

# **SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY HOUSING ADVISORY GROUP**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2008**

## **Present:**

Leigh Herington	Chairman
Alison Bailey	Regional Assembly
Graham Ashworth	New Forest District Council
Pete Errington	Home Builders Federation
Richard Feasey	Kent County Council
Paul Geehan	South East District Councils
Ian Haynes	Milton Keynes Council
Genevieve Haywood	Regional Assembly
David January	Waverley Borough Council
Chris Kenneford	Buckinghamshire County Council
Sandrine Mathard	Regional Assembly
Catriona Riddell	Regional Assembly
Sharon Smith	Regional Housing Forum Chairperson
Cath Stubbings	Regional Assembly
Paul Treadgold	Demography Sub Group Chairman
Ian Walker	Oxfordshire County Council
Mark Williams	Regional Assembly
Gerry Wyld	Slough Borough Council

## **I Introductions and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Paul Geehan who will share representation of the South East Districts with Tony Stevens.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from: Barbara Compton, Southampton City Council; Barbara Thorndick, West Kent Housing Association; Edward Dawson, SEFS/CPRE; Sunethra Mendis, GOSE; Tony Stevens, South East District Councils.

## **2 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2007 & Matters Arising**

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed. All actions agreed at the meeting had been completed. There were no matters arising.

## **3 South East Plan**

- 3.1 **Proposed Modifications:** Catriona Riddell (Regional Assembly) reported that the Government have stated that that the Proposed Modifications will be

published 'before the summer recess'. It is anticipated that the housing figures will be expressed as minima.

3.2 Anne Milton, MP for Guildford, has received a letter about the timing of the Proposed Modifications from Parmjit Dhanda MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at Department for Communities and Local Government.

3.3 The Advisory Group expressed disappointment at the way in which GOSE have handled publication of the Proposed Modifications.

⇒ **Action: A copy of the letter to Anne Milton, Guildford MP to be circulated with the Minutes.**

3.4 An announcement on new Growth Points is expected by mid-March and on Eco-Towns by the end of March. Short-listed Eco-Towns will be tested through the South East Plan process.

3.5 **First Review:** The Group agreed with the Assembly proposal to establish a small 'task and finish' sub group of the Housing Advisory Group to advise on housing distribution. Membership of the group will be confirmed. The tasks to be addressed by the sub group will include the planned regional work on strategic housing market assessments.

3.5 **NHPAU:** Catriona Riddell reported that NHPAU are holding a series of meetings around the regions to discuss the Unit's methodology for determining housing supply figures. The South East meeting is due to take place on 27 Feb.

⇒ **Action: Assembly officers to report back on the NHPAU meeting.**

#### **4 PPS 3 Task Group Update**

4.1 Mark Williams (Regional Assembly) reported that the Government guidance on windfalls is not clearly understood. Whilst interpretation by inspectors has been varied to date, the PPS 3 transition period is effectively over and a stricter line is now evident. The PPS 3 Task Group is preparing a report on the issue for the Regional Planning Committee. The report will include reference to a letter sent from the Minister to the PUSH authorities.

⇒ **Action: Ian Wright's letter to PUSH to be circulated to the Group.**

4.2 Discussions at the PPS 3 Task Group and with local authorities preparing their LDF core strategies indicated that clarification is needed regarding carry forward of over and under-provision against RPG 9 housing targets 2001-2006. The approach suggested in the Draft South East Plan is a 'clean-slate' at 2006. The matters will be discussed with the GOSE at the next PPS 3 Task Group meeting.

## **5 Demography Sub Group Update**

- 5.1 Paul Treadgold (Demography Sub Group Chairman) reported that the Regional Assembly have commissioned John Hollis to act as their demographic consultant for a further 12 months. Part of John's role is to produce a series of demography briefing notes. Completed notes are available from the Assembly website.
- 5.2 Professor Ludi Simpson will be attending the next Demography Sub Group meeting on 13 March to give a presentation on the POPGROUP projections model. The Sub Group will be exploring alternative options for preparing future projections given the uncertain future of the Chelmer Model and the PHRG at Anglia Ruskin University.
- 5.3 It is understood that CLG are currently considering options for preparing future official household projections now that Professor Dave King's contract has ended.
- 5.4 2006-based sub-national population projections are due to be published in June 2008 following a consultation on the assumptions on internal migration. Those projections will be followed by an equivalent set of CLG household projections. There is no confirmed publication date for the household projections, but Demography Sub Group are working on the basis that the household projections will be published late 2008.

## **6 Gypsies and Travellers Update**

- 6.1 Mark Williams (Regional Assembly) updated the Group on progress with the South East Plan Partial Review on Gypsies and Travellers. He also reported that letters have been sent out to Local Authority Chief Executives with invitations to facilitate the consultation but no responses have been received yet.

## **7 Housing Monitoring Update**

- 7.1 Alison Bailey (Regional Assembly) reminded the Group that a new survey for monitoring provision of affordable housing had been introduced for collection of 2006/07 data. It had resulted in more complete and comprehensive data which had been reported to the Regional Housing Board and would be included in the forthcoming Regional Monitoring Report. The Assembly has commissioned Three Dragons to carry out an evaluation of the survey, including lessons to be learned for collection of 2007/08 data. All local authorities in the region would be invited to attend one of a series of workshops to be facilitated by the consultants. Alison Bailey thanked those members of HAG who had helped to identify venues for the workshops. HAG were asked to encourage their local authority colleagues to use the workshops to feed back on their experience of the 2006/07 survey.

- 7.2 The Regional Assembly will be updating the monitoring geography for its housing surveys. The work has been delayed to await publication of the Proposed Modifications to the Draft South East Plan.
- 7.3 The Regional Assembly is aware of issues relating to monitoring indicators for LAAs, but has found it difficult to engage with GOSE who see no role for Assemblies. The Assembly will continue to press the arguments about appropriate monitoring indicators for LAAs.

## **8 Regional Housing Board Update**

- 8.1 **Regional Housing Strategy:** Cath Stubbings (Regional Assembly) reported that the strategy will be published in April. It will include the RHB work programme.
- 8.2 **Regional Funding Allocation for Housing:** The South East has been allocated £1.372 billion. Although this is a slight increase over the previous funding round, it will not be sufficient to provide the level and mix of affordable housing set out in the South East Plan, let alone the higher levels of provision proposed by the EiP Panel in their report. To help make best use of the funding that is available for affordable housing, the RHB has initiated a programme of initiatives designed to remove barriers to the delivery of affordable housing. These include training for planners on Section 106 agreements, assessing financial viability and negotiation skills.

## **9 IDeA Update**

- 9.1 Cath Stubbings reported that following the IDeA presentations to RHB and HAG, the IDeA programme had gathered momentum in the South East with a large number of events planned. The Regional Assembly will be working with IDeA to ensure unnecessary duplication of effort and to plug any gaps in the programme.

⇒ **Action: Link to the IDeA website to be circulated with the Minutes.**

## **10 Notice Board**

- 10.1 The Assembly has a vacancy for a Regional Planner.

## **11 Other Business**

- 11.1 There was one other matter. The Assembly has received the final draft of Christine Whitehead's report on housing supply and affordability in the South East. The report will be presented at a joint RPC/RHB workshop on 19 March.

**12 Date of next meeting**

⇒ **Action: Genevieve Haywood to check availability for May.**