

Supplementary Information **Regeneration Strategy - Deputations**

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL
7 November 2018

Dear Councillor

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next 7 November 2018 meeting of the Council, the following supplementary information that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

8 Cabinet Recommendations

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Thank you for this opportunity to address you.

1. My first point concerns the Strategy's statement that "Communication is crucial for the regeneration programme." (11.1) and its expressed methods. May I urge the Council to ensure that all surveys and any public consultation documents be made available as hard copy in every Borough Library so that residents don't feel disenfranchised by solely online material or indeed Council Magazines (Serving You) that require a 3 month lead time so may quickly be out of date. It is wholly inaccurate to assume that even a majority of adults – young or old – use online devices for reading consultation papers or completing surveys. Even savvy younger adults will not use Facebook. Some tell me that their working lives and small mobile phones make it impractical for them to access Council media, so please be inclusive in your communications.

2. Regarding Governance and Management (p.25) External Stakeholders surely include residents and professionals in our public sector education and medical facilities, yet residents are not able to access the Programme Projects (p11 para 1) – with sensitive material redacted – that the Governance Structure indicates should be shared for "recommendations/information/advice". Without this detailed underpinning programme of projects, how can residents make any meaningful comments or recommendations? Please ensure that the "full demographic of the borough" (p. 6) is reached by providing hard copies in our libraries.

3. Hayling's Transport Infrastructure Report has still not been published and this is key to determining any future developments on Hayling. Does this not make the Draft Regeneration Strategy premature in its Hayling Vision?

4. Focussing on the Vision's Hayling statement (p.21):

- "flood defences supporting development"(para 1): even before Climate Change's predicted rising sea levels, Eastoke's current, 5 year [see note below], shingle defence banks don't stop sea water flooding gardens and local roads. Any future protection must also provide for pedestrian and wheelchair access to the sea views that attract all visitors and residents.

- proposed "Removal of [west beach's] flood defences has allowed the beach to find its own position." (para 3): there is already alarming erosion, with encroachment on beach huts; the adjacent low-lying ground has car parks, the main road and homes. Where then will the proposed "pod hotels" be sited, how serviced without negatively impacting on Hayling's "wild coast charm" (para 1) and this area's protected natural habitat? There are already permanent toilets, showers and ample quality refreshments near parking a short walk away and suitably distant from vulnerable vegetation. West beach is hugely valued all year by walkers, swimmers and riders for its under-developed qualities – please help to keep it that way.

- the proposed park & ride second vehicle bridge: where will it be sited? Where will associated cars even buses be parked, on the mainland or on Hayling? If the latter, at what cost to Hayling's prized northern and western protected habitat? Where will its final destination be on Hayling and how will users reach their end destinations? What about the disabled, will they be confined to the existing road bridge? Realistically, day trippers with beach paraphernalia won't choose public transport over their car.

- a proposed "Hayling Gate" visitor centre "just on the Island" (para 4) could not fail to increase congestion at the A3023 road bridge. Furthermore visitors expect a visitors' centre where they're based so why not use available buildings in Beachlands, Eastoke, even the old Lifeboat station on the seafront?

I urge you to request a revision of the Hayling Statement after carefully considering the issues raised in this deputation. Thank you. Anne Skennerton

Note: South Hayling Island Beach Management 2017- 2018 Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership leaflet:
Funding for Beach Management para 2.

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I am Bob Comlay and I am here representing Havant Civic Society:

We share your objectives and aspirations for the regeneration of Havant and welcome the adoption of an interventionist approach for delivery. We also welcome the statement that: "Where necessary the Council will utilise its Compulsory Purchase Powers to bring forward schemes and will make the required budget available."

The Cabinet have heard that 'Communication is crucial for the regeneration programme' and Havant Civic Society believes that openness is fundamental to that communication. To this end, we see no justification for the exemption of entire documents; redaction of detail where necessary should suffice.

Turning to the content:

We have taken a high level view of the strategy presented and are cautious about placing too much focus on some of the visionary detail. At this early stage in the programme, spending too much time 'down in the weeds' simply distracts attention from more fundamental concerns regarding overall programme governance.

The document defines five Regeneration Areas, rather awkwardly attaching the Civic Plaza area to Havant Town Centre.

In the six outline 'Vision' statements, we note that the Civic Plaza Area is now conveniently singled out for attention.

Having arbitrarily included the Civic Plaza area in a 'regeneration area', the first of the three Regeneration Programme phases appears to be taken up exclusively by delivery of change in this space.

For Phase 1 to be viable and acceptable, it must deliver tangible demonstration of the new 'interventionist approach' and demonstrate commitment to the use of Compulsory Purchase. Phase 1 must include at least one measurable 'quick win' for each of the five regeneration areas.

For Havant Town Centre, we would seek:

- Immediate action on 44-54 West Street to end a decade of dereliction
- Urgent intervention with central and regional government to facilitate the replacement of the footbridge between the Civic Plaza area and the Town Centre. This lies at the heart of the town gateway, spanning the 'aesthetically

pleasing railway station' 'to seamlessly and effortlessly link the campus to the other character areas of the Town Centre'. Words taken from the Vision.

We accept that bringing these regeneration projects into Phase 1 will require significant investment, but through demonstration of real and visible progress in each of the regeneration areas, the programme will gain the trust and support of the community.

On the subject of Governance and Management, we have two significant issues:

1. Regeneration programme detail must be freed from exemption, redacted only where commercially necessary and only at the essential detail level.
2. The Governance Structure chart omits detail of External Stakeholders.

In the interests of constructive and effective two-way communication, we expect to see local communities represented at the External Stakeholder level. While our primary focus is on the needs of the community using Havant Town Centre, we also expect to see representation of the professional communities who provide for our health, education and safety.

Turning to Havant Town Centre

The vision statement notes the importance of the 'historic core of the town centre', but our objections to the removal of East Street from the 'Town Centre' in the Draft Local Plan remain ignored. *We believe that East Street's recent promising self-regeneration will be at risk if the Local Plan continues to downgrade its importance in the eyes of the Council.* Putting East Street back in the Town Centre and retaining accessible parking in the East Pallant area are critical factors for both businesses and less able residents.

In conclusion

If the prolonged lack of investment in renewal in the Borough is to be reversed, then demonstration of intent and evidence of progress is essential. You must bring the communities with you through direct engagement at the stakeholder level. Without that involvement, and without genuine quick wins in each of the regeneration areas, the communities will be left seeing at least five more years of decay and stagnation while Phase 1 may appear to deliver just another expensive upgrade to the Civic Plaza area.

REGENERATION STRATEGY.

Havant Borough Residents' Alliance formed two years ago following the publication of the Council's Housing Statement. HBRA is an alliance of eight residents groups and three conservation groups.

During the last two years HBRA has met with officers and councillors and pressed hard for regeneration of the brown field land in our town centres and welcome the new initiative, particularly Council intervention and the use of Compulsory Purchase. We feel that it is a long overdue analysis, setting out the borough's negative and positive points, but we remain unconvinced the actions proposed so far, will contribute to a more positive balance of outcomes. **It would have been helpful to ask these questions before work started on the draft Local Plan two years ago.**

Jobs and Skills.

The local skills base is a concern jobs have been lost when employers have relocated from Havant because they could not recruit. It is not stated in the Regeneration Strategy document but data published last year showed that schools in the **Havant Parliamentary constituency, have had the lowest application rate for university in England**. Actions needed should include; raising aspirations, boosting participation in higher education, up skilling the local workforce, raising wage levels, particularly female pay to achieve a better comparison with the regional average.

Closer working with Hampshire County Council, other agencies and Government is vital.

New Focus is needed.

There needs to be more in the strategy about the changing employment landscape particularly Artificial Intelligence, as Havant's job mix with low skilled jobs would be vulnerable. Focus is needed on climate change, how it will impact on our coastal geography and resilience solutions to coping with flooding and extreme weather events and pollution.

The Regeneration Strategy hardly mentions **social aspects** of living in the borough and the measures needed to make it a better place to live. Housing and facilities for an ageing population, access to transport, clean air and space to enjoy nature and leisure pursuits all have a place to play in a vision statement and are sometimes described as the "happiness index".

Just to Focus on one part of the borough Leigh Park.

The statement on the Leigh Park area in the document seems to ignore the current unusually wide range of tenure. The current housing offer is described as homogenous yet there is actually a very wide range of types of construction including many new homes. The biggest infrastructure project planned for the borough is the Havant Thicket Reservoir in Warren Park this will create jobs, waterside homes, as well as a range of leisure facilities, but does not get mentioned. The section regarding Leigh Park in the future being a "desirable place to live" is ill informed and implies it is not at the moment and should be rewritten. Leigh Park Warren Park and West Leigh is already desirable place to live for thousands of our residents. The land at the Leigh Park shopping centre is ideal for

housing but development has not progressed. Regeneration strategy should also focus on future maintenance of new rented housing stock where many will be living.

Property Values.

On page 17 line seven there is a reference to low property values. This needs to be clarified should it say “ low commercial property values ”?

Does the Regeneration Strategy Conflict with Draft Local Plan?

In places the Regeneration Strategy seems to conflict with the draft Havant Local Plan which is based on housing numbers and the need to make housing more affordable. Proposed new projects to bring in a new demographic, including the homes on the Council’s Plaza car park **may not be affordable to a large number of local residents in this borough who are in housing need. There is no mention of the housing and facilities needed for our ageing population which would be ideal on town centre land.** As the list of projects is confidential it is impossible to comment more at this stage and we would welcome more detail.

Development sites.

HBRA has already expressed concerned about the appearance of , and safety issues on, many sites awaiting development and would like to see some mention in the Regeneration Strategy of how these will be managed.

Conclusion.

Havant Borough is good place to live and work but has fallen behind the rest of the Hampshire County Council administrative area apart from Gosport. Resident’s homes in our borough are well kept but many of the town centres including Leigh Park, Watrelooville and the designated St Faith’s Conservation areas in Havant Town and much of the public realm look run down and uncared for.

These areas have lacked prioritisation for the last decade when bringing more shops to Havant has been the main and misguided Council focus. Stage one of the Regeneration Strategy will do nothing to change this.

We would also like to see more councillors walking their wards and report regularly to Customer Services the numerous public realm issues needing repair and maintenance that blight our town centres but could be remedied.

We hope you will expand Regeneration Strategy to give a much fuller vision for the borough and engage fully with local stakeholders to bring about the full potential of our area.

Ann Buckley CIHCM

Coordinator Havant Borough Residents’ Alliance.