

## CONGLETON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2015

### MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE HOUSING GROUP HELD AT CONGLETON TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2015 AT 09:30AM

#### 1. **Present:**

Jenny Unsworth (JU) – Chairman  
Amanda Martin (AM)  
Gillian Kaloyeropoulos (GK)  
Laura Tilston (LT)  
Tom Loomes (TL)  
Mike Watson (MW)

#### **Guests:**

None

#### **Apologies:**

David Brown, Glyn Roberts

#### 2. **Previous minutes:**

Agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting.

#### 3. **Matters arising:**

##### Link Road & Neighbouring Parishes

There was to be a meeting of the parishes to discuss site allocations and it was expected that some further up-date on the link-road might come from this. The planning application had not as yet appeared on the website but it was understood that this was imminent.

#### 4. **Reports from:**

There were no outstanding reports.

#### 5. **Consultation with Estate Agents:**

There are still some difficulties in pursuing this as GK and GR have time constraints.

**Action:** GR and GK to continue.

#### 6. **Housing Policy Objectives:**

**6.1** These are still under consideration. **GR** to be asked by chair to progress this.

**JU** to ask Andrew Thomson whether we need a housing-need survey or whether we could use the CEC version pro-rata.

**6.2** There was some discussion re affordable housing and MW explained that Plus Dane was unlikely to be able to invest in house-building for the next four years as they would need to absorb the costs of changes to the welfare system. The impact of a 1% rent reduction would be considerable and housing associations are already concerned about the impact of the Right-to-Buy policy. MW considered that the whole of the Housing Association sector within the Borough lacked the funds to buy the numbers of affordable housing already becoming available through permissions. JU asked MW for clarification on waiting-list numbers. MW believed they stood at c.2000 for CEC but this might include duplication. The way in which the system operated did not lend itself to absolute clarity when attempting to quantify need. MW said that Dane Plus had a supply of 1200 bungalows that were built in the old Congleton Borough Area. He was not aware of a great shortfall in bungalow provision in the housing association sector at the present time.

**Actions.**

MW would write to JU re the above evidence.

TL observed that there would be a knock-on effect on house-builders from this and also agreed to provide an explanatory note.

LT gave the opinion that there was possibly an imbalance between housing need in the London area and elsewhere in the country.

JU agreed to write to the Government re the effects of this matter.

The Sutherland site is now expected to be used for 84 affordable houses and it is understood that the developer will receive a government subsidy for purposes of clearing contaminated ground. This is an old permission which has been revived.

**7. Matters arising from the Report from Urban Vision:**

Some errors had been identified and JU to contact Dave Proudlove to ask for some clarification on this.

**8. To identify outstanding evidence:**

MW suggested that we could use Sandbach's submitted version and explanatory notes for guidance.

There was some discussion on the type of employment that might be likely to be attracted to Congleton and GB stated that CEC had agreed to allow towns to keep all their income from business rates so that it would be possible to offer reduced rates to businesses to encourage inward investment in employment in the town.

**Action:** GK revert with information. Age UK re statistical or other evidence.

Other out-standing issues include decisions on possible design policies, look at a five-year step for demographics and questions for the next questionnaire. There would be a working party re sites. JU to inform.

**9. To discuss preparations for general meeting:**

Members were reminded that they could attend the general meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> October at Congleton Town Hall.

**10. Next Meeting: TBD.**