

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 9.30 am
on 3 NOVEMBER 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 (Director of Development), M Jones (Principal
Planning Officer), S Nicholas (Senior Planning Officer) and
S Wood (Housing and Planning Policy Manager).

LDF15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

LDF16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 August 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

LDF17 BUSINESS ARISING

i) Minute LDF – Gypsies and Travellers RSS Review

It was reported that GO East would be running a member workshop on this issue on 13 November. A recent officer workshop had asked authorities to press ahead with the provision of pitches.

LDF18 UPDATE ON TECHNICAL WORK

Officers circulated the various technical studies that would be discussed at the workshop on 5 November 2009.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

The Group considered a summary report which updated the background information and data. The headline figures that had been reported to the previous workshop had not changed. The next stage in the process was a viability study which would inform future policy decisions. There was to be a joint launch event with the partner authorities at the Harlow Council offices on 26 November. Members of this group as well key Members and Policy Committee Chairmen would be invited.

The Group then discussed the implications of data in the document and the policies that were driving the provision of affordable housing.

Water study

An executive summary of the report had been circulated to members. The full report was expected on 9 November. The study had considered the supply and infrastructure implications for the various development options. When the council's preferred options for consultation were known there would be a further study that would look in more detail at the requirements and viability of addressing any constraints.

Transport Assessment:

There was still some concern about the consistency of the information provided in the current draft of the comparative study with other assessments. Officers from the County Council would be available to answer questions on the study at the member workshop.

The Director of Development said that the technical studies gave a picture of the demand for housing and the infrastructure that was available or required to support it. This would help point toward the viability of the various options. Representations received during the 2008 consultation sought further information. This was now being provided. People would be able to consider if it addressed the issues they had raised during the consultation now planned.

Option 4 – a suggested distribution of housing

The Working Group received a report which set out options for the allocation of the 1000 additional houses over and above those proposed for north east of Elsenham. The report also updated the housing requirement which showed a provision of 10,150 homes. This would be achieved through the new settlement, sites with planning permission, selected sites from the SHLAA study and from new allocations.

Members requested the figures for the provision of new dwellings over the past two years to be made available at the workshop. They also mentioned the situation at Stansted Airport and the effect on projected housing delivery figures if the second runway did not go ahead.

The report set out the six options for the broad distribution of the new properties and explained the reasons for the officers preferred choice, which was broadly based on the availability of sites and existing infrastructure. The preferred option was to concentrate dwellings in Great Dunmow, some dispersal among key villages and the remainder through other villages.

Members asked if further thought could be given to the balance of dwellings between Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow, particularly in the light of development proposals that might be coming forward in Saffron Walden.

The group then had a detailed discussion on the implications for the LDF process if there was a change of Government at the next election. The Council had already committed to review policies in the light of any changes to the housing requirement but it was pointed out that the LDF process would not have reached a critical phase before this information was known.

Officers were still working toward the finalisation of the pre submission consultation document in the summer with consultation taking place in the autumn. It was important that this timetable was adhered to in the light of applications for large developments in the district that were likely to come forward in the next couple of months.

Members were advised that a comparative sustainability assessment of Elsenham and other options would be available, together with the technical studies, to inform the Council's decision in due course on its Core Strategy.

LDF19

WORKSHOP

The Group felt that there was too much information for members to digest in one workshop and suggested that an additional workshop should be held to ensure that members were fully apprised of the various studies and had the opportunity to ask questions. The date of Thursday 19 November was suggested.

The meeting ended at 11.30 am.