

## Formal Council Questions and Responses

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**1 Question to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing: 2019/7 - Affordable Housing**

**Councillor Carmel Townsend asked:**

Could the cabinet member spell out the administration's policy regarding affordable housing?

Does she share my dismay, in a period of record -breaking house builder profits, that developers were given the go ahead by planning committee to reduce the number of affordable houses as part of the Glan Llyn Development?

Does she also share my concern that the wider message this sends out, is that affordable housing requirements can be watered down so easily in Newport?

**Councillor Jane Mudd responded:**

Newport City Council uses the definition of affordable housing as set out in TAN 2. Further information can be found here: <https://gov.wales/docs/desh/policy/160609technical-advice-note-2-en.pdf>.

Council policy in respect of affordable housing is set out in the affordable housing Supplementary Planning Guidance which forms part of the adopted LDP. There is a copy provided on the NCC website <http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Planning-Documents/Supplementary-Planning-Guidance/Affordable-Housing-SPG---Final-August-2015.pdf> which also references TAN 2.

All Member Training on Section 106 Agreements and viability was provided in December 2018 prior to Planning Committee. The training session provided a detailed overview of how viability is assessed and the toolkits we use to ensure that the Council obtains the maximum level of planning contribution available on each site, including affordable housing. In the case of Glan Llyn, we also commissioned the District Valuer (at the applicant's cost) to fully assess the viability of the development and there was a notable improvement between what the developer originally proposed for the remainder of the site and what Planning Committee approved in February 2019. The Officer presentation provided very detailed and reasoned justification on the issue of viability and it was made very clear to Committee Members that the viability figures had been scrutinised by the District Valuer. It is always disappointing to see reductions in affordable housing numbers but I would assure you that Officers do not concede to requests to reduce planning obligations lightly and where reductions are justified, the Officer report provides robust reasons for agreeing to an amendment.

Further to the above, a couple of all member development sessions are being arranged to cover the wider aspects and contexts of housing in the first instance and secondly another session concerning homelessness and rough sleeping.