

## **Public Questions (With Notice)**

1. At a recent meeting with members of Bury Council Planning department I asked why they were proposing to release enough greenbelt to build 2,920 more houses than Bury Council was required to as part of the GMSF. I was told that the extra release of greenbelt was for the period after the GMSF when additional houses would be required.

Since the Council themselves acknowledged that once the greenbelt is released they have no way of insisting on a brownfield first policy I am concerned that this will mean that at the end of the GMSF period Bury will end up with 2,920 houses more than required built on greenbelt.

I was told by the planning department that information about the planned over release was freely available in the public domain. I have to ask why more councillors are not challenging these figures and why it appears that the Council is intent on allowing more houses to be built on greenbelt than is required. **Carole Birchmore**

- A. The Government's housing targets for Bury was over 11,500 new homes but this target has been reduced to less than 9,500 in the second draft of the GMSF. This allowed a significant amount of Green Belt land to be protected and, in Bury, there was a reduction in Green Belt release of over 40% between the first and the second drafts.**

**The fact is that we simply do not have enough brownfield land in the Borough to meet even this reduced target and this therefore, difficult decisions need to be made around the release of Green Belt land. This is not unique to Bury – it is happening right across the country in order for the Government's housing targets to be met.**

**The targets could be met by releasing dozens of smaller Green Belt sites but these would not be big enough to secure any of the necessary infrastructure that is needed to accommodate new development. Cars would using the same roads without room for improvements, children would be using the same schools and such an approach would exacerbate the existing capacity issues that we have around physical and social infrastructure.**

**Instead, the strategy we are proposing, seeks to release large strategic sites that are of a size that they are able to provide some real and tangible infrastructure benefits, that will not only mitigate for the new development, but will also help to elevate existing pressures. The proposals in Bury will help to deliver new roads, junctions improvements, additional public transport capacity and new schools and health facilities. The proposals will also open up much of the Green Belt to the public, providing a**

**range of recreation facilities from new cycle routes to country parks.**

**However, in order to secure these benefits, proposals need to be of a size that will ensure that the package of new infrastructure measures are viable and deliverable. Whilst this does mean that on the larger sites development will not come forward until after the plan period, the land needs to be identified for development at this stage to provide the certainty needed to secure the investment needed for major infrastructure provision. Without this certainty, the major infrastructure interventions could not be delivered**

2. Given that there is no proper Adult Education Services provision in Radcliffe, can you please explain why Bury Adult Education Services' management has so far failed to consider positively repeated requests from Friends of Dumers Lane Community Centre to include Dumers Lane Community Centre as a regular venue for their courses in all their brochures? **Nicole Haydock**

**Adult Learning brochures are only produced twice per year. The planning for the autumn brochure starts in March for publication in July. The spring/ summer brochure is planned in October /November for publication December. Brochures are one method we use to promote courses along with the use of social media – we use Spotted Radcliffe which we understand is well used by the local community, Bury Adult Learning Service website, Bury Times, Posters and Leaflets, Council Twitter and Facebook pages. These methods are more flexible and responsive to the development of provision in communities as this happens all year round and does not necessarily fit into the production of the two course guides. We have however included Dumers Lane on the back of our course guide as a partner along with the organisations we currently work with across Bury.**

**Partnership working is growing with groups across Radcliffe including Dumers Lane and we have delivered taster sessions in the centre to help promote learning. We want to build on the partnership to develop provision with a view to including courses in our spring/ summer guide where appropriate which means that we would need to have plans in place of the intended offer by the end of October. This does not exclude the development of courses throughout the year as information regarding community learning needs are identified.**