

Tony Dixon

From: "Tony Dixon" <afdixon@btinternet.com>
To: <p.moriarty@lgo.org.uk>
Cc: "Harold Hall" <haroldaubreyhall@aol.com>
Sent: 28 May 2010 09:35
Subject: Your reference: 10 000 389/PBM - complaint against Arun District Council
 Dear Mr Moriarty

Your reference: 10 000 389/PBM – complaint against Arun District Council

Thank you for your letter of 17th May 2010 in which you outline your provisional conclusion. We disagree and urge you to reconsider for the following reasons:

We have provided clear evidence that Arun District Council launched and led a campaign against the Eco-Town proposals for Ford Airfield. The council announced this in its press release of 3rd April 2008. We believe this constitutes clear and unequivocal evidence of a closed mind in its approach to the LDF process.

In subsequently conducting a Select Committee inquiry into proposals for Ford the council was acting both as objector to and judge of the proposals, contrary to the law of natural justice. The council had already closed its mind to consideration of major development on Ford Airfield and to the Eco-Town proposals.

The recommendations of the Select Committee were subsequently adopted as decisions of the Full Council and forwarded as the council's response to the government's consultation. (Source: Full Council minutes 30th June 2008) Given that the council was, by its own acknowledgement, leading the campaign against the Ford proposals then the Select Committee process, and the resultant decisions of the council, can only be seen as a sham.

The Cabinet made an unconstitutional and inappropriate adjustment to the minutes of the Special Cabinet meeting of 14th April 2008.

The LDF Core Strategy Options for Growth consultation, which took place from 12th February to 2nd April 2009, describes LDF Option 2 as "*Option 2: An 'eco town' at Ford*" and question 7 asks "*which option do you consider most appropriate for Arun?*" and then goes on to list "*Option 2: An Eco-town at Ford*". The evidence demonstrates that the council had already closed its mind to this LDF option before the public consultation took place. The consultation failed to meet the aspirations of the council's own Statement of Community Involvement.

The actions of the council are a matter of public record and cannot be undone. We believe that maladministration has already occurred and has severely conditioned debate on options for sustainable growth in the District. The adverse effect upon balanced consideration of the council's Core Strategy, indeed upon the practice of open governance, is already clear to see. We find it difficult, therefore, to accept that a decision now should be regarded as being premature.

The government's decision on the Eco-Town proposals stated: "*Decision: This location has not demonstrated the potential to meet the sustainability and deliverability requirements for successful development as an eco-town **at this time.***" (our emphasis). The possibility, therefore, of a new settlement at Ford under the Eco-Town initiative has been left open.

By its actions, the council has denied local residents an open-minded approach to major issues affecting the lives of present and future generations. In turning to the Ombudsman we hope to find recognition of the wrong already done to what purports to be an open and transparent process and guidance to the Council on good practice in these matters.

We assume that, if the Ombudsman rules that our complaint is premature, it can be reintroduced at a later stage. Can you please clarify this?

Could you please acknowledge receipt of this e-mail.

Yours sincerely

Tony Dixon & Harold Hall
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