

Notice of Motion – 29 October 2024

Motion Title: Changes to National Planning Policy Framework

Proposer: Councillor William Gill

Seconder: Councillor Trumpeter

“Council notes the publication of a new draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by the Government that has wide ranging ramifications for local planning authorities, including Sandwell, on matters relating to housing targets and green belt.

Council notes with concern that whilst authorities such as our neighbours at Dudley, Wolverhampton, Bromsgrove, South Staffordshire and Wyre Forest’s housing need has increased, inner-city areas such as Birmingham and London have had their need substantially reduced. Furthermore, the draft NPPF proposes that these targets become mandatory for all local authorities.

Council believes that the proposed changes are an attack on the principle that local authorities are best placed to determine housing need and decide where new homes should be built. If implemented, the changes could render a ‘brownfield first’ development policy impossible due to the requirement to review green belt boundaries combined with the ability of Government-appointed planning inspectors to reject local plans that do not identify green belt land for development where housing targets cannot be achieved.

Council therefore calls on the Leader and Cabinet to:

1. Writes to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government setting out the terms of this Motion and asking for justification for any proposed new housing targets that would be applied to and may disproportionately affect Sandwell compared to inner-city areas such as Birmingham and London.
2. Respond to the consultation on the new draft NPPF and reject the imposition of top-down housing targets and dispute the new methodology for calculating housing need that shifts housing targets away from areas of high demand to authorities on the edge of the urban area.”