

David Moore: challenging year ahead for the Horsham area



by the Planning Inspector's examination of the Horsham District Planning Framework, the council's vision of what should happen in Horsham District over the next 20 years.

If localism in its truest sense had been applied to the plan, it would have looked very different from that which was considered by the Inspector.

Unfortunately, it's too late to do anything about that and we will all have to accept the consequences of what happens next, whether we like it or not.

The Inspector promised that his summary report should be available before the end of the year and by the time you read this article it may have already been published.

We are then going to have

to deal with the conclusions reached and possibly try to make the best of a bad job.

However, whatever happens we must make sure that we get what we need without any compromise.

For example, a sensible rate has to be set for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) so that if nothing else the council gets the money that should be due to it from any development rather than allowing developers to make excessive profits.

We'll also need to ensure that all the infrastructure needs are identified and can be met before permission is given for any planning application.

The population is going to increase in Horsham District

whether we like it or not and a significant proportion of the newcomers is going to commute to work.

We must ensure that our road and rail network is improved to cope with this need. It cannot be treated as an afterthought and, ideally, improvements should be made before the obvious problems associated with population growth occur.

We already know that in places our sewage disposal and water supply systems are in need of replacement before they are able to cope with the needs of more people.

Consequently, there's the risk that the connection of new homes to the existing sewers will create major problems for

people who already live in an area.

If we are to embark on a new house building programme anywhere in the district, we must ensure that there is an adequate and effective sewage disposal system in place.

On top of all that we have the big unknown.

Will Gatwick be allowed to build its second runway?

The consequences of an affirmative answer to this question would have enormous consequences on Horsham District, particularly the northern part of the area and especially Horsham town.

Taking all this into account, next year, 2015, will undoubtedly be even more

challenging than this year has been. We must approach all the issues that arise in a positive way so that we get the best outcome from whatever we face.

Let's hope that 2015 is a year to remember for the right reasons.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone, who shares these concerns. For more information, visit our website www.horshamsociety.org or telephone 01403 261640.

It was interesting to see an article by the Leader of Horsham District Council in last week's County Times bemoaning the fact that localism doesn't really work.

Unfortunately, localism in the district seemed to stop at council level and didn't appear to filter down below that level.

This is where one of the fundamental problems lies when one looks back over 2014.

The local news in November was dominated