

**Extraordinary Full Council – 5 October 2022**

**Written question from Ms Lindsay Becker to the Chairman**

Has independent legal advice been taken from a K.C. on whether or not the recent census figures should form the basis for determining housing need? If not why not?

## ***Response***

*KC advice has not been sought on whether census data should form the basis for determining housing need. However an independent view has recently been sought from the Head of Economic Planning at GL Hearn, a consultancy who carry out housing needs assessments and demographic work to support the planning process for local authorities across the country. Their view was that there was no demographic evidence gathered as part of the IOW Local Housing Needs Assessment (originally prepared in 2018 & updated in 2022) that would support the use of an alternative method of calculating housing need. The 2021 population data alone would, in their view, not be sufficient for this purpose. The Local Plan would therefore risk being found un-sound if it advanced a housing need figure of circa 87 dwellings per year on this basis.*

*However, KC views have previously been sought on whether there was evidence to support a case for exceptional circumstances under paragraph 61 of the NPPF, or whether taking the approach of accepting the standard method housing number, but then assembling a robust evidence base that demonstrates why such a figure is not deliverable on the Island would better help to mitigate against the plan being found unsound (given that neither approach is following government guidance). It is the view of officers, which is supported by this KC advice, that the latter approach has a greater likelihood of success at local plan examination. The publication of the 2021 Census data has been considered, but does not change the advice.*