

## PLACE SELECT COMMITTEE

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday 10 June 2024.

**Present:** Cllr Richard Eglinton (Chair), Cllr Jim Beall (Vice-Chair), Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Sufi Mubeen, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Hilary Vickers and Cllr Sylvia Walmsley.

**Officers:** Jane Edmends, David Bage, John Dixon and Simon Grundy (Regeneration and Inclusive Growth).

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** .

### **PLA/13/24 Evacuation Procedure**

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedure.

### **PLA/14/24 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **PLA/15/24 Minutes**

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **PLA/16/24 Scrutiny Review of Affordable Housing**

The Committee received a presentation from the Principal Planning Officer regarding the Local Plan. The presentation included:

- Local Plan evidence process
- Local Plan examination process
- Adopted Policy
- National Policy
- Supplementary Planning Document Guidance
- Calculating off-site contributions

The main issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- Members questioned if the modelled need of 240 affordable dwellings per year, from 2017 onwards, was being met and informed that it was not.
- Members questioned whether 20% was the maximum percentage of affordable housing developers were allowed to build and were informed that this was the basic requirement, but they were able to build more if the development required this. The Sycamores was given as an example of a development where more affordable housing had been built.
- Discussion took place regarding mixed tenure developments, and it was noted that there were different approaches to building affordable housing on a development. This included building affordable housing in a cluster or pepper potting them throughout the development. It was noted that the Planning

Service preferred affordable housing to be pepper potted across a development. It was believed that developers did not have a preference, however officers noted that pepper potting affordable housing helped to retain the value of the properties on the whole development.

- Environmental considerations and protected sites were discussed. The Tees estuary was one of these areas and a precautionary approach was taken to reduce nutrient pollution into the waterways, which had curtailed the delivery of some housing developments. However, Natural England had created a credit scheme, Nutrient Mitigation Scheme, whereby developers could offset the impact of development and create new wildlife habitats. This had assisted with house building in the area.
- It was questioned whether the target number of affordable housing was considered when developers submitted revised planning applications and it was confirmed that it did.
- The different Help to Buy schemes were discussed. It was noted that there were restrictions on who could purchase properties within the schemes and that some schemes included restrictions when the property was resold. These included who the home could be sold to and the discount the original owner received still being applied regardless of the current market value. The restrictions should be explained to the individual buying the property and the developer should be assisting in the resale, however it was uncertain whether this happened, causing problems when the owner wished to move.
- It was noted that the selling price for the discounted homes was set by the developer but both the price and standard of building had to be comparable to the other homes built on the same development.
- Members questioned whether registered providers were engaging with developers and officers confirmed that they were. Developers would gain interest from, and sometimes partner with, more than one registered provider on a development. The registered provider's independent valuers would ensure that they were buying at the right price. The Council encourage developers to identify their registered providers partner as early as possible.

AGREED that information be noted.

#### **PLA/17/24 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2024-2025**

Consideration was given to the Work Programme.

Following the Committee's request, two visits had been set up to shadow the Lettings and Nominations Team while taking calls to gain a customer insight, with an opportunity to speak to the team leader afterwards if there were any questions. Member's would be sent an email with the dates and were requested to confirm which they were able to attend.

It was noted that three registered providers would be attending the next meeting on 15 July, and members discussed what information they wished them to cover. The questions would be circulated to members after the meeting to add anything else, before sending on to the registered providers. There was also a request for the statistics on the number of homes being let, and the link officer for the review said she would be able to provide a breakdown of this for members.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.