

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
22nd February 2018**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Jonathan Wilkinson, Portfolio Holder
for Housing and Countryside Services**

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor William Powell

What mechanisms does the Cabinet Member and his officer team deploy to ensure that residential developments throughout the County, both in the Powys County Council and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) planning areas, correspond to demonstrable housing need, both in number and type.

In the case of development(s) within the BBNPA area, how does Powys County Council, as the housing authority, ensure that monies allocated as affordable housing contributions are appropriately invested in affordable development(s) within the county boundary - and in accordance with Council priorities?

Response

The primary source of data regarding housing need is the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA), a Welsh Government requirement that is updated regularly and fully revised every 5 years (WG Guidance 2006). The Powys LHMA was reviewed in 2016 as part of the LDP process and is currently undergoing a full revision. Alongside this we use data from the Common Housing Register (CHR) which holds all social housing applications for ourselves and the Housing Associations.

The LHMA for Powys disaggregates the area of the BBNPA allowing that planning authority clear access to specific data for the area of Powys within its control. The use of these data sources allows us to influence the design of development schemes so that they correspond to need now and, as far as possible, for the future.

The use of monies received as affordable housing contributions within the BBNPA is governed by that authority's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) which has a specific cascade approach to where such funds can be used and which is clear that this use of funds should not cross either any Unitary Authority boundaries or be spent outside the BBNPA. Powys is committed to acting in accordance with this SPG.

A recent bid by Powys to receive funding from BBNPA to allocate to development very close to where the funding was received has been refused and we are considering an appeal.

Powys County Council has expressed its disagreement with BBNPA holding such funds but as yet has been unable to secure an answer as to what the legal advice given to BBNPA was on which they have based this control.