that at this time the vast majority of people need a car in order to conduct their daily lives. We’re being asked to make sacrifices which will massively damage the economy and the lives of people in Fenland which is unacceptable unless there is an appropriate alternative to the current situation.”

Cllr Steve Tierney added: “I’m proud that we’ve brought this motion. We are a small council; I don’t fool myself into thinking that anything we decide here today will stop this narrative in its tracks. But if nobody speaks up and these ideas are just allowed to press on then they don’t stop until reality makes them stop. By that point they can have caused a lot of harm, a lot of expense and a lot of damage, to people, to individuals, to families, to society. I support this motion; I think the crazy idea that we can somehow take all the cars off the road to try and change the weather is a terrible narrative and one that we have to oppose.”

- See the agenda and read Cllr Nawaz’s motion in full at: [Agenda for Council on Monday, 2nd October, 2023, 4.00 pm - Fenland District Council](#)
- View Fenland’s Full Council meeting on YouTube at: [Council - 02/10/2023 - YouTube](#)

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Notes to Editors

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