

Council chiefs at odds over project

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A TOP level brainstorming session is planned by Stroud council officials in a bid to break the stalemate blocking three social housing projects worth £700,000.

The deadlock has occurred because of a clash of principles between Stroud District Council's housing and planning chiefs.

The planners turned down three projects – at May Lane and The Slade, Dursley, and Eagle Mill, Stroud – because all three sites were highly sensitive.

Housing bosses were dismayed at the refusal of planning permission because they fear losing grants earmarked during 1993/4.

by Jo Barber

A training session has already been held for staff and members from the two departments and a further meeting is planned in a bid to iron out the £711,000 hitch.

Councillor David Drew (Lab., Stonehouse) defended the planners and said many of the social housing schemes were on sensitive sites.

But he said there was a need for the council to speak with one voice rather than be given the funding only to have the application turned down on planning grounds.

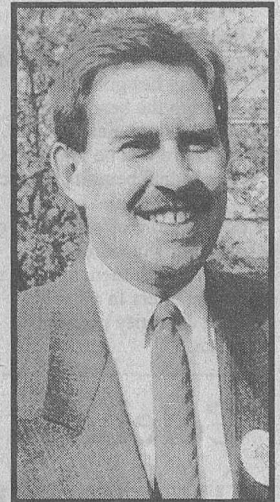
“It is very disadvantageous for these to be turned down because the money

from the Housing Corporation does not easily roll on,” said Mr Drew.

District councillor, Chas Townley, (Lab., Uplands) highlighted the lack of co-ordination between the council's left and right hands at a recent meeting of the housing services committee.

He said the failure to achieve planning permission had resulted in a projected £711,000 underspend and he said he was concerned major problems seemed to be occurring with joint applications with housing associations.

Mr Townley said: “We should be working corporately towards our aim of providing social housing through associations.”



■ Councillor David Drew... calling for council to speak with one voice.