

ADDENDUM to EO Minutes 25th March 2021 – Ref: 024/21

Current Position after HIF Vote

The HIF terms were rejected on Monday 13 to 12. My statement I read out is below.

Those who voted against saw that there was too much risk attached to it, but in my opinion, all risk stayed with DIO/MOD and was in writing in the documents I have read. This was also confirmed by lawyers at various briefings. In my opinion this was, and I am going to steal words from a colleague who is more eloquent than I:

“I believe that the vote was lost through petty and spiteful political posturing and, importantly, an overriding wish by some to keep face with local selfish grandees to protect future re-election. It had very little to do with nurturing the future of our County or taking advantage of a wonderful opportunity to enhance the living of many throughout our Community spectrum.”

The implications are this:

1. We now withdraw the local plan
 - a. This will be up to £1m to redo in a time we are already in deficit
 - b. We have no 5 year land supply so developers will find it very easy to develop sites in the county (7 already in progress since Monday)
2. SGB will still happen but the infrastructure will be at the back end and we have limited control over how it is developed, and indeed may be larger than it is now planned
3. A new call for sites may need to happen which will put pressure on the larger service centre villages like Greetham

What does this mean for the quarry development? Originally as it was not in new (or old) local plan we had a good reason for possible refusal. This is now less so as we cannot prove enough employment land etc. There are still ways to fight this, as Greetham are looking at areas such as traffic, HGV movements, impact on buildings, safety, pollution etc

Statement to Full Council Monday 22nd March

All I have ever wanted from the day I decided to become a councilor was to follow my dad's wish to do the best for the county of Rutland. I'm not sure I could sleep at night if my dad thought I had not done what was best for our special county, so I for one feel held accountable on many levels.

Some of you, saying you are supporting residents, looked to increase council tax further for our those already struggling, and sit in scrutiny meetings, on topics impacting our most vulnerable and say nothing for 2 hours. BUT tonight you are vocal, standing up for those who shout loudest, not those with the greatest need. Does this show you care about the majority or the minority?

My son is 16 and he loves this county. Can he afford to stay? Can he find suitable employment? Without more affordable housing, and the employment land planned bringing inward investment, I suspect not. We will wither as the population gets older. All those who do not support SGB we have seen at these meetings profess to have the county's future at their hearts, but they aren't thinking of our young, not thinking of those that will leave our amazing education system locally never to return. Indeed if they have their way house prices will remain high, and we will attract no inward investment to allow us to prosper as a unitary authority. Without these young people how can we thrive as a community? What happens to these wonderfully educated students? Those of you with teaching backgrounds must see that frustration? I certainly do as I see them leave the various sports clubs I work with, and never see them come back.

I also hear about the issues with the developments in Oakham. Without doubt there are challenges, but I run through there every day, and I see a growing and thriving community. I have new friends on the development who are contributing to the county, and they would never be here without that housing and the affordability it bought. Indeed some of you here voted for this in 2011, and should be commended for that foresight.

We are accused of not listening. Actually, we should be seen as listening to all arguments, not having our strings pulled by the powerbase within our wards. I hear from my residents they don't want our rural villages to be continually developed. I hear young people in Oakham crying out for affordable housing and jobs. I hear they want us to start thinking about the whole county, not small subsets of those of already have secured a future.

Those who do not support St Georges have tried to engage with those outside of their supporter base. It simply has not happened. Efforts on social media etc have simply had near to zero engagement. A pothole on the bypass will get 10 times more comments on social media. I see as much support on these posts as I do opposition. This is not a Fight4Rutland, this is a one issue localized fight, with no interest for the rest of the county and its future. If this was a Fight4Rutland, why aren't they engaging on other issues like the budget, quarries, education, SEND etc?

I ask those who have the courage to vote for the county, think of the future we want. We want a county with our young people enjoying what Rutland has to offer. A local plan allowing us to attract inward investment to create employment of all types. To create new and thriving communities and taking the pressure off our main towns, and villages. We need to make our county sustainable. Make it the county we fought for and won back.

What would the outcome of not accepting HIF be? We have heard the financial implications and the impact on development. I cannot look my parish in the eyes when we have to fight another development on their green spaces. I cannot look them in the eye when we need to fund another local plan with cuts to services. I cannot look them in the eye and risk the viability of our county. Too many of us are seeing this vote as a vote against St Georges, and using arguments about risk to derail the plan. Strangely when we discussed accepting the schools grant the other week no one mentioned risk, very strange.

I will today vote for the future generations of Rutland, and not pander to those whose motives are possibly more insular. My dad fought hard to get the county where it is today, and I know he wanted it to thrive and grow, having worked hard on getting the investment we needed. It is with that same aim, I will vote for the HIF.