

**CABINET
30th JULY 2014**

Public Questions/Statements

1. Question One

On behalf of the Shropshire CPRE Mr Selby Martin of Shrewsbury will ask the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Commissioning (Central):

"In view of the Office of National Statistics recently published figures on population growth in Shropshire, will Cabinet agree to promote a lower level of housing for the remaining years of the current strategy?"

On 29 May 2014 Office of National Statistics published its latest estimates for population growth in the UK – "ONS 2012 based sub-national population projections."

The latest ONS projections for Shropshire give an average growth rate of 1,366 people per year between 2012 – 2021, falling to 1,113 people per year over the longer time span from 2012 – 2037.

Shropshire Council's Adopted Core Strategy (Page 9) projects a population growth from 292,800 (2008) to 329,000 (2026) or an average rate of 2,011 (36,200 divided by 18) people per year.

Shropshire's rate of population growth is expected to be significantly lower than at the time the Core Strategy's housing figures were formulated. There is therefore good reason to reduce housing targets which were based on the previous ONS figures.

The ONS release states: "Significant differences between the 2012-based population projections and previous projections are likely to indicate the need for local councils to review the housing requirement within their Local Plan." This is what we are asking you to do.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Committee, Mr Malcolm Price will reply as follows:

The SAMDev document has just been approved by Council for submission to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The housing targets in the Plan may be a significant area that the Inspector wishes to explore during the examination looking at a range of evidence including the release of ONS Household Projections later this year and bearing in mind the delivery of the Core Strategy's aims and objectives and the governments drive to boost housebuilding. The Council will not be reducing its housing targets prior to or outside this examination phase.

An early review of the strategic policies of the Core Strategy is also likely to be required once the SAMDev is in place to recognise a number of factors around housing issues. This could change the housing figures for a period extending beyond 2026 possibly to 2036, the housing target could go either up or down depending on a number of factors.