

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 9.30am
on 14 SEPTEMBER 2012**

Present: Councillor J Cheetham – Acting Chairman.
Councillors S Barker, K Eden, E Godwin, J Menell,
E Oliver, V Ranger and H Rolfe.

Also attending: Councillor R Chambers.

Officers in attendance: R Dobson (Democratic Services Officer), 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).

LDF11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Ketteridge.

Councillor Cheetham said she noted no members of the Liberal Democrat Group were present and that she hoped they would re-join the working group's discussion as it was important to take the issues forward as a whole council.

LDF12 MINUTES

Subject to an amendment to show that Councillor Watson had given apologies for absence, the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2012 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

LDF13 GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES

Members considered a Call for Sites for Gypsies and Travellers which would form part of the evidence base for the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Document.

The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control drew attention to the fact that the invitation to put forward sites for consideration was restricted to those having an interest in the land.

Members noted that reference to guidance from DCLG and NPPF on protection of Green Belt land would be included. In response to questions, officers advised that although Uttlesford was not currently subject to great numbers of applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites, having a policy in place would reinforce the Council's ability to refuse unacceptable sites.

Members were further advised that the need for such sites was based on demographic forecasting based on guidance from Government and that an Essex-wide study would be carried out.

Members were keen to ensure town and parish councils were made aware of the legal requirements on provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites.

Officers explained a Parish Council Forum had been arranged for Tuesday 25 September; that emails would be sent to all district and parish councillors and also to all those whose comments had been received in the previous consultation; and that press publicity would be arranged. Training would be made available to district and parish councillors at a workshop on 19 November.

LDF14 HOUSING SUPPLY

The Senior Planning Officer presented a report on the Housing Supply Statement 2012 which had been prepared in the context of the emerging Local Plan. The Council was preparing a new Local Plan to replace the Adopted Local Plan 2005, which had identified sites for the development of 5052 dwellings for the period up to 2011. The emerging Local Plan would identify sites for development up to 2028.

Members commented on the timing of the completion of this process following the end of the adopted Local Plan; on the number of affordable homes included in the figures; and the fact that, since April, planning permission had been granted for a number of sites, which would improve the shortfall figure.

Officers gave an explanation of how the development of the new Local Plan was being progressed using the RSS figure in the absence of other data and gave details of the factors which could be taken into account in preparing the housing statement.

LDF15 FIVE YEAR LAND SUPPLY

The Senior Planning Officer presented a report on the housing trajectory and five year land supply statement 2012.

In response to Members' questions officers clarified the assumptions in the report and table. Members were pleased to note that the Council had exceeded its annual requirement since 2005 and felt this fact should be publicised. A suggestion was made to include moving averages to enable comparison between what had been achieved and what the predictions were.

In response to a request for clarification on demographic forecasts, officers said the locally derived figure which had been used in the June 2012 consultation had been relied upon and that Phase 4 of the document would include census data recently released.

In response to further questions officers listed anticipated applications for planning permission which would be taken into account in the

housing trajectory figures. Members were pleased to note that the figures were likely to be on target.

LDF16

CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS ON SELECTED POLICIES

Members considered the report of the Principal Planning Officer giving an update on representations received in response to the Draft Local Plan. The report also advised members of the comments to inform a report to be prepared on the representations and proposed changes to the Draft Local Plan, this report to be presented to Cabinet in due course.

The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control explained the proposed changes to the policies as highlighted in the report. He explained that the policies were being drafted in positive terms so that new development would be approved in respect of each policy if the application was in compliance with it. He drew attention to the responses received. Members took the opportunity to comment on suggested changes in respect of the following areas:

Policy DES1 – Design

- the reference to wheelchair accessibility in developments of 10 units or more should refer to one unit or 5% of the development rounded up;

Policy HE2 – Listed Buildings

- Members commented on the recent Conservation Area Appraisals carried out and suggested that as these studies showed many attractive features of the areas concerned the work which had gone into these documents could be used to promote the district and reinforce the link with the 100 parishes scheme;

Policy HE5 – Traditional Open Spaces and Trees

- Members felt it was important to make sure open spaces provided were single good-sized areas, rather than smaller separated pieces. The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control drew attention to the fact that under the new policies, public space would not be adopted by the Council, therefore meetings between developers and parish councils were being encouraged, in order to identify the wishes of the parish councils early on in the development process. Members felt this tactic was helpful and that a SLA with heads of terms to ensure future parish councillors were obliged to engage with the process would be valuable;

New Policy – request for additional policy on Health Impact Assessments

- Members and officers discussed the request received for the above new Development Management Policy. The view of officers was that the issues concerned could adequately be dealt with by means of validation checklists. Councillor Rolfe said he supported the suggestion for a new health impact assessment policy as new houses should be 'old people-friendly'. Councillor Menell said she thought there should be a health impact policy, as she was concerned about sufficient access to GP surgeries for new development.

Councillor Cheetham said the provisions of the access policy covered the point raised by Councillor Rolfe, and that the concern raised by Councillor Menell was answered by the fact that the health authority was obliged to provide health facilities if planning permission was given. However, Councillor Cheetham asked that further information on the question for a new policy for health impact assessments be brought to the next meeting so that the issues could be considered in further depth.

It was agreed that an update on the draft policies would be provided.

LDF17 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control said he would organise a meeting for all district councillors to be informed of the planning work taking place. It was agreed such a meeting should be arranged if possible for late October.

LDF18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was Friday 5 October at 9.30am.

The meeting ended at 11.30am.