

**COUNCIL MEETING – 26 JANUARY 2022**

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO  
COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14.3**

**Q1** **Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Planning Policy Committee,  
Councillor Bower**

**Q1** The BEW strategic allocation in the adopted Arun Local Plan sets a ceiling of “up to 3,000 houses **IN TOTAL**” (my emphasis). This strategic allocation relies on the A29 realignment which is now costed at £66 million in the recently published CIL Infrastructure Investment Plan.

Does the Chairman of the Planning Policy Committee agree with me that 3,000 houses are not enough to fund a £66 million road and that therefore funding must come from other sources?

If so, can he please give the council an update on all proposed and/or agreed funding for the southern section of the A29 realignment?

**A1** Thank you for question.

I am unable to agree or disagree with you regarding the question you put because I don't have the necessary information to form a view. I am aware officers are engaged in discussions with the various developers, site promoters, WSCC and Homes England I am sure officers will update the committee when these discussions have reached a conclusion.

**Supp**

**Q** The Infrastructure Plan produced recently for the Planning Policy Committee shows that the Council needs to find £44m from the developers for the A29 realignment. Here we are three years after the adoption of the Local Plan, and we don't seem to know what is going on. Does Councillor Bower know if that £44m is viable?

**Supp**

**A** Thank you for your question, I will seek advice from the Officers and provide you with a written response.

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**Q2 Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Planning Policy Committee,  
Councillor Bower**

**Q2**



There is no provision in the Arun Local Plan for a link road between the A259, bridging the railway at Ford and joining the A27. There is however, a very short line identified in the Arun Local Plan for bridging the railway line to the west of Ford station. See attached image. It's not clear if this bridging line is intended for farm animals, pedestrians, or something else.

Can the Chairman of the Planning Policy Committee explain what the intended purpose of this short line is?

**A2** Thank you for your question.

I would refer you to policy T SP3 of the Local Plan on page 194 and in particular sub-section (L) which refers to safeguarding the route for a possible bridge and its access roads. There is also some explanatory text on page 192.

**Supp**

**Q** What is the purpose of the line on the diagram above – Councillor Bower has referred me to various Policy information, but I am asking the question because it is not clear on the Policy information so is that just a track to get animals over the railway line or does it actually have more of a purpose?

**Supp**

**A** As I recall when the Local Plan was being formulated the line was an indicative line of where we would wish for a bridge across the railway line but funding for that at that time was not identifiable. Unfortunately, through developments that have taken place near the area that funding is not yet come forward.

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**Q3** Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Planning Policy Committee,  
Councillor Bower

**Q3** I have read on the Arun District Matters Facebook page that *“Government has formally placed Arun under the severest sanction available for what they assess as failure to deliver new housing. The results of the Housing Delivery Test 20/21 show that the Government expected Arun to deliver 2891 new homes between 18/19 and 20/21 but developers in Arun actually delivered 1862, 65% of the total. The punishment is to classify Arun as being in 'presumption'.”*

Does the Chairman of the Planning Policy Committee accept that the Arun Local Plan is not, and never was viable and that it is now failing?

**A3** Thank you for your question  
The Housing Delivery Test is a measure of whether the required quantum of homes is being delivered by the development industry. The Council has always maintained since the introduction of the test that there are only a limited number of actions the Council can take to stimulate increased delivery. However, the Council continues to engage and work with the development industry to bring forward the strategic allocations identified in the Local Plan which will make a significant difference to the total supply which as of April 2021 already stood at 5339 homes. Notwithstanding this market forces will always be a significant factor in the scale and importantly the pace of any delivery. However, to date viability has not been a significant consideration for many applications as evidenced by a general lack of viability appraisals accompanying applications.

**Supp**

**Q** You can see why the public don't bother anymore as the answers are not really answering the questions. We have been told by the Government that they are applying the severest sanctions possible to us as a Council, and they are putting us in presumption. None of us have been informed about this, I became aware of it on Facebook and so I question why Councillors have not yet been informed? Does the Conservative Group accept any responsibility for the failure of the Local Plan?

**Supp**

**A** No, we do not accept failure on the Local Plan. The Planning Policy Committee which met yesterday evening, considered the Annual Monitoring Report and one of the questions that I asked the Officers was the issue of the number of planning applications that had been granted but had not been built out – around 4,000 but this was about one year ago. I have received an email today from the Officer who had identified that as far as the housing delivery goes this last year it has in fact increased in terms of delivery and so the number of permissions outstanding has dropped. I will need to gather more data to be able to answer the question more fully which I shall do so through the assistance of Officers.

## COUNCIL MEETING – 26 JANUARY 2022

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14.3

**Q4 Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Andy Cooper**

The Bognor Regis Arcade building is in a state of serious decay and has been neglected since it was bought in 2017. There is currently a leaking roof over the flat roofed part of the building and there are many, many, more problems too.

Several options were considered in 2019 and my understanding is that they were not considered to be financially viable. (£4.8 million!). One option might be to create additional apartments by extending the building (perhaps adding a couple of extra stories over the flat roofed area) to bring that section up to the height of the rest of the building – which, in turn, might give better economies of scale and make the building more financially viable.

Last week the Economy Committee rejected the idea of a temporary roof (scaffolding and corrugated iron sheeting) over the flat roofed area of the Bognor Regis Arcade as an interim measure whilst the council assessed exactly what it wants to do with the Arcade building. Instead, the committee voted to spend £210,000 to put in place a permanent low level flat roof.

It would, of course, be ridiculous to put in place a permanent roof and then to replace it. Does the Chairman of the Economy Committee agree with me that he and his committee have deliberately closed down the option of extending the building and that, in doing so any potential economies of scale that might accrue are now lost?

**A4** Thank you for your question.

The Committee heard a range of opinions on this matter including yours and decided to support the replacement of the roof now. That is the decision of the Committee of which I am but one member. We should respect the decision of the Committee.

**Supp**

**Q** I was at the Committee meeting and so I know what went on. The purpose of my question is to give Councillor Cooper the opportunity to tell the public. Did the Committee deliberately close down the option of extending The Arcade [the upper floors of The Arcade] and did they effectively abandon the economies of scale that might have accrued from that?

**Supp**

**A** I will read out the answer that I have already given [above] for the benefit of the public so they understand exactly the situation. *The response above was then read out to the meeting.*

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**Q5 Councillor Worne to the Chair of the Constitution Working Party,  
Councillor Bower**

**Q5** Following member training sessions can you please give the Council clear direction around the Leader of the Council's intentions to move the District Council back to a Cabinet system?

**A5** No is the simple answer. However, the status of a Working Party is that it has no Executive Authority and in the case of the Constitution Working Party it may only respond to Full Council which under legislation is required to approve Constitutional changes by making Recommendations on how to implement Full Council decisions relating to decision making. It cannot give direction. Even under the Cabinet system this was always the case.

**Supp**

**Q** How much will this referendum to move back to the Cabinet from the Committee system cost our residents? Many of them will not even vote as they will not have an understanding of what they are voting for.

**Supp**

**A** Councillor Bower reread his response as set out above. This idea that Chairs of Working Parties or Committees have any Executive authority to be able to pursue projects, including potentially a referendum, is not allowed under a Committee system.

**Q6 Councillor Stanley to the Chair of the Housing & Wellbeing Committee,  
Councillor Pendleton**

**Q6** Can the Chair of Housing and Wellbeing provide a list of all sheltered accommodation within the district detailing which have designated disabled parking bays and which have disabled toilets.

**A6** Arun has 17 disabled parking bays across 6 schemes and 12 schemes have a communal/visitor w/c that has a form of adaptation.

**Supp**

**Q** Which sheltered accommodation schemes don't have disabled parking bays and don't have disabled accessible toilets. Is there anything budgeted this year to make those corrections?

**Supp**

**A** As I had no notice of that question, I do not have a list of all the sheltered schemes with me tonight. I will let you have it at some point in the near future.