

# Shouts of 'shame' as council meets to discuss Local Plan

By Georgina Townshend

'THE Local Plan is rubbish, shame on you' was one of the chants from protesters as borough councillors arrived to decide on the document's next steps.

Nearly 100 angry residents turned up ahead of a meeting of the executive on Tuesday, waving placards and signs showing their dismay at Waverley Borough Council's aim to build 2,600 homes at Dunsfold Aerodrome and 1,520 homes in Cranleigh.

The draft document sets out the approach to delivering at least 9,861 homes during the next 15 years - the equivalent to at least 519 homes per year.

At the meeting, the council approved the recommendation to publish the draft local plan, which is expected to be formally published early next month and this will be followed by a six-week period of public consultation.

The protest was organised by campaign group Protect Our Waverley (POW), which says it aims to 'raise awareness and rally support from all communities affected by the potentially harmful impact of the Dunsfold new town proposal.'

Speaking at the protest, parish councillor and chairman of the Cranleigh Civic Society Liz Townsend said: "Cranleigh is in a rural location, as is Dunsfold and Alford. We are on a rural road

network - there are no infrastructure improvements proposed.

"All this is, is housing. There is no plan to this. There is no evidence to back up the dumping of all of this housing in and around Cranleigh.

"The only reason we are in this position is because we don't have any green belt.

"It's nothing to do with putting houses in the right places.

"This is totally wrong. It is not fair for people and Waverley Borough Council has to realise that there are consequences of dumping this amount of housing in and around Cranleigh."

Other Cranleigh parish councillors were also in attendance, including Brian Freeston, Richard Bryant and Kay Newnham, as well as Charles Orange, chairman of Hascombe Parish Council.

The chairman of Bramley Parish Council, Francesca Stern, spoke about her fears of additional traffic going through the village.

Bob Lees, chairman of POW, said: "We were very pleased with the large turnout from residents of the eastern end of the borough.

"There was a lot of support for the demonstration from both the POW campaign and Cranleigh Society supporters.

"We organised the demonstration to make councillors aware of the level of concern over the 4,500 houses, including 2,600 at Dunsfold

Aerodrome, allocated to the eastern end of the borough along the already overloaded A281.

"Councillors appeared surprised by the depth of feeling being displayed.

"In the ensuing debate on the draft local plan, a number of councillors made reference to residents' concerns and the fact that the plan wasn't perfect.

"Once the draft plan is published for formal consultation, it is up to us, the residents of Waverley, to make our views on the plan known to the council so that they can be properly incorporated in the draft plan before it is submitted for inspection."

During the council meeting, Cllr Brian Adams said: "All issues raised in regards to the local plan have been investigated and referred to the appropriate statutory authority. To date, none has come back to say our plan is undeliverable. In respect of traffic, mitigation is expected to avoid any severe issues.

"In respect of utilities, any issues may be overcome by rescheduling of development.

"In respect of Surrey County Council's education and social services, Waverley is in constant co-ordination. In respect of the NHS, discussions continue with the two CCGs covering Waverley.

"This version is not final but it is the beginning."

In response to the protest, a statement from the council



Protesters gathered outside Waverley Borough Council's office with placards, angry with the Local Plan's allocation of thousands of homes. Picture: Cranleigh Civic Society.

said: "Waverley Borough Council is required to prepare a Local Plan to meet the government's requirements

in relation to housing delivery.

"As part of the process, Waverley residents will have

the opportunity to make their representations on the draft Local Plan during the forthcoming consultation period."

When the consultation period starts, residents wishing to make a representations can either log onto the

consultation portal at [www.consult.waverley.gov.uk](http://www.consult.waverley.gov.uk) or send an email to [planning.policy@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@waverley.gov.uk).