

Planning Policy Forum

**10:00 am, Tuesday, 3rd September 2013, Chelmsford Museum,
Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, CM2 9AQ**

NOTE OF MEETING**1. Introduction and Apologies**

Jeremy Potter (Chair)	Chelmsford CC
Laura Percy	Chelmsford CC
Alex Sadowsky	Chelmsford CC Intern
Hamish Barrell	Essex County Council
Kevin Fraser	Essex County Council
Emma Goodings	Braintree DC
Camilla James	Brentwood BC
Amanda Raffaelli	Castle Point BC
Laura Chase	Colchester BC
Chris Butcher	Epping Forest DC
Colin Endean	Harlow DC
Tim Parton	Marlow DC
Amy Roberts	Southend BC
Gary Guiver	Tendring DC
Richard Hatter	Thurrock BC
Hannah Hayden	Uttlesford DC

Apologies received from Paul McBride (Harlow), Ian White (Epping Forest), Melanie Jones (Uttlesford) and Sam Hollingsworth (Rochford) and Matthew Winslow (Basildon)

2. Housekeeping Matters

- Roy Lewis is retiring after 41 years at the County Council. He was thanked for his contributions over the years to EPOA. Kevin Fraser explained that Roy would be replaced in rotation at EPOA meetings by himself, Zhanine Oates and Matthew Jericho.
- Keith Holland from PINS is scheduled to attend November 12 meeting
- Health – Following his presentation to the Planning Policy Forum in May, Graham Seward is convening a group of NHS colleagues to meet in October to review EPOA Health Impact Assessment guidance.

Action:

Volunteers from EPOA are also welcome to the group reviewing HIA Assessments– please let Graham know via Jeremy Potter, who agreed to forward details on to the group

3. Duty to Co-operate

- The Essex Chief Executives Group has asked for an Essex-wide Duty to Co-operate framework. An EPOA Working Group meeting has been set up and met on 10 June and 22 July, chaired by Shaun Scrutton at Rochford. At the June meeting the main focus was to collate baseline info on plan preparation and SHMA production, and Jeremy Potter (JP) had circulated a questionnaire. This information was reported to the July meeting of the Working Group although further information will need to be sought

Actions:

- **JP will request further information on inputs to establish objectively assessed need.**
- **JP to circulate meeting notes from the two Duty to Co-operate meetings to Planning Policy Forum.**

Presentation by Tim Parton on Maldon Duty to Co-operate issues:

- Initial sieve covered wide range of issues, involved members and high level officers
- Important to have clear audit trail of meetings, issues identified and outcomes/actions
- Questionnaire circulated to all relevant bodies, 3 meetings with Heart of Essex, Thames Gateway and Haven Gateway authorities
- Initial lower housing target has been increased in response to feedback that surrounding authorities were unwilling to absorb unmet Maldon need
- Statements of Common Ground to be produced – Memoranda of Understanding too formal
- New round of meetings to be held on actual proposals in draft document – ongoing iterative process

Thurrock Duty to Co-operate presentation by Richard Hatter

- Key issues – importance of wider involvement in preparation of technical reports and evidence base
- Need to consult widely on issues of strategic importance – particularly important in Thurrock's case given its geographical position at the edge of Essex, adjacent to Greater London and Kent
- Formal statements will be expected on D2C issues with member sign-off

4. National Planning News

- **National Planning Practice Guidance**

Consolidated planning guidance is now available online, after initial difficulties.

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

The current guidelines are a 'Beta Version' subject to feedback until 9 Oct. on both form and content. The final version is expected later in the autumn. The guidelines are a material consideration in the decision making process.

It was noted that the guidance contained useful advice in two contentious areas of plan making– methodology for determining objectively assessed need and guidance on meeting Duty to Co-operate requirements

- **Fast Track system for major applications to be widened to include some major commercial projects**
- **New guidance documents**

On-shore wind turbines and solar farms

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-practice-guidance-for-renewable-energy>

Provides that the need for renewable energy does not automatically override environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities.

Guidance on onshore oil and gas (fracking and shale gas)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224238/Planning_practice_guidance_for_onshore_oil_and_gas.pdf Not considered to be particularly applicable to the geology in Essex yet.

- **Consultations**

Waste planning

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/updated-national-waste-planning-policy-planning-for-sustainable-waste-management>

Replacement to PPS10 – greater protection for Green Belt

Change of use flexibility

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/greater-flexibilities-for-change-of-use>

Housing Standards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/housing-standards-review-consultation>

5. EPOA New Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

- Work by consultants ORS ongoing – draft report expected in late September/Early October to be confirmed.

6. EPOA Demographic Study

- Roy Lewis had circulated proposal for 3 year contract with Edge Analytics for approval – 17 authorities have agreed in principle
- Project management will pass to the ECC Corporate team following Roy Lewis' retirement. Concerns were raised regarding the future of this work and the loss of demography expertise, which could be an issue if any changes to scenarios are required in the future.

7. Local Plan/LDF progress report

ECC Minerals Safeguarding

- Hamish Barrell highlighted the importance of Development Management taking minerals safeguarding into consideration on relevant planning applications.

Action:

- **JP to contact EPOA Development Management Forum to add minerals safeguarding to their agenda.**

Local Plan/LDF Progress Highlights

- Brentwood BC and Maldon DC both reported that they are currently out on consultation on versions of their Local Plans.
- Thurrock BC has submitted a Focused Review of their Core Strategy.
- Chelmsford CC is awaiting the Inspector's Report into the Examination of the Focused Review of its Core Strategy
- Amanda Raffaelli from Castle Point BC noted that the Government had dismissed an appeal on a 165 unit development at a site *land at Glebelands* in Castle Point. The Government considered that while Castle Point had not met its housing target, it could be expected to deal with this issue through the plan making process. Preservation of the Green Belt was felt to outweigh the need to provide housing. It was noted that this decision seems to be inconsistent with other decisions elsewhere allowing development in protected areas to meet housing need.

Action:

- **Colleagues were asked to provide more detailed updates by completing the on-going Plan Preparation Schedule, to be circulated with the meeting notes, and return to JP**

Date of next meeting – 12th November 2013