

**PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 22 FEBRUARY 2017 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe – Chairman
Councillors S Barker, A Dean, J Lodge, J Loughlin, A Mills and J Parry.

Also present: Councillors K Artus, M Foley and J Redfern.

Officers in attendance: R Dobson (Principal Democratic Services Officer), R Fox (Planning Policy Team Leader), G Glenday (Assistant Director Planning), A Howells (Project Manager – Local Plan), S Nicholas (Senior Planning Officer).

Consultants in attendance: Troy Hayes and John Goodall (Troy Planning)

PP38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davies, Harris and Oliver.

PP39 MINUTES

Councillor Lodge said he had requested that an item be appended to the previous minutes, but this had not been done. The Chairman agreed this request would be implemented.

Councillor Lodge said many of the documents had followed the initial publication of the agenda, and asked that this should be kept to a minimum for future meetings.

The Principal Democratic Services Officer explained the agenda had been issued electronically approximately five working days before the meeting but that a number of reports then followed. Items which followed were also circulated electronically. Printed packs where these were prepared were sent out only once all reports were available, where possible. She assured Members that all had had the same information.

Councillor Mills questioned a reference in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy of an amount of £0/m². He said the meeting on 10 January had considered the total revenues of £14 – 22 million but that the minutes were silent on that detail.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the reference to £0/m² was correct, as the larger strategic sites carried much of the infrastructure requirement. The obligation was therefore reflected in the section 106 agreement, with no other consideration payable.

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2017 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PP40

HOUSING WHITE PAPER

The Planning Policy Team Leader presented a report giving an initial analysis of the Department for Communities and Local Government's ("CLG") Housing White Paper ("HWP"): 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market'. The report set out an overview of potential implications in relation to the Uttlesford Local Plan. Officers had met Government representatives the previous week to attempt to gain further elucidation. However, unfortunately no additional clarity had been given at that meeting. Part of the HWP related to consulting on specific proposals, and it was officers' recommendation that officers prepare a response to the CLG Housing White Paper for presentation to Cabinet in March 2017 prior to submission to government.

Nick Buhaenko-Smith spoke to the meeting in relation to the HWP, the objectively assessed housing need, and the regulation 18 consultation. A copy of his statement is attached to these minutes.

The Chairman thanked Mr Buhaenko-Smith for his statement and said the Working Group would address his various comments during consideration of the aspects he had raised.

Councillor Dean said one of the risks of this project was delay and uncertainty regarding housing numbers. There was no revised "magic formula" to give a revised figure, and therefore mitigating measures to address this lack should be considered.

The Planning Policy Team Leader agreed. He said other local authorities were also waiting to see the contents of the HWP, and the consensus was to persevere in the meantime with the figure the authority had calculated and considered to be correct.

Troy Hayes said there was confirmation in the HWP that if an authority had not got an up to date Local Plan by April 2018 then the authority would have to rely on standardised housing need, therefore it was right to persevere with the existing figure.

Councillor Lodge noted officers were planning a response to the CLG, and asked what areas would be included.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said consultation questions were not all planning related so there was a need for liaising with colleagues in Housing in order to prepare a comprehensive response.

Councillor Dean asked officers to provide professional press analysis of the HWP.

AGREED

1. to note the publication of the Housing White Paper and the initial assessment of its potential future implications for preparation of the Uttlesford Local Plan;
2. Officers of the Planning Policy Team prepare a response to the CLG Housing White Paper for presentation to Cabinet in March 2017 prior to submission to government.

PP41

OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED HOUSING NEED (OAHN) UPDATE

Councillor Rolfe asked officers to respond to the points made by Nick Buhaenko-Smith during consideration of this item. He then invited Ken McDonald to speak.

Ken MacDonald made a statement, a copy of which is appended to these minutes.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said a slight amendment to the text in this item had been made, in the second paragraph to the second page. He then went through the report in detail. He said the figures were based on evidence and he referred to the rationale set out in the published documentation prepared by the Council's consultants. The figures, based on the evidence, had in 2013-14 been extrapolated on new household projections to 14,100.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the published Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) had been successfully defended at public inquiries and had been supported by inspectors. It would be very difficult to go against the inspectors' opinion when they had clearly stated they supported the calculation of the SHMA.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said whilst the Inspector had examined the published SHMA, he had given a clear signal that the uplifted figure of 14,100 was the starting point.

Councillor Dean said the second paragraph read out by the Planning Policy Team Leader gave descriptions of how the calculations came about. He asked that any spreadsheet used in such calculations during that period be made available to the Working Group.

Councillor Lodge asked that the document supplied be provided in a format which could be easily read.

The Chairman agreed it was important to see how the figures were obtained. He said regarding the 2014 Plan, the Inspector had uplifted the figure by 10%, and a clear steer that this was the right approach had been given by the Council's QC, Michael Bedford.

Councillor Mills asked that the documentation provided in relation to this explanation should also cover the reason for the uplift.

The report was noted.

PP42

REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION PAPER

The Working Group considered a report on progress on the regulation 18 consultation paper. The note set out the next formal stage of the process and the methodology that was being followed.

Councillor Lodge referred to the local plan spatial strategy, expressing his concern that the timescale proposed was not soon enough. He asked for an indication of how long the process might take.

Troy Hayes said outputs from other items on the agenda needed to be taken into account, such as reasonable alternatives, which would feed into the sustainable appraisal. These strands of work could be presented in draft form to the Working Group.

Councillor Lodge said it seemed as though meetings of the Working Group were occurring only on alternate months.

Councillor Barker said it was an agreed principle that towns and villages should not take the full amount of development, and that a new settlement or settlements would be the answer. Members had been informed of dates in March when they would receive presentations from developers about possible new settlements. The process as it went on would focus Members more on the limited options available. It was important to remember that neighbouring authorities were also under similar obligations. This was a cross-party objective and there was not going to be an answer regarded by all as a happy one. However she would reassure the Working Group that through this process the Council would end up with a plan the Inspector would accept.

Councillor Rolfe said there would be three presentations by prospective developers. This was not decision-making but an information-gathering process.

It was noted that dates for these presentations would be included in the next Members' Bulletin.

Councillor Lodge asked why the report referred to isolated examples in relation to highways capacity.

The Chairman said highways implications were being looked at everywhere, but there were specific issues with Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor Lodge queried a reference in the report, regarding preferred new settlement proposals at Easton Park where the report stated there were proposals for 1,400 new homes to be delivered within the plan period. He said the reference to this specific figure was surprising. He also questioned a reference to a statement by the developer to building 3,500 new homes; and he queried the phrase "the next few weeks", asking whether this was a reference to the presentations.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the figure of 1,400 homes for this area was not predetermined, but had simply been used for test purposes; the 3,500 was a reference to if and when new proposals came forward, as the key issue for this site was the quarry. It was important to emphasise in relation to that site that the issue was about how many homes could be delivered, depending on the existence of the quarry.

Councillor Barker reminded the Group that the question of how many homes would be capable of being delivered was one of the key questions which the Working Group had decided to set developers.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said work was being undertaken on transportation, to identify any potential blocks. This work formed one of many key workflows, about which Members would hear more information later. This information should provide Members with more answers to enable the process to become clearer.

Regarding land West of Braintree, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the Memorandum of Understanding was yet to be drafted and that the Council would meet the costs of the preparation from its own resources.

Councillor Dean said it would be helpful if the presentation evenings could include two presenting developers at each occasion, and that it would also assist Members if they could receive advance notification of which sites and which developers were the subject of each presentation.

Councillor Mills asked that Members be provided with the set of questions before the presentations. Regarding the number of houses to be built at the settlements mentioned in the report, he asked for clarification on whether a figure had been set.

Officers confirmed the options were not finalised.

Councillor Barker said if other allocations were made, then the figure for the new settlement(s) would be 4,300, but there was no certainty, as there had been no decision on this amount yet.

Councillor Dean said he understood the report was not presenting confirmed figures.

Councillor Rolfe agreed that this was the case. He said the Working Group also recognised that some towns and villages had already taken some development, and it was the whole context that was being looked at.

The report was noted.

PP43

WATER CYCLE STUDY OUTLINE UPDATE

The Working Group received a paper giving an update on the Water Cycle Study (WCS). The Study aimed to provide evidence that development proposed within the emerging Local Plan could be accommodated by the water and

wastewater infrastructure, and wider water environment, and to identify whether additional infrastructure might be required as part of the development.

The Senior Planning Officer said this study updated former work carried out in 2012. She drew Members' attention to the main points of the report, indicating the assumptions on which this initial study was based. The report stressed that the use of assumed figures for this purpose did not imply that the sites or numbers of houses would be allocated. A detailed study could be commissioned once sites were known.

In relation to this initial assessment, the Senior Planning Officer said the study confirmed there were no constraints in terms of the water cycle based on development proposed in line with such assumptions. There were no sewerage capacity issues other than upgrades which would be required. The study concluded that all four sites had a similar level of general constraints and opportunities in relation to water management although the main differentiating constraint to development was considered to be the capacity of the receiving Wastewater Recycling Centres. It had to be recognised that any planned upgrade to the receiving water recycling centres needed to take into account future growth of the sites post plan period.

Councillor Barker said she had received comments about low water pressure which caused people problems. She noted Affinity Water only requested 1 bar of water which was not much. Was it possible to ask for a higher minimum delivery?

The Senior Planning Officer said she would check this question.

Councillor Lodge queried the use of the figures on which the assumptions for this study had been based, as he considered alternative strategies should be included.

Councillor Rolfe referred to the conclusion of the report, indicating there would be much more work to be done. A key part of the exercise would be the water and sewerage provision, so the examination of the work needed would need to be expanded according to allocations made.

Councillor Barker asked for clarification of "existing flow consents".

The Senior Planning Officer said the technical definition of this term would be checked and circulated to Members.

Councillor Dean asked whether the settlements upon which the study was based were the four largest settlements.

The Senior Planning Officer said that at the time the report was commissioned, these were the four largest settlements. If any other sites were identified then the water cycle implications for those would need to be considered.

AGREED to note the Water Cycle Study Outline Update January 2017 to support the development of the emerging Local Plan, and its inclusion within the Local Plan evidence base.

PP44

LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE BASE UPDATE

The Planning Policy Team Leader gave an update on the local plan evidence base.

Councillor Lodge referred to the comprehensive sustainability appraisal. He asked whether terms of reference were yet available and suggested that a more standardised format be used.

Troy Hayes said where reasonable alternatives would work, these would be fed into the study.

Councillor Rolfe asked that terms of reference be circulated.

Councillor Lodge said reference had been made to land West of Braintree in mid-May, yet sustainable assessments were being carried out earlier than that. He asked whether consideration of this site was being brought forward.

The Assistant Director Planning said officers were currently working with Braintree District Council, which had asked them to add to the evidence base a piece of work they had commissioned. He hoped this work would be available before April, in order to include it in the process.

Councillor Lodge asked about Highways modelling, as the Highways plan had been late. He asked whether the Highways plan would be obtained on different scenarios.

The Planning Policy Team Leader confirmed that this was the case. There were many potential alternatives which would be looked at.

Councillor Lodge asked for the terms of reference of the infrastructure delivery plan to be circulated and said there was nothing on air quality.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said any such report would be dependent on the outcome of the Highways testing, which was now nearing completion. These outputs would be reported to the next meeting of the Working Group.

Councillor Mills asked about the landscape and heritage impacts timings.

Officers replied they were about to start commissioning these reports which would be reported to a future meeting.

The report was noted.

PP45

ACTION PLAN UPDATE FROM PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICE

The Assistant Director Planning presented a report updating Members on the consideration of the report of the Planning Advisory Service by Scrutiny Committee. The action plan set out in the report reflected the recommendations of the 17 January 2017 Scrutiny Committee and key actions which had been updated and subsequently reported to Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2017.

Cabinet's response to the action plan and to the proposed memorandum of understanding with Braintree District Council would be obtained in March.

Councillor Lodge said he was concerned to obtain a response on how feasible the five year land supply was, and to plan for it so as to avoid predatory actions of developers.

The Assistant Director Planning said responses on Planning Advisory Service plans were available for specified cases, in particular a case regarding Liverpool.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the issue related to where there was a deficit in the SHLS, as to whether it had to be "frontloaded" or whether the shortfall could be spread.

John Goodall said the HWP had not given clarity on these cases and that without prejudice to any conclusion, arguments could be made for either approach.

Councillor Lodge asked that the principles being tested in these cases be kept in mind.

Councillor Rolfe said this was the approach being taken.

Councillor Dean asked that care be taken in use of jargon, such as "IDP" for "infrastructure development plan" so that all documents were clearly written for public understanding. He asked Troy Hayes what the next steps were regarding the duty to cooperate.

Troy Hayes said the duty to cooperate document was a statement of compliance to be submitted to the Secretary of State and to be prepared alongside the regulation 18 plan. Typically this document would set out what engagement with other bodies had taken place, and the outcomes. These outcomes would lead to a statement of common ground, or memorandum of understanding.

Councillor Rolfe said it was very important to have this document in place as without the duty to cooperate the plan could fail.

Troy Hayes said it was necessary to establish the immediate cross-boundary priorities. The work was progressing according to a template in order to ensure all elements were captured.

Councillor Rolfe said he hoped all questions asked by the speakers had been addressed. He said in respect of the NBS and memorandum of understanding questions, and financially, answers would depend on whether a garden development was selected. The Council was minded to look at a garden development but capital was put up by other funding agencies, and therefore a business case would need to be prepared if this option went ahead.

The report was noted.

The Working Group received a report on the duty to cooperate. The Planning Policy Team Leader highlighted progress being made by the Strategic Housing Market Authorities (SHMA) towards the memoranda of understanding between the SHMA and other related organisations. He said reference had already been made this evening to discussions which had taken place with Highways and Highways England, and to meetings had taken place with Braintree District Council with a view to signing a memorandum of understanding with that authority.

Councillor Dean said the minutes of the December meeting of the Sustainable Development Member Board indicated some authorities were sending more than one representative, whereas this authority had only sent one.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the terms of reference provided for voting rights limited to one representative per authority, but that there was nothing to prevent additional persons attending.

Councillor Barker said East Herts and Epping Forest were only members of the administrative group, and had chosen to attend. She was usually Uttlesford's representative.

Councillor Lodge asked about member discussion which was stated in the report to have taken place.

Councillor Barker said the minutes included with the report were in fact draft minutes.

Councillor Rolfe invited Jackie Kingdom to speak.

Jackie Kingdom said she wished to remind the Working Group that there was no such place as "land West of Braintree", it was Stebbing.

She went on to make a statement. *A copy of the statement is appended to these minutes.*

Councillor Rolfe thanked Mrs Kingdom for her comments. Regarding the A11 corridor, he said Uttlesford was open to business, and was designating a number of areas to bring research into the North border. The Council was a key member of the London Stansted Cambridge consortium, and it was important to recognise that there could accordingly be pressure on housing.

Regarding the Regulation 18 consultation, this was going ahead.

Regarding the member discussion referring to looking at the A120 corridor, at the meeting with South Cambridgeshire, the draft minutes of which were included with the report, it should be noted that this was not a verbatim summary. Officers and Troy Consultants were being most careful to consider all options. It was important to have met Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. South Cambridgeshire had put in the majority of their development to the north of this district. This Council was looking very closely at Chesterford, and four of five sites were in the South of the district. A Neighbourhood Plan group was working

on part of Cambridge's ring road. Councillor Rolfe said there was nothing in the minutes of any of these groups which contradicted anything heard at tonight's meeting. Officers and consultants were rationalising the new settlements, and the duty to cooperate was a fundamental part of the process. If those three authorities strongly objected to Chesterford that would be significant. It was necessary to tease out all aspects. Exactly the same principles applied to the A120.

Mrs Kingdom said it was unfortunate the minutes reflected what they did.

Councillor Rolfe said these were draft minutes.

Councillor Barker said if previously the Council had considered the A120 would be a better location to deliver the sites, then it would have looked into that. Chesterford was also being looked at. The South of the district met the need better. The district was not required to meet Cambridge's housing need, and Cambridge did not need any help from Uttlesford. All these factors would be taken in the round.

Councillor Lodge said the impression given by the draft minutes of the Member discussions with Cambridge was that members considered there was logic in development on the A120.

Councillor Rolfe said there was nothing said that was not already published, and that these were isolated comments. The overall tone of the meeting was that Chesterford would be considered as part of the sites being looked at. It was not for him or for Councillor Barker to decide, for the Council, and the work was being done by officers. The process should be done on planning considerations and evidence, which was the position of this council and this administration.

Councillor Loughlin said a speaker's time had been taken up with addressing the comments recorded in the minutes.

Councillor Rolfe said the position was as he had described.

Councillor Dean said the Working Group had indicated previously that it wanted to be more transparent, and the effect of that approach could be read in different ways. Certainly the focus of the comments was on the A120, and if members were talking about the past then that was fine, but the Council was having five or six sites, and one was in the North, so in his view it seemed this Working Group was doing the job properly, and he would make sure that it did. The meetings of the Group were the right place to iron out these issues and get clarity.

Councillor Lodge said the minutes of the member discussion read as though there had been pre-judgment.

Councillor Loughlin asked that the discussion move on.

Councillor Barker said more than ever Chesterford was back on the table, as work was needed to make the Cambridge Stansted London corridor even more viable. It was important to work out the implications, and to take expert advice. If the comments made had caused anxiety, she apologised.

Jackie Kingdom said she would accept a declaration that before minutes were published there would be an undertaking that they be agreed to be correct before made public.

Councillor Rolfe said these principles were right.

The report was noted.

PP47 **PROJECT PLAN: KEY MILESTONES**

The Project Manager – Local Plan presented the project plan. She said in its entirety it could not be provided in comprehensive form other than as a printout. The printout was available for inspection by any councillor.

Councillor Dean asked whether the regulation 18 consultation would be for the statutory minimum or whether it would be extended because of the school holidays.

Councillor Rolfe confirmed the consultation would be two weeks longer to allow for the school holidays.

The project plan was noted.

PP48 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Project Manager – Local Plan said this item was a working document, which was added to at every meeting. Once the evidence base reports were received, the plan would show which items would be considered at which meetings.

Councillor Rolfe said some date might need to be adjusted. The Forward Plan would be circulated to Members.

Councillor Mills asked that all dates be circulated to members.

The Forward Plan was noted.

PP49 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be on 6 April 2017.

The meeting ended at 9.10pm.

Action points

PP40 HWP	To provide members with professional press analysis of
----------	--

	the HWP.
PP41 OAHN	Provide Members with original SHMA calculations including the reason for the uplift.
PP42 Regulation 18 Consultation	It would be helpful if the presentation evenings could include two presenting developers at each occasion, and that it would also assist members if they could receive advance notification of which sites; which developers were the subject of each presentation and the questions to be asked.
PP43 Water Cycle Study	Officers to report back on whether water pressure level was sufficient.
PP43	Circulate explanation of “existing flow consents”
PP44 Local plan evidence base	Circulate terms of reference of sustainability appraisal
PP44	Circulate terms of reference of the infrastructure delivery plan.
PP48 Forward Plan	Circulate Forward Plan and all dates to members.

Public speaking

Statement of Nick Buhaenko-Smith

Once again thank you for allowing me to speak at this meeting. My name is Nick Buhaenko-Smith and I speak on behalf of SERCLF, the residents of six parishes on both sides of the Uttlesford / Braintree boundary and the many residents beyond the immediate region impacted by the West of Braintree proposal.

I do not intend to deliver a speech but ask if the PPWG or Council officers would answer some questions.

Agenda Item 3 – White Paper

On the PPWG regarding the report submitted on the topic of the white paper a full assessment of the risks that this council may face in the preparation of its local plan?

Agenda Item 4 – OAN

Understand external consultant's reports have resulted in different housing numbers

- Given this situation can I ask if the officers and PPWG have reviewed and validated the data within the various reports to determine which is correct for this district?

I would also like to have put on record that I hope this council is not basing its housing numbers on "informal advice" as per the reference from Simon Emmsur but on validated evidence.

Agenda Item 5 - PREPARING FOR THE LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION (Page

I quote the from the agenda section 3.7 page 22:

"The principal issue is the phasing of development and the apportionment of housing numbers within the plan period of both our plan and the Braintree Local Plan (there is a prospect of a planning application for mineral extraction on part of the site within Braintree). There is a mutual interest for both authorities to agree this phasing before June 2017 and then to sign a Joint Memorandum of Understanding."

Are the council or this working group willing to expand further the details on the MOU and what is the council committing itself financially?

Item - Duty to Co-operate Meeting between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Uttlesford District Council (page 6)

In the duty to cooperate meetings with SCDC, in the documented minutes there is the following:

"Stephen Kelly (SCDC) enquired about Uttlesford's overarching strategy for their Plan".

Clr Barker "explained that there were various givens and outstanding commitments. The focus was on the A120 corridor as a priority with some development targeted at the villages and Saffron Walden"

Statement of Ken McDonald

CC0216

Uttlesford Planning Policy Working Group meeting 22 February 2017 Statement by Ken McDonald, 2 Greenfields, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8AH.

Good evening. My name is Ken McDonald. I have lived in Uttlesford for 35 years.

May I remind you that **the SHMA was considered by this Group in November 2015 when the decision was taken to defer approval until doubts raised at that meeting, were resolved. I don't believe those doubts were ever resolved, and the SHMA was never adopted by the PPWG. However, it continues to be the unsatisfactory foundation for all subsequent steps of the planning process.**

I heard at the Scrutiny Committee meeting last month that the Planning Advisory Service had highlighted the **need to explain how, within the SHMA, the exceptional allocation of 12,500 new homes to Uttlesford had been calculated. This reinforced the concerns I have been voicing for over a year about the lack of audit trail.**

Without visibility of the consultants' rationale and calculations, how can any reasonable person accept the answer, especially when the answer is in a different league to the conclusions reached by other districts across the country.

I noted that Uttlesford's Cabinet meeting last week was asked to ratify a memorandum of understanding with other authorities regarding highways issues related to the local plan, but I don't recall the PPWG being consulted.

I am concerned that **the Local Plan process seems to be steam-rolling ahead without pausing for breath, without listening, and, in particular, bypassing this PPWG working group and bypassing the public scrutiny that meetings of the PPWG allow.**

This evening, you are being asked to accept that planning should proceed on the basis of **14,100 homes. You will be told that this is in line with advice from the "Advisory Visit", but that visit was brief and was not made aware of criticisms of the SHMA.**

The original, unexplained 12,500 extra homes would allow a dramatic and exceptional increase in Uttlesford's population, **far greater than the other three districts in the SHMA and far greater than most districts across the country.**

14,100 is even more grotesque. It would mean that Uttlesford's housing stock would grow **42%** over the 2011-2033 period.

By comparison, East Herts is considering a 31% growth, Harlow 25% and Epping Forest 21%. I will pass my workings to Maggie Cox with a copy of this statement.

How can **you** be comfortable with this latest proposal, especially with no audit trail to show how **any** of the figures have been calculated?

Please **insist** that you are shown how Uttlesford's figures have been calculated before agreeing to anything.

Statement of Jackie Kingdom

PPWG Meeting: 22 February 2017

Good evening, I represent Stebbing Parish Council and thank you for allowing me to put my question to the meeting.

In looking through the papers for this evening's meeting, I read the Minutes of the

Duty to Co-operate Meeting between South Cambridge and Uttlesford D.Cs, held 13 January 2017, (Appendix 7.)

The discussion recognised the inevitable growth in the areas covered by the two councils and I was impressed by the positive attitude by some councillors – those representing South Cambridgeshire.

The London – Stansted – Cambridge corridor is already home to a diverse range of successful businesses. There are strong clusters in digital technology, bio-medical, logistics, hi-tech manufacturing and low carbon industries. The Genome Campus, Hinxton has a global level research programme with a thirty-year agenda.

The population is growing, with nearly 40% of the working age population educated to degree level or above and many jobs are available in support services. Currently, Reed Co. employment agency has 3,714 jobs vacant in, and around Great Chesterford.

The London – Stansted – Cambridge Consortium says "The M11 / M25, plus A10 and North Circular means the area is a major hub for logistics and distribution, with excellent road links to the UK's ports and the north." Roads A14, A1, M6, M5 are also mentioned.

It appears SC Councillors are prepared to work with companies and central government on opening the east of England and Norfolk to these innovative technologies. Sadly, Uttlesford's representatives on this Duty to Co-operate team seem less enthused.

The SC Joint Director of Planning asked about Uttlesford's strategy for their plan. Cllr Barker replied that "The focus was on the A120 corridor as a priority with some development ...in villages and Saffron Walden" The Council Leader, Cllr Rolfe endorsed her reply by explaining the need for development along the A120 because the airport employs under one fifth of Uttlesford residents.

When Stebbing Parish Council voiced its opposition to massive development in our village, we were told by UDC, via the Dunmow Broadcast Newspaper:

*"we are taking care to ensure all the necessary evidence is available so the public can be reassured development is going in the right place. All decisions will be taken in light of a full evidence base and following full engagement with residents.
"A further round of consultation on the preferred options will take place in the summer (2017) – this will be an opportunity for residents to have their say."*

My question is: When was this decision by Cllrs Barker & Rolfe to a total commitment to develop along the A120 taken, and is it supported by the full council? Perhaps a second 'pause' to gather further evidence, is needed or will Uttlesford's Local Plan be thrown out again by Government inspectors?

J.Kingdom 22.02.17