

<b>Committee:</b>	Environment Committee	<b>Agenda Item</b>
<b>Date:</b>	16 September 2008	<b>9</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Lead Officer's Report</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Roger Harborough, Acting Director of Development (01799 510450)</b>	Item for information

---

### Summary

This report updates Members on matters that are not on this agenda: two matters arising from the June meeting of the Committee – recycling publicity and the Dunmow Town Square project; the government's eco-towns initiative; progress on the LDF core strategy; the East of England Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation EiP; and Essex County Council's proposed sub area studies.

### Recommendations

That the report be noted

### Background Papers

The government's Eco-towns living a greener future progress report which can be viewed at

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/ecotownsprogressreport>

Announcement by Jarrow Investments on Hanley Grange eco-town proposals, which can be viewed at <http://www.hanleygrange.co.uk/news.html>

A leaflet published by Shelter on the Elsenham eco-town proposal can be viewed at

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_issues/ecotowns](http://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_issues/ecotowns)

### Situation

- 1 The new website contains enhanced information to support communication of the recycling message across to the public. Some fine tuning will be done. A recycling leaflet was circulated to all households in the week beginning 30 June. Officers continue to keep the operational efficiency of the recycling and waste collection service under review and make adjustments reflecting local circumstances.

- 2 Great Dunmow Town Council has recently approved arrangements for public consultation on the Dunmow Town Square project. This includes a leaflet, an exhibition in the library and manned information points; and direct consultation with representative groups for people with disabilities, traders and the Chamber of Trade and Commerce. Consultation will be implemented during September. It is anticipated that the Town Council will be in a position to report on the consultation and its risk assessment in early October.
- 3 The Government issued a progress report on eco-towns in July setting out standards that it expects proposals to meet, the planning process, a revised programme for three further stages in the process of bringing forward proposals. It has said that it remains committed to the plan led system. The Government will be carrying out more consultation on the eco-town concept and will seek to engage local communities in the debate. This will take place in September and October. This includes reports on more detailed technical studies. At the same time promoters have been asked to carry out more consultation on their respective proposals. The Council is hosting a meeting between the Department of Communities and Local Government, representatives of the joint parishes steering group and the promoters on 11 September. Shelter has published a leaflet for local communities "giving information about how you can make yourself heard, and facts about the need for affordable housing and the impact that its lack can have on individuals and families in your community". It is organising two local community workshops for invited representatives. At the end of August, the promoters of the Hanley Grange proposals announced that they now think the best way of promoting their proposals is through the RSS review process that is now underway, rather than the government's eco-towns initiative. The government's plan is to have its Planning Policy Statement in place by early 2009.
- 4 In order to maintain progress with the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, staff resources have had to be refocused onto the technical study work which is needed along with the preferred options consultation response to inform decisions on a sound submission strategy. Reporting of the consultation will be finalised for a future meeting of the committee. The minutes of the LDF Management Group to be held on 5 September will be reported to the committee.
- 5 The Council has been invited to participate in the RSS Single Issue Review: Planning for gypsy and traveller accommodation in the East of England public examination. This is on a "hot seating" basis in cooperation with Braintree, Colchester and Tendring. This invitation has been accepted. The matters to be addressed in the discussion on Matter 2A Essex Southend and Thurrock relate to the appropriateness of the overall scale of provision based on local and regional needs; is the balance between Districts appropriate based on both needs and capacity to accommodate them?; what weight should be given to the London Green Belt?; what provision if any should be made for transit sites and sites for travelling show people? The Examination in Public starts on 21 October and is to be held in the Spirella Ballroom, Letchworth. Matter 2A is scheduled for the afternoon of 23 October.

- 6 Essex County Council is initiating a series of studies for parts of Essex to inform the statutory advice it gives to EERA about sub regional matters to be included in the RSS14 review. One of these studies will be of the London Arc West, and covers areas of the region closest to and most strongly influenced by London. It comprises the three Essex districts of Epping Forest, Harlow, and Uttlesford; plus consideration of their cross-boundary spatial planning linkages with London and Hertfordshire. The first stage of the work will be an appraisal of the evidence base. Stage 2 will formulate potential development scenarios and options. The generic policies and sub-regional guidance set out in the approved East of England Plan for the period 2001-2021 and beyond will be used as the 'baseline' for this stage, but it will also take account of developer proposals that EERA intends to invite and the 'Regional Scale Developments Study' the regional planning body is also proposing to commission from consultants, including the potential for large-scale new settlements in the region (of over 20,000+ new homes). In Stage 3, the options will be tested through strategic sustainability appraisal, transport studies and infrastructure delivery programme and capacity. Stage 4, the final report, is programmed for the end of November. Officers will engage in these studies through a series of stakeholder workshops and participation in the study steering group/