

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.00pm
on 10 OCTOBER 2011**

Present: Councillor J Cheetham – (in the Chair).
Councillors S Barker, C Cant, E Godwin, J Loughlin, J
Menell, E Oliver, V Ranger and H Rolfe.

Also present: Councillor J Redfern.

Officers in attendance: M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), R
Harborough (Director of Public Services), H Hayden
(Planning Officer), M Jones (Principal Planning Officer), S
Nicholas (Senior Planning Officer), A Storah (Planning
Officer) and A Taylor (Assistant Director - Planning and
Building Control).

LDF17 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor J Cheetham be appointed Chairman
for the meeting.

LDF18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Crome, J
Ketteridge and D Watson.

Councillor Oliver declared a personal interest in relation to the
employment land review as he lived close to the Jubilee Works Site.

LDF19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2011 were received
and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

LDF20 BUSINESS ARISING

Minute LDF13 - National Planning Policy Framework

The Council's response on the NPPF had been sent on 28 September.
Councillors Barker and Cheetham reported on a meeting that they had
just attended where the Planning Minister had been present. During his
presentation a number of points had been raised that were relevant to
the discussion at the last working group meeting.

It was confirmed that the 20% additional homes would come from within the 15 year land supply, although there was no explanation of the rationale behind this. In relation to a traveller policy the Minister confirmed that this would be included in the document in due course. As for a policy on noise he inferred that authorities could write their own policies within the local plan to address this issue.

The working group was advised that the slides from the presentation would shortly be available on the LGA website and that the notes taken at the meeting would be circulated to all members.

LDF21 PROGRESS WITH HOUSING SITES

The Assistant Director - Planning and Building Control reported that meetings were continuing with parish councils, district councillors and developers in relation to the identified sites. Most parish councils had now been contacted and those that had responded had dates set for meetings. It was expected that further applications would come forward in the next couple of months.

In answer to a question from Councillor Rolfe, it was confirmed that this process was moving forward as quickly as possible but submitting a new application could take time, especially in relation to new development sites where detailed planning studies might be required.

LDF22 DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY

The Principal Planning Officer explained the situation to date regarding the review of housing numbers for the core strategy. The preferred options consultation in February 2010 had been based on the housing requirement in the district of 10,150 new homes between 2001 and 2006. In September 2010 the scale of housing growth had been reviewed and a new figure agreed. This approach had been based on meeting natural growth and the need to provide affordable housing for social rent.

Since then the National Planning Policy Framework had been published, which required LPAs to have a clear understanding of the housing requirement in their area. It required the Strategic Market Assessment to identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population was likely to require over the plan period to meet household and population projections taking account of migration and demographic change.

The working group noted that the locally derived figure included only a small element of in-migration and no account of demographic change. The figure was based on the SHMA but this was based on RSS figure, which now needed to be updated. The locally derived figure was no longer considered by officers to be a robust enough base on which to proceed with the LDF. The demographic figures needed to be

substantiated, if there was an unsound methodology the plan could be found unsound which would mean it could not be adopted.

In response to this change in requirements the Essex Planning Officers (EPOA) had commissioned a company to produce democratic forecast scenarios covering all of Essex. This would provide more up to date population and housing forecasts based on a number of different scenarios. The Council would then be able to consider and decide which scenario was appropriate for Uttlesford. The timetable envisaged that the final report would be circulated in early December.

The study would be produced on a consistent basis across the county and provide the forecasts required for decisions on the District's housing requirement. Members noted that the final requirement agreed could be greater than the locally derived figure.

The working group would receive reports as the work progressed.

LDF23

HISTORIC LANES STUDY

The Senior Planning Office explained that in 1973-74 the lanes of Uttlesford had been surveyed by Essex County Council and those of historic importance were identified as protected lanes (approx 200km). A policy to protect them was first introduced in the 1995 District Plan. Since then the policy had not changed but the original survey guidelines for making the assessment on the importance of the lanes were no longer available. The existing policy was now rarely used when considering an application.

The working group felt that the lanes were important to the landscape and character of the district and expressed a wish for the policy to be retained. It was advised that to do so it would be necessary to commission a resurvey of the lanes against agreed criteria. Having a policy supported by evidence explaining the special characteristics would give greater weight to the council in controlling development in respect of the use of the lanes.

The historic environment branch of Essex County Council had the necessary skills and detailed knowledge of Uttlesford to enable them to carry out this work. The survey work for the whole of the district would cost in the region of £17k and could be funded from the Planning Reserve. Members asked that the survey be undertaken for the whole of the district but were advised that it might be more expedient for this work to be undertaken in two stages.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approve expenditure of up to £17,000 from the Planning Reserve for Essex County Council to conduct a survey on historic lanes in the district.

LDF24

POTENTIAL STRATEGIC SITES

The Assistant Director - Planning and Building Control outlined the recent history of the Council's decisions on the preferred options for having taken place in February 2010. A new Local Development Scheme had recently been agreed which required the Council to consult on its options for distribution of development in January/February 2012. The draft local plan including site allocations and development management policies would then be prepared and consultation take place in June 2012.

On the basis that the results of the demographic study were awaited and the annual growth figures were still unclear, Members asked officers to work up various scenarios for housing distribution for the next meeting based on both the RSS and the locally derived figure.

Members also felt that further consideration should be given as to how to involve all Council Members in this process once the results of the demographic study had been received.

LDF2

FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates and times of future meetings were agreed as follows

Friday 2 December – 9.30am

Friday 6 January - 9.30am

Friday 3 February – 9.30am

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm.