

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 10.30 am on 20 OCTOBER 2008**

Present: - Councillor A J Ketteridge - Chairman.  
Councillors J F Cheetham, E J Godwin and H S Rolfe.

Also Present:- Councillor D J Morson.

Officers in attendance: - S Clarke (Housing and Planning Policy Manager), M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), R Harborough (Acting Director of Development), H Hayden (Planning Officer) M Jones (Principal Planning Officer) and S Nicholas (Senior Planning Officer).

**LDF19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C A Cant and J I Loughlin.

**LDF20 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**LDF21 BUSINESS ARISING**

Members were reminded that this was not a public meeting and matters discussed should not be made public until the minutes of the meeting had been published.

**LDF22 UPDATE ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

A meeting had recently been held with the Government office, where the timetable for the next stages of the local development scheme had been discussed. The group considered the proposed timetable.

The November meeting of the Environment Committee would receive a more detailed report on the representations received to the preferred options consultation. The January meeting would consider the residual housing allocation. This concerned the 1200 – 1400 houses that were still to be allocated. The Committee would look at options for the allocation which would be informed by the various technical studies that were already underway.

The Government Office had asked the Council to look in more detail at the implication of growth options at Stansted Airport and had requested further consultation on this. It was noted that the second runway inquiry was due to start on 15 April 2009 and members questioned whether this might lead to a conflict with the local authorities' inquiry case. Officers said that preparatory work for the inquiry would inform the LDF assessment.

By March 2009, the Council should have prepared its proof of evidence for the G2 Inquiry and it was expected that the consultation document would be consistent with this. Councillor Cheetham understood that RSS14 required the Council to put forward scenarios for the 2<sup>nd</sup> runway case. Officers agreed that all scenarios would be taken into account but officers would put forward the most appropriate assumption for the duration of the spatial strategy. Members were informed that the additional consultation would set out the implications of the different scenarios at the Airport in terms of activity for employment, land, housing and transport. This report was expected to go to the Environment Committee in March.

The Government Office had indicated that alongside the consultation on the draft submission, authorities could also consult on the issues and options on the site allocations development plan document. This would supplement the Core Strategy consultation and seek views on the options for the smaller sites. Members agreed that it would be sensible to conduct this work alongside the main consultation.

The Task Group noted that the decision on the proposed eco-town had been expected in January 2009. However, there now appeared to be more emphasis on integrating eco town proposals into the LDF process. A letter had been received from the Department of Communities and Local Government which raised the prospect of setting up forums to discuss the general approach to eco development with professional and community representatives. These were planned between Nov – Jan so it seemed doubtful that the Government would be in a position to announce its eco-towns policy statement in January.

It was suggested that it might be appropriate to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Environment Committee in May/June 2009 to decide what should be included in the draft submission document and the consultation. It was pointed out this would probably need to take account of the County Council elections which were likely to be held in the first week of June.

Councillor Rolfe asked when the final view on the strategy was likely to be taken. He was advised that if the consultation on the draft submission document took place as planned in June/July members would not be in a position to take a final decision until at least the end of the year.

**UPDATE ON TECHNICAL STUDIES****i) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SCHLAA)**

The Group was reminded that the purpose of this study was to identify sites in and around settlements that might be available for housing and assess their potential to deliver. The SHLAA would not make judgements about whether sites should be allocated through plan policy as this would be tested elsewhere in the LDF process. The document would cover the period to 2025, but initially the data had to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing.

A desk top exercise had been carried out to identify source of sites from planning permissions, land use data base and the employment land survey and 240 sites had been identified. Where the landowner was know a survey form had been sent out and so far 120 had been returned.

The next stage was to identify further sites and to assess their suitability. For this purpose a panel had been set up with a membership of land agents, house builders, Uttlesford Association of Local Councils and regional agencies. The first meeting would be held on 11 November and would look at how to deal with the process and set terms of reference. Councillor Cheetham would attend as an observer. Members though it would be helpful to have a representative from an Environmental group like CPRE or similar.

**ii) Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

This was a joint study and would look at a number of factors including the demand and supply for housing, housing and planning policies, the need for affordable housing and the affordability of the housing market. The community and stakeholder events had taken place in September although these had not been well attended. Information was now being sought from parish councils and from further questionnaires. Other work was also being carried out on the deliverability of affordable housing and the percentage of affordable housing that could reasonably be asked for within a development.

**iii) Water Cycle Study**

Officers had now met with the Environment Agency and the study brief would be sent out on 24 October.

**i) Transport Assessments**

Officer had reached agreement with ECC on how the study should be conducted. It would not comprise detailed transport modelling but would be a comparative analysis assessing access to public transport and highways of the reasonable alternative special strategies.

LGF24

## **FEEDBACK ARRANGEMENTS**

As a result of the various technical studies there would be a very large amount of detailed information that would need to be fed back to members before a decision was made at committee. Officers asked for views on how this could be achieved and the following suggestions were made.

- A summary report on each study should to be circulated to all members.
- Members of the Environment Committee to receive (via pigeon holes) a copy of the full report.
- An intranet link be made available to the full report and a copy be available in the Member's room.
- It was important for explanatory workshops to be held - not at the weekend and prior to an existing committee meeting if possible. Also each workshop could consider more than one study.

All Councillors would be advised of the arrangements and be asked to let officers know if there was anything that they were not happy with.

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## **FUTURE PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 12 November at 9am and would consider the reports that would be submitted to the Environment Committee.

The meeting ended at 11.45 am