

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday 27 February 2014

AGENDA ITEM 5

Questions from Members of the Public

1. Question from Dr L Derrick to the Cabinet Member for Community

In Dec 2011, WDC sold over 6000 Council homes to Red Kite.

In order to get Government approval for this sale, WDC promised the Government that “receipts from the sale would enable the Council to provide more affordable homes”. It said “affordable housing is our key priority” and that the Council anticipated “a considerable increase in affordable housing in the area. “

In order to get the tenants to vote for the sale, WDC promised the tenants that the money from the sale would be used to meet “the housing requirements of local people in housing need”.

In Dec 2011, WDC received £18.5m in net receipts as a first instalment from the sale.

In July 2012, I wrote to WDC to ask how many additional homes would be provided with this 18.5m and by when.

The reply from the then Head of Homes and Housing said “The Council will be reviewing the prioritisation of reaching decisions on the allocation of all available capital resources in the autumn. It is not therefore yet possible to provide any indication of whether the Council will directly invest some of the receipts in affordable housing or how many affordable homes might be provided.”

So already, 7 months after the sale, the council had broken its promises. From affordable housing being a key priority, WDC was now not even prepared to say that any of the receipts would be spent on affordable housing.

It is now over 2 years after the sale and I am repeating my questions.

How many additional affordable homes has WDC built with the £18.5 million and how much has that cost? And how many additional affordable homes does it plan to build with the £18.5 m and by when?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor J M Gibbs (Cabinet Member for Community)