

MINUTES  
of the  
CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD  
held on 6 November 2025 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor C. Adutwim (Chair)

Councillors I. Fuller, J. Jeapes, S. Manley, M. O'Brien, A. Sosin, C. Tron, R. Whitehead and  
S. Young

Also in attendance:

Cllr R. Moore

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ayres, Davey and Thorpe-Apps. Cllr Tron substituted for Cllr Ayres.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

### 3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

### 4. Public Questions

[Six public questions had been received for Item 5, which can be viewed here.](#) These questions covered proposed site allocations in East Hanningfield and previously submitted comments on sites 11b and 11c in Bicknacre and whether they would need resubmitting. These were answered during Item 5, as detailed below.

[The Green Sheet of amendments for the meeting was noted by the Board.](#)

### 5. Chelmsford Local Plan – Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Documents

The Board were asked to consider a report presenting the Chelmsford Local Plan Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Document and Integrated Impact Assessment: Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Addendum and their approval was sought to publish the documents for a seven week public consultation, starting in late November 2025. The Board

were informed that the previous Regulation 19 consultation in Spring 2025, had been expected to be the third and final public consultation on the draft Local Plan before submission for independent examination in 2025, but since then, several significant events outside the City Council's control had taken place. These had included the Government cancellation of the A12 widening scheme, delays in key sites, other developments slowing down and the Government's new housing target having to be met in full, meaning the Council does not currently have five years of deliverable housing supply.

The Board heard that as a result of this the Council had identified additional housing site allocations for inclusion to improve the Five-Year Housing Land Supply, to help ensure it can be found 'sound' at examination, in addition to the expansion of an existed allocated employment site. The Board were informed that moving the Local Plan submission to mid-2026, would allow time to assess the implications of the cancellation of the A12 DCO widening scheme and to continue discussions with National Highways and Homes England, regarding a revised funding and delivery solution. The importance of only submitting a local plan for examination that the Council felt was sound and ready was emphasised to the Board and as a result, the Council had been keen to resolve the housing land supply issue.

The Board were informed that the Additional Sites Document, focused specifically on additional site allocations, key consequential plan changes arising from the inclusion of the additional sites, the additional sites development trajectories and the evidence supporting them. The Board heard that the consultation would gather feedback on the additional sites and that the consultation would be supported by a wide range of consultation and engagement activities. It was noted that following a consultation, approval would be sought by Cabinet and Full Council to submit the both the Pre-Submission and Additional Sites (Regulation 19) documents for examination by an independent Planning Inspector.

In response to the questions from the public, officers stated that;

- All proposed sites in East Hanningfield aligned with site selection criteria and contributed to the Five-Year Housing Land Supply, were all considered to be equally suitable following assessment, with no overriding constraints, were in accordance with the Spatial Strategy, were in sustainable locations and site 17e was adjacent to a site with extant planning permission.
- If members of the public had new comments to make in relation to the expansion of site 11c, then these should be submitted to the additional sites consultation in the format requested by the Planning Inspectorate, however if they only related to the original site, then the comments did not need to be resubmitted, as previously submitted comments would be submitted to the inspector in full.
- Due to GDPR and the different format of a Local Plan representation, any comments already made to the planning application on site 11c, would need to be made separately to the new Local Plan additional sites consultation
- Site 11b remained in the Pre-Submission Local Plan document and as no changes had been proposed, it would not feature in the new consultation.

In response to questions from the Board, officers noted that;

- There was coverage in the additional sites document on the A12 DCO cancellation and therefore if members of the public wished to comment upon it, they could do so on that in particular, as part of the consultation.
- In preparing the updated evidence base documents that had been prepared, additional highways work and junction modelling had been undertaken, taking into account previously modelled traffic flows from the earlier Regulation 19 Document, the additional sites being put forward for consultation and traffic from neighbouring

authorities. The latest traffic modelling was available within the evidence base on the Council's website.

- The Council were keen to discourage the resubmission of repeated comments, as previously submitted comments would be sent to the planning inspector in full, and comments were being sought on the additional sites. If members of the public wanted to comment on the additional sites and then refer to the pre submission document as it was related, or had cumulative impacts, then they would be able to do so.
- The consultation documents set out the examples of the new and expanded evidence base documents, and it was important to remember that the key test in National Planning Policy was if a traffic impact was deemed to be 'severe' rather than just having an impact. It was noted that the traffic impacts for the Additional Sites detailed were not assessed as severe and in all site policies, there were requirements to mitigate any highway impacts, including specific site policies for sites such as Rettendon Place, with specific requirements to manage impacts at Rettendon Turnpike.

**RESOLVED** that;

1. the publication of the Chelmsford Local Plan Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Document and Integrated Impact Assessment: Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Addendum attached at Appendices 1 and 2 of this report and as set out in the Green Sheet for public consultation in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) be approved.
2. Authority be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for a Greener Chelmsford to: (i) make any necessary minor amendments to the Chelmsford Local Plan Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Document and Integrated Impact Assessment: Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Addendum; and (ii) prepare all necessary documentation to support the planned programme of public consultation.
3. The proposed approach to the Additional Sites consultation arrangements set out in Appendix 3 be endorsed.

(7.02pm to 7.47pm)

## 6. Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) – Autumn 2025 Report

The Board were informed that the SHELAA provided a high-level technical desktop assessment of sites in Chelmsford promoted by developers and landowners. It identified a wide range of site characteristics; highlighted the opportunities and constraints that sites may face; and established the likelihood of future site developability and deliverability. Its purpose was not to allocate land for future development; instead, the assessment technical outcomes were considered alongside other evidence base documents to enable members and officers to make informed decisions on the policies and strategies needed and where to allocate future development.

The Board heard that the latest SHELAA Assessment had been carried out across the Spring and Summer of 2025 and had looked at a total of 398 unique sites, of which 394 had been previously submitted, three were amendments received to them and four sites were new. It was noted that to avoid double counting, the site areas and yields of 75 sites had been discounted and 33 of them had either been allocated in the Local Plan or had an approved planning permission whilst the remaining 42 sites lied wholly within another SHELAA

submission. All sites have been reassessed in relation to flooding and minerals constraints as mapping layers have changed since the last assessment. Other changes to individual site assessments have been made where representations to the Chelmsford Local Plan Regulation 19 (Pre-Submission) consultation detailed agreed errors in the previous assessment. These are set out in an appendix to the report with two typographical errors in the appendix corrected on the Green Sheet. In summary, the Board heard that the findings of the report along with other evidence base documents would help guide the determination of which sites were promoted for allocation in the Pre-Submission Local Plan Consultation to ensure an appropriate land supply was identified to meet need across the Local Plan period.

In response to questions from the Board, officers reemphasised that the document did not allocate sites, instead it was part of a detailed evidence base and aspects such as the impact on highways infrastructure would be considered by other sections of the evidence base. It was also noted that the document did not pre determine if a site would be allocated and was simply a first look at sites, after which the remaining parts of the evidence base would be applied to determine whether a site should be allocated for development or not. Officers also confirmed that the Grey Belt had not been part of the Local plan review or part of Local Plan policies so had not been a consideration in the SHELAA criteria but where relevant will be a consideration at development management stage.

**RESOLVED** that the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Autumn 2025 report be noted and authorised for publication.

(7.48pm to 8.04pm)

## 7. Masterplan Procedure Review

The Board were asked to consider a report detailing a revised Masterplan Procedure and their approval was sought to recommend to Cabinet, the approval and publication of the document as presented in Appendix 1. The Board heard that Masterplans were a development management tool used to ensure well-designed, high quality sustainable developments. The Board heard that the procedure had been in place since 2018, and had not been updated since 2019, despite increased housing government targets and a greater emphasis on Five Year Housing Land Supply, which the updated procedure would assist with.

The Board were informed that the revised Procedure, set out that large and technical schemes would follow the existing masterplan route, less strategic sites with less scope for master planning would utilise a Masterplan/Development Framework with proportionate detail to the proposed development and small, unconstrained and deliverable sites, would require a site brief to be prepared, identifying constraints and opportunities. It was noted that the new procedure detailed the consultation levels for each of the three new routes, along with timetables and it would be underpinned by the Council selecting the route for each site on a case- by case basis, reserving the right to change it for each site. The Board noted that the updated procedure would give flexibility proportionate to the scale and complexity of the proposed development.

In response to questions from the Board, officers noted that the revised procedure would give officers the flexibility to choose the correct route and would allow some more straightforward sites to progress quicker, rather than get held back with other ones. It was also noted that the revised procedure recognised learnings from the previous process and would help speed up sites to assist with meeting housing targets.

**RESOLVED** that the Updated Masterplan Procedure be recommended to Cabinet for approval and publication.

(8.05pm to 8.21pm)

## 8. Review of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement

The Board were asked to consider a report detailing feedback received from the consultation on the revised draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and to recommend it to Cabinet for approval and publication. The Board heard that the Statement set out the Council's strategy for effectively involving the community, interested organisations, statutory stakeholders in planning and development matters which affect them. It was noted that the content had not changed significantly from the current adopted version and that at the September meeting of the Board a draft revised version had been approved for public consultation. It was noted that a four week consultation had been carried out, leading to 20 responses from 13 respondents, which mainly supported the principles of the SCI. The Board noted some minor changes as a result of the feedback, which were listed at Appendix 1, including some additional text relating to Essex County Council functions, details on postal notifications for Planning Policy consultations, links to new consultation bodies and reference to consultation on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

**RESOLVED** that;

1. The Statement of Community Involvement Consultation Draft – Feedback Report (October 2025) be noted and;
2. The Statement of Community Involvement as revised in line with the proposed changes set out in Appendix 1 be recommended to Cabinet for approval and publication.

(8.22pm to 8.27pm)

## 9. Work Programme

The Board considered a report updating them on their future work programme.

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

(8.27pm to 8.28pm)

## 10. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.28pm

Chair