

To Wokingham News re Alistair Corrie

Dear Sir

Alistair Corrie, Executive Member for Regeneration in Wokingham Borough Council has decided not to seek re-election in May 2014.

This is further evidence that the project for the regeneration of Wokingham Town Centre is too complex – and certainly too important – to be managed effectively by part time local politicians and council officers, however talented and willing.

Wokingham Borough Council made the “bold” decision to direct and fund the redevelopment itself.

Contrast this with the more sensible (and some may say, less arrogant) decision in Bracknell with the formation of the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) formed as a partnership between Schroders and Legal & General. This team of heavyweights has had to handle a few problems. However, the Bracknell project continues to make progress.

What will happen to the Wokingham Town Centre project after May 2014?

Will some other unfortunate councillor be offered the poison chalice? Will the roughly 100 million pounds of rate payers’ money realise a positive return or substantial loss? Will Sainsbury finally sign a contract only when it gets a dream price? Will the estimates of the percentage of remaining green space in Elms Field continue to change with every statement?

And finally, will David Lee, our Council Leader, start listening seriously to public concern. Will he stop abusing his majority of 43 Conservative seats in a 54 member council to brush aside any suggestion that any of his key decisions could be ill advised?

I write on behalf of the 650 households of the Great Langborough area. As chair of their Residents association I feel I can speak for them and share their concern about the decisions being made by the council on our behalf.

Pat Smith

Chair, Great Langborough Residents Association