

Market Harborough Local Elections, May 6th 2021
Candidates Statements

Statement from Peter James
Lib Dem Party Candidate

Summary:

If elected I will support the CEE Bill

I will seek to ensure that Leicestershire County Council become accountable for re cycled waste from beginning to end.

I will seek much more public engagement.

I will promote the introduction of high-quality public transport which needs more innovation.

I will expect energy use on new developments to figure highly on Planning Applications and use electricity as a source.

I would like to see many more electric car charging points in public areas as an experiment initially.

I will encourage much more woodland plantations and flood management.

I will encourage supermarkets and others to dramatically reduce packaging.

We must manage change carefully to protect people who may lose their jobs, pay increased taxes, and have restrictions placed on their lives.

We must sell change to at least 80% of the population to achieve success.

My Views and Commitments for Discussion.

I refer in my Election Leaflets generally to climate change, but I am happy to refer in more detail to the proposed CEE Bill here. So, let us take each section one by one and consider the likely impact on the world's population and for us in the UK. There is going to be a huge challenge for Politicians and Elected Councillors to manage the changes required. Not only in the UK but across the world.

Climate

There is an acceptance that we need to reduce emissions and attempt to halt the rising world temperatures. We should target specific areas. The National Trust have produced a UK Climate Change Hazard Map which predicts increased areas of flooding and rising heat which will affect buildings and people.

All new residential planning applications should include for electrical heating or ground heat recovery. The building industry is being too slow to adapt to change.

Challenges: Power Generation Capacity, High cost of Utility Bills, more investment required in renewable energy, home solar power with battery storage capacity.

Personally, I use an Energy Supplier who sources energy from wind turbines.

Motor Vehicles: There is a push to increase the numbers of battery powered electric cars.

Challenges: Little charging infrastructure to support vehicles, limited range, limited supply of lithium in the world for battery manufacture, high cost of electric vehicles and their replacement batteries, low residual cost on resale. The conversion to electric cars is doing huge damage to traditional car production around the world and putting many people out of work. How do we manage this?

Likely to be quickly superseded by Hydrogen Electric technology.

Personally, I drive a Smart City Car around the town, and I have an Eco Mini for longer journeys. I would tax the SUVs off the road.

Aircraft: Technology is improving, and remote communication is improving reducing the need for some business flight travel.

Challenges: For domestic travel we need to invest much more into high-speed rail and where speed is not essential high quality commuter rail. But ticket costs are far too high in the UK and

domestic rail cannot compete with low-cost airlines. It is more difficult to evaluate international air travel, but this is important for trade and other reasons. What do we do about holiday travel? The pandemic has all but destroyed the air industry with many redundancies throughout already.

Personally, I have flown lots with my work in the Leisure Industry and will probably continue to do so but I always consider other options.

Ecological

I am horrified at the damage that mankind is doing to the world on the land and in the oceans. I was in the Philippines 2 years ago and about 40 miles from the coastline in the Pacific Ocean we came across a huge slick of plastic coffee cups! It covered an area about the size of a football pitch and there were many more around. I have business friends in Malaysia who tell me that the UK has been shipping UK waste supposedly for recycling to there and it's sorted by criminal gangs using illegal almost slave labour from Indonesia to sort and dump it in the sea.

As soon as I became a District Councillor I questioned where Harborough's recycling waste ends up and it appears that some of it does in fact end up in Indonesia.

In the UK we need to do much more by planting woodlands, better river management and protecting species.

Challenges: I was horrified to listen to a radio programme this week explaining that there has been a huge increase in sales of plastic grass and would you believe it plastic hedges!! People are the challenge too!!

Personally, I have been calling for all waste to be traceable from source to its destination and for the suppliers of such materials to be accountable for it from beginning to end.

We should minimize packaging to reduce the need for recycling in the first place and supermarkets should be held to account.

Emergency Bill

The Citizens Assembly is an interesting concept and approach. But I am not sure how it will operate. Is its purpose to "sell" the new agenda or will it consist of Green supporters and opponents? Will it inform and advise Government on the way forward. Should we replicate this at local level.

Personally, I have called for more public involvement at local level we need to do much more locally.

The Impact on People and Economic Consequences

Now we must face some harsh realities – the real challenges that Politicians and Local Councillors must deal with going forward.

Many of the matters discussed here have a high cost for example:

The food we eat with less reliance on red meat will cost more.

Electric Cars will cost more to buy and maintain.

Good quality public transport will cost more.

Flying will cost more.

Energy will cost more.

People may lose their jobs because of any new Climate Change Laws.

If not carefully managed the divide between rich and poor will widen.

We need to allow developing countries to use more energy which means that developed countries like the UK must use much less?

Laws will be required to enforce change; will people obey them?

We have already witnessed civil disobedience during the pandemic. What will happen with new Climate Change Laws? It is exceedingly difficult to impose change in a democratic system of Government. The Citizens Assembly has a huge task to sell change.

What will the costs be on the public purse given the need to recover financially from the pandemic?