

PARISH COUNCIL FORUM BRIEFING

Thursday, 15th November, 2018
Time of Commencement: 6.30 pm

In attendance Adamczuk, Bullock, Follwell, Naylor and Webb
Officers Head of Planning and Development - Guy Benson
Geoff Durham – Mayor’s Secretary / Member Support Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Parish Councillor(s) Bibby, Proctor, Spence, Vallings, White and Whitmore

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THIS MEETING

None of the Members in attendance wished to chair the meeting – therefore it was undertaken as a briefing session led by the Head of Planning and Development – Guy Benson.

4. UPDATE ON THE JOINT LOCAL PLAN

Questions had been raised by Chairmen of Parish Councils regarding the Joint Local Plan (JLP), to give a general update, timescales and the impact of the Ryecroft Development on the JLP.

A new timetable had now been agreed in respect of the JLP which was available on the Council’s website. The changes were down to a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) coming out in July, 2018 which contained some significant changes.

The Government had introduced standard methodology giving the minimum requirement for housing need. However, authorities could aspire for more subject to their putting a case together with the reasons why. Further changes to the methodology would be brought in.

The consultation would end on 7 December, 2018. The finalisation of the full plan would be August/September, 2020 with submission for examination taking place in December, 2020.

Parish Councillor Webb enquired if there was a comparison document for the old and new NPPF documents. This was confirmed.

Parish Councillor Naylor asked if the new NPPF had afforded green belt land extra protection. This was confirmed as there was now an extra step to follow before ‘exceptional circumstances’ could be used to develop within the green belt.

Parish Councillor Naylor asked if Parish Council's had requested workshops to advise them on the approach for Neighbourhood Plans. The Council did not have a Neighbourhood Planning Officer but advice was regularly given to Parish Councils who were all at different stages.

Regarding the Ryecroft, Planning permission had originally been given for mixed use,(student and retail). As there had been no action, by October, 2018 a decision was made to seek a different direction on the site. An accommodation led development for students and along the lines of elderly care.

A retail study was currently being carried out following predictions that the need for retail space would fall by a third over the next ten years. Local authorities were now looking at residential/cultural and leisure developments rather than retail.

5. EFFECTIVENESS OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES AT NEWCASTLE

In the past, the approach was that all Planning Officers dealt with enforcement. This was not particularly successful and enforcement work was more difficult and more challenging.

Also, it was desired to have a more senior officer to deal with these matters. Currently the Council's Development Management Team manager was having to deal with matters.

Newcastle measures its performance on targets on how quickly people are contacted following a report of a breach of planning control. This Council has routinely met this target over the last few years.

The Council/Cabinet agreed to appoint a Senior Planning Officer but there were no applicants. The post was therefore being re-evaluated with a view to increasing the remuneration.

Members were advised that no income was made from the enforcement process – there was only expenditure.

Officers were working with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth were currently carrying out a review of Planning Enforcement.

Mr Benson invited Members to look at the National Planning Policy Guidance on Enforcement 'Ensuring Effective Enforcement'.

The Council was currently advertising for a Planning Policy Manager.

6. FIVE YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY STATEMENT FOR NEWCASTLE FROM 1 APRIL, 2018 TO 31 MARCH, 2023

Councils were still expected to produce, annually, a five year housing supply. Newcastle had given priority to the production of the new five year supply noting the government's comments.

When working out the supply there has to be clarity as to what it was being measured against.

Newcastle's supply was made up from the following (the figures were available on the Council's Website):

578 units with full planning consent
289 units contained within sites with Outline Planning permission
165 small sites
116 units with Change of Use consent
375 from sites where there is a resolution to grant – but no permission granted.

This time, Newcastle have argued that consents for student housing would release 789 houses back into the market.

This gave a figure of 2431, however, the Savoy development had been missed and therefore that would be requested to be included.

Mr Benson stated that if the Council failed to deliver, an Action Plan would have to be drawn up on what would be done to remedy the situation.

7. IMPACT OF POSSIBLE UNITARY AUTHORITY STATUS ON PARISH COUNCILS

This matter was not discussed.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting concluded at 8.00 pm