

CABINET

Date and Time: Thursday, 14 March 2019 at 7pm

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Ambler, Cockarill, Kinnell (arrived 7.02pm), Neighbour (Chairman), Oliver, Radley

In attendance:

Councillors Parker, Crampton, Foster, Burchfield

Officers:

Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Daniel Hawes	Planning Policy Manager

I 10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Bailey.

I 11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

I 12 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

Mr Fraser read out a prepared statement (attached to the minutes)

I 13 EXAMINATION OF THE HART LOCAL PLAN - STRATEGY AND SITES

Cabinet considered a response to the Inspector's letter dated 26 February 2019 (attached as Appendix 1).

DECISION

- A. That the The Hart Local Plan - Strategy and Sites (the Plan) modifications recommended by the Inspector in his letter dated 26 February 2019 in respect of the housing requirement, trajectory, the Plan period and the removal of Policy SS3 (and other associated changes) be agreed.
- B. That a reference is included in the Plan to highlight the Council's aspirations to plan for long-term needs beyond the Plan period, which could include the potential delivery of a new settlement but this, as a potential growth option, will need to be fully considered and evidenced in a future review of the Plan or in a Development Plan Document.

- C. The Plan now carries great weight and subject to the modifications agreed, now represents approved policy of the Council. Therefore, for the purposes of planning decision-making and the Planning Scheme of Delegation, development that accords with the Plan does not now amount to departures from the development plan that require referral to Planning Committee or Council.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm

Statement made by Mr Bill Fraser:

“While congratulating the Council on achieving a local plan that will satisfy the Inspector as to its soundness, providing the new settlement plan is removed, I think paras 3.2.6 and 4.4 1/2/3 of the Council’s Paper A omit a critical part of his letter.

He says: “To find the Plan sound, I must therefore be satisfied that a new settlement within the identified AoS is the most appropriate growth strategy to meet long-term needs, **when considered against reasonable alternatives.**” (Inspector’s letter para 19).

For the new town to be sound, he says, would require “further SA work, which would need to be done in an impartial manner with sufficient evidence to support its findings **and comparisons with alternative options.**” (Inspector’s letter para 35).

In relation to the above, the plan mentions urban extensions as an alternative to the new settlement, **but not regeneration of the district’s urban centres.**

If the council is to continue spending significant amounts of residents’ money on the idea of a new settlement, the work on alternatives indicated by the Inspector should first be carried out before embarking on a Development Plan Document for a new settlement.

Evidence was provided to the Inspector by Rural Hart Association that regeneration of Fleet could be self-funding and provide more homes, in addition to the other benefits it would bring to the district. No doubt the same would apply to Blackwater, Hook and Yateley.

The Council is now required to prepare Hart’s schedule of Major and Minor modifications (MMs). **This should include, if a new settlement ambition is retained, a commitment to provide a robust and impartial comparison with the alternative of urban regeneration.** This will give residents the reassurance that their Council will respect the advice of the Inspector and the Vision to maintain “...an attractive, largely rural area with thriving towns and villages”.