

*B&NES Cabinet Meeting 11 June 2014 Item 15:
Funding Approval for Indicative Housing Development Programme*

Statement by Amanda Leon, Radstock Action Group

Last month, Radstock Action Group met Linden Homes, the company currently proposed as the developers of central Radstock Railway Land. At this meeting Linden Homes was absolutely clear that they were not going to pay the proposed 106 because their responsibility lies exclusively to their shareholders and paying the 106 would mean there would be nothing in it for said shareholders.

And now B&NES cabinet is being asked to approve expenditure of OUR money in order to ensure that affordable homes are built and that Linden Homes shareholders get their profits. Of course, thanks to the Byzantine rules of the Local Government Act we are barred from seeing the details of this and any other relevant plans.

B&NES has been trumpeting its commitment to affordable housing as part of a regeneration package for Radstock for years. What they have not said is that they would be entering into deals with developers who want this sort of work so that they can line the pockets of their shareholders.

No doubt B&NES will argue that the Radstock Regeneration Project is already budgeted for – some of it will certainly not be completed by 2015, even if it actually starts.

Who is paying for all of this?

1. B&NES has assumed responsibility for paying a large chunk of the road bill, thus relieving pressure on any would-be developer
2. B&NES has let Linden Homes off their 106 responsibilities – according to Linden Homes, the 106 has been signed and everything is sorted in relation to conditions
3. Is B&NES also, by this agenda item, going to subsidise the building of the affordable homes?

And, of course, B&NES has been telling doubters that this all will mean affordable homes for Radstock people. Not true. Radstock people will have to take their turn like all the others in the authority who need decent homes.

But Linden Homes shareholders will be fine – their dividends are guaranteed now that our council and other taxes will be paying for affordable homes, roads, additional infrastructure such as additional school places and community facilities.

Throw this out and explain why we should be paying. The whole situation stinks.