



**Minutes of meeting held on the 21<sup>ST</sup> May @ Office of the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Churchgate House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU to discuss the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and its impact on Bury.**

Compiled by Chris Russell (Chair), The Friends of Bury Folk.

Attendees: - Mayor of Greater Manchester Andrew Burnham (AB), Mayoral Personal Assistant Kevin Lee (KL), GM Infrastructure Framework Ann Morgan (AM), Bury Head of Strategic Planning and Economic Development Crispian Logue (CL), Chris Russell (CR) Friends of Bury Folk Chairman, Stephen Cluer (SC) Friends of Bury Folk Secretary, Paul Acheson (PA) Friends of Bury Folk Committee member, Yassamin Sheel (YS) Representative from Save Greater Manchester Greenbelt.

- 1) CR apologised directly to AB for the treatment he received outside Bury Town Hall from some of the protesters, SC pointed out it was the first real opportunity that our supports have had to vent their frustrations over the GMSF at this level, and however all agreed that the outcome enabling the meeting was a positive start.
- 2) CR explained how The Friends of Bury Folk was formed linking the 3 main allocations Walshaw, Elton & Simister to protect their greenbelt and that it is an official group with a constitution and bank account enabling it to be a stakeholder for Bury Planning. AB agreed we had a very well formed well supported group.
- 3) CR pointed out that our group do understand the need for housing, however it must be the right amount of the right types of housing based on need in our local area and located in the right places not on our precious greenbelt.
- 4) CR explained that he represented our group at the cross party meeting at the houses of parliament with the Housing minister Kit Malthouse to form clarity on the housing figures and how they should be applied to our local plan.
- 5) AM asked do you think you got some clarity from the housing minister?
- 6) CR replied yes we believe we did and I will provide you with a copy of our minutes. CR offered to explain the important points noted from the meeting with the Housing Minister, AB agreed he and his team would very much like to understand what was said at the meeting.
- 7) CR Explained the facts from the meeting as follows:-
  - a. You have to start with the 2014 figures as the 2016 figures have been disregarded based on one area Cambridge being seen as vastly in accurate. AM explained that the next figures would be the 2018 figures which would not be released until September 2020 most confirmed too late for the GMSF by AM.
  - b. CR explained you have 2 options as follows:
    - i. Argue your own starting figure in your own plan.
    - ii. Propose a need based argument starting with the 2014 housing requirement.
  - c. AB pointed out that he had told his team to change the plan drastically following the 2016 figures but when they were withdrawn they have been forced to go back to a larger plan. CR disagreed with this action as that is not what the Housing Minister had said, he had pointed out that the figures are merely a starting point not a target. CR pointed out that the failure of Bury's local plan in 2016 was due to the then rules that required the local authority to be judge on the best figures and not figures now based on housing need and local availability.

- d. CR stated the housing minister had pointed out that you have to start with the 2014 figures and mitigate via exceptional circumstances either up or down from this figure. AB stated the meeting he had seen did not give this detail. CR asked if AB meeting with the Minister agreed with this. AB stated he has not had a meeting with the minister and has been requesting one. CR questioned this as the minister was very clear that communication had taken place between AB and his department. AM explained he may have been reporting to correspondence between the GMCA planning department and the inspectorate.
  - e. CR stated the housing minister kept stating “The housing requirement does not automatically trump the need to retain greenbelt and it should remain protected as long as possible.” He also stated “To protect it, it must remain to fulfil its purpose of preventing urban sprawl.” AB questioned this statement and pointed out that in his opinion there is sleight of hand going on there. AB pointed out that they have been made to use the 2014 figures, CR corrected and stated “as a starting point” AB repeated “as a starting point”. AB pointed out that they had been asked to sign a housing deal for figures above the 2014 figures need @ 227,000 and they agreed at the time, however when the 2016 figures came out the GMCA lowered their figures and thus the government pulled the plug on the 68m housing grant. AB stated they are being blackmailed to go higher by the government. SC asked is there any other funding now that your government funding has been removed? AB stated not necessarily, Homes England will work with the GMCA on a scheme by scheme basis. SC asked now that the funding is removed from government are there any other consequences of say going for a lower vale such as 180,000 homes? AB stated that the consequence of a lower figure such as the 2016 being put forward would open up the GMCA to legal challenges from the housing builders not the government. KL pointed out that even the 201,000 latest figure in our consultation the GMCA would expect legal challenges from the house builders. KL explained that the 201,000 figure would have to pass the government inspector and they were concerned over this. SC interjected that the GMCA is not forced to use the standard methodology to determine need they should mitigate via the exceptional circumstances. SC pointed out from his research that population growth would plateau by the end of the century and going for a 20 year plan is too far into the future and a 15 year plan is more realistic. AM questioned was it the minister that said that? CR responded that no, it was the senior planning advisor that stated the 15 year plan is recommended. AM explained that the GMSF is a framework that allows for each borough to have their local plan within it, with a 15year local plan from the point of adoption. CR pointed out that if the figures in the plan include the 4 year build-up such as the 1253 houses given permission this year alone should they not be included in the plan? CL stated that these would be included in the plan and come off the total requirement. SC points out the growth for Bury over the last 20 years on average = 800 people per year, and the average UK person per home = 2.4 people per home. This lowers the housing need down to 5000 which is entirely covered by brown field site availability and thus no need to use any greenbelt. CL stated they will of course look at this point.
- 1) CR now moves back to the topic of the Housing Minister meeting and explains about the two types of approach:
    - a. Two types of approaches to lowering the housing figures in a local plan are:-

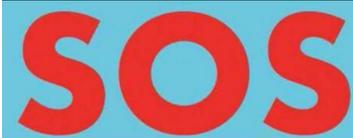


- i. Argue your own starting figure in your own plan, this requires you to mitigate the following exceptional circumstances:-
    1. Local economic shock (large employer closing CR pointed out the example of British Steel to Scunthorpe) or a period of economic change (Brexit?).
    2. Fully explored the density requirements on the areas you have.
    3. Fully explored the use of brownfield and public land that you have.
  - ii. Propose a need based argument starting with the 2014 housing requirement, this requires you to mitigate the following exceptional circumstances (CR pointed out that they need to be clearly defined in your plan, the current plan does not do this):-
    1. Fully identify and allocate all your available brownfield sites to housing need in your local plan.
    2. Fully explored the density requirements on the areas you have allocated. (CR stated that the town centre developments are a great way to increase the density on council site in Bury, AM asked if we have recommended these sites? CR responded yes we have recommended sites around Bury market for example and we have to point out that it is homes not just houses that the figures require and CL agreed they are included in their plans). AB pointed out there is another issue and that is viability of the land and that is where they are being challenged by the developers. CR responded yes we understand this and that the fund of the 58m to help with difficult sites has been removed now. So now if you cannot use a site it becomes an exceptional circumstance under the rules and you have to specify it as such, this then lowers your available stock and thus your figures.
    3. Fully explore cooperating with all your neighbouring areas and further areas afield taking your housing need. AB explained that the GMCA has asked every single neighbouring borough to take some of our allocation. AM pointed out we have stated that we have been unable to get neighbouring areas to take our housing, it's in our statement of common ground. CL pointed out that other districts are requesting GMCA and Bury to take their numbers all the time. CR again pointed out that as long as you have evidenced what you have done (note you do have to show you have tried further afield other than just neighbouring districts) you do not have to have succeeded the point is you have done your best and show it clearly in your plan.
- 2) CR now stated to move back to specifically Bury's 2014 figures,
- a. CR explained that Bury originally had 10,778 allocated with a person per home of 1.57. CL asked, where did this figure come from? CR responded, the Government Website DCLG Household Projections 2014-2035.
  - b. CR explained we then joined the GMSF and that took us up to 12,700 homes based on 1.33 persons per home. So the 2000 homes reduced in the last round of the GMSF has just put us back to square one. AB said he has a figure 11552 as Bury's starting point. AM then stated this is the figure for the household projections with

the affordability ratio from the standard methodology. CL stated that the 10,778 figure is your starting point however there is an uplift to that based on housing need which has uplifted it. SC pointed out that the uplift is based on the GMCA uplift and need, not that of Bury. CR pointed out that within the GMSF you have uplifted Bury to 12700 and then stated that you are transferring 2000 to other authorities. It just leaves us back at the beginning.

- c. CR explains that Bury should be mitigating against this argument based on our available housing stock which now stands around the 4700 mark which is lower than a 5 year supply based on the 2014 projections thus leaving us open to development on greenbelt without a valid local plan stating the exceptional circumstances.
- d. CL now states that Bury have not dropped a local plan and are in fact progressing a local plan.
- e. SC requests that the GMCA agree an official start date for the GMSF, so the 1253 houses given permission this year (4 x the required rate) can be taken off the current total in the next phase of the GMSF?
- f. AM stated the start date was 2018 however the next plan the start date will be 2019.
- g. CL confirmed that those houses being given planning permission in the last 12 months will be added to the supply. CL confirmed that all those houses gaining permission will be netted off the required supply.
- h. SC commented that the 1253 must not be lost as this is important for Bury's total requirement. CL stated that not all of them would be allowed as they were before the start date. SC stated that when we have our local meeting we must go through the numbers and ensure all parties understand the numbers and what is being included and what is not and why.
- i. AM confirmed the GMCA had a meeting that very day about forming the exceptional circumstances to be added to the GMSF to justify the numbers. CL stated they are getting legal advice on the exceptional circumstances. AM confirmed they have written to the government for clarity on the exceptional circumstances.
- j. Both AB and AM stated at this point, that this is the first time they had seen an exhaustive list of the exceptional circumstances the government are looking for. CR then provided a copy of his minutes from his meeting with the Housing Minister and his advisors.
- k. AB again stated that the GMCA are going to be attacked by the developers for the figures even as they are now and are worried about reducing further.
- l. SC asked, what is the point of having a planning committee as the developers simply go to appeal and boroughs such as Bury cannot afford to fight them off?
- m. AB stated that this is the purpose of the GMSF to control the developers to an overall plan.
- n. CR pointed out that as it stands now the developer could force himself onto greenbelt today due to the lack of a 5 year housing supply and not local plan.
- o. CL still thinks that Bury would be in a good position to defend and appeal for development on the greenbelt given what has happened up and down the country at this point. CL stated that there will become a point where the appeal will be lost due to the fact that a local authority did not have a local valid plan, which is why we need a plan.

- p. AB explained that this is the point where we have got common ground in that we must have a plan. AB pointed out that without the GMSF Bury's position will be much weaker and the numbers would be much higher, this is the argument for what GMCA are trying to achieve. AB is concerned that the whole process of the GMSF could be wrecked by one council pulling out and leaving all with no protection.
- q. CR pointed out that, we as a group understand the need for the full support of the GMCA and an overall plan and Bury have already dropped its current local plan so we are left with little choice now but to be negotiating with the GMCA to lower the destruction of the greenbelt in Bury. Our group is attempting to mitigate Bury's situation to you as the GMCA. So that is why we are requesting that you take away some of our requirement as the fundamental point made under the exceptional circumstances is that we do not have any capacity left and the housing requirement does not trump the greenbelt.
- r. AB there is a contradictory pressure when they say that on the one hand but you will not get funding for infrastructure. CR agreed in that the Housing Minister did point out that if a borough wants funding and a bigger slice of the pie for things such as HS3 it must build more homes to justify it.
- s. AM and SC discussed about working together to achieve a plan that would be the best it can be for Bury. SC pointed out that the government legislation on the housing figures had been aided/funded by the housing industry by companies such as Taylor Wimpy. AB pointed out that the problem has been led by the above housing need policy from central government. AB believes that the chaos in Westminster at the moment is leading to instability and unaccountable decisions on policy's that simply previously would not have been accepted. AB pointed out that with the changing landscape in central government it could make it worse for protecting the greenbelt not better, nothing at the moment is a done deal.
- t. CR stated that the way in which central government has communicated the local plan requirements and then not fully explained how these plans are to be judged is simply not right. A clear concise method should be presented and should be requested.
- u. AM starting point for the methodology by the government has been very clear up until now that we have to meet the housing need, they are only now being unclear and ambiguous. The GMCA currently has an ex-planning inspector looking at what they need to strengthen and what they should do next, the government inspector just winced when told that if we could not meet the figures without going into the greenbelt we would not be able to achieve them. The NPPF does set out what you need to do to change green belt as it is not protected in perpetuity, there is still an ambiguity as to how to proceed. CR stated again that the housing minister was so very clear that if all the exceptional circumstances had been met that the greenbelt is protected from housing need/requirement, stated at least 5 times in the Westminster meeting. AM did the housing minister say it the other way around that the greenbelt trumps the housing need/requirement? CR not he did not he stated the housing need does not trump the greenbelt, so if you do not make a plan you could lose the greenbelt.
- v. CL explains that the NPPF when it came out was full of ambiguity and the recent statements are just adding to this ambiguity, his feedback from other parties at that meeting said that the minister just wanted all the parties at the meeting to hear

The logo consists of the letters 'SOS' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The 'O's are white with a red outline, and the 'S's are solid red. The background is a light blue gradient.The text 'Sign the petition' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. 'Sign' is larger and bolder than 'the petition'. The background is a green gradient.The text 'Object against GMSF' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. 'Object' is larger and bolder than 'against GMSF'. The background is a green gradient.The text 'Share our group' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. 'Share' is larger and bolder than 'our group'. The background is a green gradient.

what they wanted. On one hand the housing need did not trump the green belt but on the other there was a large pressure to achieve / exceed the need. CR pointed out that yes the minister stated he wanted a 50 year plan and that would give out all the greenbelt straight away to gain large amounts of funding and comments about HS3 funding where flying around. AB interjected that these types of statements would not look good in court at which point CR stated yes it was at points like this that the housing ministers advisors from the planning stepped in to clarify. CR explained that the senior planning office stepped in and explained that really a 15 year plan is the optimum plan enabling enough time for forward planning but not too much in advance of other possible change situations (economic shock). CL interjected that he was told that the advisers were basically quoting from the NPPF which is full of ambiguity. CR questioned the statements from the government that are confirming that they have provided the greenbelt with more protection and that the NPPF is older than these statements so what has changed? AM & CL stated that nothing has actually changed as far as they can see. AB commented that currently without politics as normal ministers are not being held to account and these statements should be clarified and they are not being, he should be held accountable for the statements if they are not true. CR pointed out that in the guidance it states that the greenbelt has been given more protection. AM states but not in the NPPF itself. CL believes the only difference is that it has moved from a foot note to the main text and that is largely the difference.

- w. SC now states here is the Trojan horse that the clever people behind the plans are going to deliver 20 years of housing land all at once, that is like a buffet for the housing developers, they will have a carnival as they do not want your brownfield sites they want the greenbelt. That is what the developers want and we have to come up with a plan to try and stop that. Everyone in the meeting agreed this point. SC if we allow the developers to win then they will build and build all over the GMCA areas and create masses of problems including traffic congestion and pollution, and then nobody will want to live in our areas and this will have the opposite effect to what is wanted and required. AB states that we have built for the car in greater Manchester and it is time we build for public transport and that is what I want to achieve from the plan. AB stated he has tried to move the plan back towards development of town centres, brownfield and transport. The problem is that the building industry does not want this type of development and hence has riddled it full of bullets. AB, I am agreeing with you that we need to build much higher density and much more for public transport, some of the sites that might allow that are owned by network rail but we are not allowed to put their sites in. AB asks to his experts AM/CL how can the developers be stopped from taking all the greenbelt at once and rather than using up the brown field first? AM states that we can put on conditionality that only allows specific sites to be available in the first 5 years and if a greenbelt site is put forward within the 5 year period we can say no, if you do not have a 5 year supply of housing then that is different and Bury has a more problematic situation with its 5 year supply, so within the GMSF we are taking the heavy lifting in central Manchester and Salford, thus Bury is given a lower number in the first 5 years within the GMSF plan. CR interjects and states that in the meeting with the Housing Minister the experts said there is nothing to stop or stagger the greenbelt use if it is within your plan. AM now states yes you cannot stop the

developer from eventually using the land but you can refuse the permission at a planning level within the first 5 years of the plan. CL comments that in an 18-20 year plan nobody wants to open up the buffet and leap frog the brownfield and it is worth bearing in mind that 89% of the plan is on brownfield sites. AB interjects, I have just heard today that Paul Dennett has stated the developers are attaching our brownfield first policy on the grounds of viability, so that is where the GMSF is under attack in its current form.

- 3) AB now requests we move the meeting on a bit asking what could we suggest to what is different to that which has been proposed. We can argue all day about what we have done in the plan but currently it is the judgement but we are reviewing the GMSF following a meeting with the minister when he will see us.
  - a. SC so we need to have much better interaction with our local councils because we feel like this has been put on the community rather than embraced by the community, we want to have local meetings with the planning committee for example. CL states we have done this already up to this point with James and Chris from Bury Folk. By all means come and have more meetings with us.
  - b. AB so if we do have to accept the figures the local debate should be how this can be achieved with the figures and the transport solutions.
  - c. CR stated that at this stage this is a high level plan and that in our discussions with CL and his team it has already been discussed that we have to look at the actual deployment of the plan at a lower level of feasibility. So for example one of our sites Walshaw allocation is completely landlocked and has a terrible junction to gain access and an additional 1250 houses will gridlock the area. So in the current plan the big improvement is an improved bus service down the very road that is to be gridlocked! No infrastructure at all to solve that problem. One of our other sites the Elton site does have the ability to take a tram stop which we cannot deny however an additional 5000 houses will gridlock that area as well as it joins the same junction as the Walshaw site and even more congested roads towards Whitefield. The problem is that most of the people that live in Bury is that they commute around Manchester on the M60 as I know well as I regularly sit in the traffic for 2 hours a day. Most people are crossing Bury to the M66 junction which gridlocks Bury every morning and evening. Thus we have very high pollution in Bury due to this traffic problem.
  - d. AB this is exactly why we want the traffic management teams to meet with you to see if there are alternatives to these problems. CR yes this is important and our group always knew we would get down to this level in the end.
  - e. CR the big thing we cannot escape is that we have to mitigate at this stage to lower the housing numbers in the planned areas as eventually within your plan they will be lost to development once they are allocated. Bury is simply not big enough to take the level of housing being forced on us without losing vast areas of its greenbelt. AM yes you are the smallest area in the GMSF with the least available brownfield sites.
  - f. CR thus is I were in CL's position I would be going back to the GMSF to stipulate that I do not have any land left and need to allocate more to areas that have the brownfield with the GMCA or further afield, and if this fails then I must make a case to lower the housing figures based on a need for the area and not the inflated figures.



- g. SC so we have 10 boughs and 201 thousand homes and we need to look again at the distribution, it should be fair and based on saving the greenbelt. AB but that is the point the GMSF allows you to take only 82% of your housing numbers. CR/AM we can argue figures again and again we have already gone over that. AB yes there is a give and take and you are defiantly taking less than you would have done. SC yes but as we have said this is just a target and not a need. So the 1253 you have given permission in Bury in 12 months is 4 years housing supply based on need.
- h. CR people really think that you are hiding the numbers already given permission from the plan in order to boost the numbers, effectively add all the housing you can now and add the GMSF on top. Until this meeting we did not know when the GMSF has started and can the permissions and windfalls be taken into account within this period? CL confirms the figures run from financial years. AB states 2018-2019 and forward is in the GMSF. AM and CL now state well 2019-2020 with a new plan. AB interjects 2018 onwards is correct. SC questions you cannot just keep suggesting new starting dates. CL now states the 2018 is that start of the 19 year plan which starts with a 4 year lead in for the local plan to catch up under its umbrella to for 15 year local plans. SC why did you not have your local plan in place up until this 15 year plan starts?
- i. CR, ok at this point you all need to feedback to us exactly the dates for starting and when numbers can be taken from as it is clear you do not agree within your team, we need clarity not confusion or we will keep not trusting you.
- j. AB I have not had much to do with the GMSF for a while and thanks for bringing it back into my life!
- k. AB directed to AM, I remember you telling me end of 2018 was when we start counting the permissions given and I think that strengthens Burys position if they are ramping up permissions at the moment.
- l. CL states we are looking at all this information from windfalls across the whole of the GMCA and the requirement will reduce in the next plan based on what has been given permission. CR if you make that statement very clear then it will put a lot of people's minds at rest because they think they are being conned at the moment. SC people are panicking and think they will wake up tomorrow with all these houses being built.
- m. AM yes from the feedback so far we do think the GMSF was hard to understand and was not clear enough. YS you should not be relying on the leaders of our groups to explain what is happening you are responsible for making it clear to all.
- n. AB I will talk to Rishi and discuss how we could do a fact sheet from Bury council to explain the important points that are causing the mistrust. This should take some of the heat out of the issue. SC we just do not want to see people upset from false information.
- o. SC hands AB a picture of the greenbelt in Walshaw and explains that he could not have imagined himself trying to defend these areas but the massive impact as shown on the maps is simply not acceptable. SC we want to help you deliver this plan, we are willing to attend meetings and will even pop round for a cup of tea if you want and we have a wealth of knowledge but it must be right as if it is wrong it will destroy communities and you will have massive upset. AB I do want to work together to get the plan as right as we can get it. We have to recognise the need for housing and the threats that come with it and the need to use brownfield.

- p. CL there is nobody in this room who wants to take forward a plan that releases greenbelt, my whole career has been spent defending the greenbelt. CL the problem is we have hit the point of saturation on brownfield. CR agreed.
  - q. AM we are still looking at land supply again and density around town centres. CR the big point is that if an inspector looks at the overall GMSF he will question the density across the whole plan and not Bury and you still have areas across the rest of the plan that could take more homes.
  - r. CR points out that you will have to put down exceptional circumstances in your plan for particular areas that are full such as bury in order for the inspector to accept the lower figures in these areas. You are not going to be able to say your whole area is reducing overall you have segmented parts that cannot go any further because they are full. AM we don't think we do have brownfield left in other areas and if we have we need to know about it? YS we (Save Greater Manchester Greenbelt) are working with the CPRE on a full brownfield register for the GMCA area. YS we are also working with the transport for greater Manchester about the infrastructure. We will also be feeding back on the consultation process as well.
  - s. AB there is another round of consultation. SC can we do it differently next time as a lot of people simply gave up as it was too complicated. AM yes we are going to do it differently.
- 4) CR presented AB, AM & CL with copies of his minutes from his meeting with the housing minister as the meeting was drawing to a close. AB and if I finally get my meeting with the housing minister I will report back to you as you have done for us. CR also presented his figures on the housing numbers based on the government's requirements for Bury and the surrounding areas and the increase the GMSF has put on the base figures. CR also hand presented his consultation response. SC presented his and Carol Birchmore consultations. CR stated we have been open with you and presented you with information and are willing to move forward with further consultations.
  - 5) AB would the fact sheet we have discussed be of use to you? CR yes as currently the only information people see is from us on our face book page. AB yes we can see that that without facts it is very confusing especially with Facebook etc...
  - 6) CR we are more than happy for another meeting once you have digested the information we have provided you. CR we must challenge the government by its rules to gain the best deal.
  - 7) AB yes what I want to do is challenge AM and her team to look at town centres again to increase density and for better transport links between them to lessen the greenbelt loss. I want more done in Farnworth and Radcliff to make them a town centre challenge. CR states that Bury also has the opportunity to develop and take more of the housing requirement. Bury has already had a successful development in the rock but could do more of the same. AB yes I agree I often site Bury town centre as how to do it. AB we are going to be doing a large amount of work with Stockport and that will in some ways set a new template on town centre regeneration within GMCA. There will be new interchange, cycling and walking infrastructure. The councils have to take on the challenge and support the change. I personally had a massive difficulty with Leigh when I represented people in that area. AB a culture change is needed with some councils to make the town centre challenge work.
  - 8) Following a heated discussion on who could take Bury's housing such as Bolton, CR points out that in Bury we are destined to be filled in with one mass of housing and our greenbelt boundary's will be lost, losing 12% of them overall. AB but I think that Bury only taking 82% of its housing target is fair as you are a nett winner. I look at Oldham and Rochdale the other



way as nett losers. But there is still the question of where the 82% goes? CR 82% of a figure that was inflated and is not based on need and Bury have consistently highly achieved the housing numbers over the years when other boroughs have not. CL stated that Bury have not achieved the figures. CR pointed out much higher than other boroughs. AB Bury and Bolton have an overall higher percentage of greenbelt to start with mainly in the north of your borough. CL reiterates that Bolton has much more brownfield than Bury and we are looking at using as much as possible and we will share this with you at a meeting. SC/CR yes we welcome that opportunity.

- 9) AB we have 2 new leaders coming in to the GMCA debate and I expect the debate on sharing out the numbers will start again. This process is not a done deal and it is under review. Provisional thinking is we are going out for consultation again in October this year, we are going to try and improve the consultation mechanisms again if we can. AB I cannot tell you what the plan will be at that consultation because we are still debating it and if anything I want it to focus more on town centres. That is what I am trying to do despite the straight jacket from the government.
- 10) CR raps up stating the 3 points about how to justify your plan and clearly stating the exceptional circumstances specifically for Bury, this is how you plan by the governments rules and protect the greenbelt. CR points out that you the GMCA must be very clear on the government's rules for exceptional circumstances and need to demand your own clarity on the subject.

### **The Friends of Bury Folk Conclusions:-**

- 1) This was a positive and constructive first meeting and some common ground was evident, especially the fact that we need a plan and that increasing density in our town centres to reduce greenbelt loss is a positive step.
- 2) It was agreed that further meetings can take place between Bury Folk and the GMCA & Bury local planning. The Friends of Bury Folk need to look carefully at the capability to move some of the larger shock sites to other locations and recommend sites of higher density.
- 3) The most important point for the GMCA and Bury as our local authority was to provide a key fact sheet detailing the basics of the GMSF and how it is supposed to link to local plans as the lack of clarity has caused frustration and mistrust. Specifically, critically, but not limited to are: -
  - a. The official start dates for the inclusion of housing numbers already given permission in the deemed 4 year consultation period.
  - b. Explanation of the breakdown of the validity periods of the overall 19 year plan, being 4 years to get the overarching plan into place and the local plans ready to provide a full 15 year plan.
  - c. From these start dates a clear total of the housing numbers already achieved that should be used to reduce the overall numbers in the GMSF. An example is 1253 already in the last 12 months in Bury!
  - d. Absolute clarity on the housing numbers required under a need based assessment to be compared with the current government predictions of 2014.
  - e. Very clear and updated amounts of brownfield sites and there suitability for housing in all areas under the GMSF.

The logo consists of the letters 'SOS' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The 'O' is a solid red circle. The letters are set against a light blue rectangular background.The text 'Sign the petition' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. 'Sign' is larger and bolder than 'the petition', which is in a smaller font size below it. The text is set against a green rectangular background.The text 'Object against GMSF' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. 'Object' is larger and bolder than 'against GMSF', which is in a smaller font size below it. The text is set against a green rectangular background.The text 'Share our group' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. 'Share' is larger and bolder than 'our group', which is in a smaller font size below it. The text is set against a green rectangular background.

- 4) It was most evident in the meeting that the GMCA had had little official confirmation from central government on how to execute the exceptional circumstances required in Bury's specific case to protect its greenbelt. The information CR provided from his meeting with the housing minister showed an area that the GMCA did not seem to have heard of before that of local economic shock and the importance that Brexit could play in this part of the plan. The GMCA representatives stated they will be seeking more clarity from central government and AB will keep up the pressure for him to meet with the housing minister. AM did state that they are using an ex-planning inspector as a consultant however the rules have changed and they should get the up to date information from central government.
- 5) The next issue of the GMSF should state very clearly its confirmed exceptional circumstances as these will be scrutinised by the planning inspector on his visit. We are pushing for each sub area under the GMSF banner to have possibly its own exceptional circumstances which could lower or increase its housing requirement.
- 6) It was agreed that the consultation process was very difficult for the average person with limited technical knowledge and that this would be reviewed.
- 7) It is very important for all the councils to buy into the town centre challenge set out by AB as this will drastically reduce the loss of greenbelt and reduce the pollution levels as more will be in centralised hubs enabling the use of public transport infrastructure.
- 8) The GMCA must continue to pursue the exception circumstance of negotiating away some of our housing target to other authorities not necessarily neighbouring ones but further afield.
- 9) It is important for the traffic management teams to work with our groups to help determine a better set of plans that suit the people as well as industry.
- 10) Again all parties agreed that nothing is yet final and we must continue to work together for the betterment of all.