



Rhiannon Meades

for Mid Bedfordshire

Cllr James Jamieson
Leader
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Chicksands
Shefford
SG17 5TQ

27th November 2019

Dear Cllr Jamieson

Planning Enforcement and Securing Community Gains

Over the last few years and during the General Election campaign I have been approached by Central Bedfordshire residents voicing their frustration at the failure of developers to complete community aspects of developments. Following the construction stage of new housing and industrial developments, developers are slow to complete community provision, including play areas, roads and pavements.

This means that your Council cannot adopt roads and often residents have to pay service charges to the developer. We are left with houses in the midst of building sites rather than new communities.

There is significant demand for social housing and homes that are affordable to buy in Central Bedfordshire. These are important especially for young local families. Supply falls a long way short of demand. I am pleased that Labour is promising to introduce new powers for local authorities to make such provision core to planning consents for major developments.

I recognise that the Government has drastically cut its revenue support to the Council consistently since 2010, but the Council remains the planning authority. The Council has responsibilities to residents and their communities. These should be honoured and should include holding private sector developers to fulfilling their responsibilities. They will be making significant profits for their shareholders from these developments. This should not be at the expense of residents.



Whilst there may be good reasons for delay, in some cases, surely the developer and the Council should keep the local community informed of what is happening and why. Residents must not be left guessing as in the case of the Skatepark on the Bovis Campton Fields development in Shefford.

I would like you to commit to

- recognise that when developers are making profits from developments in Central Bedfordshire they should commit to investing in the local community
- embrace Labour's policy of making the inclusion of a significant proportion of social and affordable to buy homes in every development granted planning permission; and to enforcing this condition in full
- include community and environmental benefits in all significant developments across Central Bedfordshire as planning conditions and enforce them
- maximise the Section 106 obligations and hold developers to these
- require developers to meet their wider obligations and commitment to local communities
- regular communication with residents affected when there are either delays or changes to promises and commitments previously made

I am sure that you will be aware as I am of these issues. I am making a copy of this letter available to residents who I have recently spoken to and the local media.

I look forward to your response.

Rhiannon Meades
Labour Parliamentary Candidate for Mid-Bedfordshire

