

Member Speaking at the Meeting

Member Statement from Cllr David Tooke, Local Member for Cranborne and Alderholt, regarding agenda item 8 relating to the Local Plan

One of the Key Decisions you are considering today is whether to continue with the multiple Draft Local Plans and Options drawn up by predecessor bodies, or to develop a unified Dorset Council wide plan.

I would draw your attention to some of the excellent principles that underlay the old East Dorset Options Consultation document.

This provided seven clear objectives which I believe, if properly adhered to in the plan then developed would lead to a strong and generally accepted way forward.

Of these Seven Objectives some are very relevant to the new Dorset Council area, and could be very simply adapted.

Objective 1 - To manage and safeguard the natural environment of (East) Dorset

Objective 2 - To maintain and improve the character of the towns and villages, and to create vibrant local centres

Objective 3 - To adapt to the challenges of Climate Change

This Objective calls for reducing the impact of **carbon emissions from transport** by more sustainable patterns of development in accessible locations.

This Objective becomes even more significant in view of our declaration of a Climate Emergency.

Objective 4 - To enable the mixed economy of (East) Dorset to grow, and to develop new employment sectors – and should relate to the work of the LEP.

Objective 5 - Which states that: Sufficient housing will be provided to **address local needs**, whilst **maintaining the character of local communities**.

Objective 6 - To reduce the need for people to travel and to have more travel choices

This is one of the key Objectives and is crucial to the ability of the eventual Plan to meet most of the other Objectives.

It states, specifically:

Development will be located in **the most accessible locations**, focused on prime transport corridors and town centres. **New residential development will be located either close to existing facilities, or where good transport links exist to such facilities.**

It is supported in the Vision Statement which says:

Development will be focused on locations accessible by different modes of transport and along the main transport corridors, bus routes and town centres. Transport corridors along the A347, A348, B3073, B3072 and B3074 will be enhanced to promote a wider choice of transport.

Objective 7 - To help our communities to thrive and help people support each other.

Unfortunately when it came to the Site Allocations section, three of these excellent Objectives seem to have been ignored – Objectives 3, 5 and 6.

The options Consultation sought to put at least 40% of the required development for East Dorset in a village on the edge of the Council Area, which is remote from employment, has no public transport suitable for commuters, is nowhere near any of the main transport corridors and where most households are forced to maintain two cars.

Clearly this conflicts with Objectives 3 and 6, and the volume of housing suggested is very much more than is required for Local needs, and would dramatically change the character of the Local Community, violating Objective 5.

I would urge Cabinet to accept all or most of the Objectives contained in the document, and ensure they are properly applied within a new Dorset wide Local Plan.