

Last week, Cllr Heslop wrote a piece in this newspaper trying to justify the actions of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council under his leadership with regard to introducing parking charges in West Malling.

His simplistic analysis of the situation & dismissal of everything the Parish Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the nearly 5000 people who have objected to his proposals is very sad but telling about how he feels about West Malling.

To imply that the Parish Council have no regard for cost is plain wrong. You only need to read their statements on www.westmallings.info to see this. Insinuating that their ideas were baseless & unworkable shows a lack of understanding of the situation.

Only a parking approach for the whole of West Malling will work & his assumption that introducing charges will change anything cannot be backed up by them and is naive at best.

Both he & his officers have refused to meet with the Parish Council, attend public meetings, or provide information to justify their reports & statements. This is against both their own Constitution & Parish Charter.

The questions for him are simple,

'Why aren't you listening to the residents, visitors and small independent businesses of West Malling?';

The Parish Council firmly believe, given six months & access to the financial information, they can come up with a robust cost neutral plan that will work for the residents, visitors & businesses in West Malling. Why not give them a chance to show you? ; and

They remain willing to sit down with them to resolve this, why won't they?

Regards

Richard Selkirk
West Malling Resident