

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE  
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE COUNCIL  
HOUSE, SOUTH STREET, ATHERSTONE ON  
TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2017**

Present: Councillor Waters in the Chair.

Councillors Bell, Chambers, Clews, Davey, Davis, L Dirveiks, N Dirveiks, Farrell, Ferro, Gosling, Hanratty, Hayfield, Henney, Humphreys, Ingram, Jarvis, Jenns, Lea, Lewis, Morson, Payne, Phillips, Reilly, Simpson, Singh, Smith, Smitten, E Stanley, M Stanley, Sweet, Symonds and D Wright

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moss and A Wright

Before the commencement of business Canon Paul Wilson from Curdworth, led the Council in Prayer

**25 Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None were declared at the meeting.

**26 Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 18 October 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 18 October 2017 were circulated.

**i Minute No 43 – Housing Numbers – Government Consultation**

It was proposed by Councillor Farrell, seconded by Councillor Chambers, by way of amendment

**a That the report is noted;**

**b That an amended response to the Government’s consultation paper “Planning for the right homes in the right places” be prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council, and should include the comments listed below;**

**i) The Council believes that the new proposals will not address the fundamental causes of this country’s failing housing market – namely an over reliance on the private sector to build homes and to pay for the infrastructure and services required and under investment by Government in council built social housing for rent and to buy.**

- ii) These proposals do nothing to restore the pre 2012 NPPF powers of Local Government to ‘speed up’ the building process and to force developers to build on land which has already been allocated. Estimates suggest that the UK’s biggest housebuilders are sitting on 600,000 plots of land with planning permission ie. four times the total number of homes built each year. The four biggest companies in the industry (Berkeley, Barratt, Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey) account for more than 450,000 of these plots. Para 2.15 needs to be strengthened to say that unless Local Authorities are given greater powers to control build out rates on land that already has planning permission and to tackle land banking then the problems of a shortfall in housing supply cannot be addressed – nor will a “housing market” truly operate where increased supply leads to greater affordability through a fall in prices and rates of house building will still continue to be well below the national level of need.
- iii) Both the Duty to Co-operate and the proposed ‘statement of common ground’ should be removed from planning regulations and should no longer be a requirement by Planning Inspectors for approval of a local plan. Instead the Government should ensure that each Housing Market Area develops plans that meet their own housing needs, demonstrate that full use has been made of brownfield land and that performance standards are set for filling vacant properties. Only when it has been demonstrated that their ‘Objectively Assessed Need’, cannot be met through land available to them, should the Government intervene and provide an arbitration and decision making body to provide rulings on whether it is viable, sustainable and practical for another housing market area to deliver homes for another.
- iv) The consultation assumes that supplying more new homes will lower prices and hence make homes more affordable for those households with a lower income. However new homes only account for around 10% of purchases in any housing market – and have little influence on the overall price of a local housing market compared with land banking, low interest rates, loan finance, and help to buy schemes.

- v) **The Government should regularise the period for Local Plans, ensuring all Local Authorities are working to the same timings so to avoid the need for plans to be changed every couple of years based on new assessments from another authority. The Government should seek to extend or reduce the length of current plans to enable this to take place.**
- vi) **The Government should allocate additional resources to local authorities for the development of infrastructure associated with economic growth and house building in a way which is sustainable and permits strategic planning over the 15 year period ie. does not depend on a bidding system . The process for securing investment associated with a local plan from private sector developers for infrastructure should include legally binding agreements that cannot be amended through viability assessments.**
- vii) **The Government should amend right to buy legislation to ensure that for every property sold under this scheme, a replacement is built. This will provide local authorities with a greater incentive to build social housing.**
- c **That the number of houses [9598] proposed in this latest draft version of the Local Plan should not be accepted as the basis for planning during this period, given the uncertainties about the estimated housing numbers needed by Birmingham. Instead the Council should use the new standardised method for estimating future housing numbers needed and a revised plan based on the numbers needed for demographic growth in the Borough alone should be submitted to a future Council meeting.**

Upon being put to the meeting the Mayor declared the amendment to be **lost**.

ii **Minute No 44 – North Warwickshire Local Plan – Draft Submission for Consultation**

It was proposed by Councillor Farrell, seconded by Councillor Sweet, by way of amendment

- a **The recommendations on the responses are not supported.**

- b** The recommended changes to the Draft Local Plan proposed in the report should not be supported and should not be incorporated into a submission version of the Local Plan.
- c** The draft submission of the North Warwickshire Local Plan should not be accepted and should not be issued for consultation. Instead the Council should:-
- i)** authorise a 'pause' in the Local Plan process to reassess housing need and explore all options for growth, which are not solely based on or constrained by the "settlement hierarchy";
  - ii)** use this 'pause' to start scoping the development of a 'garden village'/ new settlement adjacent to another authorities boundary on land to the east of the A38 within the local plan period;
  - iii)** identify and enquire of landowners in this area for potential sites of around 250 ha, additional to those already put forward through the 'call for sites';
  - iv)** set out the minimum requirements for a new settlement of a maximum of 5250 homes and 45 ha of employment land. Should housing numbers decrease, then this site should span more than one local plan period. A new settlement should include as a minimum:-
    - Access off the A38 [similar to that for the Sustainable Urban Extension in the adopted Birmingham Local Plan].
    - 30ha of outdoor recreation space
    - Two new Primary Schools
    - A new Secondary school
    - A Medical Centre, including dentists and opticians
    - A Community Hub and sports Centre with space for at least 15 retail units
    - A new employment site providing 30ha of land for research and development
    - A new small business park providing 15ha of office space
    - A new off road cycle network to link the new development to North Warwickshire and Birmingham.
    - In particular a new off road cycle route will be developed alongside the route of the A446.

- Duelling of the A446 is vital for North Warwickshire. The duelling of the entire A446 between Coleshill and J9 M42 will therefore be required as part of this development.
  - The A5 is a key strategic road within North Warwickshire and the West Midlands Region. The A5, although not directly impacted by this development, will have to be improved if North Warwickshire and the wider region are to build new homes that are sustainable.
  - Direct road access to the new Metro/ Very Light Rail station located in the Birmingham Sustainable Urban Extension.
  - A green buffer should surround the site, providing clear distinction between the site and rural countryside.
  - 40% affordable housing to include a minimum of 750 Council Homes and 250 units of supported housing
- v) Base the revised Local Plan for remaining homes and employment land on the 2014 Core Strategy allocations and remove the following sites from the site allocations plan:
- i H2 – Land to north-west of Atherstone off Whittington Lane
  - ii H3 – Land off Sheepy Road (football ground)
  - iii H7 – Land to east of Polesworth & Dordon
  - iv H13 – Land west of Robey’s Lane, adjacent Tamworth
  - v H18 – Phase 2 Dairy House Farm
  - vii H19 – Land between Church Road and Nuneaton Road, Hartshill
  - vii H20 – Land south of Coleshill Road, Ansley Common
  - viii H23 – Land off Tunnel Road, Phase 2
  - ix Reserve housing sites RH1 and RH2
- vi) Approve a *Green Belt Swap* between the land proposed for a new settlement on the east of the A38 and the sites allocated for housing around the current settlements of Atherstone, Dordon, Polesworth, Ansley Common and Hartshill.
- vii) Include the Meaningful Gap area in this *Greenbelt Swap* to protect this space from future development since changes to the green belt can only be approved as a result of the revision of a local plan.

**viii) Establish a 'Development Corporation' to promote economic growth, purchase the land and manage the development of this new settlement and site until completion in 2033.**

**ix) Produce a revised timetable for the Local Plan process with a report to be brought to a special meeting of the Executive Board and Full Council before March 2018.**

Upon being put to the meeting the Mayor declared the amendment to be **lost**.

It was then proposed by Councillor Humphreys, seconded by Councillor D Wright and

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting of Executive Board held on 18 October 2017, together with the recommendations contained therein, be approved and adopted.**

**Chairman of the next ensuing meeting of the Council**