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Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2021

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Dear Mr Gove

## **HOUSING AND THE LOCAL PLAN**

I have been requested to inform you of the following resolution that was passed by the City Council at its meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) notes that the population of Sheffield is predicted to grow by approximately 90,000 over the next twenty years and a shortage of decent housing will have a profound effect on economic growth, social mobility and health;
- (b) agrees that Sheffield will require more than 40,000 new homes over the next 20 years;
- (c) agrees that the location, mix and affordability of that housing will have a huge impact on the future prosperity and quality of life for its citizens;
- (d) notes that the Local Plan has been in development since 2012, with delay after delay leaving Sheffield in a position where we will become increasingly defenceless against inappropriate development;
- (e) notes the overwhelming public response to the 2020 Issues & Options Consultation in favour of higher density, walkable neighbourhoods primarily focussed in and around the city centre and Attercliffe;

- (f) further notes that development in these locations are particularly sustainable due to excellent transport links and existing infrastructure, and with good opportunities for affordable and accessible housing;
- (g) agrees that it must listen to the people of Sheffield and commits to developing a Local Plan based on this spatial strategy;
- (h) notes that due to the importance of protecting green spaces, the Council, under the previous Administration, undertook work to determine how the new homes in central Sheffield can be maximised - and following this work, Sheffield City Council produced a plan to meet the already high target of 40,000 new homes, whilst protecting the green belt;
- (i) reaffirms support for this approach, which would have delivered the correct number of homes for the city, whilst ensuring building in the right locations;
- (j) notes with real concern that cities in the North are now being forced by the Government to adhere to unrealistic house building targets, due to a U-turn which, we believe, was enacted to protect shires in the South;
- (k) notes that as a result of the Government's U-turn, Sheffield will now face a 35% increase in its nationally determined targets for new housing delivery;
- (l) believes that these Government-imposed targets are not appropriate to the scale of need, and threaten Sheffield's green belt, as well as undermining the good work undertaken by the Council in preparing a plan which would have provided enough homes and in the right locations;
- (m) notes that Sheffield City Council's Planning Committee has rejected a number of planning applications on green spaces, including in Loxley Valley, but the Government might in the future try and force through similar development, as they seek to take even more control on planning matters away from local councils;
- (n) believes that Sheffield facing a 35% increase on targets by the Government is a real concern for protecting our green spaces and will have an impact to the city's ecology and wildlife;
- (o) commits to challenging the Government and to making sure that we enact a Local Plan that delivers for Sheffield:
- (p) asks that a copy of the notice of motion is sent to Government to highlight our position, and to all Sheffield MP's, calling on them to stand up for Sheffield and fight in Parliament the unrealistically high housing demands imposed by the Government;
- (q) believes that Sheffield's Local Plan must include higher environmental and carbon reduction standards and stronger rules on affordable homes than at present;

- (r) believes that more housing is required – but it must be the right housing, of the right size, in the right place; that the target “number of dwellings” does nothing to address the complexity of housing need and that, whether set locally or nationally, any targets must be broken down by size of dwelling;
- (s) believes there needs to be more good quality, affordable housing to rent and more social housing; and
- (t) therefore recommends that the “affordable-free zone” for developers in the city centre, where profits go out of the city and few affordable homes are built, is removed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Duckworth', with a large, stylized initial 'G'.

**GILLIAN DUCKWORTH**  
***Director of Legal and Governance***

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