

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 21 JULY 2022

Question to Cllr Wilson Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture

By Cllr Ford

Question

Sitting in the south-east of the county, Tamworth shares a significant length of border with Warwickshire. Given that political boundaries mean very little to most residents, what guidance can be given to ensure that cross-border issues are resolved in a satisfactory and timely manner?

Reply

The county council has a strong track record of working with partners regionally and nationally to deliver against our ambitions. We proactively engage in a range of regional strategic partnerships such as Midlands Connect and the Midlands Engine to support the delivery of our priorities. We also engage in a range of local government networks, such as the County Council Network and Local Government Association, that provide opportunities to continue to build strong strategic relationships with our neighbouring authorities and beyond.

At a service level, we have a range of different mechanisms and arrangements in place to address cross-border issues. A few examples include:

- The School Organisation Team works closely with all neighbouring authorities on school place planning matters. Recently the Team have worked to secure additional school places to mitigate the impact of proposed residential developments on the border.
- The Highways Team maintains good working relationships with all neighbouring councils. Staffordshire County Council is a founder member of the Midlands Highway Alliance Plus, 35 local highway authorities working together to share learning, best practice, and closer collaboration.
- Within Adult Social Care there are a range of operational arrangements in place to support cross-border arrangements, for example Staffordshire residents accessing social care services, such as a care home in another local authority area.
- In my own portfolio, we have some significant examples of cross border working. Warwickshire and Staffordshire Library colleagues

regularly share best practice and initiatives such as the Community Managed Library Model, with volunteers from both areas sharing their experiences and learning.

We fully appreciate that residents do not recognise boundaries in terms of accessing public services, and we work well with our neighbouring authorities. Staffordshire County Council is committed to working with all relevant partners to deliver the best possible outcomes for Staffordshire.