

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 10.00 am
on 24 AUGUST 2009**

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

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

LDF8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

LDF9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

LDF10 BUSINESS ARISING

i) Minute LDF4 – Member Workshop

The Acting Director of Development reported on the recent meeting with senior officials from Go East. There had been a general discussion about the situation in Uttlesford and Go East had been made aware of the reasoning behind the proposed timescale for the LDF.

ii) Minute LDF4 – Gypsies and Travellers RSS Review

It was reported that the additional pitches required by 2011 that had been proposed in the latest Government consultation had been confirmed. There had been no specific response to the Council's letter on this matter although the decision document was available that set out the issues that had been taken into account by the Secretary of State. It was noted that as the County Council had no plans to provide additional pitches, the sites coming forward were likely to be private proposals. Members had concerns at how these requests would be determined but were advised that there was guidance on this set out in the circular.

Councillor Cheetham reiterated her disappointment that these additional 10 pitches had been imposed on Uttlesford after all the authorities in the Eastern

Region had worked hard to reach agreement to each take 15 pitches for the period to 2011.

LDF11

UPDATE ON TECHNICAL WORK

Officers summarised the progress of the various technical studies.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment: this study was around a year behind schedule but it would shortly be finalised and then go out for consultation. There would also be a launch event where the findings would be publicised. As part of this work there would be an additional study that would look at the viability of the different sites in the current market. This study had already been commissioned and was expected to take between 6 – 8 weeks. The two studies would need to be taken together when looking at future policy for affordable housing.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: the site information was now available on the council's website. This was an ongoing document that would be reviewed annually and should be seen as a list of available land and not as an intention to build.

In relation to the preferred option, officers were looking at the allocation of the remaining 1000 homes. Current policy was for the remaining houses to be distributed in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and key settlements and officers were looking at how this could be achieved. The final figures were now available from ECC on the number of houses that had been built over the last year. This would enable Uttlesford's figures for residential land availability and the 5 year supply of housing to be updated.

There was some concern at the recent spate of developer led proposals being promoted on large sites in the district. Members questioned the ability to resist these in the absence of an approved LDF and were particularly concerned at the outcome if such a case went to appeal. It was explained that such a proposal would be contrary to current policy and it would have to be demonstrated that there was an insufficient supply of land in the district. This was not currently the case but there would come a time where the proposal sites would be needed to count toward the 5 year supply. It was therefore important to progress the LDF so that there was an up to date document with which to define policy.

Water Cycle Study: this had been agreed by the Environment Agency and would be circulated to stakeholders by the end of the week. Once finalised a summary report would be posted on the website and circulated to members.

Transport Assessment: there had still been a delay with this study but the findings were expected shortly and would be assessed by officers. This study together with the water cycle and other infrastructure information would

enable the sustainability appraisal to be completed. This would be a key document for the consultation.

There was then a discussion about the provision of affordable housing and how parish council's could be encouraged to pursue this. The Housing and Planning Policy Manager said that she would take this up with the Rural Housing Enabling Officer.

Members again drew attention to the Choice Based Letting system for the allocation of properties and the effect that the allocating properties to people outside the district might have on the figures. The meeting was informed that the CBL policy was in the process of being reviewed by the Housing Initiatives Working Group.

LDF12 PRE SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

It had been anticipated that the pre submission consultation would be carried out in September/October. However, due to the delay in obtaining information from outside organisations it had not been possible to complete all the technical studies. As it would be sensible to consult on all the studies at the same time it was suggested that the consultation should be agreed by the November meeting of the Environment Committee. Member felt that an extraordinary meeting to deal with this single issue might be appropriate and officers agreed to look at a timescale for this.

LDF13 WORKSHOP

It was agreed that it was premature to hold the next workshop until the technical studies had been completed and the planned workshop on 1 September would not now go ahead. The next workshop would be arranged for a day prior to the Environment Committee meeting.

LDF14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 27 October at 9.30 am.

The meeting ended at 10.50 am.