

ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24th November 2011 9:30am – 12:30pm**
AT THE BRAINTREE DISCOVERY CENTRE

PRESENT: Jennifer Candler, Maldon Dianne Cooper, Harlow Nigel Hebden, Thurrock Dev Corp Roy Leavitt, ECC Steve Rogers, Castle Point Leigh Nicholson, Thurrock	John de Wilton Preston, Epping Forest Shaun Scrutton, Rochford Vincent Pearce, Colchester Andrew Taylor, Uttlesford Roy Lewis, ECC Eleanor Bash, Braintree
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	Attention was drawn to the fire exits and location of toilets at the request of the Centre Manager	
1.	Apologies Keith Lawson; Andy Millard; Pat Amos; Ian Vipond; Clive Simpson	
2.	Notice of AOB Dale Farm Roy Leavitt GTAA Roy Leavitt EPOA Web Site Dianne Cooper	
3.	Minutes of meeting 15th September 2011, and Action List	
3.1	Corrections Item 5 – correct “Searing” to “Fearing” Item 8 – 2 nd para correct “Improved” to “Involved” 6 th para correct “Comments from” to “Comments to” Item 13.2 – correct “Barry Lewis” to “Barry Shaw” Otherwise the Minutes and Action List were agreed.	
3.2	Matters Arising Steve Rogers advised that Graham Seward apologised for not being able to attend and update EPOA regarding the Essex Health Plan, due to ongoing restructuring. Village Green – Roy Leavitt advised that Essex CC had received a significant number of applications. This has resulted in a prioritisation of casework to bring forward urgent cases. RCCE Guidance – Steve Rogers reminded colleagues of the request from the RCCE to comment on this, and to note the presentation to the Planning Policy Forum on 8:12:11.	

	POS – Dianne Cooper will feed back comments to POS	
4.	<p>Essex Population Model:- Roy Lewis introduced this item. He reminded EPOA of the purpose of the project, the selection of consultants, the methodology for the study and the current position.</p> <p>Comments on Phases 1 and 2 were requested by 30.11.11. Phases 3 and 4 would be carried out in Spring and Summer 2012, with the potential for new mid – year estimates to be included, as well as two additional scenarios per authority.</p> <p>Discussion centred on the dissemination of the information and background data. The commercial value of the work was noted, as well as the cost to EPOA, and by direct link, local authorities, of the project. Yet it would also be necessary to publish the information as background evidence to support any policy work, to allow it to be scrutinized.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Project Steering Group should sign off Phases 1 and 2 as complete after the 30:11:11 deadlines and that it should consider sales publicity for the work in 2012, with appropriate pricing. A foreword from the EPOA Chairman would be included in the document. Jennifer Candler will also circulate work regarding the Heart of Essex.</p> <p>At this stage it was agreed that the information and background data could be used by participating authorities in their planning policy work, but with discretion, and mindful of its commercial value.</p>	
5.	<p>Localism Act:-</p> <p>Steve Rogers introduced this item, and reviewed the main elements of the Act with planning significance, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Schemes (to be agreed locally after 15:1:12) • Neighbourhood Plans • Assets of Community Value • Abolition of regional spatial strategies (anticipated for April 2012) • Developers duty to consult • Amended Enforcement Powers • Community Infrastructure Levy Reforms. <p>During discussion, it was noted that consultants had been actively approaching parishes, seeking commissions for neighbourhood planning work. The provision for passing down any European sanctions to local authorities were noted, as were provisions regarding Air Quality Management.</p>	
6.	<p>Regulatory Agreement Roy Lewis reported on the joint work between Essex CC, Brentwood and Braintree on regulatory controls. This included environmental health, as well as planning enforcement, and trading standards.</p> <p>Discussion regarding the advantages and disbenefits of this degree of co-operation took place, and it was agreed to monitor the outcome of the project.</p>	

7.	<p>EPOA Budget</p> <p>Roy Leavitt explained that subscriptions were necessary for 2011/12, and would also be required for 2012/13, in order to continue with successful projects such as training and bespoke items of work.</p> <p>Discussion took place concerning funding available for gypsy and traveller work, and it was agreed that this should be raised with EHO colleagues, perhaps at a joint meeting in the spring 2012.</p>	
8.	<p>Dale Farm</p> <p>Roy Leavitt presented an update on this item. He had been involved in the recent site clearance project as an Essex County Council Partner, had first hand experience of the preparations for, and execution of court warrants to clear the unlawful site.</p> <p>He noted as a key issue partnership working with all relevant statutory agencies. The search for alternative locations had also been exhaustive. A considerable amount of work had been done with the gypsy and traveller community at the site in terms of understanding family personal needs.</p> <p>The arrangements for controlling operations were described, and the role of Essex CC as a partner.</p> <p>The key planning lessons learned were the importance of accurate site information and early intervention where justified.</p>	
9.	<p>Planning Policy Forum</p> <p>The next meeting of the Planning Policy Forum would take place at County Hall on 8:12:11. Matters to be discussed included Neighbourhood Plans (including a presentation from Jan Cole of RCCE) Essex Broadband and Planning reforms.</p>	
10.	<p>Development Control Forum</p> <p>The minutes of the Development Control Forum of 7th October 2011 were noted with thanks.</p>	
11.	<p>Any other Business</p> <p>11.1 Essex Gypsy & Traveller Unit – Roy Leavitt described proposals to create a dedicated G&T Unit at Essex CC, to be responsible for monitoring and controlling encampments, to which districts would be asked to contribute. It was based on a successful model operating in Northamptonshire, where considerable success had been observed in controlling what had been a significant problem.</p> <p>It was noted that presentations to all districts were being undertaken, and Roy Leavitt agreed to circulate the papers.</p> <p>11.2 Jennifer Candler advised of Planning Enforcement Training at Maldon on 24:1:12.</p> <p>11.3 Diane Cooper asked if the EPOA website could be checked and updated.</p> <p>11.4 It was noted that Essex County Council was considering a review of the Essex</p>	

<p>11.5</p> <p>11..6</p> <p>11.7</p> <p>11.8</p>	<p>Design Guide.</p> <p>A Temporary Planner Post is available in Colchester if anyone with experience was seeking a 12 month contact.</p> <p>A part time Development Control Planning post will be available in Harlow.</p> <p>Houses in multiple occupation were proving to be a local difficulty in Harlow resulting in the consideration of an Article 4 direction.</p> <p>On a similar theme, a note was made of claim for withdrawn permitted development rights regarding car boot sales at Epping Forest.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Items for Future Meetings</p> <p>Not discussed</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p>Dates for future meetings</p> <p>Noted – Thursday 15th March 2012 at 9.30am Thursday 14th June 2012 at 9.30am Thursday 13th September 2012 at 9.30am Thursday 13th December 2012 at 9.30am</p> <p>Meeting Closed at 13:00</p>	