

New Homes Bonus Group

PETITION – NEW HOMES BONUS SCHEME

Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 16 April 2014 on this matter is reproduced, below:

The Chairman referred to the receipt of a petition, submitted under the Council's petition scheme, relating to the New Homes Bonus Scheme.

The Chairman invited the Lead Petitioner Mr P. Rowbottom to present the petition and to address the Council on the contents of the petition.

Mr Rowbottom gave the terms of the petition "to request the reallocation of New Homes Bonus Money to communities directly affected by new housing developments following full public consultation"

Mr Rowbottom stated that this was the first petition to meet the requirements of the Council's Petition Scheme in that it contained over 1400 signatures of people from across the District who felt strongly over the matter, and the petition could therefore be presented at Council.

Reference was made by the Lead Petitioner to a quotation from the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Grant Shapps MP at the launch of the New Homes Bonus Scheme in 2010 "the New Homes Bonus will ensure that those communities that go for growth reap the benefits of development" It was felt that a range of communities across the District would benefit from the use of the New Homes Bonus within their areas.

Members were urged to give full consideration to the issue and to support a change in Council Policy so that local communities could benefit from the scheme.

The Chairman thanked Mr Rowbottom for the petition and stated that the Council had already made a decision in relation to the New Homes Bonus which now formed part of the Authority's agreed budget for 2014/2015. However she considered the subject should be investigated further and

the Chairman therefore proposed the following:

That the petition be referred to a cross party working group comprising the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Finance Portfolio Holder, the Labour Group Leader and the Leader of the Independent Alliance;

That the Group undertake a more evidenced based and in-depth investigation into the options that might be considered in relation to the New Homes Bonus;

That when the Group meet to set up their terms of reference they consider favourably giving the opportunity for the public to feed into the process; and

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That the Group aims to submit a report back to the appropriate decision making forum by September 2014.

This was seconded by Councillor R. Hollingworth and on being put to the vote the Chairman declared it to be carried.