

Council – 19 July 2021

Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)

Motion from Cllr Bell, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group

Planning for the Future and the Planning Bill

Council notes:

- The significant concerns that have been expressed about the planning reforms proposed by the Conservative Government in their Planning for the Future white paper.
- The Government's intention to introduce a Planning Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech in May, which builds on the Planning for the Future white paper.

Council is concerned that Government proposals:

- Perpetuate an arbitrary target-driven approach that will require 20,085 homes in North Somerset, irrespective of evidence of community need or land supply.
- Take away many of the opportunities for communities and their locally elected representatives to have a final say on how their areas develop.
- Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them by giving automatic rights to build in 'growth' areas, and increase permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
- Remove local Section 106 payments and the Community Infrastructure Levy for infrastructure and replace them with a national levy; it is unclear how the new level of developer contributions would work.
- Fail to recognise the climate emergency by making it a key priority that would enable the planning system to respond to the climate crisis.

Council believes that the Government's Planning Bill should give local councils greater powers to:

- Challenge unrealistic housing targets.
- Deliver improved infrastructure alongside new developments.
- Require new development to meet high sustainability standards.
- Require quality design standards as part of new developments.
- Strengthen developer contributions to essential services including health, employment, and education.
- Prevent land banking and poor delivery by developers where planning consents are in place.

Council resolves to write to the Government and our local MPs to set out our concerns and to emphasise our belief that local councils, in consultation with their businesses and residents, are best placed to understand the issues in their area and respond with an appropriate spatial strategy.