

**Weetslade Community Conversation
Wednesday 20th November
John Willie Sams Centre**

Present: Cllr Muriel Green, Cllr Alex Cowie, Cllr Anthony McMullen, Cllr John Harrison, Angela Gent NTC, Bev Oakley (notes) NTC. Claire Dobinson Booth (Capita) Rachael Watts (Capita), Sarah Bell (Riverside Housing Association) and 14 Residents.

The Chair Muriel Green welcomed everyone to the very first Weetslade Community Conversation event. Explaining to all that this is one of the two new ways that residents can have a say in how they can help shape decisions about their local area. The Mayor is keen to hold one event in every ward 3 times a year, this is in addition to the regular newsletters, street meetings, and partnership working. The new Mayor wants to work with communities but there is no blue print; it is for us to decide. Most here tonight are from Dudley – the next Community conversation could be held in either Seaton Burn or Wideopen.

The Council budget needs to find £20million in savings. We won't go into why we are in this position at this event, however at the Camperdown Mayors Listening Event the Mayor will talk about her budget.

Listening and Community Conversations events are about talking to each other.

The previous Mayor had a plan where businesses and buildings should be located, Annitsford Farm was one example. So the new Elected Mayor has drawn up suggestions and proposals regarding the North Tyneside Local Plan, to get suggestions and ideas from residents. Part of tonight's conversation will talk about that plan tonight.

North Tyneside Local Plan

Claire Dobinson Booth delivered a presentation on the North Tyneside Local Plan and opened the floor to questions.

Q	How any potential land development or building in Dudley – this piece of land near Owen Pugh's has been identified for house building. Owen Pugh's have offered this.
A	The pink areas are from housing assessments and lots of submissions
Q	Owen Pugh's have identified this as their own site
A	They have said what do you think about this so it's here as an option
Q	Perhaps they are not relocating?
A	Perhaps not – we can find out, it could be value of land. There are other pieces of land in Dudley Archery (??) Terrace Peoples Centre and Club site. Planning applications have run out. There are things that can improve the Village. Claire explained that details are all in the Plan.
Q	Biggest area in Dudley Housing and Employment?

A	Lots of options perhaps workshop and live debate of it.
Q	Does it have to be developed?
A	This is a consultation, it may seem strange but feasibility regarding planning applications mean it may be knocked back.
Q	Plenty of office buildings near the farm that are empty
A	We are not looking to increase employment development there, but we might refurbish
Q	My concern is that this is a village. We don't want to lose the identity of living in a village. At some point, will there be anything left?
A	It's an important point about community identity – Greenbelts will stay. This area is very rural. There is a process to follow.
Q	Is there a demand to build on this land in pink?
A	Over last 5 years we have had requests for 500 units – There is a demand to build houses, a target of about 800.
Q	Pink area number 3 – can you tell me how close these houses would be?
A	I can't tell you whoever worked on the side would need to consult. The development of sites would be further down the line.
Q	Is there a plan?
A	Council are looking at it as a feasible development.
Q	Is all pink area land owned by Bellway etc?
A	The Duke of Northumberland, Bellway, North Tyneside Council and industrial areas.
Q	Who owns Owen Pugh land in Annitsford?
A	<i>Pointing at map</i> - Council own No 3, Owen Pugh No 2.

Cllr Muriel Green reported on the history of Annitsford Farm. When the Pit closed, the Council were persuaded to buy the land to build houses for families from closed pits. A third was used for housing. It is one of very few pieces of land that North Tyneside Council own. Whole of the Borough is being looked at for the North Tyneside Local Plan.

Cllr John Harrison explained that there is a national shortage of homes and that there is a requirement to build more. North Tyneside is growing and we need to maintain that this is the best place to live and keep the green belt and the coastal strip. We also need to ensure we have good things to do, for example Parks – the Green lungs in our local community to name a few Northumberland and Wallsend parks.

Q	Who are they building these homes for? Wideopen and Seaton Burn?
A	There is a national shortage of homes and the Government want to ensure we meet their requirement. Some want smaller homes because of the “bedroom tax” etc. There are issues regarding transport links, we are looking to create an industry using the A19 corridor. We may go under or over to help create transport links, and maintain town centres – Wallsend, North Shields and Whitley Bay, and how we make sure there is a good mix of homes.
Q	Building of homes based on the current economy seems wrong. Years ago Bellway got land and they have only just started to build.
A	Nothing has been decided until after consultation and after residents have helped to shape it. The Government are wanting more than 12,000 homes, and we are trying to shape the plan around this recommendation. People can be very precious about pieces of land in the area in which they live, but the reality is that more people are living for longer and more want to live in North Tyneside. We have to make sure we have the homes to accommodate this.
Q	My difficulty with building houses is that yes, people want to move in – but there are people in North Tyneside who have housing problems. We are also faced with road transport issues, such as travel to Wideopen and Newcastle centre
A	We have to get the balance right. There are 6000 people on the waiting list, and 3000 homeless.
Q	It doesn't appear to be addressed, as all in the private sector and attracting and not assisting growth
A	The HRA of 15,000 homes would be money to build homes and we will build 3000 homes over next 3 years to ensure we tackle these issues.
Q	Are these Council?
A	No, we will be building affordable homes with our partners we can ask them for 25% of homes to rent out. We can't build an assigned portion without a partners agreement. We will start development and get them to use local labour, employment and materials.
Q	So you need 25,000 homes
A	No
Q	So you have 25,000 to build?
A	The schemes we are looking at could be part owned/part rent or buy outright. We have to give a range of options. 95% mortgages mean it's cheaper to buy instead of renting. We can't wait for the economy to improve, we have to start building. It's important that people want to live here. This is the biggest

	chance for people to analyse and feedback on this plan. A home built that is build now has to last for 200 years. Another statistic – a baby girl born now will live to be 100 years old we are living longer. We need to ensure our future generations have homes to live in. If we don't get the Plan right now, a Government officer will say how it has to be.
Q	How does new hospital impact?
A	It won't impact on housing but we do consult with them. It will give job opportunities.
	<p>Cllr Green advised she hopes to bring an update on the hospital to the next meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Green thanked John Harrison for the update on the bigger picture. Transport is fundamental and we need to look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road developments – especially on A19 • Biggest case load is housing. In this ward there are lots of issues. First in Seaton Burn by ISSIS. There will be 20, over the road from Meadow Bank.

	Sandy Lane bypass – Cllr Muriel Green would like this put back in the Plan to keep that open. Cllr John Harrison – the land to develop on will be Brownfield sites, and that's why it's important.
Q	I moved 3 years ago from London and it's great. For many years I had relatives on the Suffolk Coast and opposite was Suffolk down lands. It was quiet but deemed light industrial use. A few years later because of light industrial use, the area has been heavily built up this site is now ruined – all the greenhouses have gone. I was told that because planning deemed light ind use this is how they got their foot in the door. If housing in Dudley is in demand – my point is this is how things can slip.
	Cllr Muriel Green advised everyone – please fill in your forms for this consultation and make your comments.
Q	One thing not addressed – Johnny Winterburns over dam crossing Blyth Valley built houses on the right, houses from Cramlington. A lot of people moved into the houses and they used to come in to chase the cows, what I am saying is you have no say in who comes in. I have a wildlife garden, I don't want anyone coming in and destroying it.
A	Planning officer Claire advised that there is a process and the plans will come out in stages – but that we can't be sure who can move in next to you nobody can.
Q	What are the timescales being talked about?
A	No idea – there was a consultation to sell 4.9million by the previous mayor This is Council land – Housing associations may well be different – we don't know the timescales.
Q	Recreational land – increase schools etc. It's a massive thing we are second

	guessing.
A	John Harrison – There was a plan to sell the land off for an income on the HRA account. This was stopped. We need to consult so we need to get the balance for North Tyneside Local Plan. There is some interest but as there are other priorities – we are not selling at the present moment. Nobody is going to simply start building, there has to be a planning application, and you can appeal. There is a process to follow.
Q	My concern is where would £9 million be spent?
A	We are not selling, that was a proposal of the last Mayor. The Duke is looking to build at Backworth and Earsdon, but planning applications do not happen overnight. 300 houses opposite Peter Barratt are proposed. They will take up some of the housing consultation. There is no timescale. Planning applications can take months.
Q	Are these indigenous to this area?
A	The people they attract for this kind of build are clients who are professional young people and families, traditionally they commute to Hexham or Corbridge.
Q	The A1 is packed now.
A	That's why we turned down the planning application. Statistically the number who both live and work in North Tyneside is 50% so this is why Newcastle are concerned, as there is a leak into North Tyneside. We are told to attract to this area – the average income is £17,000, which is lower than the national average, and wouldn't increase. It is important to get people to live here to raise the local economy..
Q	My question is – where is all the water going to? I've been told water is being dealt with.
A	Cllr Muriel Green reported that the application for Wideopen had been turned down twice, and had been supported by Government, but on the second time an appeal to Eric Pickles was upheld, and that is how the developers can come along and say they are going to build. If the Plan is in place, developers like, for example, Persimmons, can't build. Please put your comments in about Dudley.
	Cllr Green then gave a brief update on Residential homes in Dudley before handing over to Sarah Bell of Riverside Housing Association.
	Sarah Bell said we are looking at accommodation for older people and Riverside Housing Association development with a difference. We have sheltered and residential care. We now have a unique scheme in North Tyneside Extra Care scheme – Weetslade Court – 24 hour care. Safe and secure housing for over 55's. There are 4-10 units shared ownership units from 25 to 75%. The rest of the units may be used for those with a care package.

	It is a community building with lots of other usage for example hairdressers, Zumba and Pilates classes, etc.
Q	Who built it?
A	Bellway homes have contracted it out.
Q	How much per unit?
A	£160,000 for 100% share, £40,000 for 25% share with £275 monthly rent and a service charge of £50 per month.
Q	Is this really the way forward? How many have sold?
A	There are 10 allocated and 14 interested so far. There are no 2 bed roomed bungalows available
Q	What's the floor space?
A	Have booklets to share; all different layouts, at the same cost. It is a community building. There are 51 flats
	<p>Cllr Muriel Green provided an update on other local issues</p> <p>Level Crossing in Dudley</p> <p>As is usual on public rights of way matters it can be very time consuming to arrive at a point that suits all parties bearing in mind the parcels of land in question are private. The proposal was to create a safe link path away from the rail crossing west of the line off Dudley Lane. However, this was rejected the land owner.</p> <p>The land owner subsequently submitted a section 31 declaration which sets out agreed rights of way and means no new ways can be claimed. However the potential route has been utilised by the wider public dating back at least 40 years and would qualify as a public right of way (subject to an order and potential objections). We can produce an order to place the path on the definitive map using the evidence we have, and I am confident we would succeed. However, the council is trying to work with the landowner rather than against and in doing so the council is in liaison with his site agents.</p> <p>It must be pointed out though that he will object and this will end up at an independent tribunal unless we can persuade his agents otherwise. Objections will be received regarding the closure for the rail crossing too.</p> <p>The powers, duties and responsibilities for Public Rights of way are invested in Local Authorities to support our efforts to protect and promote access for all and are embedded in complex and wrangled laws and acts. More often than not the paths cross private land and this makes the task that bit more difficult.</p> <p>Parking Bay in Hedgefield View</p>

	<p>Angela Gent has requested an update from Highways.</p> <p>Double Yellow Lines in Dudley</p> <p>Cllr Green talked through the latest Members Update regarding the restrictions that are progressing this financial year. Any requests received for new restrictions after 01 April 2013 have been added to a list to be considered as part of a programme of works for next year.</p>
Q	Why fence off land?
A	Some do it to identify their land
Q	Two parking spaces
A	Angela Gent to follow up
Q	Is the old school in Dudley being reclaimed as a parking area?
A	It was sold to a developer by the last administration, and there is uncertainty as to whether this can be reclaimed as a car park.
Q	Post Office closes in January and services will move to the Spar shop. Any feedback?
A	No comments made
Q	There are too many double yellow lines, where will visitors park? There are yellow lines at the entrance to Bentburgh. Parked cars make cars slow down, yellow lines will make traffic flow faster.
A	There will be a process to follow before any changes in traffic management are made.
Q	The Hedges from Fordley to Dudley need cutting back
A	This has been noted
Q	At next event what would you like to discuss?
A	Hospital
Q	Is there really a case of no extra beds.
A	They are cutting 6 bed bays to 4. The hospital will need to have a more detailed discussion about this. This will make a big improvement on wards.
Q	A few years ago was there was an archaeological dig on the old car park?
A	Yes, there was a bronze age find. Whoever develops any site would have to carry out an archaeological dig. A planning condition would state they need to look at underground before building on the top.

Cllr Muriel Green advised all that we will type up the comments and all the issues that have been raised to share back to residents.

Ward surgeries take place on:-

Councillor Alex Cowie, Muriel Green or Anthony McMullen will be in attendance.

Every Thursday

9.00 - 10.30 am, John Willie Sams Centre, Market Street, Dudley

10.30 - 11.00 am, Estate visits and home calls

11.00 am - 12.00 noon, Wideopen Library

1.30 – 2.30 pm, Chapelville, Seaton Burn

First Saturday each month

9.00 - 10.00 am, Morpeth Avenue Recreation Room, Wideopen

10.15 - 11.15 am, John Willie Sams Centre, Market Street, Dudley

The Mayors Listening Event where you can hear more about the budgets will be held 6.00 – 8.00pm at Burradon Primary School.

Cllr Green advised if there are any further queries please do not hesitate to let her know.