

# EPHING FOREST LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE

## NOTICE OF MEETING

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping      **Date:** Thursday, 22nd March, 2012

**Room:** Council Chamber      **Time:** 7.30 pm

**Democratic Services Officer:** Rebecca Perrin (The Office of the Chief Executive)  
Tel: 01992 564532 Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

### **Members:**

#### **District Council Representatives:**

Councillors K Angold-Stephens (Chairman), R Morgan, B Rolfe, B Sandler and Mrs P Smith

#### **Local Council Representatives:**

Clerks and Chairmen/Members of Parish and Town Councils

#### **County Council Representatives:**

Members for the following divisions:

North Weald and Nazeing:	Councillor A Jackson
Loughton Central:	Councillor C Pond
Ongar and Rural:	Councillor G McEwen
Epping and Theydon Bois:	Councillor Mrs J Whitehouse
Buckhurst Hill and Loughton South:	Councillor V Metcalfe
Chigwell and Loughton Broadway:	Councillor J Knapman
Waltham Abbey:	Councillor Mrs E Webster

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**PLEASE NOTE THE START DATE OF THE MEETING**  
**COFFEE/TEA WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FROM 7.00**  
**P.M IN THE MEMBERS ROOM**

### **1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION (Pages 5 - 8)**

1. This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking.

2. The Chief Executive will read the following announcement:

“This meeting will be webcast live to the Internet and will be archived for later viewing. Copies of recordings may be made available on request.

By entering the chamber's lower seating area you consenting to becoming part of the webcast.

If you wish to avoid being filmed you should move to the public gallery or speak to the webcasting officer"

Please note that a pilot exercise to webcast future Local Councils Liaison Committees was agreed at the last meeting on Thursday 3 November 2011.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**3. MINUTES (Pages 9 - 16)**

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on Thursday 3 November 2011 (previously circulated).

**4. LOCAL PLAN (Pages 17 - 20)**

(Assistant Director Policy & Conservation) To consider the attached report.

To be noted that a series of presentations for District, Parish and Town Councils would be arranged by the EFDC Planning department over the next few months regarding the Local Plan, with a standing item for the Local Plan at each Local Councils Liaison Committee.

**5. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS**

To discuss the following matters raised by Local Council's:

(1) Update - Invite to County Councillor Mrs Tracey Chapman, Portfolio Holder and/or County Councillor P Channer, Deputy Portfolio Holder for Highways to speak on Highways issues, principally the North Essex Parking Partnership.

At the meeting of the Local Council's Liaison Committee on 21 July 2011 members requested that the County Council Portfolio Holder for Highways be invited to speak and answer questions on Highways issues, principally the North East Parking Partnership. An invite was subsequently sent to County Councillor Mrs T Chapman who responded that she could not attend the committee meeting on 3 November. An invite was also extended to the Deputy Portfolio Holder for Highways, County Councillor Mrs P Channer, who also could not attend. Officers attempted to approach the North Essex Parking Partnership for a representative to attend the Committee but this was felt not to be feasible. At the request of the committee invites had been passed again to these County Councillors to attend this meeting; however they are unable to attend.

(2) New Standards Regime

Councillor S Jackman to update the committee.

Parish and Town Councils to note the Repeat Session - Localism Act 2011 - Briefing on New Standards Regime that will be held at the Civic Offices on Friday 23 March 2012 at 7 p.m. (Please contact Kim Partridge to confirm attendance 01902 564443).

**(3) Improved Representation**

Branch members were concerned that the successful future of the Local Council Liaison Committee (LCLC) depended on improved representation from Parish Council members. Branch requested that the LCLC give consideration to arrangements for future consultations with a view to increasing Parish/Town Councils' attendance.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Thursday 5 July 2012 at 7.30p.m. and then on the following dates:

- (a) Thursday 8 November 2012 at 7.30p.m., and then on;
- (b) Thursday 7 March 2013 at 7.30p.m.

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**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PROTOCOL FOR WEBCASTING OF  
COUNCIL AND OTHER MEETINGS**

## **Introduction**

The Council has agreed that certain meetings should be the subject of live web transmission ('web casting'), or recorded for subsequent transmission. Fixed cameras are located within the Council Chamber for this purpose and there is a mobile unit for use in other locations

This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of web cast meetings and to ensure that in doing so the Council is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Accordingly the following will apply to all meetings to be web cast by the Council:-

## **Main provisions:**

1. The Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to request the termination or suspension of the webcast if in the opinion of the Chairman continuing to webcast would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.

This would include:

- (i) Public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
- (ii) Exclusion of public and press being moved and supported;
- (iii) Any other reason moved and seconded and supported by the Council/Committee or Subcommittee.

2. No exempt or confidential agenda items shall be webcast.

3. Subject to paragraph 4 below all archived webcasts will be available to view on the Council's website for a period of six months. Council meetings are recorded onto DVD, which will be stored in accordance with records management procedures.

4. Archived webcasts or parts of webcasts shall only be removed from the Council's website if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information.

If the Monitoring Officer has decided to take such action she must notify all elected Members in writing as soon as possible of her decision and the reasons for it via the Bulletin

Council expects the Chair of the Council and the Monitoring Officer to ensure that Council meetings are conducted lawfully. Therefore, Council anticipates that the need to exercise the power set out above will occur only on an exceptional basis.

5. Any elected Member who is concerned about any webcast should raise their concerns with the Head of Research and Democratic Services

## **Agenda Front Sheets and Signage at Meetings**

On the front of each agenda and on signs to be displayed inside and outside the meeting room there will be the following notice:-

### **WEBCASTING NOTICE**

**Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site - at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.**

**You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.**

**Therefore by entering the Chamber and using the lower public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for web casting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the upper council chamber public gallery area**

**If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Senior Democratic Services Officer on 01992 564249.**

## **Meetings of the Area Plans Subcommittees, District Development Control Committee, Licensing Committee and other 'Quasi Judicial' Hearings**

In any correspondence notifying applicants, supporters or objectors of the meeting date on which an application will be heard, the following advice will be included if the particular meeting has been chosen to be web cast:-

"Please note that Council meetings may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Authority's Internet site. If you do not wish the hearing of your application to be filmed, please contact the Senior Democratic Services Officer to discuss their concerns. The Council will not film speakers if they do not wish to appear in the webcast"

## **Conduct of Meetings**

At the start of each meeting to be filmed, an announcement will be made to the effect that the meeting is being or may be web cast, and that the Chairman may also terminate or suspend the web casting of the meeting, in accordance with this protocol. This will be confirmed by the Chairman making the following statement:-

"I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet and will be capable of repeated viewing.

If you are seated in the lower public seating area it is likely that the recording cameras will capture your image and this will result in the possibility that your image will become part of the broadcast.

This may infringe your human and data protection rights and if you wish to avoid this you should move to the upper public gallery."

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## EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Date:** Thursday, 3 November 2011 **Time:** 7.30 - 9.45 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic  
Offices, High Street, Epping

**Members  
Present:**

**Representing Epping Forest District Council:**

Councillor(s): R Morgan, B Rolfe, Mrs P Smith and  
Mrs J H Whitehouse

**Other Councillors:**

Councillor(s): J M Whitehouse

**Representing Essex County Council:**

County Councillor(s): G McEwen and Mrs E Webster

**Representing Local Councils:**

Mrs D Borton (Nazeing Parish Council), Councillor E Borton  
(Nazeing Parish Council), R Balcombe, Mrs S De Luca (North Weald  
Parish Council), B Surtees (Ongar Town Council),  
Councillor Mrs J Bowerman (Matching Parish Council), R E Russell  
(Stapleford Abbots Parish Council), Mrs S Jackman (Ongar Town  
Council), K Avey (Epping Hemnall), Mrs M McEwen (High Ongar,  
Willingale & The Rodings), Mrs P Richardson (Loughton Broadway),  
C Pond (Loughton Central), C Buttlings (Chigwell Parish Council),  
Caves, Mrs V Evans (Epping Upland Parish Council),  
Councillor J Harrington (Sheering Parish Council), Jackman,  
A Middlehurst, Councillor B Miller (Epping Upland Parish Council),  
Mrs L Peters (Moreton, Bobbingworth & the Lavers) and  
Mrs E K Walsh (Loughton Town Council)

**Apologies:** **Epping Forest District Council –**

Councillor(s): K Angold-Stephens

**Essex County Council –**

Councillor(s):

**Parish/Town Councils: -**

Mrs K Canning (Chigwell Parish Council) and R Church (Buckhurst  
Hill Parish Council)

**Officers  
Present:**

D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), J Gilbert (Director of  
Environment and Street Scene), J Preston (Director of Planning and  
Economic Development), P Millward (Business Manager) and  
M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant)

**By Invitation:** County Councillor J Jowers (Portfolio Holder for Communities and Planning)

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## **10. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman took over the Chairmanship and proposed that Councillor C Pond fill the position of Vice-Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor C Pond serve as Vice-Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

## **11. MINUTES**

### Minutes of the Last Meeting:

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 21 July 2011 be agreed subject to the following amendments:

- Councillor Mrs J Whitehouse was representing the County Council rather than the District Council.
- Parish Councillor P Collins was representing the Parish Council rather than Bassett Community Action Group.
- Mrs K Canning, Clerk for Chigwell Parish Council and Parish Councillor R Alvin, Chigwell Parish Council had attended the meeting.

### Matters Arising:

#### **Minute Item 2 Matters Arising**

Members sought clarification regarding requests for work to the North Essex Parking Partnership. The Director of Environment and Street Scene advised that Essex County Council were undertaking three major parking reviews. However enquiries regarding signs and lines should be referred to the North Essex Parking Partnership. However enquiries could also be passed to the Director and Assistant Director of Environment and Street Scene if problems were being experienced.

Members were concerned about parking problems around train stations. The Director of Environment and Street Scene advised that officers have regular dialogue with Transport for London, and London Underground had attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recently and highlighted there was no more capacity on the Central Line at present and therefore additional parking would be counter productive.

#### **Minute Item 3 Demise of Area Forums**

The committee had expressed concern at its meeting in July about the cessation of the Local Area Forums. In attendance at this meeting was County Councillor J Jowers, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Planning who had been invited to the committee to discuss this issue.

**Minute Item 5 Safeguarding Training for Town and Parish Council Staff and Councillors**

The committee had received an invitation for Parish and Town Council staff and councillors to attend Child Protection and Safeguarding training provided by the Council. Currently Loughton Town Council had become involved, the offer was still open.

**Minute Item 6 Queen's Diamond Jubilee – Beacon Proposal**

The committee noted in July 2011 that a request had come in from the Chairman of the County Council that fire beacons would be erected in the district for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. A number of local councils were looking at buying a beacon, Stanford Rivers Parish Council had made their own beacon.

**Minute Item 7 Issues Raised by Local Councils****(2) Article Four Directions and Protection of Conservation Areas**

It was advised that K Polyzoides, Assistant Director of Planning (Policy and Conservation), would chair a forum involving Town and Parish Councils who had an interest in conservation areas. Members advised that the National Planning Framework would be all encompassing. It was important to designate conservation areas quickly before and changes would occur through the implementation of the framework. The Assistant to the Chief Executive would discuss this with planning officers. It was felt that this should be an agenda item for the committee meeting in March 2012.

**(4) ECC Salt Bins – Agreements between EFDC and ECC on winter services**

Members asked when the County would start re-filling salt bins. It was advised that officers would make enquiries and inform Town and Parish Councils.

**12. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS****(a) Invite to County Councillor Mrs T Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Highways to speak on Highways issues and principally the North Essex Parking Partnership.**

At the committee's last meeting on 21 July 2011, members requested that the County Portfolio Holder for Highways be invited to speak and answer questions on highways issues and in particular the North Essex Parking Partnership. Subsequently an invite was sent to the County Portfolio Holder who said that she could not attend this committee meeting on 3 November. An invite was also sent to her Deputy Portfolio Holder, County Councillor Mrs P Channer who also advised that she could not attend. It was advised that officers had attempted to approach the North Essex Parking Partnership for a representative to attend this meeting but the Partnership was unable to provide an officer to attend.

Members requested that the invite should be issued again to the County Council for the Portfolio Holder or her Deputy to attend the committee meeting on 22 March 2012.

**RESOLVED:**

That an invite be sent to the Essex County Council Portfolio Holder, or Deputy Portfolio Holder, for Highways to attend the next Local Council's Liaison Committee on 22 March 2012.

**(b) County Councillor J Jowers, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Planning**

County Councillor J Jowers, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Planning was introduced to the committee. He had been invited to speak on the demise of area forums. He had been a parish councillor at Mersea Island and Leader of Colchester Council.

County Councillor J Jowers accepted that many Town and Parish Councils valued the opportunity to meet with County afforded through the area forums. However, the County Council was required to save a further £340 million and on the basis that the Area Forum cost some £500,000 per annum to administer, it was felt the expenditure could no longer be justified. He went on to explain that the County Council was consulting generally on Essex wide partnership arrangements as a number of districts were no longer proceeding with their Local Strategic Partnerships, however he understood that the Epping Forest LSP was very active. In a response to a question from the Acting Chief Executive Councillor Jowers confirmed that the county would be prepared to contribute £15,000 to the local LSP costs. Councillor Jowers spoke about the proposed locality boards that were being considered involving District and County members. It was explained that a one size fits all approach was not being taken and agreed that the Local Council's Liaison Committee was potentially a blue print for future arrangements in Epping Forest. Councillor Jowers felt that an option paper would be useful. He also went on to say that the Community Initiative Funding for the County (replaced by the Big Society Fund) had been protected and he welcomed applications from local groups.

**RESOLVED:**

That a paper on some of the options being considered for replacing Area Forums should be drafted and circulated to members.

**(c) The Committee received a report from J Preston, Director of Planning and Economic Development, regarding the Draft National Planning Policy Framework Consultation and the views which EFDC had given.**

The proposed National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) involved the deletion of all but one of the current Planning Policy Statements (PPS), all of the current Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG), and a small number of circulars, replacing these with a much shorter single document. The overall intentions were to:

- (a) consolidate and streamline national planning policy reducing bureaucracy;
- (b) promote sustainable economic growth while retaining important environmental and social objectives;
- (c) empowering local communities to do things their way instead of control from central government; and
- (d) more user friendly and accessible, making it easier for the public to have a meaningful say in planning decisions.

The consultation ran from a 12 week period from 25 July to 17 October 2011, there were 13,000 responses to the consultation nationally. The Director warned the members of the challenges to come. A lot of glasshouses in the area might be converted to housing later on for example, some changes to the application of Green belt policy could mean that the council had to have a 5 year supply of land plus an extra 20%.

It was advised that the growth of development was the only reasonable option. However this would cost the council more in resources. The presumption was in favour of sustainable development.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report regarding the Draft National Planning Policy Framework Consultation be noted.

**13. "LOOK AND FEEL" PUBLIC SPACES DRESSING FOR THE 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES**

The Committee received a report from J Gilbert, Director of Environment and Street Scene, regarding the Olympic Games in 2012.

The venue for the Olympic Games canoe and kayak events was at the new White Water Centre located in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. Additionally, one of the two park and ride facilities for the venue would be located at North Weald Airfield and significant parts of the Olympic Route Network (ORN) also passed through the district.

Government money had been made available to host authorities, in this case Broxbourne Borough Council, to "dress" the areas in the immediate vicinity of venues, this was named the Olympic "Look and Feel," and consisted of street decorations such as lamp column banners/flags, bunting, fencing scrims and similar. These decorations were all in prescribed form and design which were found in the "Look Book" published by LOCOG, the organising committee for the London Olympic Games.

The District Council and Broxbourne Borough Council had been working closely to formulate what was called a "Look and Feel" plan, enabling the immediate locality to be dressed. It was advised that the budget from the government did not enable other parts of the district to be included.

The Cabinet, at its meeting on the 24 October 2011 considered a report seeking a funding package enabling towns and parishes to apply for Olympic "Look and Feel" dressing. A community "Look and Feel" package was suggested, comprising of 12 lamp column banners, 10 barrier scrims and 100 metres of bunting, the value being around £3,500. It was proposed that interested local councils would meet half the cost.

It was important that local councils gave this matter urgent consideration. There was a deadline of early December 2011 for ordering the "Look and Feel" decorations in order to obtain them at the cheapest price from LOCOG's provider. Since the "Look and Book" referred to earlier was not and could not be allowed into the public domain, local councils interested in seeing the types of decoration available, would need to achieve this by the same deadline. It was advised that a primary school in Stapleford Abbots, the pupils had received a commemorative coin in connection with the Olympics.

All Parish and Town Council clerks had received a letter from the Director of Environment and Street Scene seeking a response in respect of "Look and Feel."

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the report regarding local councils' consideration to purchase, through joint funding arrangements with the District Council, "Look and Feel" decorations for their area, be noted; and

- (2) That local Councils respond to the initiative to purchase Look and Feel banners etc, as soon as possible but by the latest at the end of November 2011.

#### 14. JOINT USER GROUP FOR IPLAN

The Committee received a report from Mr P Millward, Business Manager for Planning and Economic Development, regarding the Joint User Group for iPlan.

At a meeting of the Essex Association of Local Councils, Epping Forest Branch held at Ongar Town Offices, five Parish and Town Council representatives were nominated to participate in the iPlan User Group. These representatives would be participating in meetings with Planning and Economic Development officers. The first meeting was held on 25 July 2011 between the nominated representatives, the Business Manager of Planning and Economic Development and five officers responsible for different elements of Planning Information. At this meeting the following Terms of Reference were agreed:

- (a) Record and receive feedback regarding any difficulties that Parish/Town Councils experience using iPlan.
- (b) Investigate and report back to the User Group on progress, or the lack thereof, made in resolving difficulties raised in using iPlan.
- (c) Compile an action plan list of all issues raised, order to resolve difficulties raised and identify those issues can only be resolved using additional resources.
- (d) Suggest future improvements to IPlan and Electronic Website Planning Records to assist Parish/Town Councils in moving from paper planning records to greater use of electronic website planning records.
- (e) Invite Parish/Town Councillors, Parish Clerks and other local council staff to participate in work based placements within the Directorate to familiarise themselves with Planning and Economic Development in the District Council.
- (f) Liaise with ICT to enable iPlan to be compatible for use with Google Chrome, Firefox and other recognised internet search engines.

Formalised training on iPlan was not currently possible due to resource implications, it was decided that groups of Councillors and/or staff from Parish/Town Councils to visit Planning and Economic Development to enable them to gain a greater awareness of all planning processes from application stage through to placing planning applications onto the Corporate EFDC website. Five Parish/Town Councils had participated to date. Positive feedback had been received from all participants and it was proposed that further efforts would be made to encourage more local councils to visit the directorate, promoting a greater emphasis on partnership working between local councils and the District Council. In addition, the Development Control Team had allocated officers to local councils as appoint of contact for Development Control and planning application matters. Officers have attended parish council meetings in Chigwell, Stanford Rivers, Theydon Bois and Stapleford Abbots in the last few months to discuss matters ranging from pre-application enquiries, permitted development, approaches to considering Green Belt household extensions and validating requirements/concerns of plans.

The committee thanked P Millward for his work with local councils assisting them with iPlan.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report regarding the Joint User Group for iPlan be noted.

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members requested that Local Council's Liaison Committee should be webcast. The Acting Chief Executive agreed to investigate this and support a pilot scheme of webcasts.

**RESOLVED:**

That a pilot scheme of webcasts of the Local Council's Liaison Committee take place.

**16. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting of the committee will take place on Thursday 22 March 2012 at 7.30p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**

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## ***Report to Local Councils Liaison Committee***

***Date of meeting: 22 March 2012***

**Portfolio:** Planning & ICT

**Subject:** EFDC Local Plan: Briefing- March 2012

**Officer contact for further information:** Cassandra Polyzoides (01992 564119)

**Democratic Services:** Rebecca Perrin (01992 564532)

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**To update on progress of the Council's Local Plan.**

### **Report:**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

1. As previously reported to Local Council Liaison there have been significant changes to the Planning system, namely the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and subsequent changes to the Planning Regulations outlining how the new Local Plans should be delivered.

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will replace all but one of the current Planning Policy Statements (PPS), all of the current Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG), and a small number of circulars, resulting in a much shorter single document. The overall intentions are to:

- (a) Emphasise the primacy of the Local Plan;
- (b) Consolidate and streamline national planning policy to reduce bureaucracy;
- (c) Promote sustainable economic growth while retaining important environmental and social objectives;
- (d) Empower local communities to do things their way instead of excessive control from Central Government; and
- (e) Make the system more "user friendly" and accessible, so that it is easier for members of the public to have a meaningful say in planning decisions.

3. The draft NPPF introduced the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" but it:
- did not define "sustainable development", instead indicating that economic, social and environmental issues are "key sustainable development principles";
  - was equally unclear about the relative weighting of the new presumption against the retained national guidance on the protection of the Green Belt;
  - advised that (a) plans should be "driven by a search for opportunities to deliver sustainable development, rather than erecting barriers to suppress or prevent it"; and (b) where plans are silent or indeterminate on issues, the presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply

4. In responding to the consultation on the draft NPPF, the Council challenged these (amongst many other) issues and proposed wording to be included in the final version of the NPPF which would address the potential conflict between the presumption and the need to

protect the Green Belt: "When considering a development proposal in the Green Belt which is likely to have a significant effect on any of the five purposes of including land in Green Belts, a planning authority may assume that such a proposed development would not be sustainable under the terms of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, unless it is satisfied that very special local circumstances apply."

5. The National Planning Policy Framework is due to be published sometime between March and April 2012. The same is anticipated for the amended Planning Regulations relating to the preparation of Local Plans, now that local authorities are given the option to prepare a single volume document, which is what this Council has decided to do.

6. There will be a transitional period after publication of the NPPF, during which local authorities will be expected to adopt new Local Plans. Officers believe that this may be 18 months although this has not been made official and may be shorter.

### **Strategic Land Availability Assessment**

7. The Council has appointed consultants to work on the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA), following the consultation on methodology carried out late last year. Nathaniel Lichfield Partners (NLP) has been issued with call for sites responses and EFDC's land terrier information. The consultants have also been asked to review land on the periphery of the existing settlements. The SLAA will help to identify potential sites for housing, employment and retail uses over the Local Plan period (to 2031), and this information will be fed into the Issues and Options document for consultation starting in July 2012.

8. Member briefings on the SLAA are being held in the Council Chamber on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March. There will be an am and pm session and invites were sent out the w/b 12/3. The consultants will be presenting their methodology and findings and it will be an opportunity for local Councils to ask questions and provide comments.

### **Other Evidence Base Work**

9. Over the coming month's consultants will complete studies on a Heritage Review, Carbon Reduction Strategy and an Assessment of Open Space & Recreation Facilities. A more detailed assessment of housing needs for the elderly and other groups will be prepared by officers.

### **District/Town Parish Council briefings/presentations**

10. Two briefing sessions on the Local Plan were given by officers in January to District and local council Members. Another presentation on the progress of the Local Plan and the Issues & Options consultation will be given at the end of June/beginning of July 2012 prior to launching the consultation document. Local Council Members will again be invited to this briefing.

11. Other presentations by consultants on new evidence base documents will be taking place in the upcoming months and a programme detailing dates and times of these briefings will be made available in due course.

### **Appointment of Fortismere Associates**

12. The Council has decided to appoint consultants to assist in the project management of the Council's Local Plan. Fortismere Associates will be reporting to Management Board and Local Plan Cabinet and Cabinet Committees on progress of work.

They have been working with the Forward Planning team (as consultants via the Planning Advisory Service) by offering advice on the timetable and providing a 'critical friend' review of

evidence base documents - to assess whether they are fit for purpose, particularly in view of the on-going changes to the planning system and the abolition of the East of England Plan.

### **Issue and Options Consultation**

13. Work continues on the new population and household projections from the jointly-commissioned Essex Planning Officers' Association study. Officers are continuing to work to a condensed timetable for the new Local Plan, anticipated for submission summer 2013 and are focused at this stage solely on collating and finalising evidence.

14. Consultation on the Issues & Options stage of the Local Plan will run from to end of July 2012 to September 2012. In order to meet the Local Plan delivery deadline it was necessary to keep this summer date and the consultation period may be extended to 8 weeks (from 6 weeks) in order to take into account the main holiday period. The Issues & Options consultation document will not set out detailed proposals for new planning policy, but will identify specific issues, and potential options, for the district over the next 20 years. These will include (i) population and household projections; (ii) strategic distribution of new housing and employment land, and (iii) the information on potential development sites from the SLAA.

### **Preferred Strategy**

15. The Council will take into account the responses made at Issues & Options stage, and any further evidence collected to identify the Preferred Strategy for the district. This stage will include indications of specific land allocations and policies that will be included in the adopted version of the Local Plan.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

16. A letter and email have been issued to town and parish councils regarding Neighbourhood Planning which includes a link to the Rural Community Council of Essex website, where useful information can be found on the preparation of these Plans: [http://www.essexrcc.org.uk/Our\\_work\\_with\\_Communities/Community\\_Led\\_Planning/Information\\_packs/Neighbourhood\\_Planning\\_Guide.aspx](http://www.essexrcc.org.uk/Our_work_with_Communities/Community_Led_Planning/Information_packs/Neighbourhood_Planning_Guide.aspx). The link and information on Neighbourhood Planning are also available on the Council's Local Plan website Planning Our Future: <http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planningourfuture/default.asp>

17. The Forward Planning team will be solely focused on the delivery of the Local Plan until the submission of the Draft Plan to the Secretary of State. Any support for Neighbourhood Planning would therefore only be possible after submission has been achieved.

18. Local councils will of course be involved in the preparation of the Local Plan and the Forward Planning team has issued a questionnaire to town and parish councils to help identify local priorities and opinions on a series of key topics. Officers also intend to meet local councils for one to one discussions and to visit areas and collate local information.

### **Reason for decision:**

None applicable.

### **Options considered and rejected:**

None applicable.

**Consultation undertaken:** Management Board

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: The delivery of the Local Plan is met through a dedicated budget for this piece of work.

Personnel: The delivery of the Local Plan is the sole focus of the Forward Planning team

Land: The Local Plan will determine land allocations for the District to 2031

Background papers: Draft National Planning Policy Framework

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: N/A

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A