

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE**HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 6.00 P.M. IN THE PRINCES THEATRE, TOWN HALL,
STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA**

Present: Councillors Stock (Chairman), Turner (Vice-Chairman), Baker, Bray, Broderick, Cawthron, Coley, Land, Mooney, Platt, Porter, Skeels Snr. and Talbot

Also Present: Councillors Heaney, Hones, McWilliams, Nicholls, Stephenson and White

In Attendance: Head of Planning (Cath Bicknell), Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer (Lisa Hastings), Planning Policy Manager (Gary Guiver) and Senior Democratic Services Officer (Ian Ford)

9. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

Further to Minute 1 (14.7.15) and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 32.6, the Committee gave consideration to electing its Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

The Chairman apologised and took responsibility for the confusion that had occurred at the previous meeting in respect of the election of a Vice-Chairman of the Committee and reminded Members of the circumstances. He apologised that he had received advice from the Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer during the item, which he had not then made known to the Committee.

It was then moved by Councillor Coley, seconded by Councillor Platt and **RESOLVED** that Councillor Turner be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G V Guglielmi, with Councillor Coley substituting and from Councillor Howard.

11. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had received an email from Councillor Howard in which Councillor Howard had stated that under Minute 7 – Tendring District Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document, it should be minuted that Councillor Bray and Councillor Howard had put forward paragraph (c) of the motion that was then carried in that Councillor Howard had stated: "...in the event of there being any increase identified in the objectively assessed housing need, then the consultation must be returned to the Local Plan Committee before being opened to the public" and Councillor Bray had inserted the words: ", or significant decrease".

The Chairman drew attention to the fact that the minutes had incorrectly stated the venue for the meeting.

Councillor Porter raised his concerns that Minute 1 did not reflect what the audio recording of the meeting seemed to indicate in that it appeared that both a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman of the Committee had been elected at that time. The Chairman and Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer explained again the events of that part of the meeting and, at the request of the Chairman, the Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer read out the following advice that had been circulated to Members with the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee when they had been published:

“The Monitoring Officer accepts that the advice given to Councillor Stock, acting as Chairman of the Committee, was not repeated to the Committee before the vote was taken on the appointment of the Chairman, therefore, consequently, whether the Vice-Chairman was appointed or not has caused some confusion. It is not possible for one vote to decide the appointment of two positions, as this would fetter and prevent any Committee Member to vote differently for each nomination. In addition, the position of Vice-Chairman was not at that time vacant, therefore for these reasons the Vice-Chairman appointment was not resolved and will subsequently be the first item on the agenda of the next Local Plan Committee meeting.”

It was moved by Councillor Talbot, seconded by Councillor Platt and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 14 July 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following:

- (1) The correction of the venue of the meeting to the Princes Theatre, Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea and not as published the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Thorpe Road, Weeley; and
- (2) The inclusion in Minute 7 that Councillors Howard and Bray between them had put forward the wording of paragraph (c) of the resolution.

NOTE:

In accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 18.5, Councillors Bray, Broderick, Cawthron and Porter each required that that they be recorded in the minutes as having voted against the above motion.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none on this occasion.

13. PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Chairman invited the following persons to address the Committee:

Michelle Miller, a resident of the District, spoke against any further housing developments in the Great Clacton area especially in the vicinity of Foot's Farm, which could result in the loss of valuable farmland, a riding school facility, loss of wildlife and exacerbate local flooding issues.

Parish Councillor John Cutting, Chairman of Little Clacton Parish Council, spoke to urge the Council to pursue an option of housing development in the north and north-west of the District along the A120 and A133 corridors. He also, on behalf of the Parish Council, submitted views on potential housing developments in areas of Clacton-on-Sea such as Hartley Gardens and Foot's Farm.

Parish Councillor Peter Dumsday, Chairman of Weeley Parish Council, against questions in respect of the reasoning behind the Officers' recommendation (c) [in the report considered in minute 15 below]; the timetable for progressing the Local Plan; whether there would be a further Local Plan Newsletter to residents; and on the use of consultants to explore 'Garden City' principles for the Local Plan.

John Smith-Daye, a resident of the District, spoke and questioned the robustness of the statistics used in the Peter Brett and Associates' study [which formed the appendix to the Officers' report considered in Minute 15 below].

Alan Eldret, representing Tendring Residents' Lobby Group, spoke and also questioned the assumptions underlying the Peter Brett and Associates study. He also urged the Council to adopt its Local Plan as soon as possible to reduce the District's vulnerability to unrestricted, speculative planning applications.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PLANNING POLICY MANAGER

The Council's Planning Policy Manager (Gary Guiver) made announcements on the following matters:-

(1) Co-operation with Colchester Borough Council (CBC) and Braintree District Council (BDC) on Local Plan Development

Tendring District Council (TDC) and CBC were continuing to work on a cross-boundary development near the University of Essex whilst CBC and BDC were working together on a similar project at Marks Tey.

TDC, CBC and BDC were also working with Consultants on how best to incorporate the principles behind 'Garden Cities' into their Local Plans. An Officer, jointly appointed and mostly based at CBC would work with the Consultants. ATLAS, a subsidiary of the Homes and Communities Agency, were also working with TDC, CBC and BDC.

A bid was also to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government for support to formulate the Local Plan. The Chairman informed Members that the Bid would be considered as an urgent item at the next formal Cabinet meeting on 25 September 2015.

(2) Update on the Public Consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options Document

Feedback on attendance figures was submitted together with an outline of some of the themes and concerns that were appearing through the public comments such as alternative proposals for development at Horsley Cross, Thorpe Railway Station and Jaywick.

Councillor Coley urged Mr Guiver to keep in close contact with Babergh District Council in respect of their proposed major development in the Brantham area.

15. OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

The Committee had before it a report of the Head of Planning that reported the findings of the 'Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study' (July 2015).

The Committee was aware that The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) required Councils to boost, significantly the supply of housing by: "*using their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area*" and that the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study published in July 2015 would form part of this 'evidence base' and would help determine how many new homes the Council would need to plan for through the new Local Plan.

The Committee was informed that the study had been undertaken by consultants, Peter Brett Associates (PBA), on behalf of four Councils, namely this Council, Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council and Chelmsford City Council. This was because the Government's latest good practice guidance on assessing future housing need recommended that such studies be undertaken over a 'housing market area' across more than one authority rather than for one authority in isolation. This would ensure that cross-border relationships, along with housing market and economic factors, were properly taken into account. From looking at migration and commuting data, the study had concluded that the inter-relationship between Tendring, Colchester, Braintree and Chelmsford was sufficiently strong for the combined area to be considered as a 'housing market area' and that the inclusion of other neighbouring authorities would not significantly alter that conclusion.

It was reported that the study had begun, (as required by the latest good practice guidance), with the official population and household projections produced by the Government and had then considered adjustments to those figures to take into account a variety of factors including employment projections, the anticipated effects of London 'overspill' and 'unattributable population change' (i.e. unexpected differences in the total population of Tendring between the 2001 and 2011 Census).

Having taken those factors into account, the study had recommended both an 'upper' and 'lower' housing growth figure for each Council to consider as the basis for allocating land for housing in their Local Plans.

Table 9.5 in Appendix A1a contained those figures viz.:

Table 9.5 Housing targets – suggested ranges

	Low	High
Braintree	793	845
Chelmsford	736	775
Colchester	903	920
Tendring	597	705
HMA	3,029	3,245

Source: PBA

For Tendring therefore, Members noted that the lower figure was 597 homes a year and the higher figure was 705 homes a year and that if the new Local Plan was to cover the period up to 2032, this would imply the need to make provision for between 10,000 and 12,000 new homes over that period. Members further noted that the study had recommended that it would be sensible for Braintree, Chelmsford and Colchester to apply the higher figures but for Tendring, lower economic projections and adjustments for 'unattributable population change' would justify applying the lower figure.

The Committee was therefore advised that the findings of the study suggested that the new Local Plan needed to identify sufficient land for approximately 10,000 homes between now and 2032; a reduction from the 12,000 homes suggested in the report to the first meeting of the Local Plan Committee in May 2014. The 'Issues and Options' consultation document considered by the Committee at its last meeting in July 2015 and which was now the subject of public consultation until 13 October 2015 had been adjusted before publication in order to reflect this new evidence.

The Committee was made aware that further work was now being carried out by consultants on behalf of Tendring, Colchester, Braintree and Chelmsford Councils in order to assess, in more detail, the likely requirements for affordable housing and housing to meet the needs of particular groups in the community including, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes. That further work would inform each of those Councils' planning policies on housing type, mix and tenure and was expected to be completed in November 2015.

Following discussion it was moved by Councillor Stock and seconded by Councillor Mooney that the Local Plan Committee having considered the findings of the new 'Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study' (July 2015), as attached as Appendix A1a to the Report of the Head of Planning:

- (a) Instructs Officers to go back to the authors of the above-mentioned study to investigate the matters raised by the Committee in respect of figures and assumptions in the study and to explore the possibility of revising its conclusions with a view to setting lower housing growth figures for Tendring; and
- (b) Notes that a further, more detailed, assessment looking at the composition of future housing needs, across particular groups in society, was underway.

Councillor Bray then indicated that he wished to amend Councillor Stock's motion to make reference to a specific annual build figure for new housing and, after discussion, the Chairman adjourned the meeting for a short period of time to enable the Legal Services Manager to give advice to Councillor Bray as to the wording of that amendment.

Following that adjournment and pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 15.7, Councillor Stock's motion was withdrawn.

It was then moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Mooney and:

RESOLVED that the Local Plan Committee having considered the findings of the new 'Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study' (July 2015), as attached as Appendix A1a to the Report of the Head of Planning:

- (a) Instructs Officers to go back to the authors of the above-mentioned study to investigate the matters raised by the Committee in respect of figures and assumptions in the study and to explore the possibility of revising its conclusions with a view to setting lower housing growth figures for Tendring such that it was no greater than 479 dwellings per annum, as detailed in Section 4.39 of the Appendix; and
- (b) Notes that a further, more detailed, assessment looking at the composition of future housing needs, across particular groups in society, was underway.

The meeting was declared closed at 7.32 p.m.

Chairman