

Local Plan Committee

Monday, 04 April 2016

Attendees: Councillor Christopher Arnold (Member), Councillor Lyn Barton (Deputy Chairman), Councillor Elizabeth Blundell (Member), Councillor Barrie Cook (Member), Councillor Andrew Ellis (Member), Councillor Martin Goss (Chairman), Councillor Kim Naish (Group Spokesperson), Councillor Gerard Oxford (Group Spokesperson)

Substitutes: Councillor Nigel Chapman (for Councillor John Jowers)

65 Have Your Say!

Councillor Lissimore attended the Committee and, with the consent of the chairman addressed the Committee. She explained that she had sent to the Council an electronic copy of a petition seeking a reconsideration of the Tollgate Village planning application which had 2,269 signatories attached to it. She referred to a number of the comments which had accompanied the signatures voicing concern at the decision which had taken place. She considered that the consideration of the application had not been balanced in relation to the representations made by town centre retailers and the content of the Planning Officer's presentation. She requested a full discussion of the issue and asked the Chairman to indicate what and when the Local Plan intended to do to rectify the public perception of the issue.

Councillor G. Oxford referred to his role in chairing the Planning Committee meeting when the Tollgate Village planning application was submitted to the Planning Committee following the invoking of the Deferral and Recommendation Overturn Procedure.

Councillor Naish questioned why no representations had been made to the Local Plan Committee about the Tollgate site allocation prior to the submission of the planning application.

Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, confirmed that site allocations would be reviewed prior to the Committee's next meeting in June and the Tollgate Village site would be part of that review.

The Chairman confirmed that the decision of the Planning Committee was now the subject of an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. He also made a commitment to reading the comments within the petition which would be treated as a response to the Local Plan consultation which would be the subject of a report to the Committee's next

meeting on 13 June 2016 followed by a recommendation to a subsequent meeting of Council.

Tim Foster, Chairman of Campaign Against Urban Sprawl in Essex (CAUSE) addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He explained that CAUSE was of the view that there should be an 'infrastructure and jobs first' approach to the Local Plan and this had been publicly launched in November 2015. He was disappointed that although all Colchester Borough Councillors had been invited to attend the launch only two had done so. He referred to the petition voicing concerns about a potential garden settlement in the Marks Tey / West Tey area which had accumulated 6,700 signatories which had been received by the Mayor of Colchester. He hoped that when the Committee met again in the new Municipal Year that the Committee members would be willing to listen to an alternative vision to bring infrastructure first.

The Chairman explained that he had been unable to accept the invitation to attend the CAUSE workshop due to work commitments and confirmed he would give consideration to the comments contained within the West Tey petition.

Robert Johnstone addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which provided for the protection and enhancement of Public Rights of Way and access. He was concerned that, although the NPPF appeared to be held in high regard by both officers and councillors, he was able to identify numerous examples of Public Rights of Way which had not been protected or enhanced as a consequence of development. He was of the view that more opportunity needed to be taken within development proposals to explore the creation of new rights of way and the addition of rights of way links.

The Chairman offered to consider the issues raised during the Committee's discussions on draft policies for inclusion in the new Local Plan.

Louisa White addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). She referred to the planning conditions attached to major developments and the problems being encountered whereby retrospective changes are made to such conditions which lead to adverse effects for local residents. She referred to examples of apparent breaches in planning regulations being reported with a view to enforcement action being undertaken but no action has been taken. She acknowledged the ability of planning permission to be applied for retrospectively but was of the view that such applications were very difficult for local residents to legitimately oppose and potentially led to doubts about the integrity of the planning system when adverse effects on communities were ignored.

The Chairman indicated that he was aware of the concerns of local residents and

confirmed he would continue to work with them to resolve the issues.

Peter Hewitt, on behalf of Myland Community Council, addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to the Call for Sites exercise and the large number of green-field sites which had been put forward for consideration. He expressed his hope that many of these would ultimately not form part of the Committee's Preferred Options. He also referred to the potential future development in Langham and Boxted and expressed his concern regarding the impact of such new developments on the local road network and on associated air quality levels. He requested the Committee to consider not including any future proposals in the North Colchester area within its Preferred Options.

Nick Chilvers, addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to the future consideration of the new Local Plan and the need to take account of social planning. He explained that flexibility was required in order to take account of differing requirements for different lifestyles. In particular he referred to the dilemma for working people who generally suffered from a shortage of time which meant that convenience was often more important than loyalty. He explained that a greater number of quality homes were required in the town centre given the importance of providing for sustainable development. He was of the view that greater road capacity was also required because most people used their cars through necessity rather than because they were lazy. He supported an extension at Severalls Lane to create more lower skilled, factory type jobs and made reference to statistics indicating a large increase in the number of families with young children.

Councillor Manning attended the Committee and, with the consent of the chairman addressed the Committee. He explained that a number of issues had come to light at recent Planning Committee meetings and, in his capacity as Chairman of that Committee, he wished to highlight their importance in relation to the delivery of quality development to the Local Plan Committee. The issues included:

- 36 inch wide internal doorways to provide for whole life access for people with disabilities;
- Car ports with increased minimum height restrictions as well as wider driveways in order to accommodate vans;
- Lowered kerbs at all road junctions to assist wheel chair and push chair users;
- Applications to reduce cycle parking provision should only be considered where existing provision exceeds to approved standards;
- The provision in individual dwellings of external charging points for low emission vehicles as referred to in Paragraph 35 of the NPPF

Councillor G. Oxford supported the issues identified by Councillor Manning, explaining that recent consideration by the Planning Committee of an application for development in Tiptree had highlighted the importance of considering flexible parking provision solutions to overcome problems associated with on-street parking.

Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, confirmed that a reference had been made within the new Local Plan draft policies to charging points being provided in a proportion of individual units within developments of a certain size, given her understanding that the likely installation costs was in the region of £650 per unit. She was also aware that some London Boroughs were actively encouraging charging point provision but she was not yet aware that this practice was being followed elsewhere. She considered that increases in parking provision minimum height standards was too prescriptive and was more a matter for the Planning Committee to consider as a design issue. She explained the existing policy in relation to Lifetime Homes which provided for a percentage of homes to be adapted on developments of a certain size. She further explained her view that it would be preferable to provide for flexibility in garage and parking sizes through guidance rather than policy which accorded with government guidance

The Chairman thanked each of the members of the public and Councillors for their attendance and the representations they had made to the Committee.

66 Minutes of 14 December 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2015 were confirmed as a correct record.

67 Minutes of 2 February 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

68 Colchester Local List

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services giving details of the proposed amendments to the adopted Colchester Local List.

Beverley McClean, Coast and Countryside Planner introduced the report and responded to Councillors questions.

It was explained that the Local List for Colchester included buildings, architectural features and historic assets that, while not of national significance, were considered to be locally significant for their architectural or historic value. The List covered urban Colchester, Langham and Wivenhoe and was due for its 4th annual review.

In January 2016, a press release had been issued inviting members of the public and local groups to nominate buildings or historic/architectural features for consideration for either inclusion or removal from Colchester's Local List. Information had also been

gathered about any planning applications that had resulted in the loss of or alteration of buildings or historic/architectural features on the Local List. Representatives from the Colchester Historic Buildings Forum, who had drawn up the original List had not been consulted for advice on this occasion. A total of 21 changes had been proposed, seven of which were not considered suitable for inclusion and one suggestion, for a number of streets to be included in their entirety had resulted in a split recommendation.

The proposed changes would result in the addition of 14 new buildings/assets to Colchester's Local List which would next be reviewed in March 2017.

Members of the Committee welcomed the report and were supportive of the work undertaken to update the Local List. Councillor Barton requested future reviews include Colchester Historic Buildings Forum, Councillor Arnold requested that the asset known as Langham War Memorial be amended to refer to Bosted Airfield War Memorial, Langham Parish and Councillor Naish asked for clarification about the air raid shelter at the junction of Fairfield Road and Dilbridge Road East and whether it was listed.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment in relation to the Bosted Airfield War Memorial, the changes required to update the adopted Local List be approved.

69 Strategic Housing Market Assessment - Update

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services giving details of the Strategic Housing Market Survey (SHMA) update to be added to the Council's Local Plan evidence base.

Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager, presented the report, responded to questions and assisted the members in their discussions.

It was explained that the SHMA update had been prepared for Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester and Tendring Councils by consultants HDH Planning and Development Ltd following guidance in the latest published National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) to calculate the level of affordable housing need and the size and tenure of all dwellings required within the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (OAHN) Study. Previous SHMA work reflected earlier Government guidance and had a different geographical scope. The Update report, together with the OAHN Study, therefore provided the Council with Government guidance compliant evidence on housing requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out the role of a SHMA, which was to demonstrate that local planning authorities have a clear understanding of the housing requirement of their area and that local planning authorities should work with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries, to identify the scale and mix of housing, and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to require over the plan period.

The SHMA set out variations between authorities and provided information for each authority to provide specific local evidence. In addition the report focused principally on the size and tenure of all dwellings required within the OAHN Study, the calculation of the level of affordable housing need and provided information on the accommodation requirements of certain household groups which had an appreciable impact on the housing market within the HMA. It was important to note that the affordable housing need figure was not derived directly from the housing target OAHN. The housing target provided an overall number of units required, but did not dictate their level of affordability. The affordable housing need figure was an unconstrained figure that reflected the current housing market situation. It was not a component of the OAHN but was calculated using a completely different approach and different data sources. In Colchester, the report concluded that the affordable housing requirement of 30.2% could be met by the OAHN identified and no adjustment would be required to this figure. However, other evidence such as the Council's viability assessment would also need to be considered and allowance taken of the fact that some sites may not deliver affordable housing, for example, due to government policy thresholds.

The report used a Long Term Balancing Housing Market (LTBHM) model in accordance with the NPPG to break down the OAHN to identify the tenure and size of housing required for each authority within the SHMA.

Chapter 6 of the report considered the impact of subgroups of the population on the housing target. In terms of specialist accommodation for older persons, in the overall HMA there is a requirement for 7,746 additional specialist units, of which 7,157 should be sheltered housing and 319 should be extracare housing. The requirement for 7,746 additional specialist units for older people represents 10.4% of the total Objectively Assessed Need for the period to 2037. Further information would be gathered on the specific housing requirements generated by the University of Essex and the Colchester Garrison and by those wishing to build their own homes and this would be used to update the evidence base once available. It had recently been confirmed there were currently 11,657 students registered at the University of Essex and the largest accommodation categories were 4,000 housed by the University, 4,000 living in privately rented accommodation and 1,300 living with their families. The University planned to grow to 15,000 students by 2019 with corresponding plans to increase its accommodation. Further information was needed from Colchester Garrison on its plans for growth.

The private rented sector is becoming increasingly important in the HMA, increasing by 93.9% between 2001 and 2011 to 19.5% of the population. 17,877 private rented households were estimated to live currently in Colchester (para 6.34 and 6.35, p. 77 of main report Background Paper).

The Update report seeks to establish the potential demand for discounted market housing (including Starter Homes) and shared ownership. It concludes that there is a

potential annual demand from all age groups for 48 discounted home ownership dwellings and 224 shared ownership dwellings in Colchester (Table 3.7 and 3.8, p. 44 of main report Background Paper). (The shared ownership figures include households able to afford discounted home ownership). The low level of demand for discounted new home ownership reflects the fact that it is more expensive than entry-level home ownership (which includes both new and existing houses), with the exception of three bedroom homes in Colchester, and accordingly cannot be considered to address local affordable housing needs. It is important to note that numbers also represent just the potential demand and not the tenure preferences of these households.

It is proposed that the Committee note the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update.

In discussion members of the Committee referred to:

- The definition of extra care housing and what type of accommodation this included;
- The impact of the increase in buy to let investments and the associated increases in house prices and greater reliance on private sector housing as a consequence;
- The future of Development Briefs in identifying design requirements for potential sites

In response to questions from the Committee members the Planning Policy Manager, together with the Place Strategy Manager, explained that:

- The timescale for the production of the new Local Plan would remain as previously envisaged;
- Whilst Development Briefs were still [possible the intention was to move to a more criteria based approach to development which would set out in detail what would be expected to be delivered for individual sites.

RESOLVED that Strategic Housing Market Survey update be noted and added to the Council's Local Plan evidence base.

70 Brownfield Land Pilot

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services explaining that Colchester had been selected to be a Brownfield Land Pilot and giving details of the requirements of the Pilot.

Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, presented the report and assisted the Committee members in their discussions.

It was explained that Colchester Borough Council had been identified as one of 73 councils across England to pilot one of the new brownfield land registers, which would provide house builders and the public with up-to-date and publicly available information on all brownfield sites available for housing locally. The intention was that the registers would help house builders identify suitable sites quickly, speeding up the construction of

new homes whilst also allowing communities to draw attention to local sites for adding to the register, including in some cases derelict buildings and eyesores that are primed for redevelopment and that could attract investment to the area. The councils taking part in the pilots would inform future government guidance on the operation of the brownfield registers which were eventually to become mandatory for all councils under proposals going through Parliament in the Housing and Planning Bill.

The Key Principles of the Brownfield Land Registers included:

- Based on the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) process, including annual reviews of potentially suitable sites. Will also expect authorities to look at other relevant sources and ask landowners and others to volunteer sites for consideration;
- Potential brownfield sites should comply with the National Planning Policy Framework definition of previously developed land;
- To be regarded as suitable for housing, potential sites must be:

Available – Deliverable or Developable

Capable of supporting five or more dwellings or more than 0.25ha

Capable of Development – free from constraints or constraints exist but can be mitigated.

- Sites that meet these criteria will be placed on the register, including sites which already have planning permission.
- Registers to be kept under review, regularly updated and made publicly available
- Data on each site to be in a consistent standard format and published to Open Data standards

The Key Stages of the Pilot were:

- Stage 1 – Identifying provisional brownfield sites. Councils will identify provisional brownfield sites from the existing evidence base and consider what other relevant sources could be used to identify further suitable brownfield sites.
- Stage 2 – Assessing the suitability of provisional brownfield sites. The suitability of the provisional sites will be assessed against the criteria specified in the draft manual. Decisions about whether to include a site on the register will be for local authorities. There will be no right of appeal because there is always the option of submitting a planning application.
- Stage 3 – Compiling a pilot register including the required information for suitable sites. The Government plans to make consultation discretionary when including land on a register.
- Stage 4 – Publishing a pilot register by the end of June 2016.

The Productivity Plan 2015 set out the Government's intention to legislate to grant automatic planning permission in principle on brownfield sites identified in new brownfield registers, subject to the approval of a limited number of technical details. This process was seen by Government as the way to ensure 90% of brownfield land or sites (waiting determination) would have planning permission by 2020. Permission in principle did not form part of the Brownfield Land Register Pilot and further details were awaited

on this aspect.

In response to questions from the Committee members the Place Strategy Manager, explained that the urban capacity study that had previously been used to inform the Strategic Land Availability Assessment had included information relating to brownfield development but the current definition of brownfield, as identified in the NPPF was different to that used previously. She also confirmed that it would be for each Local Authority to determine what minimum size of development would be suitable for residential development and that agricultural buildings were not included in the definition of brownfield.

RESOLVED that the requirements of the Brownfield Land Register be noted.

71 Settlement Boundary Review

Councillor Chapman (in respect of his membership of the Dedham Vale (AONB) and Stour Valley Joint Advisory Committee) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services giving details of the approach to a review of settlement boundaries in the rural parts of the Borough.

Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, presented the report and assisted the Committee members in their discussions.

It was explained that to inform the preparation of the Local Plan the Council had undertaken two formal Call for Sites consultations as a result of which many proposals had been put forward including sites outside of Colchester in the rural parts of the borough. These were being assessed along with other sites identified as part of the Strategic Land Availability Assessment and it was likely that there would be changes to the existing settlement boundaries in some towns and villages. Accordingly and as part of the evidence base for the settlement boundary review an assessment of the comparative sustainability of all settlements had been carried out. This could then be used to define the most sustainable settlements and inform the hierarchy and approach to the spatial strategy, particularly for planning growth beyond the urban edge of Colchester.

The following criteria had been included for assessment of each settlement (and part of settlement where separate settlement boundaries existed):

- Access to sustainable transport (Railway station; bus stop - including crude consideration of quality of service);
- Environmental constraints;
- Proximity to community facilities including schools, public open space, community / village hall, doctors surgery;

- Percentage of people who travel less than 2km to work (RCCE Profile);
- Total Population;
- Total Households.

Having summarised the data for each settlement under each criteria it would be necessary to make judgements and draw conclusions from it. As the underlying principle of the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore the new Local Plan is to support the principle of sustainable development, it was suggested that only settlements which could be justified as being sustainable should be defined by settlement boundaries in future and new allocations would only be appropriate within the new sustainable settlements. Those villages which were not considered to be sustainable settlements would be known as Other Settlements and would not have village envelopes. It was acknowledged that the initial reaction to removing village envelopes would be one of concern that it would lead to less protection and more development. However, because these areas would be formally defined as countryside in planning policy terms and having identified them as unsustainable locations they would not generally benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Consideration would also need to be given to policies for the countryside areas as well as proposals within small hamlets / clusters and for settlements where there was more than one defined settlement boundary.

In accordance with the Options agreed for future growth last year, sites would need to be considered to accommodate proportional growth in those settlements identified as sustainable. It was proposed that the following key considerations should inform proportionate growth and appropriate capacity on a settlement by settlement basis:

- Environmental Constraints/environmental capacity;
- Physical Constraints/capacity;
- Capacity of physical and social infrastructure and tipping point for requirements/likely viability implications;
- Current population and households for whole parish;
- Parish Council views / support.

In discussion members of the Committee voiced their concern regarding the public perception of these proposed changes and about the impact on the level of protection in rural areas. Committee members specifically referred to:

- The continuing ability of rural communities to gain something for the community on the back of a development;
- The welcome dialogue which was being undertaken by Council Officers with Parish Councils in order to gather information and communicate potential proposals;
- Whether the proposals would mean that it would become very difficult to obtain approval for any development in the countryside on policy grounds alone;
- The need for a great deal more and wider consultation on the proposals in order to give adequate reassurance to residents in rural communities;
- The importance of providing additional information on policy matters to Parish Councils

and rural communities so that there is a greater understanding of the proposals and their context prior to implementation;

- The potential to include information on settlement boundaries within the planned full consultation exercise on the new Local Plan to be undertaken during the forthcoming Summer period;

In response to questions from the Committee members the Place Strategy Manager, explained that:

- There would be little difference in procedure for rural communities seeking to provide additional housing, as a balance would continue to be maintained between protecting the countryside and permitting appropriate amounts of additional development;;
- There was no intention to introduce significant changes as a consequence of these proposals and the intent of removing smaller settlement boundaries would be to focus new development on larger sustainable settlements;;
- Consideration would be given to the production of information material which could be published to assist in communicating the proposals to local residents;
- There definitely would need to be changes to settlement boundaries because each of the Options identified by the Committee previously included development in some villages;
- The purpose of the report was to encourage Committee members to consider their preference in terms of the approach to settlement boundaries to be adopted in terms of retaining all settlement boundaries as they currently are or to take the opportunity to review settlements where there may be opportunities to make changes and for this to inform the Preferred Options process;
- The difficulty of including settlement boundary information gathered from a new round of Parish Council consultation in the forthcoming consultation exercise as this would have an impact on the ability of the new Local Plan to be delivered in accordance with the agreed timescale.

RESOLVED that existing village envelopes be retained with revisions being made where appropriate to accommodate suitable sustainable development.

72 Local Plan Draft Policies

Councillor Chapman (in respect of his membership of the Dedham Vale (AONB) and Stour Valley Joint Advisory Committee) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Naish (in respect of his membership of the Angling Trust East of England Freshwater Forum and the Environment Agency) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Josef Schumacher addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to the petition which had been submitted

seeking the protection of the Salary Brook Valley. He explained that the valley was home to numerous rare wildlife species and contained areas of ancient woodland which would all be lost if the Valley was to be developed. He considered that recent planning decisions had indicated that Planning policies were no longer adequate to protect areas of woodland. He was of the view that strong local policies needed to be developed in order to ensure such areas would not be lost. He therefore asked the Committee to consider the need for a policy to provide for the retention of this ancient woodland area unless there was a clear need for development.

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services giving details of a number of draft policies for inclusion in the Local plan Preferred Options.

Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, presented the report and assisted the Committee members in their discussions. She welcomed the submission of the Salary Brook Valley petition and acknowledged the importance of Salary Brook being recognised.

It was explained that the Council was working on a new Local Plan which would guide development in the Borough between 2017 and 2032 or even beyond. Once adopted the new Local Plan would replace the 2008 Core Strategy (amended 2014), the Development Policies (adopted 2010 and amended 2014), the 2010 Site Allocations and the Tiptree Jam Development Plan Document 2013. As well as providing allocations for new development, an essential part of the Local Plan would be to provide the strategic and detailed policies against which all planning applications in the Borough were considered.

The draft Local Plan was intended to follow the Local Plan Experts Group recommendations for a more place-based approach to plan making. Policies on strategic growth requirements and environmental issues would accordingly be followed by a number of policies and allocations concerning different parts of the Borough. The Plan would also include a number of more detailed development management policies, many of which were presented in the report for initial review.

This approach was intended to assist with the process of considering the full plan given that these development management policies did not have consequential implications and were non-contentious. These policies had been reviewed to take into account changing local evidence and circumstances such as planning approvals and appeals, any changes to national government policy or guidance and comments received during the Issues and Scoping consultation. Policies had also been the subject of consultation with appropriate internal stakeholders.

It was confirmed that no policy which related to site specific allocations for land for a specific purpose were included at present as they would be subject to detailed consideration in June when specific sites were considered.

In discussion members of the Committee specifically referred to:

- Health and Well-Being – amend first sentence to read ‘ All new development should be designed to help promote healthy lifestyles and avoid causing adverse impacts on general public health...’;
- Health and Well-Being – amend second bullet point to read ‘Providing a healthy living environment where healthy lifestyles can be promoted including green space and creating attractive opportunities for activities, for example walking and cycling’;
- Community Facilities – agreed;
- Housing Density – agreed;
- Housing Standards – include a reference to Broadband provision retain the reference to car charging points as set out, that is, applicants to have regard to the need to ensure a consistent approach to wording in Policy on Sustainable Access;
- Historic Environment – agreed;
- Public Realm – agreed;
- Promoting Sustainable Transport – agreed;
- Sustainable Access to Development – to include a reference to rural train stations and review wording regarding electric charging points;
- Natural Environment - include reference to ‘species and habitats of significant importance’ and also work with Tendring District Council to seek protection for woodland areas across the district boundary;
- Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – amend the last sentence of the Explanation to read ‘ Proposals outside of the AONB will not be supported where, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, they will have an impact on natural beauty, special qualities and public enjoyment of the AONB.’;
- Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – delegate to the Place Strategy Manager authority to include the definition of the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB as set out in a draft report to the Dedham Vale (AONB) and Stour Valley Joint Advisory Committee when it is published in June 2016;
- Coastal Areas – agreed;
- Flood and Water Management – agreed
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems - agreed

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendments and additions set out above, the first tranche of draft policies, as set out in the Appendix to the report and which will form part of the Local Plan Preferred Options document be approved for public consultation in the summer of 2016.

73 Memorandum of Co-operation

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services giving details of the Memorandum of Co-operation with Braintree and Tendring District Councils, Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council.

Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, presented the report and assisted the Committee

members in their discussions. She suggested the references to Regional and Structure Plans in the Introduction be removed as these were no longer really relevant to current considerations and for the first sentence in the section on Strategic Issues to be amended to read 'Future population will be driven largely by net migration and natural change.'

It was explained that as part of the work on the new Local Plan, work had been taking place with neighbouring local authorities, particularly those within the identified strategic housing market area (Chelmsford, Braintree and Tendring) and Essex County Council, as well as Maldon District Council on key cross border issues.

Chelmsford, Colchester, Tendring and Braintree had worked together to commission a number of pieces of evidence base to support the new Local Plans, particularly in relation to housing need across the strategic market area. Whilst work had also been undertaken with Braintree, Tendring and Essex County Council on the exploration of the potential for new garden communities across the area.

During the course of meetings to discuss closer working on planning matters it was agreed to produce a Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC) to provide a framework within which individual Local Plans could be progressed. Local authorities had a Duty to Co-operate with others on cross border strategic issues which was required to be demonstrated at the examination into the Local Plan. The MoC would therefore help to demonstrate that this duty was being met and to provide a framework for future co-operation.

The MoC, called 'Collaborative Working on Strategic Priorities in North and Central Essex', identified four key objectives as well as strategic issues grouped into themes around transport, infrastructure and connectivity, providing sufficient new homes, providing employment, addressing education and healthcare needs and ensuring high quality outcomes. In addition there was reference to the production of some strategic cross border policies which were referred to as Local Plan Part 1. Each local authority would produce its own Local Plan but each Plan would have the same Part 1 section within it, a draft of which was currently being finalised by the officer working group with a view to it being part of the draft Local Plans when they are published in June. Maldon District Council had also been engaged in the MoC process but given the current stage of preparation of their Local Plan, would not be a signatory to the MoC.

In response to questions from the Committee members the Place Strategy Manager, explained that, whilst Babergh District Council was not included within the MoC proposals regular joint discussions were taking place.

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Planning to sign the Memorandum of Co-operation: Collaboration on Strategic Priorities

in North and Central Essex on behalf of Colchester Borough Council.