

Patricia Hughes
 Joint Chief Executive
 Hart District Council
 Harlington Way
 Fleet
 Hampshire
 GU51 4AE

Sent via Email only

Dear Ms Hughes

18 February 2021

Shapley Heath Stakeholder Engagement

The organisations listed below would like to express their significant concerns about the governance of the Shapley Heath Stakeholder Forum (SHSF). Several people have already written to you expressing their concern about the large number of Hart Officers being members of the Thematic Groups. Moreover, 4 out of the 10 members of the Stakeholder Forum Steering Committee (SFSC) are also Hart Officers.

Group	Chair	SFSC 1	SFSC 2
Community and Wellbeing	Caroline Winchurch (HVA)	Caroline Winchurch (HVA)	Liz Glenn (HDC)
Homes and Heritage	Mike Shepherd (Vivid)	Mike Shepherd (Vivid)	Beverley Mogford (HDC)
Sustainable Transport	TBA (Split Vote)	Chris Cornwell (HW Care Group)	David Turver (WHH)
Green Spaces	Caroline Winchurch (HVA)	Andrew Ratcliffe (HDC)	Adam Green (HDC)
Future Proofing	Candy Burnyeat (WWVPS)	Candy Burnyeat (WWVPS)	Tristram Cary (RHA)

We are disappointed that you have chosen to answer these concerns by way of a "Frequently Asked Question" and not take any action to correct matters. The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Stakeholder Forum includes the following:

CORE FUNCTIONS

1. To provide a space for the representatives from parishes, community organisations, business sector, third sector (voluntary sector), public sector (e.g. health, education, highways) and housing associations to consider topics raised through community engagement activities
2. To provide a steer for continued community engagement to ensure that the wider community's views are fully captured and responded to

It is supposed to be a space for community representatives to feedback to the Council, not for the Council to effectively represent itself. The ToR then goes on to list the groups that will be invited to be members of the SHSF – as one might expect, Hart District Council is not mentioned, except for the Project Manager. The membership section then states that organisations may only be represented by one person each:

Organisations are expected to restrict attendance to one representative each, the neighbouring boroughs/districts may be represented by both an officer and a member. No restrictions apply to the County Council.

Clearly, HDC has breached its own ToR by inviting its own officers to be full members of the Thematic Groups and appoint 4 out of the 10 representatives to the Steering Committee. We remind you that one of the Government's key principles for Garden Communities is "Strong Local Vision and Engagement". It is totally inappropriate for Hart's own officers to be performing these roles.

The solution to this issue is probably contained in the ToR, which also states "The Stakeholder Forum, (Steering Committee and Thematic Groups), will be supported by members of the Garden Community Project Team as appropriate". We believe that this means that Hart Officers should attend meetings of the Thematic Groups as observers, and where appropriate offer advice and opinion when requested by the Chair of each group. Indeed, their role as subject matter experts would unquestionably add significant value to the process.

We believe that it is important that this project is set up to succeed by following your own ToR and the Government's key principles for Garden Communities. We hope that you will now reconsider your stance on this issue and ensure true community representatives are members of the Thematic Groups and represent their Groups at the Steering Committee. We believe it is important that you act quickly so that the first meeting of the SFSC is properly constituted on the 22nd of February. We look forward to receiving your considered response to our collective concerns and recommendations.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Chris Farrance
Chairman, Hartley Wintney Parish Council

On behalf of:

Parish Councils

Dogmersfield
Hartley Wintney
Odiham
Winchfield

Cllr Graham Chisnall Chairman
Cllr Chris Farrance Chairman
Cllr Angela McFarlane Chairman
Cllr Meyrick Williams Vice Chairman

Representative Community Groups

Rural Hart Association Tristram Cary
We Heart Hart David Turver