

ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**Minutes of meeting held on 3rd March 2016
at the Discovery Centre, Great Notley**

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| <p>PRESENT: Andrew Cook – ECC (Chair) Jeremy Potter – Chelmsford CC Andy Millard – Thurrock BC Adrian Tofts – Maldon DC Andrew Taylor – Uttlesford DC Ian Vipond – Colchester BC Ken Bean – Epping Forest DC Steve Rogers – Castle Point BC David Lewis – Basildon BC Christine Lyons – Rochford DC Amanda Parrott – Basildon BC Gary Guiver – Tendring DC</p> | <p>Dianne Cooper – Harlow DC Emma Goodings – Brentwood BC Graham Thomas – ECC Dominic Collins – ECC Sue Garwood – ECC (notes)</p> <p>Guests: Chris Lamb – Design South-East Glenn Chipp – Epping DC Sean Perry – ECC Richard Greaves – ECC Paul Ashworth – ECC Steve Andrews - ECC</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 all authorities other than Southend.</p> <p>Peter Geraghty – Southend David Green – Chelmsford Shaun Scrutton - Rochford Mathew Winslow - Basildon Gordon Glenday – Brentwood Simon Meecham – Tendring Nick Fenwick – Maldon</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Notice of AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future population forecasting (AP) - Working relationship with Essex Police (SP) | |
| 3. | <p>Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting – 3.12.15 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the last meeting</p> | |
| 4. | <p>Design Review <i>(Presentation by Chris Lamb, Director, Design South-East)</i> Design South East is an independent charitable support service for local authorities in the south east. They have a full-time team to manage the service with experienced experts. They provide constructive advice ranging from one to one meetings, training sessions, surgeries, workshops and conferences.. They always</p> | |

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| | <p>do site visits and work locally. They have a policy of no one size fits all and have a whole place approach. They advise on how to accommodate future changes – shaping the built environment. They hold an urban design summer school once a year – everyone here is very welcome to attend. There is a very simple price structure for the service – a small subscription from the public sector with price matching from the private sector.</p> <p>AC requested more information on the Kent design process – CL will forward it to AC for circulation.</p> <p>GT asked for an explanation on the private and public sector money. CL said the majority is private sector funding – anything related to projects will be paid for by the private sector.</p> <p>Contact details for Chris Lamb: T: 01634 401166 M: 07966 253720 chris@designsoutheast.org</p> <p><i>(copy of presentation to be forwarded under separate cover)</i></p> | <p>CL/AC</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>Devolution Update - Request for assistance with the Housing Workstream (Glenn Chipp)</p> <p>Question mark about where the devolution process is going at present. Workshop held last Friday with leaders. No deal agreed and disagreement between authorities on how best to proceed. GC wanted to speak to EPOA members to get an overall picture across the county about central devolution. What would that arrangement bring and what would people struggle with. Important to get a base line agreed and then go to central government with wish list. Need to identify big infrastructure schemes across greater Essex. Jobs will also be associated with that growth.</p> <p>AC enquired about the time frame and how the information might be collated. DC said it is important to show government that we have got the appetite to deliver and show them what we can do together. Collective working and linking with design is what we need to do.</p> <p>GC will provide template – AC will circulate to colleagues for completion.</p> | <p>GC AC</p> |
| <p>6.</p> | <p>Traveller Transit Sites (Paul Ashworth & Steve Andrews)</p> <p>Paper put forward to ECC politicians back in October last year which gave endorsement to continue piece of work to establish transit sites in Essex. Initial trawl across Essex has been done, casting a net in the area to see what is out there. Transit sites would be used by travellers passing through. In terms of facilities, they are to just be a hard standing with a communal waste facility and toilets, plus possibly horse and water facilities. Sites are to be suitable for police to direct people too using the appropriate powers. Sites are to be split between the north and south of the county. In terms of delivery, the key is to find a piece of land that Essex is willing to invest in.</p> <p>AT asked if any specific area is being looked at. PA said there is no hard and fast rule, other than it has to be an available and suitable site – could be anywhere in the county. There is no evidence to suggest that it would be beneficial to put it in an area of where unauthorised encampments have been as trends can quickly move. Cross checking exercise would need to be carried out to ensure there are no overlaps and transit sites are not in the same place as permanent sites. At the</p> | |

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| | <p>moment, they are still in the process of sifting through the sites but will then go to each individual authority concerned. If anyone has a suitable site to offer, please contact PA.</p> | ALL |
| 7. | <p>GTAA Update (Andrew Taylor)</p> <p>Commissioned to do an update based on the new definition. All authorities joined except Basildon, Epping and Thurrock. Work commenced then Thurrock asked to join. Basildon undertook their own study. All the site surveys have been done. Some issues arising so going back to individual authorities to query. It will be a simple report which AT wants to finish before he leaves Uttlesford. If not finished, it will be passed on to a member of his team to complete.</p> <p>KB said Epping had already started doing a more detailed study but there was not as much information and engagement as they had hoped so Epping would like to join the GTAA work after all. All agreed to Epping joining and AT said that it won't slow down the main study too much. He will obtain a price.</p> <p>Post meeting note: JP circulated the G&T appeal decision in relation to the use of the 2014 GTAA (Paras 23-30 of decision).</p> | AT |
| 8. | <p>National Planning Update</p> <p>Government's consultation on proposed changes to National Planning Policy Framework – the deadline for comments closed mid February. All agreed that individual responses will be sent rather than a combined EPOA response and all to share responses with each other.</p> <p>Technical consultation related to new application planning system coming in. . Starts in 2017 with 2 years of pilots from areas not performing very well. Fee arrangements are proposed to be de-regulated therefore anyone can charge what they wish. Private sector could charge higher rate for quicker service – raises quality issues. AC will speak to Nigel about DM Forum response to this.</p> | ALL AC |
| 9. | <p>Planner – Recruitment & retention difficulties (Richard Greaves)</p> <p>RG had meeting with Herts CC last year about general recruiting. District authorities in Herts are finding out if there are any commonalities. RG has had responses from eight authorities. There has been a 15% drop in staff when comparing 2008 figures with 2014/15 for a similar workload. Feedback showed a loss of experienced staff to private sector and lack of graduates coming through. RG will revisit this again and put some recommendations in place. Agreed it would be helpful to bring back to this meeting after the DM Forum has come up with recommendations. It was confirmed by AC that there is no formal agreement within Essex to stop 'tapping up' between authorities.</p> | RG |
| 10. | <p>Draft Heritage Statement Guidance</p> <p>AT wanted to bring this document to everyone's attention – a copy was circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. Everyone present confirmed that they were happy for it to be branded as an EPOA document.</p> <p>AT confirmed that EPOA information will continue to be posted on the Uttlesford website and when he leaves, a new rep will carry out this task instead.</p> <p>As AT was leaving the meeting at this point, AC took the opportunity to thank him</p> | |

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| | on behalf of EPOA for his sterling work as deputy chair and for his hard work with GTAA. AC thanked him and wished him the best of luck. | |
| 11. | <p>Greater Essex Growth & Infrastructure Framework Planning Compact work took place a while ago and has been left for Leaders to have a discussion, at the same time devolution discussions came to the forefront with new work streams coming in. Now trying to construct an infrastructure plan to bring everything together across greater Essex – the Growth and Infrastructure Framework. Tender document is out and bidders being interviewed next week. The tender document is based on the Planning Compact work and experiences in Kent. The person who pulled all that together for Kent is now in house at ECC. Once the successful companies are on board, they will be commissioned to kick off with phase 1. The point of the exercise is to pull everything together to draw conclusions for the future. It is recognised that everyone is at a different stage. Timescale for an agreed document is late summer. In order to push work forward this has got to be a countywide greater Essex document.</p> <p>There will be an external editorial group to project manage the work and DC would like to invite people from the EPOA group to help with this. There will also be an internal stakeholder group at ECC. DC will send scope around and asked if there are any offers from around the table to help with interviewing bidders early next week. AM (Thurrock) agreed that this will be a very valuable piece of work. DCooper said she was involved in the compact work so would like to be involved in this work.</p> <p>Post meeting note: After the meeting, DC circulated the Growth & Infrastructure Framework tender document to all.</p> | ALL |
| 12. | <p>ARU Training Programme AC had recently received an e-mail from Lewis with the results of the annual assessment feedback forms. Lewis had looked at approx. 180 forms and the results were very good. AC asked the group if everyone would like to continue with the training for another season and the general consensus was that they were happy to continue. AP pointed out that she had feedback to say some sessions were very DC focused. AC will meet with Lewis on behalf of the group to mention this and request what feedback data was received from LA attendees. JP and SR offered to attend meeting along with AC.</p> | AC/ JP/SR |
| 13. | <p>EPOA Budget Update Orders have been received from everyone for 2015/16 subscriptions and invoices have now been raised. AC asked if everyone was happy for the subs to remain at £2,500 per authority for the next financial year and everyone agreed they were. AC pointed out that the money covers training costs, room hire and sub groups but it doesn't include new projects like GTAA, which are charged separately.</p> | |
| 14. | <p>Local Plan Progress & Duty to Co-operate All agreed to report at this meeting by exception as Planning Policy Forum did a round robin update and details are included in the minutes.</p> | |
| 15. | <p>Planning Policy Forum minutes (16.2.16) The draft Planning Policy Forum minutes, along with an up to date Plan Preparation Schedule, were circulated by AP to all on 1st March 2016.</p> | |
| 16. | <p>Development Management Forum minutes (15.1.16) Post meeting note: The minutes and associated documents were circulated by NR to all EPOA members after the meeting.</p> | |

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| 17. | <p>AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edge Analytics – The 2014 SMPP is due to be published in May. AP asked if EPOA group would want anything about population forecast in the future. AC said he thought there was a conversation in the past about agreeing to fund this. JP confirmed that phase 7 was reached but the discussion didn't come to anything and ECC commissioned them separately. It was thought that additional scenarios might be required in addition to keeping the same as before. Agreed that this will be brought to the June meeting with recommendations from the Policy Forum as to what is wanted. - Essex Police and Planning process – SP said Essex Police want to get involved in more detail in the planning process. James Greenway from Essex Police, Head of Estate Services for Kent and Essex, is the point of contact. He would appreciate being kept in the loop when people go out to consultations. <i>Post meeting note: James' contact details are as follows. His land line extension numbers are diverted to his mobile:</i> <p>James Greenway BSc (Hons) LLM MRICS Head of Estate Services Estate Services Department Kent & Essex Support Services Directorate ☎ Extn: Essex 160001 or Kent 192700 mobile: 07989 992427 💻 james.greenway@kent.pnn.police.uk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair/Vice Chair – AC asked those present for expressions of interest – none were received. He then asked if everyone was happy for him to continue in his role as EPOA Chair or would anyone like to volunteer to take over the role. Everyone confirmed they were happy for AC to continue. As no volunteers were forthcoming for someone to take over as Vice Chair, AC will come to June meeting with a recommendation. | <p>AC AP</p> <p>AC</p> |
| 18. | <p>Items for future meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer networking break - Planning Compact (DC) - Countywide Transport Modelling (SP) - Demographic modelling – recommendations from Policy Forum (AP/JP) - Design and quality issues – Design Kent & Essex Design Guide (DC) - Help with local plan (AC) - RTP1 presentation- Dr Michael Harris (value of planning, infrastructure work) <i>(Post meeting note: Dr Harris has accepted invitation to the June meeting)</i> - Cross border counties (like minded groups (Cambs/Herts) - GT to bring to Sept meeting | |
| 19. | <p>Date of next meeting: Thursday 9th June – 10 am</p> | |