


ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 March 2013 9:30am – 1:00pm**
AT THE BRAINTREE DISCOVERY CENTRE

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| PRESENT: Catherine Bicknell (Tendring) Paul Calder (ECC) Jennifer Candler (Brentwood) David Coleman (Maldon) Dianne Cooper (Harlow) Jonathan Galton (Climate Consulting) Emma Goodings (Braintree) Chris Lamb (KAC) Roy Lewis (Essex) | Elizabeth Moon (ECC) Leigh Nicolson (Thurrock) Jeremy Potter (Chelmsford) John de Wilton Preston (Epping) Steve Rogers (Castle Point) Graham Seward (NHS Mid Essex ECC) Shaun Scrutton (Rochford) Karen Syrett (Colchester) Andrew Taylor (Uttlesford) |
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| | Attention was drawn to the fire exits and location of toilets at the request of the Centre Manager | |
| 1. | Apologies Paul Anderson (S Essex PCT) Andrew Cook (ECC) Eleanor Dash (Braintree) David Green (Chelmsford) Gary Guiver (Tendring) Keith Holmes (Chelmsford) Derek Lawrence (Maldon) Keith Lawson (ECC) Andy Millard (Thurrock) Jenny Ruder (ECC) Clive Simpson (Basildon) and Ian Vipond (Colchester) | |
| 2. | Notice of AOB Reminder re ARU training sessions. | |
| 3. | Minutes of meeting of 13 December 2012 and Action list, and matters arising Action List: All completed, except that; SELEP agenda/liaison was required for next meeting. Duty to cooperate; not clear if Government were to give advise, what PAS could do and therefore Shaun Scrutton had not progressed a separate protocol. It was noted that the ECEA agenda for today contained an item re the duty. Corrections: None. Matters arising: None not covered as items on this agenda. | |

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| <p>4.</p> | <p>County Matters Guidance</p> <p>Paul Calder of ECC reminded those present that ECC had produced guidance on this a few years ago, and that he had been tasked with updating it. Paul had hoped to have been able to table an amended version at today's meeting as EPOA had been involved in helping to agree the previous version; however that was not yet ready as he was awaiting input from the Environment Agency. It was agreed that the amended document would be put instead to the next DC/DM and Policy Forums, and then to the next meeting of EPOA for consideration.</p> <p>Paul went on to ask for information from colleagues about what checks for policy compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework were being undertaken; ECC did not want to be reporting on Local Plan policies within their reports to Committee if those policies were now being taken by the Borough/City/District Councils as being non compliant or of little or no weight. It was agreed that a schedule which was being used by the Policy Forum would have an extra columns added to capture what the various Councils were doing.</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>Planning and Public Health</p> <p>Graham Seward attended in place of Paul Anderson and gave a short presentation, (copy attached) he then sought feedback about Health Improvement Assessments</p>  <p>2013_03_13_Public Health & Planning.ppt</p> <p>Epping</p> <p>Indicated their case load in recent times had few cases where an HIA would have been justified, and that many applications would not be relevant for this assessment. It was understood that some transport developments might justify such assessment. However, if that gave a negative view, that the Local Strategic Partnership had held a successful health summit and that Waltham Abbey displayed the dilemmas (it has lower than expected life expectancy and a sometimes poor health record, but that it sat close to many free facilities such as the Forest, and the Regional Park).</p> <p>Castle Point</p> <p>Recognised similar position to Epping. Had interesting relations with Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and population growth had interesting impacts (the Castle Point population is tending to age, but to stay in the same properties, and this does raise issues about providing that population with increasing health services; however, this would not tend to be revealed in HIAs associated with planning applications.)</p> <p>Rochford</p> <p>Had consulted Health bodies for some time a while ago without eliciting responses, until it was realised that section 106 contributions might be requested to assist health provision. Would appreciate understanding who exactly to consult after 1 April.</p> <p>Subsequent answer to this is me-pct.planning@nhs.net</p> |

Brentwood

Recognised that these assessments were at a strategic level, but that they raised general issues. Considered there was a need for specific guidance.

Harlow

Recognised that they were a new town, and hence might be different; raised issues at a strategic level. They had out of date but centrally located health centres in each of the neighbourhoods; there were questions about merging some of these. The Gilden Way development was providing a financial contribution, whereas New Hall developers had opted to provide a building. This was more than a physical infrastructure issue. Dianne referred to the outer circles on the one slide in Graham's presentation.

There was then a discussion about the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Graham agreed to forward the up to date locality profiles. For example Braintree's top issues were; hip fractures, road accidents and educational attainment.

Uttlesford

Consider this is not a Development Management matter but is a Policy matter. Getting a definite answer is difficult. They are using a lifetime neighbourhoods approach, seeking for services to be within walkable distances.

Essex

Roy Lewis explained that the County were doing work with an outcome focus. They were looking to see specific DM policies and to access external funding.

Thurrock

They looked to involve teams in the same meeting. They had looked at the issue of takeaways near schools and at Supplementary Planning Guidance on this similar to what had been done in Barking & Dagenham.

Chelmsford

Wanted the CCG contact for both Development Management issues and that for Community Infrastructure Levy) They had had different views back on these two areas in the past which were not always consistent.

Maldon

Were concerned that there was an inconsistent message and that there were deficits to address.

Consultation from 1/4/13


Graham explained the intention to have a single e-mail from NHSPopCo.

He has provided links to the locality profiles;

<http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/grouppage.aspx?groupid=19>

and to the outcomes framework;

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_132559.pdf

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| 6. | <p>EPOA Budget</p> <p>Roy Lewis reported for Andrew Cook. He understood that expenditure was showing a slight excess over income, but did not understand if all subscriptions had been received yet.</p> | |
| 7. | <p>Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) update</p> <p>Andrew Taylor explained that the third GTAA for Essex was now at the tender stage. He reminded those present that there was a sum of £51k in the separate budget for this, although he was conscious that the GTAA for Basildon had a tender price of £40k so there may be a need to seek further contributions to achieve this piece of work. Of course by having pooled resources, and by having a consistent approach across the County, this had been an efficient method of procurement of this work to date.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>Website Update</p> <p>Andrew Taylor explained that Uttlesford were in the process of moving the hosting of the EPOA website to their website, and that this was making good progress.</p> | |
| 9. | <p>Design Reviews</p> <p>Elizabeth Moon presented an update on Design Reviews together with Chris Lamb of the Kent Architecture Centre (KAC). Liz started by a reminder that these exercises used to be provided by ECC free of charge, and that had developed to involve colleagues from Hertfordshire which had been presented to EPOA a couple of years ago. There had also been occasions where a scheme may have had such an exercise undertaken under the national arrangements involving CABE/Design Council, but these arrangements were also changing, even though the NPPF emphasised good design.</p> <p>Chris explained a little of the more local approach which KAC used in Kent, and which Shape East had similarly used in the then Eastern Region. The KAC design reviews cost between £4k and £7K per day, which was paid for by the promoter of the scheme, but was routed through the relevant Local Planning Authority. The Panels involve drawing from a pool of design experts and are generally well received. The key issue for some participants was whether some design promoters were up to this type of evaluation of their schemes.</p> <p>Chris would welcome feedback, and that he will contact EPOA members to talk through their design review needs to develop the right solution. Presentation attached.</p> <p> EPOA presentation_March_</p> | |
| 10. | <p>Climate Change. Community Energy Funds.</p> <p>Jonathan Galton gave a verbal presentation in which he explained that he was in dialogue with DM and Policy Planners and Building Control Surveyors at present.</p> <p>He reminded those present that Part L of the Building Regulations had</p> | |

gradually reducing thresholds up to 2016, and that there was a zero carbon hub at the DCLG. There were two parts to the definition; a CO2 cap and carbon compliance including the use of renewable energy. Two approaches existed; there could be more provision “on site” or there could be payments made into a fund (“offsetting”). This was not considering provision of woodlands or carbon credits, but retrofitting of measures to the existing building stock.

There were two delivery options; 1/. A Local Authority defined list either in a County Group or using a third party. 2/. The Local Authority do not define a list, but allow a third party, with greater freedoms, and who perhaps do not come from the same locality to make such arrangements.

Jonathan encouraged further dialogue with him and drew attention to an event in Ipswich on 25 April.

Paul Calder drew out that Habitat offsetting has used a similar model. See previous EPOA minutes. Andrew Taylor reflected that 2016 was going to be a challenge for Planning and Building Control and whether the NPPF would be revised to make clear which of the functions was seen to be at the forefront.

11. Local Plan Progress and Duty to Co-operate

John Preston commenced the discussion by indicating that in the time available today he was not proposing to spend as much time on this as had been given to the subject at the last two meetings. Indeed it was clear that there was a considerable understanding about the importance of these issues, but that the EPOA Policy Forum was looking at the matters in detail and on a regular basis. It was agreed therefore that the efforts of the Policy Forum were to continue, but that main EPOA would in future concentrate on a more strategic level discussion. The Policy Forum had developed a spreadsheet which was available with their minutes. Latest version attached.



Final EPOA Plan
Preparation Schedule

The discussion then turned to pick up that ECEA were meeting today and that their agenda had an item on the duty to co-operate, and they were going to be asking EPOA to conduct some substantial work. That does beg a question about whether the agenda/minutes of ECEA are being seen by EPOA and vice versa. The request from ECEA will be circulated.

At a high strategic level attention was drawn to the upcoming meeting at the Greater London Authority, and that in efficiently discharging the duty that it was prudent to build on existing arrangements/groups; examples being Enfield Essex Hertfordshire Border Liaison Group, the North London Strategic Alliance, and the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium. In addition it was likely that topic groups were helpful such as that emerging re Crossrail 2.

Thames Gateway South Essex was another example of a long standing grouping which could be used rather than making brand new arrangements, thereby avoiding this becoming even more of a growth industry.

Maldon had conducted three meetings by area, but with themes. They drew attention to the particular difficulty of progressing emerging plans given the degree of interpretation of NPPF requirements that is required. They are

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| | <p>seeking clarification on both requirements for objectively assessed needs for housing and on duty to co-operate. They have taken legal advice from Counsel and have met with the Planning Minister</p> <p>Everyone was conscious of Planning Inspectors emphasising that the duty led to actions or outcomes not merely the holding of pleasant meetings.</p> | |
| 12. | <p>Co-operation with SELEP</p> <p>Steve Rogers had endeavoured to get a senior SELEP officer to the meeting and hoped to achieve that for the next meeting. He drew out that the SELEP Board were due to meet on 15 March, and that key points on the agenda for that meeting concerned;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the progress with the Enterprise Zones at Harlow and at Sandwich. • Investment decisions including the Growing places fund • South East Growth Strategy – which will steer away from local matters such as housing and planning, and spatial planning matters. • Skills. The mismatch between what is necessary in contrast with what is being provided. The suggestions in the Essex Deal were being recommended. • An update on Coastal communities work. <p>Attention was drawn to a DFT consultation on the strategic road network.</p> | |
| 13. | <p>Essex ICS and Deal for Growth</p> <p>Steve understood that the ICS was continuing with a refresh of its projects discussed at its meeting on 5 March.</p> <p>On Deal for Growth it appeared that the Government was not making any comment about the Essex bid although it had approved a bid from Southend-on Sea.</p> | |
| 14. | <p>Population projections work</p> <p>Roy Lewis provided a further update on the work that was being undertaken by Edge Analytics.</p> <p>The Essex County Council Overview and Scrutiny had considered the work to date positively when they had considered it recently.</p> <p>It was recognised that the funds which EPOA had directed to this work were now almost exhausted and that keeping the model for Essex plus up to date would involve expenditure. Those costs would involve something in the order of £390 pa to host, or £1400 to host and update</p> <p>Epping Forest, Harlow and Heart of Essex were each contemplating specific pieces of work for their respective areas on this modelling already.</p> <p>Attention was drawn to an RTP1 workshop event at Ely Maltings on 2 May which was on the topic of population.</p> | |
| 15. | <p>Planning Update</p> <p>John briefly mentioned the work which Paul MacBride had undertaken after the last meeting on the residential permitted development consultation to ensure an EPOA view was given. However,. The timescales for many of these consultations were a challenge for each individual authority, never</p> | |

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| | mind attempting to collate/combine those into an EPOA response. Thus an EPOA response was probably going to be a rarity. | |
| 16. | Planning Policy Forum Minutes of meeting of 12th February were noted. | |
| 17. | Development Control Forum Minutes of meeting of 11th January were noted. | |
| 18. | AOB There was simply a reminder to take the benefit of the ARU training as EPOA funded this. | |
| 19. | Items for Future meetings SELEP Future ARU training programme and feedback on last year's programme. | |
| 20. | Date of Next Meeting The next meeting would take place on 13 June 2013 at 9:30am at the Discovery Centre Braintree The meeting closed at 13:00 | |