

Statement to Cabinet 1 September 2022

As you decide whether to throw more good money at a “facilitated reflection” after squandering over £800K of bad money on the Shapley Heath debacle, may I humbly offer some points for you to reflect upon:

- 1) You might consider whether it was appropriate to even start the project at all after the Inspector had rejected it, and your own bid documents for Government funding said the Garden Village was not necessary to meet our housing needs.
- 2) You might ponder why you ignored my warnings prior to and during the 21/22 budget meeting that the “bloated cost structure is completely indefensible” and that you were set up to fail because you had not secured enough funding to be successful.
- 3) You might contemplate why concerns about Governance raised by Hartley Wintney Parish Council and others were ignored by the project sponsor.
- 4) You might think about why you rebuffed questions about obvious budgeting and spending irregularities in July 2021.
- 5) You might consider whether your credibility is damaged or enhanced by claiming the project met its core objectives when the fact-checked audit report clearly states you didn’t meet a single milestone.
- 6) You might also review whether it is entirely appropriate to simply throw the officers under a bus, when it is clear that there were also significant Cabinet member failings.
- 7) Finally, you might contemplate whether it is appropriate for those involved to remain in office when despite repeated and accurate warnings, they have continued to squander our money on a totally unnecessary project that has delivered nothing of substance.