

MOTION ON NOTICE

City Council 14 September 2020



Conservative Proposals to Remove Residents' Voices from the Planning System

Plymouth City Council strongly supports the principle of local people shaping the future of their cities, towns and localities by being able to influence, and having a key voice in, the outcomes of Planning Applications. For decades, residents and their elected Councillors have been able to input their views and concerns at all stages of the Planning process, including the right to have applications decided in public meetings of Planning Committees.

We are therefore strongly opposed to the Conservative Government's White Paper "Planning for the future" which rips the democratic heart from our Planning system.

We oppose the use of "growth areas" to prevent local people and their elected representatives having any further say on the principle of development after the local plan has been adopted.

We oppose the merger of Use Classes, which will mean developers can change uses of buildings irrespective of views of local communities.

We oppose any plans to replace Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy with a single centrally-set Infrastructure Levy which won't deliver the proper funding of projects such as schools, roads and GP surgeries, and ensure a fixed proportion of affordable homes.

We oppose the failure to place the climate emergency at the heart of the White Paper and the government's insistence on targeting net zero as late as 2050.

We disagree with the Government that few people engage with the current system. Councillors are regularly contacted by constituents concerned about development issues and the system of public engagement must be strengthened, not destroyed.

We disagree with the Government that Planning is a barrier to development, given that 90% of Planning Applications are approved by Local Planning Authorities in England. In fact more than a million homes have received permission in the last decade but have still to be built.

We oppose this "Developers' Charter" which will severely curtail public involvement in Planning, disenfranchise Councillors and the people we represent and will likely lead to a generation of low-quality, slum housing. We believe the residents' voices in Planning should be strengthened to maximise affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes with appropriate supporting infrastructure.

We request the Cabinet to respond to the Government accordingly and Plymouth's three Members of Parliament to vote against these disastrous, undemocratic proposals.

Proposer: Cllr Bill Stevens

Signature "By email"

Seconder: Cllr Sarah Allen

Signature "By email"