

Questions from the Public

Question

1. Is it democratic that the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP), upon which local residents have not been consulted, should override the Local Plan 2020-40 upon which we have been extensively consulted over the years?

Answer- Portfolio Holder for Planning

As you will see from another item on this meeting's agenda, the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013 – 2033 (not 2020 – 2040 as your question suggests) has now passed its 5th birthday. By law, therefore, we are required to consider whether the plan is in need of updating – which the report says that it is. Indeed, the plan itself commits to a review every 5 years (see paragraph 2.12). Therefore it is inevitable that the current version of the local plan will be replaced by new, updated plan or plans which look forward further than 2033 and contain new or revised policies and development allocations. The council has decided that this is best undertaken by separating out the strategy elements and the more local elements into different documents. We can then work much more closely with our neighbours on a mutually more beneficial strategy for this part of Devon. We are required by law to work with our neighbours because of the “duty to cooperate” and a formal joint plan like the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan is the best way of doing this. I want to reassure you that there is no democratic deficit. Both the GESP and the Teignbridge Local Plan Review are at an early stage and will continue to be prepared with public consultation and through the proper legal procedures, over the next 3 – 4 years. Both plans will need to be approved by Teignbridge council during the course of their preparation and finally at their adoption.

Question

2. Will the housing of hundreds of Exeter workers, resulting in thousands of miles of commuting from sea level via a 250 m high moor, not increase the difficulty of fulfilling Teignbridge's promise to be 'carbon neutral' by 2025?

Answer- Portfolio Holder for Planning

This question presupposes a particular strategy of dispersing Exeter “need” to Teignbridge. However, I suggest you have a look at Exeter City Council's recently published Liveable Exeter Vision. This includes proposals for about 11,000 - 12,000 new homes to be built in Exeter in liveable new neighbourhoods previously developed land. On current figures this would more than meet their housing need, allowing for development already planned within the city. A sustainable transport strategy is being prepared to accompany this investment, concentrating on walking and cycling as the main forms of transport within the city. Nevertheless, it seems clear that Teignbridge residents will continue to wish to access the highly paid jobs within the city and I can't see anyone thanking us if we tried to stop them! By working with our Greater Exeter partners we can continue to provide the public transport improvements across the area which are needed to reduce all of our carbon footprints. We have seen a doubling of rail travel in the area over the last 10 years and we will work with our partners to continue the improvements needed to continue and accelerate this change. Having signed the climate emergency declaration I can confirm that this council will be taking account of our ambitions in our future strategies, both in planning and in other parts of the council. I am sure that the public will support us in our aims. Any climate change work which tries to ignore the world outside Teignbridge (and indeed, beyond this country) is bound to fail.