

Notice of Motion - Affordable Housing and Viability Issues

In April 2013 DCLG published 'Section 106 affordable housing requirements '

This stated that:

'2. Unrealistic Section 106 agreements negotiated in differing economic conditions can be an obstacle to house building. The Government is keen to encourage development to come forward, to provide more homes to meet a growing population and to promote construction and economic growth. Stalled schemes due to economically unviable affordable housing requirements result in no development, no regeneration and no community benefit. Reviewing such agreements will result in more housing and more affordable housing than would otherwise be the case.'

Inevitably this has led to many schemes all over the country (including recently permitted schemes which haven't had time to 'stall') but which include affordable housing being amended to delete that housing. The financial equivalents which are given as an alternative do not equate to the actual built development which is lost.

According to recent figures from DCLG the number of new affordable homes built in 2015-16 fell by over 50% between 2014/15 and 2015/16. The Local Government Association estimates up to 5.4 million people will need affordable housing by 2024. The need is desperate and we consider the current position to be incompatible with an inclusive and caring society, hamstringing local authorities in providing for affordable housing and detrimental to the social wellbeing of residents.

It is therefore requested that this Council, through the Local Government Association, or alone if it has to, seeks the support of other Councils for a case to be made to Government that the ability to review provisions in agreements relating to affordable housing on the grounds of viability should be rescinded and that affordable housing becomes mandatory in developments either within the development, on suitable alternative sites at the developer's expense or through the true equivalent in financial contributions, thus allowing Councils to secure suitable affordable housing provision for their residents.

Proposer - Cllr Carole Mulroney

Seconded by Cllr Peter Wexham

27 November 2016