

ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

**Minutes of meeting held on 8th September 2016
at Hadleigh County Park**

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| <p>PRESENT: Andrew Cook - ECC (Chair) Natalie Hayward – Rochford DC Andy Millard – Thurrock DC Dianne Cooper - Harlow DC Graham Thomas - ECC Peter Dawson - ECC Laura Chase – Colchester BC Steve Rogers – Castle Point BC Amanda Parrott – Basildon BC Peter Geraghty – Southend BC Cathy Bicknall - TDC</p> | <p>Lisa White (minute taker)</p> <p>Guests: Jorn Peters Jason Fergus & Roy Warren</p> |
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| No. | Agenda item | Action |
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| 1. | <p>Introduction & Apologies: Introductions were made and the following apologies noted. Representatives were in attendance for Colchester & Rochford</p> <p>Ian Vipond – Colchester BC Shaun Scrutton – Rochford DC Matthew Winslow – Basildon DC David Lewis – Basildon DC Adrian Gascoyne – ECC David Green – Chelmsford CC Kenneth Bean – Epping Forest DC Nigel Richardson – Epping Forest DC Jeremy Potter – Chelmsford CC Emma Goodings – Braintree BC Phil Drane – Brentwood DC</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Notice of AOB: N/a</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting 9/06/16</p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record. To note Steve Rogers apologies for the meeting held in June</p> | |
| 4. | <p>Training Skills programme AC asked the group if they were happy with the proposed programme. DC noted there is not a dedicated session for Cabinet Members.</p> | |

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| | <p>SR- the assumption is the 8th March might be but need to get clarity. Requested the need to obtain feedback from the courses as the feedback received from last year's training sessions was negative.</p> <p>SR - also mentioned that he wanted to pass on his congratulations to Lewis and his team for making the programme work and scheduling the training sessions</p> <p>LW to contact Lewis to clarify if there is a Cabinet Members session</p> <p><i>Post note - Lewis has confirmed that the March session is suitable for members to attend.</i></p> | LW |
| 5. | <p>Local Plan Progress & Duty to Co-operate (report by exception only)</p> <p><u>Update from group</u></p> <p>SR – Castle Point submitted their local plan on the 25th August and Inspector David Smith was appointed on the same day. Informal indication would suggest they will have initial feedback by the end of September. St Albans submitted theirs some weeks earlier and have been asked to attend DtC Hearing sessions. .</p> <p>AC – waste plan examination booked for the end of September and will attend these sessions when diary permits.</p> <p>LC – Colchester are in consultation with the preferred options until 16 September. Part 1 of the plan, including Garden Communities, is being prepared jointly with Braintree and Tendring and will be examined separately from the Colchester-specific Part 2 of the plan.</p> <p>DC – proposed timetable set for Christmas period and currently re-assessing member's decisions. They are in support for growth in houses but not keen on some of the proposed sites, some sites need a revamp. A Member Duty to Co-operate meeting to be held the following week.</p> <p>AM – Options 1 & 2 are in consultation with very high level of context involved. Options 2 in consultation and outcome will be in November. The outcome of the decision will delay the timescale and stage 2 could be a bit harder.</p> <p>PG – the local plan document in 2010 was delayed for a number of reasons. The plan will go to Cabinet next week and work to consultation early November. The issue of car parking is part of the plan and the development of car parks in the town centre and future local development framework. Seeking views to get it adopted with a timetable to commence in the new year.</p> <p>Q – NH raised a question around the representations for housing policies and the recent judgements made, considering a 10 year mix of different policies.</p> <p>A – PG the general feeling is the members are not receiving the same questions?</p> <p>NH – if the plan is heading in the right direction we could be losing appeals. The current local government plan, issues, options workshops and different specific intentions to have something by the end of the year.</p> | |

AP- Still dealing with 21,000 representations, they have drafted a statement for consultation, still working to schedule and plan going to Cabinet on the 29th. 21 site allocations, 6 new sites and two existing sites. Challenging work with the Members – running workshops with members to assist in the approval process of the local plan.

GT – Reported on a recent Planning Officers Society and Planning Advisory Service meeting in Kent, where the clear indication was that Government still intend to penalise LPA's who have not made sufficient progress with their Local Plan. The expectation is that this will be addressed through a reduction in the amount of New Homes Bonus grant paid.

7. Essex Design Guide proposals



Essex Design Guide
2016- A charter for G

PD presented the attached paper and gave an outline on how they scoped the document based on the value of the challenge with complex and large schemes. GT – spoke about the Quality Panel and gained some insight within the Cambridgeshire context. Council members in Cambridgeshire expected the large and complex development proposals to proceed through the Quality Panel prior to proceeding as a planning application for determination. Councillors particularly in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council very much valued the independent views of the Quality Panel architects.

PD - spoke about scale of the document could become over time, hence the value of making this a web-based design guide document. This will prove to be more flexible and simpler to refine in future.

Q - SR – asked what is the composition of the Cambridge panel, who are the 9 members?


PD – consists of architects, planners, expert builders and private sector
If there is scrutiny of the developer, this will go to panel for discussion. The Quality Panel is a discretionary process, but there is a high expectation to deliver a good quality product. In Cambridgeshire members can be involved from the beginning and can follow a development proposal through the process.



Q - SR – how do we deal with the disparity of the parts of Essex and the relevant design influence? For example the building we are sitting in today, looking at the rural approaches, as compared to the mixed uses and the town centres.

PD – We need to be mindful of the different location, qualities and indeed land values in Essex. The Design Guide will need to be respectful of this variation. Equally, the work of the Quality Panel will need to be sensitive and able to respond appropriately to individual circumstances and situations. The Design Guide will be able to provide guidance around the principles of development and map the different areas within county.

Discussion

DC – concerned with the size of the document, will it be a bigger website and is there ability to enter more documents on the web base? DC went on to discuss the

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| | <p>difficulty trying to negotiate with the developer one of the reasons are the housing sites.</p> <p>PG – issues raised around parking. What are the standards that are being used and what is acceptable and what isn't.</p> <p>LC – the success of the design document relies on cultural change rather than formal adoption. Colchester adopted original design guide, but didn't formally adopt later version or Urban Place Supplement – referred to in policy as supplementary guidance.</p> <p>AC – looking at the characters of some parts of Essex, we need to see how the Essex design guide incorporates into the principal document instead of using several different documents. Looking at the amount of work districts have to carry out in the next 6 months and sticking to these scales.</p> <p>AM – consultation on the design guide, need to change perceptions of the work in Thurrock. Developers are keen to get to the table</p> <p>GT – one of the drivers behind The Quality Charter of Growth is achieve the understanding that Essex is open for business and growth, but this needs to be of a good quality, provide the correct level of infrastructure, and thereby are resistant to new development and further growth. The Quality Charter will help along with the other measures discussed help to address this anti-growth position in some areas.</p> <p>PG – Southend have their own design guide, this is a high quality production document. The local plan is updated and it's about getting the right balance between the county as a whole with most of the principles in mind. Re property values at what point do quality panels take place. Is it early intervention and the management to achieve that process.</p> <p>Key issues are the calibre of the panel and the approach of the developers.</p> <p>AC – requested to put this item as a regular standing item.</p> |
| <p>6.</p> | <p>London Plan update – guest speaker Jorn Peters</p> <p> London Plan update presentation.pdf</p> <p>JP presented the London Plan update and spoke about the major applications and planning frameworks. He also highlighted the workshops they are holding and invitations will be sent to the local authority planning officers.</p> <p><u>Questions raised.</u></p> <p>Q AM – how will that fit into the wider pieces of work for example Thames gateway. The collaboration of work, the structures already in place and on-going projects, will this plan compliment the plan.</p> <p>Q AP - How have you managed to keep the list to a capacity of 127 and this is not incorporating point number 6 and considering the list of schemes, the relationship between Essex and London.</p> <p>A JP – We need to identify the more important structure issues. Need to be part of the same mix in other areas. We arrived at this list due the input of East of England, IGA and waiting for more substantial input from East.</p> <p>GT – The East of England team are attending the meeting this week</p> <p>SR – Discussion held on “green belt “areas, how we meet the housing needs without impinging on the green belt, the same problems are faced here in Essex. Unless we collectively agree to look at some of these areas. Is there an appetite to</p> |

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| | <p>consider developing this Green Belt area in London? JP – there is currently no option to build on the green belt areas, the Mayors manifesto is to stay away from the green belt.</p> <p>Q - DC – will the Mayor reject the build on green belt? JP – this is not up for discussion on the Mayors agenda? JP – spoke about the Summit 9th December (date for diaries) PG – have they considered the parking policies? GT – spoke about London not being able to accommodate both its required number of new homes or employment sites. The consequences of which means that it is very likely that the local authorities in Essex will be asked through the Local Plan process to take a proportion of additional homes and displaced London businesses.</p> | |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>GIF update</p>  <p>2016-09-08 Growth and Infrastructure Fr</p> <p>GT – provided an update on the infrastructure gaps within Essex. GT also passed on his gratitude to the staff who contributed to the phase 1 and the phase 2 consultation will be circulated shortly for comments to be feedback by 29 September. The GIF is in a draft format and this further round of comments will help refine this still further.</p> <p>GT highlighted one of the importance dimensions of this document that were not foreseen by the Leaders and CEO when this work was requested earlier in the year, was the value of this collective work in our engagement with London in relation to the emerging London Plan.</p> <p>Kent, Surrey and East Sussex have completed their GIF, whilst Norfolk and Suffolk are about to commission a GIF, in part predicated in being able to have a grown-up regional conversation with London.</p> | |
| <p>9</p> | <p>Active Designs Essex update- Roy Warren</p>  <p>20160908 EPOA Meeting Active Design</p> <p>Update on active design - Roy Warren from Support England. Government endorsed design. RW spoke about the previous presentation at the last meeting, the idea was to stimulate a discussion for active Essex and follow this guide County Wide with people at local level to prepare their own design guidance. Rob manages Hadleigh since 2011 and has been concentrating on the legacy of the park and how they can build on this legacy.</p> <p>AM – are we embedding the design guide into the local design policies ? GT - work with colleagues scrutinising health impacts and assessments. AC - On behalf of the group, GT is best placed to engage with regarding incorporating Active Design principles into Design Guidance.</p> <p>RW & JF concluded the meeting with a tour of the park.</p> | |

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| 10. | AOB n/a | |
| 11 | Date of next meeting: 1 st December 2016 – Discovery Centre | |