

**PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL CHAMBER -
COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on
THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2017 at 6.00 pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Chairman)
Councillors S Barker, A Dean, P Lees, J Lodge, J Loughlin and
A Mills

Officers in attendance: A Bochel (Democratic Services Officer), P Bylo (Planning Policy
Manager), Glenday (Assistant Director - Planning) and S Miles
(Planning Policy Team Leader)

Public Speakers: K McDonald and Councillor Hargreaves

**THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED OVER THE COURSE OF THE
MEETING, AND ARE LISTED HERE IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER:**

Access to the Easton Park development (PP11)
Affordable housing strategy (PP11)
Air quality (PP18)
Baseline figure of housing need (PP7)
Co-operation with other authorities (PP11 and PP15)
Delivery of the Local Plan (PP11)
Development corporations (PP11)
Footpaths and bridleways (PP13)
Further stages in the Local Plan process (PP7)
Green belt (PP11)
Green infrastructure policy (PP16 and PP23)
Historic Impact Assessment (PP7 and PP18)
Housing density (PP12)
Housing mix (PP12)
Minimum standard for houses (PP18)
Monitoring plan (PP21)
Neighbourhood plans (PP8)
Ongoing work commissioned by Uttlesford District Council (PP7)
Parking design (PP17)
Public transport (PP15)
Rat running (PP15)
Renewable energy (PP18)
Retail provision (PP8 and PP14)
Sports provision and strategy (PP7 and PP8)
Stansted Airport (PP7 and PP13)
Statement of Community Involvement (PP24)
Transport Study (PP7 and PP15)
Water provision (PP7)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davies and Oliver. An apology also received from Councillor Lees who was to arrive late due to an earlier meeting.

Councillor Dean declared a non-pecuniary interest because his wife was a volunteer at, and a member of, the Trustees of the Gardens of Easton Lodge.

Councillor Barker declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Essex County Council.

PP6 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting on 17 October 2017 were signed and approved as a correct record.

PP7 **UTTLESFORD LOCAL PLAN, REGULATION 18 DRAFT PLAN CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

The Working Group considered a report noting responses received to the regulation 18 draft Local Plan.

The Chairman thanked officers of the Council for their work distilling nearly 6000 comments into the report. He said this work was a key part of the Local Plan development process. The representations had to be considered for the consultation to be meaningful. This was the second of four rounds of consideration of the draft plan consultation. Further studies had been initiated out of the consideration of responses so far. The third stage was when responses to the representations made during the consultation would come back to a future meeting of the working group, and the fourth stage was when the regulation 19 Local Plan was put together.

In response to the statement from Ken McDonald, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the Council had arrived at its Total Housing Need figure through evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA would be the documents examined by the inspector of the Local Plan to ensure it was robust. If the Housing Need figure was calculated using different trend years, the level of need would be different. However the SHMA, the NPPF and the NPPG had advised that household projections published by the Department for Communities and Local Government should provide the starting estimate for overall housing need, and that the objectively assessed need set out in the published SHMAs were the best figures to be using. Government guidance and professional advice was also that these were the figures which should be consulted on. The Council had published an Employment Needs paper in October. In this paper, a preferred scenario included 4 major drivers of additional job growth above the moderated baseline. One of these drivers was growth at Stansted Airport, which resulted in the figure being adjusted by 6750 jobs.

The Chairman said recent visits by an inspector had indicated the numbers being used for the draft plan were appropriate, and that Uttlesford District

Council should be mindful of this. There had been a lot of consideration of these numbers. However, the inspector said the Council should also bear in mind the recent government consultation the right homes in the right places.

In response to the statement by Councillor Hargreaves, the Chairman said concerns regarding water provision were not unique to Uttlesford. A key piece of work for the Local Plan was an update to the water study, which was currently in progress. The government had committed to building one million homes and while it would be guided by the Environment Agency, it would want to look for solutions to water problems.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the Council had met with the water providers in the area to initiate an update to the Council's water cycle study. The Council was seeking to address the issue and were awaiting the results of the study.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the covering report set out the summary of representations to the consultation, and gave an outline of how the report was structured. Proposed responses to the representations would be brought to the working group at a later date.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the Council had received an email from Elsenham Parish Council which said its consultation response had been summarised slightly inaccurately in the report. An updated summary of the report had been circulated with the agreement of Elsenham Parish Council. Members noted this change to the report.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Planning Policy Team Leader said other work had been commissioned in response to representations received. This included an update to the Transport Study. Discussions had taken place with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council to make sure the evidence base reflected concerns about traffic that could be generated by a new settlement in the north of Uttlesford. Part of the work being completed by the Planning Policy team was supporting work for a bid to upgrade the A505. The Chairman said this sort of joined up work with other councils was very important. It was the Council's responsibility to mitigate any extra pressure which might be created by new settlements.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said that in response to representations submitted to the Council, work had been commissioned to provide information about the impact of potential garden community sites on archaeology. A full Historic Impact Assessment was also being completed and could be finished in the next few months. Representatives of the Council had also met with Sport England to discuss a new sports and playing facilities strategy. This would possibly take up to 12 months to complete. Sport England had said it would not object to further iterations of the Local Plan if it was involved in study and the drafting of policy.

In response to a question from Councillor Lodge, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the phrase 'no mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed', which was used throughout the report, was intended to mean that no

mitigation was suggested at this stage, as the Council was not yet proposing responses to representations. At future working groups, recommended responses would be brought along with appropriate mitigation.

Councillor Lodge said that even though there would be no responses to the comments made during the consultation at this stage, it was important that people know the Council was intending to respond to the representations made.

The Chairman reiterated that responses to consultation submissions will be proposed at a future meeting of the working group and put online. The Planning Policy Team Leader said responses would be provided by policy.

In response to a question from Councillor Mills, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the Infrastructure Delivery Plan update would look at all forms of infrastructure and how they were needed to meet development needs in the draft plan. The updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan was being produced by Troy Planning, but was not expected until towards the end of the period for gathering the evidence base, because other evidence was needed to feed into it.

Ken McDonald and Councillor Hargreaves spoke on this item. A copy of both statements are appended to these minutes

PP8

OVERARCHING SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

The Planning Policy Team Leader said this section of the report gave overarching summaries of each chapter.

In response to a question from the Chairman regarding emerging and adopted neighbourhood plans, the Planning Policy Team Leader said a new section could potentially be added to the Local Plan discussing neighbourhood plans in detail.

Councillor Barker said people liked Uttlesford as it was and did not want to see development on the intended scale. However many did not follow the Council's progress with the plan, and so were unaware that it was doing its best to mitigate the impact of the new houses that would be constructed. Other districts round Uttlesford had to do the same and it was important to look at the big picture. The Council needed to keep emphasising that it was trying to mitigate the negative effects of the Local Plan.

The Chairman said there had been general collective support across Uttlesford for the way the plan was laid out.

Councillor Loughlin said there was a response made to the consultation on page 19 that said oral comments made at Local Plan forums had not been summarised in the report.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said he was unable to say how oral comments had been taken into account, because he had only joined the Council after the last forum had been held.

The Chairman said it was difficult to weight verbal comments, but it was also necessary to take account of them.

Councillor Mills suggested that a book be provided for people to write comments at future forums, and the Planning Policy Team Leader said staff members could also offer to minute statements for those uncomfortable with providing written responses.

Councillor Lodge noted summaries of representations made on retail on page 44, which said there were doubts that garden communities would reach the size necessary to support local retail centres. Encouraging those in new garden communities to travel to other towns for retail would be something the Local Plan should avoid.

The Chairman said the challenge was that shoppers would go wherever the best retail offers were. Shopping habits may well have changed by the end of the Local Plan period. However garden communities of the size planned would have attractive retail offers.

Councillor Lodge said an area which Council policy had failed was the provision of sports provision in developments. He hoped it was an area which the Council would be beefing up as part of its strategy.

The Chairman said he thought the aim to increase sports provision would come out in the strategy. He supported the principle of Councillor Lodge's argument, but securing funding for sports facilities was a challenge. Developer contributions were the easiest route for securing funding. The increasing population and prominence of the wellbeing agenda meant further facilities were needed. The Council needed to be engaging with the appropriate people and would be failing in its duty if the consultation was not extensive. Sport was a key issue. The running track planned for Carver Barracks was a recent achievement on sport.

Councillor Dean said it was very important that the public be thoroughly engaged in the development of the sport strategy.

The Chairman said engagement would often be with the relevant sporting bodies too.

Councillor Mills said the reason for the long period of time it would take to complete the sports strategy was that it had a very wide brief, as it was looking at how the strategy would be implemented, as well as what was needed.

Councillor Lees entered the meeting.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the chapter introduced the plan. Responses to this section primarily concerned procedural issues and the sustainability appraisal.

PP10 **CHAPTER 2: SPATIAL PORTRAIT, VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the main issues raised regarding this section were questions about how the aims in the chapter would be met.

The Chairman said it was important to get a broader understanding of what was intended to be created in the proposed communities communicated to the residents of Uttlesford.

PP11 **CHAPTER 3: SPATIAL STRATEGY**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said this chapter included representations of the main strategic policy of the plan, such as scale and distribution of housing growth and provision of jobs. Most comments were directed at the three proposed garden communities.

Councillor Dean noted comments between pages 213 and 219 about Uttlesford District Council's engagement with Cambridgeshire. He said the Council should work hard to demonstrate that it is properly engaged in cooperation with other councils. He asked whether Uttlesford District Council were adopting a leadership role with other authorities.

The Chairman said Councillor Barker had been doing a lot of detailed work with Uttlesford's SHMA partners and with Braintree District Council. Uttlesford had also been engaging with various levels of authorities in Cambridgeshire, including the City of Cambridge Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the combined authority, the mayor and Cambridgeshire County Council. Representatives of the City of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire would be visiting the proposed North Uttlesford garden community in the New Year.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean asking whether there needed to be any flexibility in the Local Plan in case some of the proposed sites for development could not be built on, the Planning Policy Team Leader said there had been suggestions that the Council over-allocate housing numbers to provide a buffer of sites that could come forward if there was a problem with a certain site. This was something the Council was looking into.

Councillor Dean said some comments had expressed concern that building work would squeeze out smaller builders.

The Chairman said allocations of building work for the Local Plan would provide room for smaller builders, and there would be standard planning applications as well.

Councillor Mills said the inspector would be looking for the plan to be robust, and so there would have to be a backstop of normal planning applications to over-allocate housing numbers.

Councillor Barker said many houses had already been built or had planning permission. There would likely be jobs for small builders because of the large amount of development going on throughout Essex.

The Planning Policy Manager said the Council was beginning to look at the Affordable Housing Strategy in greater detail. Community-led housing and self-builds were two initiatives which could be built into policy.

The Chairman said the Council was diligent about providing 40% affordable housing. The Council was also keen to develop a model to provide housing that had rent which was affordable to most people. A mix of housing was crucial.

Councillor Loughlin said the district lacked council properties.

The Chairman said housing associations would probably charge 80% of market rent, so it would likely be that the Council would have to own the properties.

Councillor Mills said there were multiple options for this.

Councillor Dean said housing could be owned by local community groups and so would not be subject to Right to Buy. The Council needed to be innovative in how it approached the issue.

Councillor Dean said the Council needed to allay concerns that garden communities would not be delivered because there was no money to provide them. The Chairman said the government had gone out to consultation on development corporations. In the New Year, the Council would begin to lay out how it would go forward. Guaranteeing the infrastructure would be vital. Grosvenor and Land Securities recognised that the developments would be built on garden city principles.

Councillor Lodge said government policy was changing very rapidly and that meant policy SP5 in the regulation 18 draft local plan was out of date. The government now saw development corporations as the way forward and this needed to be put into the regulation 19 plan. He proposed officers look into creating a new development corporation and return to the working group with options.

The Chairman said how the corporation was modelled was centric to the whole proposal. However, it needed to be in line with government policy which had not yet been set in stone. The matter was being worked on, with the aim of providing the full range of facilities in the garden communities.

The Assistant Director – Planning said work was underway investigating delivery options for the plan. These options would be brought before members, but would not going to be the Planning Policy Working Group because its remit was to look at the Local Plan and policies included in it, rather than the governance arrangements for agreeing the delivery vehicle for the plan.

Councillor Lodge said that the method of implementation was integral to the work of the group, and he objected to it not being brought before the working group.

The Chairman said the delivery of the Local Plan would be scrutinised in a public forum, but the terms of reference did not give the Planning Policy Working Group the authority to make recommendations on delivery mechanisms.

The Assistant Director – Planning said the Project Manager – Local Plan was looking at ways to bring governance options before members. It was important to separate the two processes of creating the plan and ensuring its delivery so that one process was not being led by the other.

Councillor Lodge said he could not see the reasoning for this. The Chairman said the Project Manager – Local Plan should be given time to develop ideas on the matter.

Councillor Lodge said the legislation was there for development corporations to take on all new town development.

The Chairman said the government was now working on how to apply that on a more regular basis. The Council would make it clear what the vehicle for delivery would be.

Councillor Mills said variance in the delivery vehicles would be needed for the three proposed communities. It would be integral to their delivery that they meet certain requirements. It would therefore be necessary to see that the formalised governance arrangements be in place for the regulation 19 plan. This needed to be sorted out going forward.

Councillor Dean noted comments from Great Easton and Tilty Mill Parish Council about the lack of access to the proposed Easton Park development, and asked whether the Council could dispel these concerns.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the Council were looking at whether a proposed transport link from the proposed West of Braintree garden community towards Tendring could be expanded between West of Braintree, Easton Park and Stansted Airport. Land Securities was also being consulted about the best possibilities for road access to the proposed Easton Park development.

Councillor Mills said the existing access was dual carriageway, and another interchange was being proposed once the population level of Easton Park had reached a certain amount.

Councillor Dean said there were comments on page 334 about the need for more transparency about developing the Local Plan. He did not think lack of transparency was a problem now, but the Council needed to keep doing everything it could to change the public perception here. Developers had been encouraged to engage with the public, and the Council join developers at the public exhibitions they were holding.

The Chairman said that was a good idea, though the Council would first have to consider whether it could do this without giving the impression of pre-determination.

The Chairman said in the New Year, there was the intention to have a new round of meetings between parish councils, Uttlesford District Council and developers, and to hold further exhibitions. Developers were also considering design weekends to bring communities in to share thoughts and get community feedback. The Council should also aim to make sure the wider community was aware of what was happening, why it was happening and when.

Councillor Dean said there had been a representation from East Herts District Council suggesting Uttlesford District Council could adjust its green belt so that East Herts could change its commercial area.

The Chairman said he did not think a minor adjustment was an intrusion into the green belt, but the Council took its substantial protection very seriously. The development in North Bishop's Stortford was impacting on Farnham at the moment.

Councillor Loughlin said the green belt was sacrosanct and allowing development in it would create a precedent. It was up to the Council to protect the green belt and the Countryside Protection Zone.

Councillor Lodge said Policy SP10 on page 436 was replacing Policy S7. Policy SP10 was a watered down policy and it would be good for officers to see if the current S7 protection could be built into SP10. Councillors Loughlin and Lees agreed with this suggestion.

The Chairman said that officers would look into this point.

PP12

CHAPTER 4: HOUSING

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations for the chapter raised issues about the appropriate density and mix of schemes in Uttlesford, as well the affordability of affordable housing.

Councillor Dean noted representations said standards for housing density allowed for a greater density of houses than in East Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire. He asked whether officers could confirm whether Uttlesford's standards were different to elsewhere and why. The size of dwellings in the UK was on average smaller than other European countries, which negatively affected living conditions.

Councillor Mills said Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) principles proposed 20-30 houses per hectare. This should be the target for the new Garden Communities in Uttlesford, though there might be some areas where the density would be slightly higher. This would be less dense than some of the conventional developments over the past ten years. The health of the community would also play into the design of the houses, and the Council would be looking to reinforce this when the planning came forward.

In response to a question from Councillor Mills, the Planning Policy Team Leader said he would look into whether density was measured by an entire area or just the density of housing located in that area. There was a tension between low density sites with open spaces versus best use of land. If developments were not dense enough, then they might not be able to support a public transport route, as many houses would not be in walking distance of the public transport route.

Councillor Lodge said Policy H1 was aiming to build 35-60 houses per hectare in town centres and then between 30-50 house per hectare adjacent to a settlement. It seemed relative to the environment that Uttlesford was looking at too many.

The Chairman said officers would take this under consideration and come back to the group about the issue.

Councillor Lees said many representations suggested the housing mix was wrong. She asked how the Council would get the appropriate housing mix, and whether those parish councils without neighbourhood plans would be being consulted. The number of bungalows seemed to be a big issue, and some elderly people would want a greater availability of bungalows.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said there needed to be an evidence base to show that a different housing mix was required. The Chairman said the Council should look to update its evidence.

Councillor Barker said the Strategic Housing Market Assessment made recommendations for Uttlesford's housing mix, and it was completed by experts in the field. The Council should have regard for this.

Councillor Lees said studies only answered questions that had been asked at the start of the study.

Councillor Mills said the indicative levels for housing mix would need to be taken forward to the regulation 19 plan. There was also government policy pointing to the release of larger houses for those wanting to move into smaller homes, and this was seen as an important way to meet housing requirements.

PP13

CHAPTER 5: EMPLOYMENT

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations for this part of the plan questioned the demand for employment land in the district, and suggested support for different business sectors and that some employment policies be more flexible.

Councillor Dean said there was a claim on page 495 that various authorities had said that potential future employees at Stansted Airport would be living in those districts.

The Planning Policy Team there had been work to find a balance of work and jobs across both SHMA and FEMA areas.

Councillor Dean asked whether something would be done about Bury Lodge Lane in Stansted to prevent large vehicles going down Church Road in the middle of the town.

The Chairman said the Council should look into a weight restriction for this road.

Councillor Dean said there was a need to build footpath and bridleway networks between new and current settlements into the planning, in order to encourage people to use transport other than cars, and to ensure the settlements were connected for ease of access.

The Chairman said it was important to strike a balance between connectivity and mitigation.

Councillor Barker said it was necessary to ensure development catered for public rights of way, rather than destroying them.

PP14 **CHAPTER 6: RETAIL**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations on this part of the plan supported the need for appropriate retail provision in new developments, queried the uses that were appropriate within existing town centres and opposed out of centre retail development.

PP15 **CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORT**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations suggested that persuading people out of their cars would be difficult, and expressed concerns about the impact on road networks and air quality.

The Chairman said the Council had to recognise that the car would still be the most used form of transport for the majority of the Local Plan period, but that technology was changing, such as electric and driverless cars. There should be a giant step forward in terms of public transport. Each new development should be well-connected. It would be irresponsible not to ensure this. Hopefully there could be a cycle path between Saffron Walden and Cambridge.

Councillor Barker said representations had raised the issue of rat runs. If the new sites were to go ahead, a solution to prevent rat running in existing communities should be discussed before development began.

In response to a question from Councillor Mills, the Planning Policy Team Leader said it would likely not take too long to complete the Transport Study. Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council had said they would provide information to fit into Uttlesford District Council's modelling update.

In response to a question from Councillor Lodge, the Planning Policy Team Leader said that any traffic proposals in the Local Plan for Saffron Walden would be included in the modelling work in the Transport Study. The Chairman said the Council was continuing to look at mitigation for areas of poor air quality. Modest improvements would likely be as much as could be hoped for the moment.

Councillor Dean asked whether the Transport Study was only addressing roads, or included other potential forms of transport such as a rail link to Haverhill or between Braintree and Bishops' Stortford.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the study did not include those possible rail links because it was essentially modelling a worst case scenario.

The Chairman said the Mayor of Cambridge had indicated there was a plan for a light railway at Haverhill to Cambridge South.

PP16 **CHAPTER 8: INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations had asked for the provision of appropriate infrastructure alongside development, with some parish councils making requests for specific infrastructure in specific areas.

Councillor Dean said there were representations on page 597 from the National Trust and Natural England which said there was a need for policy on green infrastructure, and asked whether the Council was working to create this policy.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said he thought the point being made was that the Council needed a standalone policy on green infrastructure, and this was something the Council was looking at.

The Chairman said he noted representations made by the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group which said existing GP practices in the area did not have the capacity to accommodate significant population growth. New facilities would be built in new developments, but there would need to be dialogue with the clinical commissioning group in order to provide doctors to fill the new posts created.

PP17 **CHAPTER 9: DESIGN**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations said good design was important, but questions were raised about the subjectivity of what was good design, with arguments for both specificity and flexibility in design.

Councillor Dean said garden villages should have a ban on green verge and pavement parking, but this would only be achievable if accessible, personal and general parking places existed in the right place. He asked for assurance that the Council would take this issue seriously.

The Chairman said this issue was a challenge. It had been agreed that the width of the road and the provision of cycle paths was important.

Councillor Mills said the German model had offsite storage parking, while other new developments in the UK had wider roads, a verge and then pavements to allow more space.

The Chairman said the issue demanded innovation.

Councillor Lees said the Council had to be innovative enough to say that it did not agree with Essex County Council guidelines about parking.

Councillor Loughlin said the Essex Design Guide were recommendations rather than rules. There was more tandem parking now, and it was important that the Council address design issues to do with parking.

Councillor Barker said it would be interesting to see new developments in planning for parking because many people would soon own electric cars.

The Chairman said people had very different views on what good design was.

PP18 **CHAPTER 10: ENVIRONMENT**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations supported the protection of the historic environment, but expressed concern about the impact of specific developments and suggested further detail was required regarding how the built and natural environments would be protected.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the Council was working with Historic England to develop a full Historic Impact Assessment. In addition to looking at the impact of garden communities on heritage assets, it would also consider the character of landscape. A Sustainability Appraisal would examine the policies in the plan to ensure they were delivering sustainable development.

Councillor Dean said a comment from Historic England on page 673 said policy appeared to prioritise renewable energy provision over the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. Similarly, a comment said Policy D9 placed rigid expectations on energy efficiency in all development and might make schemes unviable.

Councillor Dean said developers and landowners could afford to invest in the design of low-energy properties and he thought the Council should be ambitious in dealing with the energy efficiency of both new and existing properties.

The Chairman said he thought the group endorsed Councillor Dean's point.

In response to a point made by Councillor Dean regarding a comment by the National Trust about the impact of development on Hatfield Forest, the Chairman

said it was right to appropriately protect the forest, but the problem of restricting access to it was not a reason to prevent development.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the National Trust and Natural England were doing research on how far people would travel to go to Hatfield Forest and how to mitigate the effects of development. The provision of green infrastructure in new developments would help to mitigate this, but Hatfield Forest was very much a destination which people would choose to visit on a day out, as opposed to country parks which might meet more day-to-day needs. The Council would meet again with the National Trust at the end of January.

In response to Councillor Dean's question as to whether the Local Plan was going to safeguard land for future potential development, the Chairman said it would not, but Saffron Walden was trying to plan for the future. Many people would hope that Carver Barracks would be available for development for the next Local Plan period, and so the Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan could build in the potential for a relief road for Carver Barracks.

In response to Councillor Loughlin's question about how air quality would be monitored, the Chairman said the Council had a statutory obligation to monitor air quality.

Councillor Dean said a review monitoring air quality in Stansted had taken place and monitors were due to be put in place this month.

Councillor Lodge said there had been a number of policy reviews on air quality. Policy EN16 was weaker than before and there was no reason why it shouldn't be stronger. Neighbouring authorities were being more robust. Policy should be along the lines of "a new development should not adversely affect air quality levels within an Air Quality Management Area". This was a very reasonable request. Measures could be put in place to ensure air quality did not deteriorate.

The Chairman said it was difficult if levels of traffic would increase too, although this would hopefully be less of a problem as technology developed.

The Chairman said officers should relook at policy regarding air quality, and also whether initiatives could be brought forward to protect air quality.

Councillor Mills asked if there would be a minimum standard for houses to be built to in new garden developments. These houses would also be more environmentally friendly, which would help with mitigating air quality.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said this was an area which the Council needed to look at, and environmental standard of the buildings was an important aspect of this.

Councillor Mills suggested the team look into a Level 4 standard and above.

The Chairman said it was important to consider the future.

PP19 **CHAPTER 11: COUNTRYSIDE**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said representations supported the protection of the countryside, but also requested flexibility to allow for the provision and expansion of community facilities.

Councillor Dean said there was a comment by Historic England on page 718, which said Policy C1 did not seek landscape enhancement. Additionally, on page 725, a comment talked about Policy C4 on community facilities in the countryside. Both policies were written in a restrictive matter, rather than promoting enhancement. It would be good to have the policy reworded more positively.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said officers would look at more positive wording.

PP20 **CHAPTERS 12 - 13: ALLOCATIONS**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said there were a wide range of representations in this chapter.

PP21 **CHAPTER 14: DELIVERY AND MONITORING**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said there were not a large number of representations, but some did talk about how the Council monitored whether the policies in the plan were being achieved and that the Council should be assessing this in a more specific manner.

The Chairman said a revised timetable for the Local Plan would come to the next meeting of the working group. At such a time when officers responded to representations made to the Council, a monitoring plan should also be brought to the working group.

Councillor Dean said the Council needed to be able to assess whether it had met TCPA principles.

PP22 **CHAPTERS 15 - 21: APPENDICES**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said no representations were made on the glossary.

PP23 **LATE REPRESENTATIONS**

The Planning Policy Team Leader said late representations could not be considered for the regulation 19 Local Plan. However at this stage it was thought appropriate to include the limited number received to the report.

Suffolk County Council talked about taking into account development in its area in Uttlesford's transport modelling. The Essex Wildlife Trust referenced green infrastructure master plans for sites being prepared in advance of creating a built development master plan. These plans could then be monitored.

The Chairman said key wildlife corridors were one point the Essex Wildlife Trust raised, for example Broxsted Wood.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said this would be something Uttlesford District Council would need to take into account in its master-planning work for the garden communities.

Councillor Dean asked why Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council's representation was made on page 819, because this implied that the council did not respond until after the deadline.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said he would look into this.

In response to a question from Councillor Barker, the Planning Policy Team Leader said colleagues at other councils had received broadly the same comments.

Councillor Barker said it was good to know that Uttlesford was not being singled out.

The Chairman asked for a list of topics to be presented at the beginning of the minutes so that readers could find a particular topic with ease.

The Chairman asked officers to give some thought to how to clearly present how representations were being responded to, when bringing draft responses to the working group.

Councillor Lees asked if it was possible to provide documentation to show that work being done by professional organisations was being chased up, so as to demonstrate the Council was working to get its work done.

The Chairman said this was possible, and the Council would flash warning signs if there were delays.

Councillor Dean it was important to have discussion on each topic incorporated in the minutes.

PP24

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Planning Policy Team Leader gave a summary of the report. The Statement of Community Involvement set out the Council's approach to consultation for planning documents and applications. Representations were received from organisations and individuals. Appendix 1 summarised the representations and gave suggestions for potential changes as a result of these recommendations.

The Chairman said the report was an update to the Statement of Community Involvement which had been seen at previous meetings.

RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet that the Statement of Community Involvement be adopted subject to the changes as set out in the Report of Representations.

The meeting ended at 9:00pm

ACTION POINTS

General point	Continue to pursue wider engagement in the development of the Local Plan.
PP7	Amend Elsenham Parish Council's representation summary to policy INF1 as per the email received from Elsenham Parish Council.
PP8	Provide books for comments at Local Plan Forums, and offer to minute comments for those not comfortable with writing.
PP8	Consider a new section in the Local Plan covering Neighbourhood Plans.
PP11	Investigate building provisions of policy S7 into the proposed SP10 policy.
PP12	Investigate whether housing density is measured by the number of houses over an entire area, or over the space taken up by houses within that area (gross or net density).
PP12	Investigate the possibility of lowering the proposed density of housing to reflect similar densities in other districts.
PP12	Officers should look to update the evidence base regarding the necessary housing mix.
PP13	Ensure there is a balance

	between connectivity between new and current settlements, such as footpaths and bridleways, and mitigating the effects of new settlements.
PP15	Consider solutions to rat running in existing villages.
PP16	Consider a standalone Green Infrastructure Policy.
PP18	Reconsider the wording of policy EN16. Suggested wording was “a new development should not adversely affect air quality levels within an Air Quality Management Area”. Relook at whether initiatives could be brought forward to protect air quality
PP18	Consider sustainability standards in new communities.
PP19	Look at making sure Policies C1 and C4 were more positively worded.
PP21	Bring a monitoring plan to the Planning Policy Working Group meeting. This should also cover how the TCPA principles will be monitored.
PP23	Investigate why Stansted Mountfitchet Council’s representation were mentioned in the late representations chapter.
PP23	Provide a list of topics mentioned at the beginning of the minutes of the meeting
PP23	Give some thought to how to clearly present how representations were being responded to, when bringing draft responses to the working group.

Good evening. My name is Ken McDonald. I have lived in Uttlesford for 36 years.

Uttlesford's draft Local Plan calls for a massive increase in population – around 43% over the 22 years covered by the plan. This is considerably more than almost anywhere else in the country. The fact that it is so extreme begs for greater scrutiny.

Responses to the Regulation 18 consultation have persistently questioned the housing need.

Other responses have questioned the impact on housing need of the assumptions made about employment at Stansted Airport

For more than two years, I have been calling for a clear statement of how Uttlesford's so-called "Housing Need" has been calculated. I have also been asking that alternative methods of calculation be considered. The consideration of alternative, properly justified, approaches is permitted under the National Planning Policy Framework and also under the Government's current consultation "Planning for the right homes in the right places".

Despite repeated assurances that this Local Plan will be "evidence-led" and transparent, my requests have been rejected or ignored. I submitted a detailed and damning assessment of the SHMA, both in response to the 2015 Local Plan consultation and in response to the Regulation 18 consultation. In 2015, my multi-page submission was summarised in three words, whilst I can find no reference at all to my updated multi-page objection to Policy SP3 in this latest consultation.

We are left with no audit trail and no consideration of alternatives. Each of these deficiencies will provide massive scope for argument when the final Plan is considered by an Inspector.

Each of these deficiencies also leaves Uttlesford at risk of its plan again being found Unsound.

Will the District Council now commit to publishing the following four key pieces of evidence?:

- (a) A clear and auditable statement of how it has arrived at the total Housing Need for Uttlesford.
- (b) A clear and auditable statement of how that Need might be calculated if the exceptional period of "airport-related" house-building early this century were to be discounted.
- (c) A reasoned explanation as to why one of these options has been adopted and not the other.
- (d) A clear and auditable statement of what has been assumed about future employment numbers at Stansted Airport and how that has influenced the forecast Housing Need for Uttlesford.

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My subject is water supplies. I'm going to emphasise some things you already know, but there is a final point, so please bear with me.

We are all aware of the environmental damage already done in the district and getting worse. Streams now dry or only intermittent flow and water related life just gone. We used to have kingfishers in Newport.

On p296 of the consultation summary the Environment Agency say that the water consumption standard for houses in the garden villages should be enforced at 110 litres per inhabitant per day. That is the very highest standard, not what is being applied to houses going up now. Multiplying by the number of people per house and by 365 days that's about 100,000 litres per house per year. To make the sums easy if we say build 10,000 houses across the district that means another 1 million tonnes of water a year has to be found. And round here 'found' mostly means pumping out of the ground.

It's not just houses. On p443, policy SP11 Stansted airport expansion, the EA says failure to consider both water supplies and sewerage means the application for expansion will be 'unsound'. 10 million more passengers per year, and what do we all do before going on a long flight?

On p596 the EA says the level of discharges from sewage works into watercourses is at its limit (euphemism by the way, look at their maps from the Hyder report of 7 years ago and the whole district is in red for over abstraction) and additional permits may not be granted, breach of environmental legislation and no water cycle study. Unsound. A word repeated several times.

P604 - EA again - our rivers are headwater only with not enough dilution volume and 'permitted nutrient limits could be extremely challenging to meet' What that means is the output from our sewage works has biological material in it which consumes oxygen. So the sewage works output is further damaging our rivers.

In the absence of an up to date Water Cycle Study, I went through Affinity Water's 2015 documentation. Full of acronyms, but even without the scale of development now being planned, and factoring in all the water savings, it says they would have deficits in their ability to supply.

My point is this. No doubt discussions have already been held with the DCLG so they know there is a water problem. But would it be a good idea, to challenge them **now** with the strong possibility that the answer on water supply from Affinity, from the EA, and therefore from UDC, may be that the number of houses requested is not sustainable? And ask them now what would be their position if we said they must significantly reduce the housing requirement demanded of this area?

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