

Agenda – Co-operation for Sustainable Development Member Board

6 June 2016 – 6.30pm
([Civic Centre, Harlow](#))

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Chairing of the Co-op. Member Board for the next year
3. Draft notes of meeting of 19 April 2016 – including review of action points
4. Update on Strategic OAN Spatial Options work inc. Transport Modelling – **AECOM / Essex CC**
5. Update on assessment of the Strategic Sites work - **AECOM**
6. Discussion of the three draft Memoranda of Understanding:
 - a. Distribution of OAN across West Essex/East Herts HMA – **Epping Forest DC**
 - b. Transport infrastructure (including J7, J7A & J7) – **Essex CC**
 - c. Epping Forest SAC/Air Quality (particularly re: Epping Forest) – **Epping Forest DC**
7. Expression of interest for capacity funding to DCLG in response to the Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns & Cities Prospectus
8. A.O.B.
9. Dates of next meetings (already booked):
 - 18 July 2016 – 6.30 p.m. Harlow DC
 - 12 September 2016 – 6:30pm Harlow DC

**Co-operation for Sustainable Development Member Board
6 June 2016 (Civic Centre, Harlow)**

Attendance

Members	Officers	Representing
	Phil Drane	Brentwood BC
Cllr Richard Bassett (Chair), Cllr Chris Whitbread	Derek Macnab, Alison Blom-Cooper Sarah King	Epping Forest DC
Cllr Gary Jones, Cllr Bob Brunton	Liz Watts, Kevin Steptoe, Claire Sime	East Herts DC
	David Sprunt, Zhanine Smith	Essex CC
Cllr Jon Clempner, Cllr Danny Purton	Graeme Bloomer	Harlow DC
	Nigel Allsopp Simon Amor	Highways England
Cllr Helen Coombe		LB Redbridge
Cllr Susan Barker	Richard Fox	Uttlesford DC
	Steve Smith	AECOM
	Rob Smith	ATLAS

*** Actions in bold**

1. Apologies received

Broxbourne BC – Cllr Paul Seeby, Martin Paine
 East Herts DC – Cllr Linda Haysey
 Essex CC – Cllr Kay Twitchen
 Epping Forest DC – Cllr John Philip
 Herts CC – Cllr Derrick Ashley, Paul Donovan
 Lee Valley Regional Park Authority – Stephen Wilkinson, Claire Martin

2. Chairing of the Co-op. Member Board

Cllr Richard Bassett explained that he had completed his year as Chair of the Co-op. Board, and as per the Terms of Reference, a new Chair should be chosen for the year ahead. Cllr Linda Haysey had volunteered to be the new Chair. This was agreed unanimously. As Cllr Haysey was unfortunately unable to attend this meeting, Cllr Bassett chaired it in her place.

3. Draft notes of previous meeting (19 April 2016) – including review of action points

The notes were agreed as circulated.

- Sarah King to add potential for new site for Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) to the next Co-op. officer group agenda on 19 May 2016 - *Done, was discussed on 19 May 2016, work ongoing*
- Nigel Allsopp would chase a reply to the enquiry by the Essex CC Cabinet Member to the Minister – *Noted that the Minister has now replied*
- A representative from Highways England (HE) to attend the Co-op. Board on 6 June 2016 - *Done, Nigel Allsopp and Simon Amor in attendance tonight*
- Essex CC Growth Infrastructure Framework (GIF) information to be circulated – *Zhanine Smith gave a verbal update (see A.O.B.)*
- Regarding highways issues, the Co-op. Board would:
 - consider sending a joint letter to the Minister/Local Plans lead official at CLG
 - request a formal response from HE, agreeing to sign up to the MoU supporting the principle of J7A as long as the transport modelling shows a business case exists
 - contact MP/MPs on this issue*This was all followed up via a letter from the West Essex/East Herts Leaders on 27 April 2016 to Highways England - reply was received from Highways England on 5 May 2016. Also see A.O.B.*
- John McGill to amend LSCC Core Area Vision as per Member comments - *Done, John McGill sent an updated draft vision which has been incorporated into the Draft Distribution of OAN MoU*

4. Update on Strategic OAN Spatial Options work & Strategic Sites work inc. Transport modelling

a. Strategic OAN Spatial Options work & Strategic Sites work

- Steve Smith (AECOM) gave a presentation on the Strategic OAN Spatial Options work. He explained that the work was progressing well and would be completed within the next couple of weeks, including identification of the 'best option' for OAN distribution
- It was noted that the title of the third MoU (Epping Forest SAC/Air Quality), was confusing, and should be renamed to make clear that it is about Habitats Regulation matters, regarding sites of European importance (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation like Epping Forest), and the cumulative impacts that more than one authority's growth could have on them. (Non-cumulative impacts and non-European sites would be dealt with at the individual Local Plan level)
- It was noted that James Riley (AECOM) who is doing the HRA work urgently needs the traffic modelling data from Essex CC transport to model air quality impacts, and cannot progress without it. Essex CC officers are chasing their consultants to prepare this data quickly. Progress with the transport modelling may need to be managed by prioritising certain runs
- The 'best option' for OAN distribution as highlighted by all of the Strategic OAN Spatial Options work will be presented to the Co-op. Member Board on 18 July 2016
- It was noted that a joint/co-ordinated press release would be needed for when the four West Essex/East Herts draft Plans go out for representations in November

b. Transport modelling.

- David Sprunt (Essex CC) gave a presentation on the interim results of the transport modelling
- The modelling results being shared were only 'initial', and that the model would have to be tweaked to produce robust outputs (as per standard practice)
- It was noted that the VISUM transport model doesn't necessarily show problems on particular junctions well, so Essex CC has a separate model for that purpose
- The modelling incorporates the assumptions of: J7 improvements, a new J7A being built, and interim improvements to junction 8. The model does not assume a full scale J8 intervention as there is no detailed scheme for a major intervention in place yet
- Essex CC need to work with HE on the timescale for a major J8 intervention, large enough to cope with proposed growth at Stansted Airport. The interim solution incorporated within the model would give enough headroom for approx. 5-10 years' growth. All noted the importance of an intervention at J8, especially as a planning application is expected imminently from Stansted Airport, so officers will need to know what developer contributions will need to be sought
- Essex CC has previously run modelling assuming no new J7A to see the effects (this showed very bad effects on the highway network), but will re-run it as part of the Strategic OAN Spatial Options modelling, to show the consequences of not having J7A
- HE representatives explained that HE is about to start the route strategy process to feed into RIS2, and there is an online tool where stakeholders can record their priorities; this would be a good way of getting J8 on the list. (Essex CC is already responding to this). **David Sprunt to send a link to RIS2 online tool to Sarah King.** *[Note – this link was sent and has already been circulated among the Board].*

5. Discussion of three draft Memoranda of Understanding

a. Distribution of OAN across West Essex/East Herts HMA

Sarah King introduced this overarching MoU, which leads on from the joint SHMA which identified the Objectively Assessed Need in the West Essex/East Herts SHMA area.

This MoU focusses on the OAN level of housing growth, the agreed best option for its spatial distribution (which we do not know yet as the Strategic OAN Spatial Options work is not quite complete), the rationale for the choice of agreed best distribution option, and arrangements for future co-operation and monitoring/delivery. It also includes appendices on governance, the roles of authorities and groups involved, the LSCC 'Core Area' vision, and summaries of technical evidence (SHMA, Strategic OAN Spatial Options work, Transport modelling etc.). Signatories to this MoU will be East Herts DC, Epping Forest DC, Harlow DC and Uttlesford DC. It will also be 'supported by' (but not signed by) Essex CC and Herts CC (as Highways authorities) and Highways England.

Sarah noted that there was an error in the draft as circulated, there is a reference on p32 referring to figures 30-34; this should read figures 16-20. This will be amended in the draft.

b. Transport infrastructure (including J7, J7A & J8)

David Sprunt (Essex CC) introduced this draft MoU, to which the signatories would be Essex CC, Herts CC, Highways England, East Herts DC, Epping Forest DC, Harlow DC and Uttlesford DC. The purpose of this MoU is to help deliver the highway infrastructure needed to support the best option of spatial distribution of the OAN. The key parts of the MoU are section 4 and the appendices, which together detail key highway issues regarding M11 J7 and 7A, M11 J8, and key local highway network improvements such as on the A414 corridor through Harlow, Second Avenue etc. It was noted that the bit on the A120 around Bishop's Stortford had been deleted in tracked changes. This was because those works already have funding allocated. However, all felt that this kind of information should still be in the MoU, but within an 'already funded' section, for clarity.

It was noted that the location of a potential new hospital (relocation of Princess Alexandra Hospital) would have an effect on traffic movement on the network, both in relation to where the new hospital could be, and whether the existing hospital site were to be used for housing etc. Essex CC has included two potential sites for a new hospital in the modelling to assess the effects.

Sustainable transport corridors will be very important in reducing the impacts of traffic on the network. Those proposed so far are a 'north-south' corridor from the Gilston area, through Harlow town centre, to the area south of Harlow; and an 'east-west' corridor along First Avenue and out to the area east of Harlow. These two corridors are thought to be deliverable. If these are to be successful they will need to be written into Local Plans and have political support. David Sprunt added that it would be important for the district councils to work with Essex CC on securing developer funding for highways improvements; this will need to continue after Local Plans are in place.

David Sprunt noted that outside of this MoU, Essex CC is working on another MoU between Essex CC and Highways England that will be more general. Claire Sime added that East Herts DC anticipate having additional MoUs on the rest of their district, as clearly the one being discussed at present is Harlow focussed.

Simon Amor noted that Highways England is committed to working with Essex CC and the West Essex/East Herts district councils to find a way forward for J7A. He acknowledged that this was difficult as the Department for Transport was asking HE to deliver J7 improvements, but J7A is not, at present, funded, so there is a need to lobby the Minister. However one of HE's strategic objectives is to facilitate economic growth, and clearly J7A will do that. HE is happy to assist in bringing forward the data showing the need for J7A.

c. Epping Forest SAC/Air Quality (particularly re: Epping Forest)

Alison Blom-Cooper explained that Amanda Thorn was leading on this draft MoU, and the Conservators of Epping Forest and Natural England are heavily involved as well.

There are two key transport matters that could cause harm to Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The first is how air quality could be impacted by growth in traffic (caused by growth in development). This is modelled using air quality data and transport modelling – the latter of which Essex CC have not yet been able to provide for AECOM due to work pressures. If harm cannot be completely avoided, which is unlikely, then it must be mitigated against. The second key issue is recreational pressure, from people who for example might drive into the forest and park there in order to take walks. This can also create more traffic and thus more harm to the air quality, but it is easier to mitigate against. The first, air quality harm is an HMA-wide issue, as development in another district might still lead to more people driving through Epping Forest. However, the recreational pressure issue is more local to Epping Forest DC and may be handled via an MoU between Epping Forest DC, the Conservators of Epping Forest and Natural England only.

Cllr Barker expressed concern that air quality in Saffron Walden was not included within this MoU. Steve Smith explained that this MoU dealt with air quality issues relating to 'European sites' only, i.e. sites which are designated as being internationally important such as Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation, as these sites have to be assessed under the Habitats Regulations to very strict requirements. Air quality issues not relating to European sites would be covered by each Council's Habitats' Regulations Assessment of their individual Local Plans. AECOM will however make reference to Saffron Walden within their overall report. All present felt that a change in the title of this MoU would be helpful, to reflect what it does and does not cover. **Epping Forest DC to rename this MoU.**

It was agreed that all would send any comments for all three draft MoUs directly to Sarah King by 17 June 2016.

6. Expression of interest for capacity funding to DCLG in response to the Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns & Cities Prospectus – Rob Smith, ATLAS

Rob Smith explained that a new Garden Villages, Towns & Cities Prospectus was issued this year by CLG. The first section is for 'Garden Villages', meaning up to 10,000 homes. Government is seeking expressions of interest for these and is likely to select up to 12 bids by the end of July. The Homes and Communities Agency will handle the criteria and scoring. The Garden Villages section is intended to be for discrete, freestanding self-contained settlements rather than urban extensions.

The second section of the prospectus invites expressions of interest for 'Garden Towns/Cities', meaning over 10,000 homes. Government recognises that this might be in the form of transformational growth, i.e. a place with the potential for a step change in growth which would change its nature. The prospectus does not define what a garden city should be but general principles would be things like high quality green infrastructure, sustainable transport, good design, potentially including self or custom building etc. Government wants bids to be locally led and is probably only looking for a couple of schemes each year. They will be looking for long term planning, i.e. more than a Local Plan period, but also would want some tangible outcomes of growth within 5 years.

If a bid were to be successful it would provide enabling funding, e.g. for capacity support and officer time. Funding is usually given via a lump sum at the start, then a lower level retainer every year. Any funding would also come with CLG's support in brokering with other Government departments, it would likely make getting capital investment in infrastructure much easier, and it might help get priority access to the Planning Inspectorate etc. in plan making matters.

East Herts DC, Epping Forest DC and Harlow DC officers have been drafting a bid document with ATLAS's help, seeking capacity funding from CLG, under the 'Garden Towns/Cities' section of the prospectus. If CLG awarded funding, then it could be used for e.g. a joint strategic delivery team, or dedicated resources in individual authorities, or masterplanning and infrastructure planning.

It was agreed that **Rob Smith would arrange a meeting between CLG and East Herts DC/Epping Forest DC/Harlow DC officers** to discuss the bid [*Note – this meeting took place on 1 July 2016*], in terms of the level of growth the authorities are trying to provide through their Local Plans, and what funding they would seek. Uttlesford DC officers noted that although Uttlesford DC is not currently proposed as part of the bid, they would support such a bid.

7. A.O.B.

- Highways matters – A meeting has been arranged with Transport Minister Andy Jones for 8 June 2016, at which Members and officers would stress the importance of highways infrastructure to deliver growth in the West Essex/East Herts area. They would be seeking support in principle for funding for M11 J7, the new J7A and J8. – [*Note - Meeting with Minister took place on 8 June 2016 and was thought helpful and positive, the Minister took on board everything presented*]
- Essex Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF) – Essex CC has commissioned AECOM to prepare this. It will not replace individual Infrastructure Development Plans. The GIF will assess the current position on education, highways, emergency services etc., then look at the infrastructure needed to meet future proposals for growth. The baseline work should be complete in June/July

2016 and the final report in Aug/Sept 2016. **Sarah King to circulate GIF presentation, and ask Essex CC to present the GIF findings at the September 2016 Co-op. Member Board.**

- Membership of the Co-op. Board - Essex County Cllr John Spence is the new Essex CC representative on the Co-op. Board, with Essex County Cllr Mick Page as his deputy on the Board

8. Dates of next meetings (already booked):

- 18 July 2016 – 6.30 p.m. Harlow DC
- 12 September 2016 – 6:30 pm Harlow DC