

COUNCIL MEETING

31 July 2023

PUBLIC QUESTION 2

Name of person submitting the question: Bernard Brown

Member to whom the question is to be put: Councillor Oliver

Question

In view of the apparent failure of accountability and Governance of matters relating to the Rother District Council's Blackfriars Project will the leader tonight, no less than seven months since he was first asked the question, tell residents how much the infrastructure and Spine Road project will now cost to complete, how this compares to the original budget, why this overrun has taken so long to be reported and why the governance of the project as well as the Governance of the Rother DC Housing Company Ltd has been allowed to apparently completely fail?

Answer

Firstly, I do not accept that the governance of either the project nor the Housing Company has failed. The Cabinet report earlier this month made clear the significant economic challenges that have been faced whilst trying to deliver this project. The project has brought forward a site that has remained undeveloped for decades and will still deliver 200 much-needed new homes in Battle, a significant success for this Council. Whilst we have indicative costings for the infrastructure element of the scheme these are yet to be confirmed within the context of the wider project. A full paper will be coming to Cabinet in the coming months which will outline, to the public, the full costs of the scheme, and any funding requirement from the Council.