

Summary of Marie Tidball Meeting on 3rd July

How it was Set Up

Invite Received from Marie Tidball with less than 24 hours' notice stating: On arrival, you will be assigned to a table depending on your locality. To introduce the meeting, I will give a short talk outlining how the meeting will proceed. Cllr Tom Hunt will then give a talk. For the rest of the evening, you will take part in a series of themed, facilitator-led discussions about the suitability of the additional site allocations, and what you would want to see in the Local Plan in terms of housing, employment opportunities, public services, and infrastructure. Throughout the evening, both Cllr Hunt and I will be rotating around the room to hear directly from you about your concerns to do with the Local Plan.

Invites included **“Do not film, record, or take photos of the meeting.”**

Marie Tidball Introduction – Summary

- The issues raised will be used to form a response on behalf of the constituents to SCC even if this is against Labour policy.
- This is only the start of the conversation and there would be chance to continue to feed into the plan after the consultation period had concluded with further surgery slots to be organised over the summer
- Nothing is off limits – the discussion at the tables is to look at solutions
- She stated that she was concerned about the suitability and concentration of the sites and that our area has been one of the most affected
- She has already received lots of emails and letters and is working to raise concerns and has in fact asked SCC to look at the Hallam Campus Sites
- Work in groups to drill down into the issues – site suitability, housing/ employment, public services, infrastructure. Facilitators at each table to assist with the discussion and recording of views

Tom Hunt Introduction – Summary

- Explained background to local plan and that no decisions have been made despite the council having voted to submit the plan on the 14th May
- Not enough houses have been built which has been a failure and those that have been built have not had all the right services built to support
- Too many people in temporary accommodation – 700 families in temporary accommodation
- Wants the city to grow. Need 38,000 extra homes. Brownfield first policy
- Need 3,500 additional homes but no more brownfield sites available however will continue to try to unlock more brownfield sites
- Inspectors in charge not SCC. 20,000 in City Centre
- Wanted a fairer distribution. Limited options in short period of time as only had 8 months to prepare plan
- Wanted to ensure homes are not built in the wrong places without access to schools, GP surgeries, playgrounds etc

Intervention by Member of Save Our Greenbelt Community Group (recording of the meeting was stopped at this point)

The following was read out by one of the group members and the other stood up in support. She was initially instructed to sit down but she continued with her statement

“In planning your discursive grouped themed meeting, you have sought to create an imbalance of power in this room – clearly positioning yourselves in a place of control. You are both answerable to the constituents in this area for the Sheffield Plan that, you Tom Hunt, have proposed, and for which you both evidently favour.

We expect to ask questions and expect you to answer. In a similar format to other meetings – for example how you managed the S13 meeting where they had an opportunity for some of their community leaders to make a speech and then for you both to take questions and answers from the floor.

We will not be coerced into discussing how to make this plan acceptable so that you can claim that you have consulted with us and tick a box. We deserve respect, not to be patronized or treated like children.

How do you intend to change tonight’s format to respect our expectations.”

Marie Tidball responded that she wanted to know the residents’ views so that she could represent them in her objection and encourage everyone to take part, but this was going to be done in a deliberate way. She apologized if the format had come across as patronizing but said she wanted to ensure as many people as possible had access to Tom, hence the breakout into small groups

The Community Group members met in private and agreed to take part. Members had been allocated across different tables so the community group members agreed that their remit would be to not to follow their agenda on how to make these developments work, but to concentrate the groups on residents’ objections. The Group Members then rejoined their tables and explained this to other group members who in the main agreed to this approach.

Each table were then given a series of questions to answer. See Appendix 1 for the questions asked on table 3 (Chapelton Group). The discussion varied from table to table, but most held the line of explaining their objections to answering in a way that implied acceptance of the proposals with certain conditions.

Marie Tidball and Tom Hunt circulated around each table to seek views.

Part way through the meeting, Adele Riddle came into the church and was extremely upset at not receiving an invite to the meeting. The participants stood up and cheered for her. Some were in tears as sympathetic to her frustration and the fact that her family had so much to lose and had been treated so badly by SCC.

After Adele Riddle left, the discussion continued, and Tom Hunt continued circulating around the tables.

Some recollections of statements made by Tom Hunt are stated below

Consultation - An attendee from the meeting challenged Tom Hunt regarding the lack of any information or consultation. She stated that you can inform me with a letter that my road will be resurfaced in a week that will be mildly inconvenient, but you haven’t sent me anything to explain that you will be building on greenbelt that will have a massive impact on our lives. His response was that they had to put the plan together in a hurry and only had 8 months so didn’t have time to get around to consulting with everyone. The resident stated that this was not her problem as it is their duty was to consult, and they only really had 2 main areas – S35 and S13. Why was their comms team not involved? He just hung his head and nodded and agreed that they should probably extend the consultation period.

Agree Local Plan or else - He informed the group that they would be better agreeing this local plan, or the Government will send in their own planners and Sheffield CC would have

no control of that. To this the group at the table said bring it on as we have nothing to lose as we already know that these plans are in contravention of the Governments Golden Rules for planning.

Green Spaces – Tom Hunt said, “it was important to give people nice places to live with green spaces”. I think a general response was “what, by getting rid of the green space we already have by building on it”

Schools – An attendee said that the LA Education Department had stated there are no actual plans to build new mainstream schools on the sites identified at this time and it is unlikely this will change. Tom seemed surprised that she had obtained this information

Building in the West - He said that he wanted more even distribution of building on greenbelt and had voted in favour of building in the West but had been voted down by his council colleagues including the Lib/Dem that had voted against it.

Employment Land- He was challenged by the group in Chapeltown over the demand for further employment land in the area considering the significant amount of employment land available in the area already. He had no answer other than to say the inspectors had mandated more employment land at which he was challenged that it was SCC that had defined the type and location of employment land which brought no benefit to the local area as warehousing and logistic is heavily automated and EVRI was 1.3 miles away and having to bus workers in to fill jobs there. Again, just a nod of acknowledgement but no response

Not knowing the area - When Tom Hunt was asked if he actually knew Ecclesfield his reply was that he didn't know the specifics of the areas affected by the local plan

Group Feedback

Each table was asked to nominate someone to speak on their behalf – the majority of those chosen were also members of the community group.

They each gave feedback on the 3 most important points to their group. These included:

- The dire consultation process which did not align to the principles set out for local Government public consultations with residents doing the councils role helping to inform people through over 10,000 leaflets distributed, weekly meetings and drops ins to help people understand and make their views known. The lack of accessibility and transparency was flagged with thousands of pages of documents dumped in an online portal for people to try to make sense of (with further documents being added into the consultation process) and then respond in a ridiculous 6 week period.
- The alleged Brownfield Policy set out by SCC and the PM and how our community knew of available sites that had not been assessed which we were offering to work with the council to review but were being ignored. Also not given sufficient information on why sites were rejected (fundamental constraint?). There was also the mention of the 15,000 homes with planning permission not yet built
- The unfair allocation of housing and employment across 2 postcodes in Sheffield and the fact that this was done as a desk-based exercise to hit the numbers across as few sites as possible with massive housing estates and enormous same industry employment sites congregated really close together. The final comment made was ‘our community greenbelt should not be collateral damage for lazy planning’
- There is a decrease in birth rate in Sheffield so the figures quoted don't stack up
- If we provide some brownfield sites, will you look at these and apply your own policy of brownfield sites first? He was also asked for the report which showed clear rationale why sites were rejected and said he would provide this

- He was challenged that in effect the plans suggested imposing the equivalent of 2 towns/villages in the middle of existing towns and villages. Research has shown that smaller developments help integration as in accordance with the Government Planners recommendations but on this scale, it is against all the rules of urban sprawl
- Lack of consideration of Greybelt areas

Concluding the Meeting

Marie Tidball summed up that she understood the strength of feeling and the reasons for this and would be making these clear in her objections to the Planners / SCC.

Tom Hunt reiterated that they had very limited time to come up with a plan, only 8 months and had they had more time, the plan may have looked different. He did not refute the fact the plan was a desk-based exercise and said they may not have got it right due to time pressures, but no decision had yet been made and to make sure we had our say during the consultation period. He said he had voted for a more even distribution in building, particularly in the West, but had been outvoted and this included the Lib/Dems. Finally, he acknowledged that if they had got the consultation process wrong, they would take on board the feedback 'for next time'.

Meeting ended at around 8.45 pm after 3 hours.

Appendix 1

D Infrastructure

a. Roads

- What particular roads or junctions require improvement?
- How important is it to reduce car dependency at the new sites?

b. Public transport

- What specific bus routes would you like to see?
- What improvements to pedestrian infrastructure would you like to see?
- What improvements to cycling infrastructure would you like to see?

c. Utilities

- What changes or improvements need to be made to essential utilities including water, electricity and internet access?

d. Flooding/ extreme weather prevention

- Are there any particular areas that are severely affected by flooding/ extreme weather?

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