

NOTICE OF MOTION – CLLR T AZIZ – VIABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOMES

Executive Summary

At its meeting on 3 December 2020, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor T Aziz

“Motion on viability of affordable homes

Since 2012 WBC has been relying on the opinion of a sole company to determine viability of affordable homes on site for developments. This has resulted in almost all cases being declared unviable by that company.

It's good practise to seek multiple opinions and not limit to sole opinion.

This motion calls that WBC to employ services of more than one company to determine the viability of affordable homes in future developments before being presented to planning committee.”

Officer Comment

“In effect, this Notice of Motion is asking the Council to do what it already does. The local planning authority does not rely on the opinion of one single company to determine the viability of affordable homes on site for developments. Applicants wishing to argue the case that their development cannot fully meet the affordable housing requirements set out in the Core Strategy can submit their own financial viability assessment to try to demonstrate their case. This assessment is then reviewed for the local planning authority by an independent specialist in financial viability appraisals to determine whether or not the applicants submission is accurate. This review is commissioned by the local planning authority and paid for by the applicant. Therefore, every application has at least two opinions on viability. In some cases the Council engages, at its own expense, another consultancy to peer review the assessments of an application to provide reassurance to the local planning authority. The cost of a viability assessment is typically £2,000 - £3,000 plus VAT.”

Background Papers: None.

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