

Press Release

**From Councillor Barry Stamp
Stafford Borough Councillor
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Use: Immediate

Council Cabinet Accused of Misleading Councillors Over Affordable Home Scheme

Stafford Borough Council's Conservative run Cabinet have this week been accused of misleading fellow Councillors over the provision of affordable housing being planned as part of the redevelopment of the Riverside Centre.

Barry Stamp, the Leader of the Council's Liberal Democrat Group said he was appalled to hear that any affordable housing being provided as part of the redevelopment scheme would not be built on the existing site.

"Council planning policies require developers of large housing sites to provide a certain amount of afford housing as part of their scheme. This would amount to nearly 100 affordable homes being built as part of the redevelopment of the old Riverside site. However at last weeks meeting of the Council's Cabinet it was let slip that these homes were not going to be built on the existing site. Instead the Council have agreed to make further land available to allow the developers to meet their commitment. Time and time again during the meeting, the Cabinet members kept saying that the new sports centre development would not cost the rate payers of the Borough a penny, but they seemed to have conveniently forgotten that they were going to have to give away even more land to allow these homes to be built. I am at a loss to know exactly where this land is or when these homes are to be built. It is clear the Council has no large housing sites it can donate, so one imagines they will be using up odd bits of land right across the Borough. I am extremely worried they will try to build on any bit of green open space they own regardless of its social and community value. I am also concerned that these affordable homes will not be built until the main development is finished, and then because of the scattered nature of the sites may take years to complete. It is all very well the Cabinet blowing their own trumpet about the cost of this scheme, but the land they intend to use for these affordable homes does have a value which I suspect has not been included in their sums," said Cllr Stamp.

“I now intend to write formally to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council asking for details of what land the Council intends to make available to the developer along with its value. I will also be seeking an assurance that these affordable homes will not be left until the main development is finished before they are built,” said Cllr Stamp.

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