

Planning Policy Forum

**10.00 am on Tuesday 16 February 2016
Chelmsford Museum, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, CM2 9AQ**

MEETING NOTE**1. Introductions & Apologies**Present:

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Amanda Raffaelli (Chair) | <i>Basildon BC</i> | Sandra Scott | <i>Colchester BC</i> |
| Alethea Evans | <i>Essex CC</i> | Max Nicholls | <i>Chelmsford BC</i> |
| Kevin Fraser | <i>Essex CC</i> | Kevin Freeman | <i>Inner Circle Consulting</i> |
| Anne Clitheroe | <i>Castle Point BC</i> | Tessa Gooding | <i>Inner Circle Consulting</i> |
| Natalie Hayward | <i>Rochford DC</i> | Rebecca Roebuck | <i>Cambridgeshire County Council</i> |
| Paul MacBride | <i>Harlow DC</i> | Brian Whiteley | <i>Planning Aid</i> |
| Cathy Carpenter | <i>Braintree BC</i> | | |
| Zhanine Smith | <i>Essex CC</i> | | |

Apologies:

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|------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Richard Hatter | <i>Thurrock BC</i> | Claire Stuckey | <i>Chelmsford BC</i> |
| Lesley Stenhouse | <i>Essex CC</i> | Phil Drane | <i>Brentwood BC</i> |
| Amanda Thorn | <i>Epping Forest DC</i> | | |
| Laura Chase | <i>Colchester BC</i> | | |

2. Notes & Actions of the Last Meeting 24 November 2015

- Page 5 - Harlow - SHMA figure agreed by 4 Authorities taking part in SHMA. Now considering how to apportion it across the area, especially affordable housing, as there are difficulties in respect of affordable housing delivery

3. ECC Independent Living ProjectPresentation - Kevin Freeman - Inner Circle Consulting (ICC)

- ICC are working with ECC on the Independent Living Project.
- Have already had some engagement with LA's but not enough, especially with planners.
- Want to work with planners to integrate this project into Local Plans and policy, and have produced a draft booklet with some guidelines in, which they require some feedback on before rolling out to all LA's for formal feedback.
- Want to meet with each LA to discuss how this can be delivered in relation to both policy & physical site allocation, and what evidence needed to assist in defending appeals & making Local Plan policy robust.

- Have already got some consensus from LA Housing Officers about how to address some of the issues, and want to be able to achieve this with Planning Policy Officers also.
- ECC set out to look at housing provision for the over 55's, and want to have a planning framework in place which can accommodate this.
- Independent living is seen as various forms of extra care.
- A number of benefits have been identified including community, costs, health, older people are able to retain their independence.
- The aims are identified as providing an attractive, affordable range of tenures, with tailored access to care and support to individual households, and to reduce hospital admissions and the need for residential care accommodation.
- The Essex population growth between 2015-2029 (of 55+) expected to increase from 466,134 to 600,875. If this growth is pushed solely into residential care homes there will be significant pressures on costs and physical buildings/space. Estimate costs savings of £4,000 if people not placed in care homes. Estimate that 1,000 people living in the wrong type of accommodation.
- Planning Policy input expected to include:
 - Use class designation
 - Planning obligations
 - Site allocation
 - Local Plan policy
 - Design criteria (making places attractive & where people want to live)
- Will distribute draft to us and need districts to be partner to it.

Questions/Answers/Comments

- Housing need contained in SHMA's, Do these need to be tweaked further to take account of this particular need.
- Harlow context – New Town with aging population, joint SHMA, difficulties in delivering affordable housing, including specialist housing.
- Car parking, how is this going to be accommodated, Essex wide struggling with this.
- Scheme been developed in Chelmsford, which already has parking problems. Acknowledge that Independent Living Homes have more likelihood of occupants having access to cars.
- Projecting need, previously used interim 2011 population projections. We using 2012 projections, can this be addressed.
- PPG advising should be counting housing for elderly towards the overall housing need in plans. Should set out policy in Local Plan on how deal with this group.
- Need to have evidence to show why chosen specific methodology.
- Need to be aware of viability concerns. Government in state of flux, benefit changes stalling schemes, how care will be paid for.
- Basildon undertook some viability testing in relation to independent living and residential care provision, and it indicated that such provision only viable in Billericay, therefore it results in poor distribution.

- Need to remember there is still a need for residential care homes given that the gaining population is increasing. But there is an 'interim' period when those previously moved to residential care homes could be accommodated in alternative options.
- Need to ensure ECC use same methodologies that are applied in SHMA's.

4. East of England Forecasting Model

Presentation – Rebecca Roebuck – Cambridgeshire CC

- The East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) was originally commissioned by the Regional Assembly to inform the RSS.
- The regional monitoring group - East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) retained the model once the Regional Assembly closed.
- Since then the group has extended the geography that it covers, to include the LEP's that 'touch the boundary of LEPs within the East of England.
- Oxford Econometrics provided the forecasts for the last 3 years, now new contract with Cambridge Econometrics.
- The jobs led / economic led forecasts include 31 industry sectors and can run up to 2045.
- Looking to align jobs and homes.
- Assumptions are made when getting from job numbers to housing numbers, including economic activity (uses employment & unemployment rates only, not activity) and commuting rates (is proportionate rather than specific numbers.)
- 1 year contract £45,000 which the EELGA will match fund. Essex contribution would be £3,000. This will allow the model to be developed further to include London and the rest of the South East of England in the model.

Questions/Answers/Comments

- Commuting to London is key in Essex, is this taken into account, what is the London Plan doing.
- Understanding is that to date the economic and demographic models are not integrated. The GLA are working on trying to bring these together.
- If Edge already doing demographic modelling, do we need another model.
- Is the EEFM an unconstrained view? Yes
- Edge uses EEFM in 2 of its scenarios.
- Is open to challenge when 'drilled' down to district level – variable from year to year.
- There is an element of continuation of growth, but can go back and pick out why this has occurred if have both jobs and housing in the model.
- Will send Essex information to Essex, not the whole regions data to Essex
- Colchester/Braintree/Tendring have PBA doing SHMA and when used Experian data Braintree's figures were much higher than the others.
- Oxford use own assumptions on occupancy / dwelling ratio to calculate headship rates. Cambridge use assumptions relating to average household size which better reflects CLG headship rates.
- EEFM calculate jobs and population simultaneously.
- If you take the population directly from the EEFM then you have population and jobs that are consistent, and then apply the headship rates to this population to get household projections (both then based on 2012 figures).
- Rebecca to provide information on 2012 figures and what the implications are.

- Expecting 2014 forecasts in next few weeks. These will be supplied and would welcome feedback on draft forecasts, particularly if there are any spikes which we can explain.

5. Neighbourhood Planning & Planning Aid

Presentation – Brian Whiteley – Planning Aid

- Presentation slides provided.
- Overview provided of how the team of 3 is made up and the services they provide.
- Advice line seeing increase in calls from people wanting pre-application advice, as a result of not wanting to pay LA's for pre-application advice. Restrict calls to a maximum of 15 minutes.
- Between 2013 and 2015 had a contract to help neighbourhood plan groups.
- Previously volunteers were funded by Planning Aid, now groups will have to find these volunteers themselves.
- The East of England Region is getting busier in terms of contact with Planning Aid. Advise all LA's to have link & information on our websites.
- Some volunteers are providing critical friend advice, such as whether evidence or a plan is considered sound.
- If volunteers are not chartered, then other chartered members oversee their work.
- There are checks for conflicts of interest before volunteers assigned.
- We can contact Brian if we have neighbourhood plans come in.
- RTPi website, planning advice section has very good advice on neighbourhood planning.

6. Local Plan preparation: National News

- Harlow sitting on steering group looking at the review of the overarching principles of the Metropolitan Green Belt, which is sponsored by the GLA. The study will be completed by the end of March and is looking at first stage principle only at this stage.
- The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding (Register) Regulations 2016 and draft planning practice guidance came out on 4th February 2016. The Regs set out what the register should contain etc and the guidance explains how to take it into account in SHMA's. They come into force on 1st April 2016.
- No news on Local Plan panel review.
- The CAA is out to consultation on guidance relating to surface access to airports. It mainly focuses on buses & cars, with details about set down charges. The consultation closes in April.
- ONS are out to consultation on how they are going to achieve 90% cuts. It is looking at cuts to data supply sizes and household projections being every 3 years rather than 2 years. Want to know what are prioritised are.

7. Responding to National Consultations (NPPF & New Homes Bonus)

- ECC have drafted response to NPPF and once agreed will circulate. Highlights include:
 - Continually changing NPPF means constantly having to review evidence base, is making it very difficult for plan making.
 - Concerns around affordable housing.
 - Not just planning holding up delivery of housing, is developers as well.
 - Whole new settlements have longer lead in times, are they deliverable, particularly during plan period.
 - Starter homes on brownfield sites in rural areas not sustainable. Could also be in employment locations, which may not be suitable for housing, and could result in loss of employment land.
- Basildon still working on responses.
- Safeguarding employment land in a plan could open up site to be used for housing.
- Need to remember that Government want economic growth as well as housing.
- Harlow looking at concerns relating to affordable housing in their SHMA area. ORS looking at the implications. This may result in needing quick updates to SHMA's, otherwise developers will challenge.
- ECC finance department doing response to New Homes Bonus.
- Basildon's finance department also dealing with their response.

8. London & Rest of the South East Update – Amanda Parrott

- GLA in process of preparing new population projections, expected to be published in May.
- Are extending model to cover whole country. This will allow us to see their assumptions made about our area, and we could use in the long term.
- Following December summit want to improve joint working, and improving communication between members in Essex and the GLA. East of England LGA have £100,000 for technical work and for a co-ordinator, and a planning and infrastructure group will be set up to look into what work needs to be done.
- Unclear who to sit on panel.

9. Local Plan/LDF progress report

- Waste Plan approved by ECC Council 9th February 2016 for pre-submission consultation and engagement. Going to Southend's Council on 24th February 2016.
 - Plan and documents will be online, and an email will be sent to advise when available to view.
 - The LDS will be updated.
 - Expect to submit in June and examination in September.
- Brentwood out to consultation until 23rd March 2016.
- Basildon out to consultation until 24th March 2016.

- Colchester has 2 submission neighbourhood plans out to consultation, examinations expected March – May. Local Plan Preferred Options consultation expected June.
- Braintree expect consultation on Local Plan June-August and CIL late 2016.

10. Duty to Co-operate & Planning Compact

- ECC Commissioners talking about infrastructure plan. A brief has been written and out to tender for consultants.
- Need to make sure it covers strategic issues, so the districts can concentrate on local issues.
- Cross boundary matters need to be considered.
- Needs to be a living document to deal with changes, such as the Lower Thames Crossing.

11. Any other Business

- Harlow made representations to Crossrail 2 consultation about advantages of extended it out to Harlow – economic benefits and unlocking growth. In terms of spatial planning Harlow has clear existing transport links, green edges, cycleways that can be used.

Dates of Next Meetings: 24 May 2016
6 September 2016
22 November 2016