

District Council Report July 2018

PLANNING INSPECTOR CONFIRMS HOUSING GROWTH FIGURE FOR NORTH ESSEX

A planning inspector has confirmed the amount of new houses which need to be built across north Essex over the next 15 years. Colchester Borough and Braintree and Tendring District councils submitted a joint section one to their Local Plans, a blueprint for growth in the area until 2033.

Following a public examination of the Local Plan, a planning inspector has now reported back on the expected housing need for the period. He reported back on other aspects within the Local Plan last month. The inspector backed the councils' submitted figures for housing growth up until 2033 – of 550 new homes each year in Tendring, 716 in Braintree, and 920 in Colchester.

His response on housing figures had been delayed from the rest of the Plan after consideration of a late submission from a developer over Tendring's projected numbers. However, the inspector ruled the councils had accurately predicted housing need based on national guidelines.

Neil Stock, Leader of Tendring District Council, welcomed the inspector's response. "Getting an accurate figure for predicted housing growth is a critical part of the Local Plan, as it sets out how many new homes we need and how quickly we need them. This will provide greater certainty for housebuilders and councils which can only be a good thing," he said. "I am glad the inspector has recognised the amount of work which has gone into this calculation, and that this can provide reassurance to the public that we have not simply plucked a figure out of the air."

Tim Young, Deputy Leader of Colchester Borough Council, said the borough was at the forefront of delivering sustainable growth. "Colchester continues to be a place where people want to live, work, learn and visit, and that is reflected in our housing figure. Having a strong Local Plan in place, which has been prepared in consultation with our residents, is vital to ensure Colchester's housing requirements deliver sustainable developments in the right places and with the right infrastructure. It is not just about housing numbers, but creating great places where vibrant local communities can thrive and prosper."

Graham Butland, Leader of Braintree District Council, said "I am pleased that the Planning Inspectorate agrees with the housing need figures which underpin our Local Plan. We know building new homes is a key priority for the Government. Having a Local Plan allows us to shape where these new homes go, and make sure they are built in sustainable places, rather than where best suits developers."

PUBLIC TO BE ASKED VIEWS ON POLLING ARRANGEMENTS

A consultation begins later this month on where polling districts – and polling stations – are located during elections in Tendring. Following changes by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, Tendring District Council (TDC) is reducing next May from 60 councillors in 35 wards to 48 members representing 32 wards. As a result, TDC's Electoral Services team has looked at the most appropriate places for people to cast their votes during elections, and how the new wards should be split up into polling districts.

Whilst many polling places have remained the same, it has been necessary to introduce some new premises and discontinue using some existing ones. From Monday, July 16, until August 28, everyone will be given the chance to have their say on where they vote. To see the initial proposals and have your say, visit www.tendringdc.gov.uk/council/elections-voting/ from July 16 or view a hard copy at Clacton Town Hall or TDC's offices in Weeley.

Ian Davidson, Returning Officer and TDC Chief Executive, said it was important people reviewed the changes. "Making sure voting is accessible to all is a crucial part of democracy, and it is particularly relevant that we're announcing this consultation during National Democracy Week. I urge everyone to have a look at the proposals and see where they will be voting – subject to any changes following the consultation – from December. I also encourage people to come up with alternative suggestions for their polling arrangements."

CONSTRUCTION TO START ON £5M CLIFF STABILISATION SCHEME THIS SUMMER AFTER PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED

A £5million project to shore up cliffs along the Holland-on-Sea seafront will begin this summer, now planning permission has been granted. The scheme was unveiled last year, and since a public exhibition in October 2017 which showed strong support for the plans, the team has been busy working on various aspects of the project.

Phases one and two focus on the area under the Kings Cliff Hotel, between Hazelmere Road and Queensway. The scheme includes new drainage, sheet piled walls, and an easy access ramp down the cliff. Anglian Water has provided £3m of funding for the project, with the rest coming from Tendring District Council (TDC) and cash left-over from the £36m new beach scheme.

Reptile-proof fencing was installed in March around phases one and two of the scheme, with the animals set to be relocated to nearby slopes before construction begins. A planning application for the scheme was approved by TDC's Planning Committee on Tuesday, June 26th.

The tender process has also now been completed and the winning contractor is JacksonHyder. TDC is in discussion with JacksonHyder about the schedule of works, and more details will be made public shortly.

Construction is scheduled to begin in August, and is expected to be completed late Spring 2019.

Mick Skeels, TDC's Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism, including seafronts, said the cliff stabilisation project was about more than shoring up the slopes. "Of course the main reason for carrying out this work is to stabilise the cliffs, which provide protection to homes and businesses right along this part of the seafront," he said. "However, it also gives us an opportunity to make more general improvements – for example, by making our new beaches even more accessible by making less steep paths."

Members of the public who spot damage to the reptile fencing are asked to report it by calling 01255 686962.

COUNCIL UNITED IN CALLS TO DUAL TENDRING STRETCH OF A120

Councillors have backed calls for the A120 through Tendring to be upgraded to a dual carriageway.

Members of Tendring District Council (TDC) unanimously voted through a motion at full council on Tuesday July 3rd setting out the importance of the works as a matter of urgency.

The motion calls on Essex County Council as Highways Authority to lobby get the works included in the Government's next road funding cycle, RIS2, which will be announced next year. It also pledges the council to gather support from MPs, stakeholders and the wider community for the scheme.

Currently the A120 is single carriageway from Hare Green to Harwich, despite being a route of international significance linking Harwich International Port – a national resilience port – to Stansted Airport.

The section from Horsley Cross to Harwich in particular is of poor standard, and Highways England has confirmed the road is reaching the end of its life. However TDC does not want to see the road simply renewed, but to take the opportunity to upgrade the A120 to a dual carriageway – opening up economic growth in the process. Neil Stock, TDC Leader, welcomed the cross-party support the motion received.

“If we are to be successful in achieving our goal of a dual carriageway A120 right through Tendring, then we must work together and be united,” he said. “Government will not put money into a scheme if it sees political differences as a potential barrier to the project being successfully carried out – what we need to show them is that this is a sensible investment. Upgrading the A120 not only improves a road used by Tendring residents, but is the key to unlocking future growth at Harwich ports, right along the A120 corridor, and for UK PLC as a whole.”