

## APPENDIX 4

### DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2006-2010 – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Ref	Respondent	Respondent's Comment (Summary)	Response/Action Proposed
1.	Nazeing Parish Council	<p>(a) Throughout the Plan there are a number of references to the special character of the district and the Green and Unique issues. In particular the point is made that the majority of the district lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Included in the Local Plan Alterations are replacement chapters in relation to the Green Belt and Housing. The Green Belt policies make it clear that, except in specified circumstances, planning permission will not be granted for development in the Green Belt. In light of these policies, the Council was extremely surprised to note proposed Action HN1 for increasing the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>This proposal forms part of the Action Plan in Section 10 of the draft Plan, which is regrettably in smaller print than the rest of the document and as a result could easily be overlooked. Had the Local Plan Alterations included a policy along the lines of Action HN1 it would have generated considerable adverse comment. The impression gained by the parish council is that the draft Council Plan is being used as an attempt to circumvent the Local Plan should the occasion arise. This is not an acceptable process.</p>	<p>The smaller print used for the Action Plan section of the draft Council Plan was utilised for issues of space only and is not representative of the final version of the Plan, which will be professionally designed and printed. There is no intention to circumvent Local Plan policies arising from actions contained within the draft Council Plan.</p> <p><b><i>Comment to be considered Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</i></b></p>
2.	Loughton Town Council	<p>(a) Paragraph 11.7 (Page 30) refers to the Loughton High Road Town Centre Enhancement Scheme as an aim, but the scheme is already commenced.</p>	<p>The draft Council Plan was first prepared some months ago and needs to be updated in relation to the progress of the Loughton High Road Town Centre Enhancement Scheme. Relevant text within the draft Council Plan (Paragraph 11.7) has therefore been revised to reflect the commencement of Phases 1 and 2 of the Loughton Enhancement Scheme.</p> <p><b><i>Comment accepted</i></b></p>

		(b) No mention made of Phases 3 and 4 of the Loughton High Road Town Centre Enhancement Scheme. As the Plan covers a four-year period it is essential that Phases 3 and 4 of the Scheme are included or we face the prospect of only half of the High Road enhancement being completed, which would be unacceptable. The Town council urges the completion of all four phases of the scheme as soon as capital receipts permit or by the end of 2009 at the latest.	The timescale for Phases 3 and 4 of the Loughton High Road Town Centre Enhancement Scheme have not yet been agreed by the Council.  <b><i>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</i></b>
		(c) The town council requests the addition of the following:  "We will strive to improve our relations with local councils through formal and informal consultation and by devolving to them (especially the larger councils) services that can be better provided by first-tier authorities".	<b><i>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</i></b>
3.	High Ongar Parish Council	(a) Residents of the district should not be referred to as customers, as we have no choice except to move away.	The term 'customers' is intended to cover all users of the council's services, not just residents of the district. Reference to 'customers' is also considered to be preferable to alternatives such as 'service users'.  <b><i>No action</i></b>
		(b) Consultation should have been delayed so as to incorporate detail in respect of the budget for 2006/07.	The draft Council Plan was developed in advance of the determination of the budget to allow sufficient time for consultation on draft aims and priorities. Details of the budget settlement etc have since been incorporated within the draft document.  <b><i>No action</i></b>
		(c) Six themes and thirty actions – try to cut/combine.	The draft Council Plan (and the annual Best Value Performance Plan) reflects the themes of the Community Strategy, so as to ensure consistency across the high-level plans for the district. The new Council Plan contains far fewer aims, priorities and actions than the current version.  <b><i>No action</i></b>

		(d) Those persons unable to view website or visit the Civic Offices are disadvantaged.	This comment appears to relate to the variety of background information about the district available from various Government and other agency websites, that is used as contextual information. Relevant text within the draft Council Plan (Paragraph 5.1) has been revised to reflect that this type of information can be provided by the Council if required.  <b>Comment accepted</b>
		(e) Aims and priorities. Too many pages to digest, suggest cutting out five pages of achievements.	This comment relates to the most important section of the Council Plan. Public communication of the Council's achievements in priority areas is important to demonstrate improvement and places future aims and priorities in context.  <b>No action</b>
		(f) Action GU1 – insist on appropriate infrastructure for regional growth. Proposed level of affordable housing for key workers is excessive at 500 pa.	<b>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</b>
		(g) Proposed level of affordable housing is too high.	Future affordable housing requirements based on most recent Housing Needs Survey.  <b>No action</b>
		(h) Include commitment to not allowing the provision of a waste incineration facility within the district.	<b>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</b>
		(i) Capital expenditure profile to 2009/10 on housing (£34,226m) and non-housing (£14,502m) seems disproportionate	<b>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</b>
4.	Willingale Parish Council	(a) Given that the district is largely rural, there is insufficient emphasis on rural transport, rural policing and affordable housing in the countryside.	<b>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</b>
5.	C. Beazley MEP	(a) No reference to European Union Structural Funding to assist the delivery of aims and priorities.	Individual streams of external funding other than direct sources have not been set out within the draft Council Plan.  <b>No action</b>
6.	Essex County Council Youth Service	(a) The value of working with a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations could be enhanced.	Relevant text within the draft Council Plan will be revised to give greater prominence and recognition to the important

			<p>partnership role of statutory and voluntary organisations in the district.</p> <p><b>Comment accepted</b></p>
7.	Loughton CAB	<p>(a) The addition of the following to proposed action HN2(c):</p> <p>‘.....and to work with partner agencies to tackle homelessness’.</p>	<p>Relevant text within the draft Council Plan (Action HN2(c)) has been revised to incorporate this comment.</p> <p><b>Comment accepted</b></p>
		<p>(b) Greater recognition of the contribution made by the voluntary sector in working towards and achieving the Council’s proposed priorities is required.</p>	<p>Relevant text (Paragraphs 2.12, 2.13) within the draft Council Plan has been revised to give greater prominence and recognition to the important partnership role of statutory and voluntary organisations in the district.</p> <p><b>Comment accepted</b></p>
8.	City of London Corporation	<p>(a) Greater recognition of the contribution made by agencies such as the City of London Corporation, the LVRPA and the Essex Wildlife Trust in maintaining the natural environment of the district.</p>	<p>Relevant text (Paragraph 2.6) within the draft Council Plan has been revised to give greater prominence and recognition to the important role of other agencies in maintaining the natural environment of the district.</p> <p><b>Comment accepted</b></p>
9.	Voluntary Action Epping Forest	<p>(a) There are almost no references to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and the significant role it plays in the district. Both Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) and the wider VCS work in partnership with the Council and is funded to help deliver the Council’s aims. As an example, the VCS is omitted from the Council’s list of partners</p>	<p>Relevant text (Paragraphs 2.12, 2.13) within the draft Council Plan have been revised to give greater prominence and recognition to the important partnership role of VAEF and voluntary sector organisations in the district.</p> <p><b>Comment accepted</b></p>
10.	Churches Together in Epping and District	<p>(a) Affordable housing in this area is an area which Churches Together in Epping &amp; District (CTED) is concerned about. We have a representative of the Churches’ National Housing Coalition on CTED, receive regular updates via our meetings and we were addressed on this issue by Tony Barker, at our AGM last September. Another area which we are proud to be associated with is The Box in Epping High Street, which as you probably know, is funded and run entirely by local Christians. Now approaching its first anniversary of opening, The Box has gained excellent local</p>	<p>These comments appear to have no direct relevance to the draft Council Plan. It is recommended that the interest of CTED in the work of the Local Strategic Partnership be referred to the LSP for consideration.</p> <p><b>No action (for Council Plan)</b></p>

		<p>standing and is widely seen as making good provision for teenagers, including the marginalised.</p> <p>Having seen mention of the Local Strategic Partnership in the document, it is our understanding that there should be a Faith Representative for the area on the partnership. Could you tell us who that is? We have looked at the related websites but cannot see a list of members of the LSP. It would be our concern as CTED that there is regular communication with the church bodies when it comes to plans for the area.</p>	
11.	Anonymous (1)	<p>(a) There is a need to keep the public more in the picture than you have been doing up to now. Over the last five years I have not gained any information directly from the Council about what progress is being made on various items that affect all of us. In most instances one has to rely on the local press and if it were not for them most of the actions taken by the Council would not be known to a lot of residents.</p> <p>For instance, the Harlow Plan, East of England Plan, Blunts Farm fiasco, health centre in North Weald to name a few. It should be possible to have a news section on the website that would enable people to be able to obtain up to date detail on subjects that affect them. To this end, it would be an idea if the council were to ask people what topics they would like to be able to access and these should remain until finalised.</p> <p>You propose a room in the council offices in which this detail should be available in one form or another, that is acceptable, but not to those of us in the southern area and surrounding villages, hence the web form. Some topics appear in the local press then disappear, for example the suggestion that a health centre would be built in North Weald in conjunction with the houses on the old parade ground of the airfield. Nothing further is written about this. The Forester is not big enough to include the various local issues but the website would.</p> <p>My feeling is that one does not have any chance of putting forward ideas that conflict with the views of heads of departments and that proper consideration is not given when some complaints are made.</p>	<p>These comments appear to have no direct relevance to the draft Council Plan and it is recommended that these matters be referred to the Customer Services, Media, Communications and Information Technology Portfolio Holder and the Head of Research and Democratic Services for consideration.</p> <p><b>No action (for Council Plan)</b></p>

12.	Anonymous (2)	<p>(a) Reference to the Council's views/relationship with the unelected East of England regional body needs to be included, along with references to government moves for a regional structure that could lead to the demise of the Council, and the restructuring of Primary Care Trusts.</p> <p>Any building in the Green Belt needs careful assessment and monitoring. Need to restrict 'buy for let' in housing 'hot spots'. The existing graffiti removal service is excellent, but more is needed to be done to combat fly posting. More needs to be done in relation to the cleaning of out of town roads.</p>	<p><b><i>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</i></b></p>
13.	Staff (1)	<p>(a) The East of England Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy) is going to be one of the biggest influences on the future of the district. It proposes 11,000 new homes in the period up to 2021 (Para 7.3 rightly identifies that this will create an increase of over 20% of the number of houses in the district), along with land for employment purposes. Sufficient weight has not been attached to the importance of this document in framing Council's priorities over the coming years. For example, 'Section 5 – Our Key Influences' does not recognise the East of England Plan as an influence, despite the impact it is likely to have. Similarly, the government's 'Sustainable Communities Plan', which is driving the growth in the East of England Plan, has not been referenced and would usefully add some context.</p> <p>The outcome of the East of England Plan will have an impact on all of the objectives proposed by the draft Council Plan, and I suggest that Para's 2.4 and 4.2 are extended to include further information about the proposals of the East of England Plan. It would be particularly helpful to point out that the proposals of the draft East of England Plan are very likely to have an impact on the objectives of each of the identified themes.</p> <p>The implementation of the growth proposals (if they remain as per the current draft East of England Plan) will be locally unpopular, but will also require significant resources and possibly joint working with other neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>There are several issues that could helpfully be identified in the Council Plan that may have an impact on the Council's future</p>	<p><b><i>Comment to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</i></b></p> <p>The Head of Planning and Economic Development has the following views in relation to these comments:</p> <p>To the extent that the view seems to encapsulate the new administration's emphasis, there may be merit in adopting the points being made. However, other commentators have made points concerning the length of the draft Council Plan, and previous planning input had sought to make points as brief bullets rather than repeat other documents. I think these additions fall foul of the brevity criterion.</p> <p>The Local Strategic Partnership coined the term Economic Prosperity, and I still do not see that it is for the Council Plan to seek to change that. I had sought to make the point more simply by suggesting that on page 41 that the following was added at the end of the first bold paragraph;</p> <p>The Government are suggesting that these documents are called Sustainable Community Strategies in future.</p>

		<p>priorities. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• possible pooling of developer contributions and government infrastructure finances in order to facilitate the new developments proposed by the East of England Plan;</li> <li>• provision of, and planning for, a new “high quality public transport spine between Epping and Stansted Airport (via North Weald and Harlow);</li> <li>• any future expansion of Stansted Airport; and</li> <li>• the impacts of the Barker Review of Housing Supply and Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing) - which state that areas of high housing demand will be expected to treat any housing figures from the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as a “floor” rather than a target i.e. once the figure in the RSS is reached if there is further demand for development land the Council will be expected to review land allocations and release more land to meet that demand. The delivery of new housing is a government priority, and therefore the requirements of the revised Policy Statement should be recognised.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, section 11 (Economic Prosperity) sets out how the Council wishes to encourage economic success in the district. As comments submitted to the draft Best Value Performance Plan stated, the use of Economic “Prosperity” is unfortunate as this could lead to conflict with the view of central Government that prosperity is achieved through substantial development in areas of high demand, and the Council’s view that the amount of development proposed should be reduced.</p>	
14.	Staff (2)	(a) The draft Council Plan is missing the inclusion of making homes more energy efficient. There are no reference to Local Agenda 21 and not many on sustainable development. Would like to see some reference to small-scale renewables in new developments as this is needed if discussing sustainable development. Only local environmental issues are mentioned and the Plan needs to refer to the bigger picture and mention climate change, as flooding and lack of water are issues that are happening now.	<p><b><i>Comment to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.</i></b></p> <p>The Head of Environmental Services suggests that the Council Plan should include some specific mention of Local Agenda 21 principles and how the Council’s actions locally contribute towards the greater picture.</p>