

Public Forum - UDC Extraordinary Council Meeting 16/11/16

Statement on behalf of Little Easton Parish Council

FOLLOWING THE FAILURE OF THE PREVIOUS LOCAL PLAN IN DECEMBER 14 UDC WERE AT PAINS TO SAY THAT THE WORKINGS OF THIS NEW LOCAL PLAN WOULD BE OPEN AND TRANSPARENT. INDEED ONE OF THE FIRST DOCUMENTS PRODUCED WAS A JOINT STATEMENT BY THE COUNCIL GROUP LEADERS SAYING AND I QUOTE

“WE SUPPORT RECENT WORK TO ESTABLISH A FRESH APPROACH TO PREPARING A NEW LOCAL PLAN BASED ON STEP-BY-STEP, DELIBERATIVE AND TRANSPARENT WAYS OF WORKING”

AND

“WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO SET OUT CLEARLY THE JUSTIFICATION FOR WHAT IT CONTAINS AND THE PROCESS FOLLOWED IN REACHING THE DECISIONS TAKEN”

IT IS AN INDICATION OF HOW UDC HAVE NOT MET THAT COMMITMENT THAT ONE OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THAT DOCUMENT HAS FELT IT NECESSARY TO PUT FORWARD THE MOTION BEFORE YOU THIS EVENING .

IN EFFECT SAYING THERE IS A LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND CONFIDENCE IN THE PROCESS.

THE SINGLE SETTLEMENT OPTION AT EASTON PARK DIRECTLY AFFECTS THE RESIDENTS OF LITTLE EASTON AND INDEED THE VERY EXISTENCE OF LITTLE EASTON AND YET THERE HAS BEEN NO DIRECT CONSULTATION WITH LITTLE EASTON PARISH COUNCIL ON THE PROSPECT OF THIS NEW TOWN ON EASTON PARK

THE PRESS AND MEDIA SEEM MORE WELL INFORMED THAN WE ARE.

THE EASTON PARK SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN A DEVELOPER LED PROPOSAL WE BELIEVE BASED ON INACCURATE AND MISLEADING INFORMATION.

UDC HAVE BEEN AT PAINS TO STRESS THAT ANY NEW SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE TO GARDEN VILLAGE PRINCIPLES ONE OF WHICH SPECIFICALLY SAYS

“THE GARDEN VILLAGE MUST BE A NEW DISCRETE SETTLEMENT AND NOT AN EXTENSION OF AN EXISTING TOWN OR VILLAGE”

YET AT ITS CLOSEST POINT THE EASTON PARK SETTLEMENT WOULD BE JUST 100 YARDS OR SO AWAY FROM THE LARGE TOWN OF GREAT DUNMOW.

THE LACK OF CONSULTATION AND TRANSPARENCY BY UDC HAS LED TO SERIOUS CONCERN AMONG RESIDENTS AND PARISH COUNCILS, AS WAS SHOWN AT THE RECENT PARISH FORUM, THAT DECISIONS ARE BEING TAKEN REGARDLESS OF THE FACTS AND WITHOUT FULL AND DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF **ALL** THE OPTIONS

ANY NEW SETTLEMENT SITE CHOSEN SHOULD BE THE BEST AVAILABLE SITE, TAKING **ALL** FACTORS INTO ACCOUNT, WHICH MEETS THE DEFINED GARDEN VILLAGE PRINCIPLES AND IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY NOT BECAUSE IT IS THE EASY OPTION AND IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE DEVELOPER.

WE SUPPORT THE STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR MARTIN FOLEY AND AGREE THAT UDC CANNOT MAKE ANY RECOMMENDATION WITHOUT THERE BEING A FULL AND THOROUGH STUDY OF THE NEW GARDEN SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL LOCATED TO THE NORTH OF THE DISTRICT AT GREAT CHESTERFORD.

UDC NEED TO LEARN FROM PAST MISTAKES AND PRODUCE A LOCAL PLAN THAT IS BOTH ROBUST AND FULLY SUPPORTED BY THE COUNCIL **AND** THE COMMUNITY

Chris Audritt
Chairman
Little Easton Parish Council
16TH November 2016