

ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**MINUTES – 13th June 2019****ATTENDEES**

<p>Graham Thomas – Chairman Ian Butt (Castle Point BC) Christine Lyons (Basildon BC) Richard Greaves (ECC) Nigel Richardson (Epping Forest DC) Karen Syrett (Colchester BC) Gordon Glenday (Uttlesford DC) Jeremy Potter (Chelmsford CC) Paul MacBride - (Harlow DC) Graham Norse – (Tendring DC) Phil Drane – (Brentwood BC) Amanda Parrott – (Basildon BC) Nigel Richardson (Epping Forest DC) Alethea Evans ECC</p>	<p>Guests: Brian Horton - SELEP (Housing Lead) Jon Wilson - Essex - Police & Fire Consultant Leigh Norris - Essex Police</p>
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	Agenda item	Actions
1.	Introductions & Apologies Apologies, Peter Geraghty, Andy Millard, Ian Vipond. Emma Goodings, Catherine Bicknell and Mark Curle,	
2.	Minutes and Matters Arising from previous meeting Graham noted the launch of the Quality Review Panel. Attendees in the room commented that it was brilliant. Christine, Jeremy and Paul spoke about their anticipation of the improved place-making that this will bring. Jeremy noted that they have met with Sport England and they have noted their interest in using it as their own scheme to accredit developments with the Livewell brand that is being developed with the help of public health colleagues. GT asked that this item be tabled for discussion at the next Planning Portfolio Holders meeting.	Jeremy
3.	Notice of AOB:	
4.	Essex Police and Fire Service – Engagement with the Planning Process Leigh and Jon talked to a PowerPoint presentation which outlined what the three emergency services are aiming to do to be better engaged to help shape and influence the new developments that are being progressed through the planning process in Essex. Leigh is leading a project which will report into Chief Officers at the end of July. A joint letter from the three emergency services has since been sent to all of the Essex local authority CEOs. One of the key aspects of work for the Emergency Services is to determine how much additional demand they will need to address from the scale of 180,000 - 250,000 new homes being planned for and the 300,000-350,000 population increase. How does this align to current/future demand and the long-term strategic response? They explained the emergency services have had a very mixed level of ability/capacity to engaging with the growth agenda in recent years, with limited involvement with the police and even less with the fire service neither of which	

	<p>have really engaged at the strategic level. Estates planning for the emergency services is changing, both finance driven, and also community needs driven, therefore the types of physical facilities is changing also with smaller shared spaces required with secure hubs, good WIFI in central locations, and in the new Garden Communities, which is different to the large more centralised facilities the emergency services have used to date.</p> <p>Local Authorities need the right contact to liaise with the emergency services- for local plan purposes, master plan stages and the pre app ad planning application process.</p> <p>Ian invited Leigh and Jon to one of the next South Essex Project Delivery Board meetings share the requirements and kick start early engagement with the South Essex local authorities.</p> <p>Paul emphasised the need for the emergency service to establish some key principles for planning officers to apply.</p> <p>Amanda asked if the police/fire service had mapped all the areas were the new growth is planned across Essex, as contained with the Local Plans.</p> <p>Jeremy challenged Leigh to consider what resources are available to engage from the emergency services because with so much growth and development occurring this is likely to be a challenge for the emergency services to keep-up. This challenge was accepted and would be looked at.</p> <p>ACTION: It was agreed that the three Emergency Services need to articulate/align behind a strategy and establish core principles for their services which can be used by local authorities and developers. This may need to respond to geography/development scale across different sectors of Essex. This would be a useful form of evidence to influence new developments</p> <p>ACTION: In order to help with this work Ian Butt, Christine Lyons and Paul MacBride agreed to work with Leigh. Jon and emergency service colleagues on a Task and Finish basis to help move this work forward.</p> <p>ACTION: Alethea to incorporate a few paragraphs into the revised ECC Developers Contribution Guidance. And to share Essex wide growth planned in map format - allocations (housing and employment etc) and infrastructure.</p> <p>Action: Brian Horton offered Leigh to attend the next Essex Developers group (details to be exchanged).</p>	<p>Ian Butt</p> <p>Leigh Norris</p> <p>Ian Christine Paul</p> <p>Alethea</p> <p>Brian</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>EPOA Housing Delivery Test (HDT) - Task & Finish workstream - feedback</p> <p>How can we influence MHCLG? And what are our practical outputs?</p> <p>Jeremy updated colleagues on the HDT task and finish team works and outlined some of the early thinking on the serious unintended consequences, including providing a perverse incentive for local authorities not to produce Local Plans.</p> <p>One of the key things we are looking to do early on is to engage with MHCLG and the Cabinet Office if required, which is planned to occur and after next sub group meeting (1st July). The threat to Plan led development needs to be clearly outlined and a mechanism to prevent this blunt instrument bringing forward unintended consequences.</p> <p>He explained that the HDT is not sophisticated to differentiate between the different types of organisations that operate within the development market to secure permissions. Within our area we know that in addition to house builders we have land promoters, and those agents/consultants who operate to simply secure planning permissions. It is within these none house builder organisations that we see sites come forward more slowly, and often it is in these situations</p>	

	<p>where the required developer funded infrastructure and affordable housing is less likely to be delivered. Hence research is needed to build-up a much better picture on the delivery rates and the performance of the different stakeholders and organisations.</p> <p>Any communications have with MHCLG will need to be set within the context of being pro-growth and development, and therefore we need to be alive to the linkages with developers and quality agenda in Essex. And the research we undertake will help make the conversations we have with MHCLG much more meaningful.</p> <p>Any EPOA letter must offer solutions: for example, if an authority has an up to date Local Plan it ought to be allowed to be allowed to proceed to deliver for 3 to 5 years regardless of HDT performance. The local authority research will build - up a record on the local developer/promoter activity- as a mechanism to identify those who are land banking etc, and therefore not delivering, or not delivering at the rate they themselves indicated. We will also be able to contrast this with those house builders with a good track record of delivery. Such information could become important at Local Plan examinations planning appeals and planning committees.</p> <p>We need to understand and work with MHCLG to develop sanctions for local authorities to hold over the poor performers? A number of initial ideas are being considered and can be tested with MHCLG.</p> <p>How does the HDT work within a greenbelt local authority? Greenbelt policy currently trumps HDT. It will be interesting to see if, or how, this changes.</p> <p>ACTION: Brian explained the Kent Chief Planners also have the same concerns, and he offered to share the messages finding from across the South East.</p> <p>ACTION: It was also agreed that Homes England to be approached to engaged with the Task and Finish Groups HDT considerations, perhaps at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: Alethea confirmed that Beth Harris who is supporting the HDT would send round a request for help on the build-out rate research.</p>	<p>Jeremy Potter/Brian Horton</p> <p>Jeremy Alethea</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>EPOA Training and Development Update</p> <p>Christine introduced and reported good news on the apprenticeship Level 7 which is a Master’s degree, being offered by several Universities. Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) will now be running an RTP1 accreditation apprenticeship degree for applicants from September 2019.</p> <p>Christine explained she is also working on behalf of EPOA with ARU and other universities in England to develop an offering for planning training from A Levels through to degree level (levels 3 to 6) .</p> <p>Richard asked in relation to planning technicians and those working without a planning degree if we could map out the number of such posts across the local authorities in Essex with a focus on vacant positions to help demonstrate the level 3-6 demand for ARU and other universities to provide bespoke planning training for.</p> <p>ACTION: All asked to confirm to Christine what level they would be interested in, and what types of training are people interested in.</p> <p>ACTION: A draft of the what was the ARU planning training programme for 2019/20 will be presented to the next EPOA meeting.</p>	<p>All to inform Christine</p> <p>Lewis Herbert</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Planning and Health update HIA and Livewell</p> <p>Laura explained that the revised EPOA Health Impact Guidance has been</p>	

	<p>additional layers of charging. He encouraged a simple approach, which could be revised when more data is available. The risk with over complicating the process is that inertia may set in with permissions/delivery threatened.</p> <p>ACTION: All authorities encouraged to adopt the Strategy asap.</p> <p>ACTION: the new legal advice will be considered by the authorities who have commissioned it. And shared with the remainder of the authorities asap.</p> <p>Implementation seems to be the sticking point collectively. Graham urged joined up working and relationships to keep things moving on this issue. He proposed a Chief Officers meeting to support high level decision making on the project and allow the officer steering group to continue with their good work.</p> <p>ACTION: Graham to offer to chair a Chief Officers meeting 9am – 10.30 on 26 June am. Hosted at CCC.</p> <p>ACTION: Chair of EPOA to email chair of RAMS steering group to offer thanks for their work and confirm that an EPOA group will meet on 26 June to address the legal issues, to allow their detailed work to continue.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Ian Butt</p> <p>Graham</p> <p>Graham</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Elections - changes and implications - Round -up</p> <p>Epping: predominantly remain conservative led</p> <p>Basildon: Coalition led. Local Plan submitted, and no intention expressed to redirect this.</p> <p>Colchester: Changes to cabinet and within groups, but not too much. Local Plan unaffected.</p> <p>Brentwood: retain conservative majority, but reduced control. Opposition have more teeth. New leader in place, keen but plenty to learn and work on.</p> <p>Uttlesford: Residents for Uttlesford group took control of council, on a manifesto of removing Local Plan and against the Stansted airport development. Inspector has written to new leader to understand the Council’s position on the Local Plan. Hearings due to start in July. A “green – issues” agenda is the new position.</p> <p>Tendring: Reduction in total number of elected members. Conservatives lost a lot of seats, and the council now in no overall control, with independents and UKIP propping-up conservatives.</p> <p>Chelmsford: Now controlled by Lib Dems, as conservatives lost 30 seats. Many new members, and very keen. Unlikely to impact on Local Plan</p> <p>Harlow: Labour retain control.</p> <p>Castle Point: Conservatives lost seats but remain in control.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Planning Portfolio Holders agenda – 25 June</p> <p>Reiterate in briefings that its is more of a sharing of experience and a common challenge.</p> <p>TOR at the top of the agenda- to confirm role and aims of grouping.</p> <p>ACTION: AE to share attendees confirmed and invited. Officers to confirm any additional invitees as necessary.</p>	<p>Alethea</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Environment Agency – briefing note (circulated)</p> <p>Action: AE to confirm to Kat at the EA that Ian has confirmed the role of the South Essex grouping – who will take this issue forward in the JSP.</p>	<p>Alethea</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>Graham Bloomer, Director of Planning at Harlow has retired. EPOA members expressed their thanks for his work with EPOA over his career and wished him well in his retirement.</p> <p>ACTION: To invite Mark, chair of Essex Developers Group to another EPOA</p>	<p>Graham to</p>

	meeting, as he was unable to attend – perhaps Decembers meeting to align with our HDT work.	invite Mark
	<u>Date Next EPOA meetings 2019/20</u> <i>12 September, 5 December 2019, and 19 March 2020</i>	