



Suffolk Coastal District Council
Community Infrastructure Levy Examination
Opening Statement

Thursday 19 March 2015.

I am Cllr Geoff Holdcroft, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and IT at Suffolk Coastal District Council, and thus the Community Infrastructure Levy project falls within my Portfolio.

The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy across Suffolk Coastal is a key priority for the Council and is driven by the need to ensure that the much needed infrastructure and other facilities to support the future development of the district are provided in a timely fashion. The draft Charging Schedule submitted to the Planning Inspectorate has not only been subject to two rounds of public consultation in accordance with the CIL regulations but has also received cross-party political support when these matters were brought before Council.

Elected Members of the Council believe that the only way to deliver the infrastructure and facilities needed across the district is through the introduction of CIL to help deliver the quality of life and sustainable communities that are much needed.

The Council has used independent professional advice from Navigus Planning to determine the extent of infrastructure required across the District to support the delivery of our Core Strategy. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan clearly identifies a funding gap which funds received through CIL will contribute towards.

Alongside the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the Council also commissioned Peter Brett Associates to undertake viability work to determine the level of CIL which strike the appropriate balance between the desirability of funding infrastructure through CIL and the potential effect these charges may have on the economic viability of development across the District.

The Council firmly believes that the charges within the draft Charging Schedule are based on a robust and credible evidence base which has taken into account the best available evidence, and up to date guidance as well as taking cognisance of the unique character of Suffolk Coastal. A range of development scenarios have been tested to provide the local context and to test typical developments which may come forward across the District. The results of this viability work have informed the draft Charging Schedule.

Post April 2015, the Council (like all other local planning authorities without CIL in place) will be faced with pooling restrictions relating to the current arrangements for Section 106 funding. The Council consider these pooling restrictions to be a major risk; making the delivery of essential infrastructure and facilities alongside development very uncertain and potentially undermining the Council's ability to deliver sustainable communities across the district.

Introducing CIL will overcome these pooling restrictions and ensure that the Council (in partnership with other stakeholders and service providers) can bring forward the infrastructure required.

In conclusion; there is very broad support for the Council in the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy, therefore I encourage the Planning Inspectorate to recommend that the Draft Charging Schedule be introduced across Suffolk Coastal when your report is published.

ENDS