East of England Local Government Association

Improving the East

East of England LGA Written Statement

Respondent no.1384.
Matter 5
Legal and Procedural Matters
Duty to Co-operate

M5. Irrespective of matter M4, did the Mayor engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis during the preparation of the Plan:
a) with all relevant local authorities and other prescribed bodies in London; and
b) all relevant local authorities and prescribed bodies outside London on strategic and cross boundary matters in the wider South East?

As far as local authorities beyond London in the East of England are concerned:
Examination documents NLP/EX/03 and NLP/PP/007 provide an overview of the engagement that has taken place in relation to the Plan between the Mayor of London/GLA and local authorities/local authority representative bodies in the wider south east. This has involved:

- the GLA engaging with individual local authorities or groupings of local authorities beyond London.
- the wider south east collaboration initiative - comprised of wider south east summits, political steering group and officer working group.

East of England LGA (EELGA) has very much welcomed the engagement that has taken place during the course of the London Plan preparation and is of the view that on the whole it has been active, on-going and in large part constructive. EELGA is committed to continuing to work with the Mayor of London, London Councils and South East England Councils on shared issues of strategic concern and as necessary, issues relating to implementation of the new Plan when it comes into force.

The wider south east summits have engaged a wide range of leading local politicians and helped members from the East of England to raise their concerns and share experiences regarding the London Plan, and other key priorities for WSE collaboration on growth, infrastructure, tackling barriers to housing delivery and related strategic planning.

There are, however, a number of issues where engagement has not been as constructive or productive as we would have liked and unfortunately this has been in relation to those parts of the Plan arguably potentially having most impact within the East of England. EELGA's position on these matters is set out in written statements for relevant matters, each of which proposes a way forward in terms of potential improvements to drafting of policies and supporting text in a way which seeks to address EELGA's concerns and to support the Plan.

These issues are reflected within EELGA's representations on the draft Plan and are:

- Assistance from local authorities beyond London in meeting London's housing needs – there has being ongoing uncertainty in relation to whether and the extent to which the Mayor might seek the assistance of local authorities beyond London in meeting London's housing needs. The consultation draft of the Plan is not clear in relation to the Plan's intentions for dealing with the 1,000 dwelling per annum shortfall between need (66,000 dwellings per annum) and targets (65,000 dwellings per annum).

- Housing delivery failure/Review of the Plan – EELGA has concerns that given the scale of housing growth proposed within the Plan, there is a substantive risk of delivery failure. That delivery failure will put pressure on areas beyond London (for example, in terms of forcing greater out-migration and pressures on local authorities beyond the Capital being asked to make good London delivery failure within their areas). To address this concern EELGA has called for the Plan to be clear that:
    - housing delivery failure within London is a London failure that will be dealt with within London.
    - a review of the London Plan will be instigated to address any substantive housing delivery failure.

  The Mayor of London/GLA has been reluctant to address this issue.

- Wider South East Collaboration/Growth Locations in the Wider South East and Beyond/Willing Partners (Policies SD3 and SD3) – EELGA has been concerned that there is a lack of clarity about the Mayor's intentions in relation to any wider south east role in delivery of the London Plan – for example, about what is being sought from willing partners, are willing partners sought to deliver the 'missing' 1,000 dwellings per annum in the first ten years of the Plan? Are willing partners sought to deliver more of London housing and other growth beyond that 10 year period? EELGA called for a discussion within the wider south east officer and political arrangements on the need to improve this part of the Plan. This has not happened.

- Strategic Infrastructure Priorities - EELGA has worked with partners of the wider south east political steering group to identify strategic transport infrastructure priorities in the wider south east - but only on the basis that these are infrastructure priorities, not growth corridors.

- Excavation waste was included in the Draft London Plan as one of the waste streams for which London would plan to be self-sufficient. However, in the "Draft London Plan Showing Minor Suggested Changes" published in July 2018, all references to excavation waste have been deleted from Policy S17. The supporting text states that this material is "extremely difficult to recycle" and that Circular Economy Statements should be used to demonstrate that the best practicable environmental option is used for the management of this waste stream. This change in policy refers to millions of tonnes of material (as identified in the SLR report Task 2) which could have a significant impact on the waste management strategies of neighbouring authorities if proper consideration is not given to its management routes. This issue has been taken out of consideration through a process that was supposed to address minor changes (the publication of "minor suggested changes"). This change is far from minor. Attempts to discuss this matter with officers of the GLA have been met with a complete lack of engagement. This lack of any engagement over a major issue demonstrates a lack of good faith and a reversal of a previously published position. This cannot be seen as constructive engagement.

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