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ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP

Meeting Type:	DoO Governance Group Meeting
Date:	12 th January 2026
Venue:	MS Teams
Meeting Chair:	Fern Lincoln (FL) (ESC)
Attendees:	SZC – Rebecca Calder (RC), Mike Humphrey (MH), Roan Morling (RM), Jen Mills (JMi) – Observer, Jessamy Pearce (JP) – Observer ESC – Fern Lincoln (FL), Ellis Rix (ER), John Paul Farthing (JPF) – Observer, Teresa Howarth (TH) – Observer, Heather Fisk (HF) – Observer, Joss Mullett (JMu) – Observer, Tom Cox (TC) – Observer SCC – Kate Watson (KW), Callum Eton
Apologies:	Alexis Corless (ESC)
Meeting Record produced by:	Jessamy Pearce (SZC)
Next Meeting Date:	13 th April 2026

Summary / Key Discussion

Meeting Notes:

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Actions:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
21/07/2025	1	SZC to provide a more accurate estimate of total workers meeting the five-day rule for next workforce survey ahead of the full site access control system being in place.	SZC	Once permanent survey company in place
21/07/2025	2	SZC to share relevant questions on the next Workforce Survey with SCC / ESC in advance, & in reasonable time to allow for response.	SZC	As above
05/11/2025	3	SZC to share contact details for who they are speaking to at ESC regarding the former SZB caravan site.	SZC	ASAP
05/11/2025	4	RC to review and provide further information regarding context of workforce lookahead to the group.	RC	Next meeting
05/11/2025	5	JM to explore whether Implementation Plan can be shared with the Councils' third-party consultants – feedback via Planning Group.	JM	Feedback to Planning Group

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05/11/2025	6	ESC to consider whether to introduce more flexibility into use of bedspaces created by SZC Accommodation Grants such as by allowing them to be utilised by non-SZC workers.	ESC	Next meeting
05/11/2025	7	ER and RC to review data sources to see what can be utilised to inform mitigation delivered under Housing Fund grants.	ER / RC	Ongoing

Review of Previous Actions

- **Action 1:** now have the turnstile data for MCA / ACA and for the workforce survey which was circulated before Christmas, SZC has extrapolated the data up so we are a step further but we are waiting for the final survey company to be appointed and the TCA turnstile data to be available. Hoping contract to be in place for April survey.
- **Action 2:** carry forward.
- **Action 3:** closed.
- **Action 4:** much bigger exercise going in which this will be wrapped up in. JMi working on a monitoring and reporting process with each working group to ensure responsibilities in deed of obligation are all captured and monitored – once in final stages and approved by council representatives this will be shared with the groups and feedback will be requested from each of the groups. Close action for AWG.
- **Action 5:** Planning group have latest copy of implementation plan – discussing how widely this can be shared.
- **Action 6:** to be discussed.
- **Action 7:** as above.

SZC Reporting

- **SZC Update**
 - Nigel Cann new CEO for SZC, Julia has stepped down following successful financial close.
 - 100th apprentice started last month from college.
 - Oxford Economics report published.
 - University of Suffolk study of residents and users of Leiston perceptions of the project published (link available on SZC website) – for accommodation concerns included fear of rising costs and availability of rental market. Currently less issues with accommodation being raised by local residents, complaints more about roads/traffic/ parking but also positive enquiries re job opportunities.
 - First spaces at the Northern Park and Ride now open and Yoxford roundabout should be open for traffic around March.
- **Accommodation Management System**
 - RM provided an update on number of bedspaces advertised (6072 from 1014 separate properties); number of workers registered as accommodation seekers on the AMS (977 - noting this will be more than the total number of non-home-based workers currently on site as seekers are not removed when they leave the project).
 - Advertiser survey sent out to 555 registered providers early December and has now closed, 121 responded (9 of which had received bookings), all at the price they were looking for (6 were less than £50 per night, 1 was between £50 and £75, and 2 were more than £75 per night).
 - Key feedback was lack of bookings and problems with 2 factor authentication but IT have said this should be continued for now unless safer option can be created.

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- TH asked if response rate versus bookings is what SZC expected – RC noted that if accommodation advertisers are happy they may be less likely to respond than if they are unhappy so we cannot extrapolate responses up to calculate total bookings. ER expressed ESC concern with low booking ratios. RC noted that its early days at the moment but SZC are looking at ways to improve the AMS for workers e.g. change already made to enable workers to register as soon as they role on the project is confirmed, rather than at induction.
- RC suggested SZC could do a seekers survey to understand whether workers are booking using the system and if not, why not. ER noted that ESC need people to feel confident in offering accommodation through the AMS, as that is where grant recipients are directed to offer accommodation.
- KW noted possible alternative routes, such as contractors organising things themselves (booking up hotels) and Facebook sites. TH noted that we need to think more about this if other sites and methods are more accessible for seekers perhaps we need to reassess AMS, perhaps compare to Hinkley. RC noted that HPC did not have a comprehensive AMS – the SZC AMS has been provided in response to lessons learnt.

Action – RM to consider seeker survey – share questions with AWG in advance.

- **Project Accommodation**

- Utilisation of Project Accommodation:
 - RM provided an update on the utilisation of project accommodation.
 - 498 Pakefield chalet bedrooms on sale - all refurbished.
 - 99 bookings w/c 9th January 26 (just under 20% of capacity).
 - In discussion with one contractor for 100 room booking for 2-year period; another contractor for 12 rooms for 4-month period. Discussing provision of 130 rooms for Sizewell B during outage period May-July 2026.
 - Pool/sauna now open every evening, indoor gym completed and open every day / evening, snooker room open for use.
 - TH mentioned potential concern with heating in rooms - the rooms have panel heaters; bathrooms have downflow heaters – has there been any issues with warmth/mould/condensation? RM advised that there have not been any complaints about this - the heating is turned on prior to guests arriving. FL said could be helpful to have a regular report on condition of rooms. RM happy to organise a site visit if wanted.

Action – ER/RM to check in every quarter to review any concerns on Pakefield chalet accommodation – could be a site visit. To be arranged/diarised.

- Progress of Project Accommodation:
 - Campus construction underway.
 - Pakefield caravan park application submitted and comments received from ESC. RC said SZC were disappointed with comments, caravans are not for permanent living arrangements – layout based on touring caravan provision was in accordance with pre-app advice from ESC and the LEEIE layout which was agreed as appropriate by ESC and the Secretary of State at Examination. TH noted that there is a meeting set up in February to review between SZC and ESC.
 - CE asked what the intended bedspaces are for each site and where this information is located so there can be transparency. RC confirmed that this is as per set out in the DCO - 3,000 bedspaces, 2,400 on campus and 600 on what was the Land East of Eastlands Caravan Park, subsequently agree with AWG that rather than providing 400 caravan pitches at LEEIE Eastlands, SZC would provide 399 chalet bedspaces at Pontins and 134 caravan spaces at a caravan park in East Suffolk. There are additional bedspaces proposed at Pakefield and on other site to provide additional choice to workers. RC offered additional run through to CE separately.

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- **Other sites**
 - Sizewell B caravan park – could not agree cost with estates team so not expected to progress.
 - Darsham Resorts – ready to submit application, awaiting final internal approval.

Action – JMi to share feedback to Planning Group on why former Sizewell B caravan park did not progress.

- **Workforce Survey**
 - Workforce survey reporting was run through by MH.
 - Results discussed and a number of actions taken for consideration for future surveys – ESC concerned that large number of respondents are not providing temporary accommodation information which the AWG would like to understand particularly versus the DCO, so data showing points of pressure can be relied upon; the response “property provided by employer” should be moved out of the question on accommodation types and put into the question on source of accommodation; school cohort should be reported by year group not nursery, primary, secondary etc; all workforce survey information required should be set out in one place – the ESEWG needs HB / NHB worker split by district.
 - KW concerned this it has been two years since Commencement and Councils are waiting for data - RC noted that the questions are not going to change much more so we are already collecting the data needed under the Deed.
 - SZC is happy to consider requests for changes to data presentation / any gaps the Councils consider are present but asked that comments are made with regard to the commitments in the Deed of Obligation.
 - A discussion was held on the extent to which workforce survey data is useful for future forecasting of school place demand – SZC noted that people may only be on the project for a few years so primary school age children may not still be here to create a demand for secondary school places. KW queried the breakdown of the 18+ group and what their needs may be - RC advised that this group is most likely to be spouses and partners rather than elderly parents.

Action – SZC to share updated workforce survey report with AWG.

Action – Councils to feedback on data provided / presentation, having regard to the Deed of Obligation.

ESC Update

- **DoO Reporting**
 - ER presented expenditure from the Housing Fund under the Private Housing Supply Plan – just under 700k in Accommodation Grants committed and 96 bedspaces delivered so far, of which 59 are in Leiston and 15 in Saxmundham.
 - TH suggesting it would be helpful to have total budget on the slide as well.
- **Planned Delivery**
 - There are currently 104 active enquiries for SZC accommodation grants.
 - The grants process is reviewed on an ongoing basis – the next stage is ensuring bedspaces are filled and if not how best to support landlords. There should be more of an update at the next AWG.
 - A substantial number of enquiries (266) have been closed, primarily due to lack of planning consent, being outside eligible areas for grant consideration or withdrawn.

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- Currently a steady flow so no need for more events at the present time, ER would like to see more minor works grants applications so is looking at how to boost these.
- RC recalled that at HPC the project advertised for people to let out spare rooms - ER will discuss with RM whether this may be helpful.
- *Housing and Homelessness Resilience Funding*
 - Officers have begun proactively working within Leiston based on the dataset funded. Enforcement officer and Technical Officer will continue to utilise this recourse as well as other data and information.
 - Community Engagement has continued, and advice to prospective landlords as well and local agents.
- *Housing Advice Homelessness-*
 - Starting to see increase anecdotally from Citizens Advice (CA) saying more people are coming in asking for advice if landlord gives them notice.
 - Would like a direct clear path for housing needs team to support tenants made homeless to find alternative accommodation as soon as possible in local area.
 - Further assistance needed to secure affordable PRS within impacted areas and section 21 notices are being served within Leiston and surrounding areas.
 - This is being addressed within the review of the PHSP.
 - Clarity has been requested in which areas AWG will consider as impacted by the SZC project.
 - Potential effect of Renter's Rights Act as well as SZC noted. FL advised there was an event on 16 Jan re the Renters Rights Act - attendance from Eastern Landlords Association, Fosters Solicitors. Over 100 attendees so should provide more awareness and will aim to highlight work council are doing with SZC and discussion on homelessness.
 - KW – noted Community Fund gave a grant to CA, asked if there is a formal link between that grant and what we are talking about here. RC - There is not a formal reporting link but ESC / SZC / CA meet monthly - that grant can be used for lots of different things but we don't require them to formally report.
 - ER – housing events to continue every quarter, a colleague from CA attends these also.
 - Need for ongoing review of housing needs / which areas are being impacted noted.
- *Private Housing Supply Plan - Amendments*
 - Two points have been amended – East Suffolk Lettings incentives to have more flexibility and to be able to offer landlord incentives; more financial assistance for people who are potentially displaced from impacted areas. This will be kept under ongoing review.
 - SZC noted they were supportive of the changes to the plan.
 - AWG unanimously agreed amendments.
 - UPDATED PHSP TO BE PUBLISHED WITH MINUTES.
- *Tourist Accommodation Plan*
 - Paper circulated afternoon of Friday 9 January – AC not in attendance but JM happy to try answer any questions.
 - KW noted that she had sent the paper to SCC Tourism Working Group colleague for comments.
 - MH - note seems to be a direction of travel – is the position statement (PS) intended to be the tourist accommodation plan (TAP) or just feeding into it? JM advised that they are separate but related – the TAP will not provide ESC with authorisation for planning matters so the intention is to have the

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TAP approved followed by PS. If the other way round, the AWG may want to make changes to PS which would take a long time.

- There was a discussion on the timings of the PS versus the TAP and whether an interim TAP could be prepared, noting that the PS may be needed to inform what ESC propose spending the moment on. JMi raised the need to be in compliance with the Deed of Obligation – the TAP should be signed off once which triggers initial payment then annually thereafter payments tick over – wording at the moment does not give flexibility. If a different route is being requested, legal advice would be needed.

Action – Comments to be provided to AC on the Tourism Accommodation Plan and meeting arranged to discuss comments to include MJ, KW, CE from SCC.

Actions agreed in meeting:

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21/07/2025	2	SZC to share relevant questions on the next Workforce Survey with SCC / ESC in advance, & in reasonable time to allow for response.	SZC	As above
05/11/2025	3	RC to review and provide further information regarding context of workforce lookahead to the group.	RC	Wrapped into wider data discussions with Councils – close for AWG
05/11/2025	4	JM to explore whether Implementation Plan can be shared with the Councils' third-party consultants – feedback via Planning Group.	JMi	Feedback to Planning Group
05/11/2025	5	ESC to consider whether to introduce more flexibility into use of bedspaces created by SZC Accommodation Grants such as by allowing them to be utilised by non-SZC workers.	ESC	Ongoing
05/11/2025	6	ER and RC to review data sources to see what can be utilised to inform mitigation delivered under Housing Fund grants.	ER / RC	Ongoing
15/01/2026	7	RM to consider seeker survey – share questions with AWG in advance.	RM	Next meeting
15/01/2026	8	ER/RM to check in every quarter to review any concerns with Pakefield accommodation – could be a site visit. To be arranged/diarised.	ER/RM	Next quarter
15/01/2026	9	JMi to share feedback to Planning Group on why former Sizewell B caravan park did not progress.	JMi	Next meeting

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15/01/2026	10	SZC to share updated workforce survey report with AWG.	MH	With meeting minutes
15/01/2026	11	Councils to feedback on workforce survey data provided / presentation, having regard to the Deed of Obligation.	ESC / SCC	By 23 Feb 26
15/01/2026	12	Comments to be provided to AC on the Tourism Accommodation Plan and meeting arranged to discuss comments to include MJ, KW, CE from SCC.	RC	February 2026