

**PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL CHAMBER -  
COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on  
TUESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2018 at 5.30 pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Chairman)  
Councillors S Barker, P Davies, A Dean, P Lees, J Lodge,  
J Loughlin, E Oliver and V Ranger

Officers in attendance: A Bochel (Democratic Services Officer), G Glenday (Assistant  
Director - Planning), R Harborough (Director - Public Services)  
and S Miles (Planning Policy Team Leader)

Public speakers: D Hall, M Herbert, K McDonald and F Wilkinson

**PP25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Barker declared a personal interest as a County Councillor for Great Dunmow.

Councillor Dean declared a personal interest because his wife was a volunteer at, and a member of the trustees of, the Gardens of Easton Lodge.

**PP26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

PP23: 'Councillor Ranger said it would be **irresponsible** to juggle with mathematics to equate figures for care home spaces with those for homes' to be changed to 'Councillor Ranger said it would be **immoral** to juggle with mathematics to equate figures for care home spaces with those for homes'

**PP27 GARDEN COMMUNITY STRATEGIC GROWTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS**

In response to a statement from M Herbert, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the housing trajectory was not a definitive plan of when building would happen, but an estimate of when it was most likely to happen. There was the potential for building to happen at a faster pace, and the Local Plan did not prevent this in the infrastructure and other requirements policy were met.

The Planning Policy Team Leader gave a summary of the report.

Councillor Barker noted that parking standards was a very important issue to areas such as Great Dunmow. Parking restrictions were an even more important

requirement. The Planning Policy Team Leader said many of these criteria were already covered in the Essex Design Guide.

Members noted they had been impressed with the waste system in Eddington. There were no wheelie bins, and instead waste was stored underground. While this sort of system could not be retrofitted, it could be introduced in new garden communities.

Councillor Dean said it was essential that the majority of the Council's dialogue with the community was face to face, and that all ideas that came about from this engagement were logged by officers.

Councillor Ranger said the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) should specify space standards for dwellings. Dwellings would need to be adaptable for those living in them.

Councillor Lees said the Essex Design Guide for parking standards had been followed in places such as Foresthall, Dunmow and Elsenham, and all still had problems with parking. It would be good if the Council could be more innovative here.

Councillor Lodge said landowners still stood to walk away with £2 billion from the Local Plan. The Council should look further into the idea of setting up development corporations.

The Chairman said development corporations were complicated. The delivery of the new communities was a matter for the Garden Communities Member Governance Board to consider. The Development Plan Documents were being started now as they were fundamental to the planning of these new communities.

*M Herbert spoke on this item. A copy of his statement is appended to these minutes.*

## PP28 **LOCAL PLAN STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Planning Policy Team Leader gave a summary of the report.

Members asked that the Statement of Community Involvement express the importance of the Development Plan Documents. The Planning Policy Team Leader said he would bring ideas about these changes to Cabinet.

Members said community engagement was very important. Interaction between Uttlesford District Council, the community and the developers was key.

Members asked for further elaboration on the need for engagement on s106 agreements with town and parish councils.

RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet that the Local Plan Statement of Community Involvement is subject to a six week consultation between 7 January and 18 February.

## PP29 **REVIEW OF REGULATION 19 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

In response to statements from members of the public, the Chairman said reviewing the Council's sustainability appraisal had been the responsible thing to do, after the company that had completed the appraisal, Place Services, had an appraisal it completed on behalf of North Essex authorities criticised by an Inspector. The Chairman noted that the Regulation 19 local plan consultation was purely an opportunity to make representations. Comments submitted would not be responded to by the Council, but instead would be sent to the Inspector.

The Planning Policy Team Leader gave a summary of the report. He said the updated sustainability appraisal would not require the Council to relook at the homes and jobs forecast or to produce a new evidence base. The appraisal would examine the existing evidence. If the appraisal did identify that the Council's current strategy was appropriate, it would be able to be sent out for representations without another consultation on the local plan before it was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by 24 January. AECOM, which was working on the Council's updated sustainability appraisal, had said the appraisal could be completed before the plan was programmed for submission.. In response to a member question, the Planning Policy Team Leader said he would request a project plan from AECOM.

In response to a Member question, the Director – Public Services said it was part of the Council's processes for officers to undertake testing and strengthening of the evidence base to support its examination once Council had passed the resolution to approve the submission of the local plan.

The Chairman said that officers had asked for a more fundamental, rather than light-touch, update of the sustainability appraisal. This was identified as a modification of option 3 in the report.

In response to a Member question, the Director – Public Services said officers would seek legal advice as to whether it would be appropriate to release counsel's opinion on approaches to strengthening of the sustainability appraisal.

Members noted that the Council did not start off with an overall vision of how the local plan would look, and instead took an approach of seeking out various ideas for where development would take place. This was something that the North Essex Garden Communities group had received criticism from the Inspector for.

The Director – Public Services said his interpretation of the AECOM report was that it said that the regulation 19 sustainability appraisal report had been considered separately from the quantum of development and the distribution of development. However, while the report gave that impression, in each iteration of the plan, the quantum of development changed and alongside this the

development strategy was reviewed each time. His view was that the problem lay in the adequacy of the explanation.

Councillor Ranger noted that 'consultation' had been wrongly used in the paragraph on option 3 of AECOM's report, on page 86 of the agenda document. The Director – Public Services confirmed this should instead say 'representation'.

In response to a member question, the Director – Public Services said that now the Stansted Airport planning application had been approved by the Planning Committee, the Inspector examining the submitted plan would need to decide whether the plan should be modified to reflect the council's new position on the limits to airport activity.

The Chairman confirmed the working group would see the updated sustainability appraisal.

*K McDonald, F Wilkinson and D Hall spoke on this item. Copies of their statements are appended to these minutes.*

The meeting finished 18.45.

PP30

## **ACTION POINTS**

PP27	Remove the question mark next to parking standards on Page 16 of the agenda pack.
PP27	Consider not using the Essex Design Guide in relation to parking standards in the DPDs.
PP27	Ensure much of the engagement with the community takes place face to face, with a means of logging all ideas raised.
PP27	Include space standards for dwellings in the Development Plan Documents.
PP28	Include within the SCI more information on DPDs and their important role in the consultation on garden communities.
PP28	Include within the SCI a point about the need for engagement with town and parish councils on s106 agreements before a decision has been made.
PP29	Request a project plan from AECOM regarding their work on the updated sustainability appraisal.
PP29	Subject to legal advice, circulate counsel's opinion relating the update of the sustainability appraisal.
PP29	Circulate the updated appraisal to PPWG.

