

**Formartine Community Forum
Oldmeldrum Academy, Oldmeldrum
27 March 2013
Local Development Plan Process and Identification of Main Issues**

At this meeting the Formartine Community Forum members were briefed on the Local Development Plan (LDP) preparation process and the current stage of identifying main issues to be included in the Main Issues Report (MIR). Piers Blaxter (PB) the Policy Team Leader was available to answer questions and Alan Davidson, Senior Policy Planner took the meeting note.

Summary of issues raised

Concerns were raised on the likely impact on housing as a result of the predicted increase in the elderly population. PB advised that the future supply of appropriately sized housing was likely to be a main issue. The definition of affordable housing was "housing which would be available for people in modest incomes". This definition would include pensioners. The new policies seek a better mix of house types meaning that people have the opportunity to downsize to realise their capital as a pension. The trend for previous fifteen years has been for the developers to build larger houses at the top of the market. This is no longer something that should be allowed.

Concerns were also raised on whether developers could be "forced to" build a mix of housing. PB reiterated the change in policy shift, noting that affordable Housing is a relatively new concept and that Aberdeenshire Council was one of the first to seek this in Scotland. While new applications will reflect the new policy, applications lodged before the start of the new plan may not display the changes that are sought.

In response to a concern being raised on the creation of ghettos, PB advised that the policy states that affordable housing should be indistinguishable from market value housing.

In answer to whether that night's event was the sum total of the "community engagement", PB reiterated Aberdeenshire Council's commitment to public engagement and confirmed that there will be formal public meetings later in the year.

Following discussions over the format of the community meetings, PB advised that Community Councils should promote public meetings and can invite developers to these meetings. The public should not, however, expect specific details on the proposals. That will be done through the formal planning application process.

When it was suggested that there be a limit on the number of additional houses allocated to settlements, say, for example, 10% of the total number of houses, PB agreed that there may be merit in considering this.

Concerns were raised about the impact planning had on climate change. It was thought that housing was being built where there were no jobs which in turn increased commuting. PB advised that the Structure Plan concentrated development in strategic growth corridors and that 80% of all development will be in these areas thus promoting co-location of houses and jobs. The majority of new housing would be built within the Aberdeen City boundary.

PB thanked attendees for their time.