

DEPDEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Monday 14 December 2020 at 6.30pm via Zoom

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Leadbeater
 Councillors: Peter Ebbens
 Andrew Rabett
 Nicky Moncrieff
 Mike Chester (West Suffolk Councillor)
 Susan Boor (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Dennis Bibby and Andrew Read

2. West Suffolk Councillor Mike Chester took the meeting through the presentation of the proposed Local Plan for West Suffolk.

This is a long process and not due to be adopted until 2024 and will last until 2040.

The Plan includes transport, retail leisure and housing. Horse racing at Newmarket is regarded as very important to this area.

16,000 new homes will be required by 2040 in West Suffolk but the existing Local Plan has only allocated land for 13,400 new homes.

Submission by 22 December 2020.

3. After a discussion the following submission was agreed:

- 1) Blanket ban on development in the countryside is detrimental to dispersed rural communities like Depden where there is no settlement boundary defined. It condemns these areas to inevitable decline, with an ageing population, and a lack of affordable housing options for local people. We would like the local plan to better reflect the need to sustain and cherish communities in the countryside rather than ignoring their needs and any denying any possibility of continuity and renewal in villages with many centuries of history behind them.
- 2) The plan calls for “safe and healthy” places for people to live – this is clearly true of places like Depden and there are many people who would prefer to live in rural areas rather than towns and suburban housing estates – this option should not be reserved for those with high incomes!
- 3) The policy fails to take into account trends that will be even more apparent by 2040 – the assumption that public transport is essential for people to access work or that personal transport should be discouraged on environmental climate change grounds are both outdated.
 - a. Recent experience has shown that it is possible for a large part of the population to work from home successfully and the emphasis should be on providing high speed full fibre broadband in rural areas to enable this to be even more widespread. This trend will change the pattern of how we work and also where people can live sustainably and this should be reflected in the plan
 - b. Responses to climate change include the ban on sales of petrol/diesel cars by 2030, so by 2040 these will almost completely have been replaced by electric vehicles powered by renewable energy, so the use of personal transport to access work or other facilities will be much less detrimental to the

environment than at present, this should be reflected in the plan rather than continuing to assume that the only sustainable development is in the towns.

- 4) Policy DM27 is overly prescriptive in defining a cluster as containing 10 or more houses. We recently had an application in the parish refused for a property as infill in a cluster of 9 houses, the application was supported by the parish council and would have not had a detrimental impact on the village. The definition of cluster should be amended to make it more context-specific

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.15pm

Chairman

Date