

## **Community Conversations – Chirton Ward 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

People present: Cllr John Stirling (Chair), Cllr Amanda Norman, 10 and 6 residents / representatives of residents.

Apologies received Cllr David Corkey

Cllr John Stirling opened the meeting by explaining that this was a new way of listening to residents and was part of the Elected Mayors commitment to give residents opportunities to be listened to. This is particularly important due to the financial situation where the Council will have to make 64 million pounds of savings over the next few years.

### **Flooding**

Andrew Burnett and Steven Harvey from Capita and Rachel Walton and Kathryn Wilson from Northumbria Water were present to answer any questions on this item.

The Council will be spending over £4 million on work to reduce the risk of flooding with the priority being any flooding to residents properties. This funding includes some larger schemes and small scheme. Information from residents about what happened to their properties and historical knowledge on old streams etc are really helpful, Andrew gave his contact details so that he could be contacted directly with any issues.

Question How closely are you working with Northumbria Water?

Response Very closely, one of the outcomes of the events on the 28<sup>th</sup> June has been to strengthen partnership working, by the different agencies and also across boarder with Newcastle and Northumberland. Before we do any gully work we will talk to Northumbria Water and we also hold regular partnership meetings.

Question How do you decide what scheme to fund?

Response The priority is to reduce the risk of flooding to properties, over 900 homes were flooding on the 28<sup>th</sup> June. Information from residents is really helpful, they often know about old streams and can let us know what happen during a flood which helps with modelling a solution.

Question In the past new houses have been build on areas that have been streams and are prone to flooding. Why was planning permission given?

Response We have become more aware of the impact of flooding when looking at planning applications, including looking at ways that any development could reduce the risk of flooding. This has not always been the case in the past.

### **North Tyneside Local Plan**

A presentation was given by Rachel xx and Martin xxx explaining about the North Tyneside Local Plan. Information on this will be going to every resident and is also available on the council's website and in the Libraries. This plan will be for the next

15 years. The consultation is about identifying land for development. It is important that residents tell us what they think. The consultation closes in early January.

Question Does this cover parking, this is a major problem in some communities  
Response Yes, there is a policy on parking within these proposals

Question You mentioned that between 10,500 and 12,500 homes, will these all be council?

Response No, this will be mixed with 25% as affordable housing, this includes housing build by the registered social landlords (RSL's)

Questions I have real concerns that this means 75% of the homes will be for sale. People around here cannot afford this. Where will they live?

Response The government have said that the council must build this number of houses, the developers want to build housing that people want so they will be taking into account the local market.

Cllr Stirling I would love to build 100% council properties, but we do not have the money to do that, we do work with social landlords where we can and I think we need to look at the cost of what is affordable.

Question The impact of the welfare reform changes and the bedroom tax means that people cannot afford to live in the houses they have, where are they going to go?

Cllr Stirling We have to work with the developers, we will not be building a lot of one bed-roomed houses because people don't want these.

Question Why does the council continue to allow people to buy their council houses.

Cllr Stirling This is not something the council has any control over; it was a central government policy.

Question 25% affordable, who decides what is affordable?

Response The Council and Registered Social Landlords set a target rent

statement We need more affordable housing, in particular smaller housing

Question If you are building all of this new housing, what will it bring to people already living here?

Response When we sell land for development we do get section 106 money that can be used for infrastructure development, for example schools, roads

Question Will the council evict anyone who cannot pay their rent because of the bed room tax

Cllr Stirling There is a fund, the Discretionary Housing Payment that can help and the council have increased the amount of money in this fund.

Question I have a concern about lack of parking, particularly on Heaton Terrace, is there something the council can do something about.

Cllr Stirling If this is causing an obstruction it is a Police matter. I will speak to the

Police about this

Question What is happening in Heaton Terrace Park?

Cllr Stirling There are some activities, but we really need someone from the community / a community group that is prepared to run this

**Community Organisers.**

There are four community organisers working in this area. They introduced themselves and hoped in future to support more residents to attend future meetings.

Cllr Stirling also reminded people about the Mayors listening event on the 4<sup>th</sup> December at the Youth Village, North Shields. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Date and time of next meeting

TBC