

Tendring
District Council



**TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Planning Services

**Core Strategy and
Development Policies Document**

Technical Paper 5 – Key Issues

October 2010

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is the fifth in a series of ten ‘technical documents’ that have been prepared by officers of Tendring District Council to explain the background to the Council’s ‘Core Strategy and Development Policies Document’, an important element of the wider ‘Local Development Framework’ (LDF) for the Tendring district. The series of technical documents comprise:
- 1 – Introduction;
 - 2 – Structure of this Document;
 - 3 – Strategic Context;
 - 4 – Spatial Portrait;
 - **5 – Key Issues;**
 - 6 – Spatial Vision and Objectives;
 - 7 – Spatial Strategy;
 - 8 – Core Policies;
 - 9 – Development Policies; and
 - 10 – Implementation and Monitoring.
- 1.2 These technical documents correspond directly with each of the ten chapters in the Core Strategy and Development Policies Document (hereafter ‘the Core Strategy’) and provide the ‘audit trail’ explaining how different factors, pieces of evidence, events, discussions and decisions have affected the content of the Core Strategy.
- 1.3 In accordance with best practice, we have attempted to keep the Core Strategy itself as slim and succinct as possible. However, given the complexity and the importance of the Core Strategy, particularly in a district like Tendring, we anticipated that a lot of questions would be asked, from a variety of stakeholders, about the rationale behind certain policies and/or proposals. Rather than explaining everything in the text of the Core Strategy which would have increased its length to an unacceptable and potentially unreadable level, we hope that many of the questions raised by different parties are answered somewhere in the text of these technical documents.
- 1.4 This particular technical document provides the background to the list of ‘key issues’ facing the Tendring District as set out in Chapter 5 of the Core Strategy explaining how these issues have been derived from information in the strategic context and spatial portrait (Chapters 3 and 4 of the Core Strategy respectively) and other intelligence.

2. Background

- 2.1 In developing the Core Strategy, the Council is required by Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning¹ (PPS12) to have a clear understanding about the key issues and challenges facing the area. The key issues will form the basis of the rest of the Core Strategy, which will ultimately attempt to address these issues through appropriate policies and proposals.
- 2.2 An understanding of the challenges that face Tendring is the key to forming appropriate policies and initiatives for the future, identifying development opportunities and projects and taking advantage of the many attributes and attractions the district offers. The district has a superb coastline and rural backcloth, containing a number of unique settlements, each with their own characteristics, strengths and individual issues. Therefore by identifying the key issues of the district an understanding of the spatial vision and strategic objectives for the district in particular can be established (see Technical Paper 6 – Spatial Vision and Objectives). In turn, these visions and objectives shape the more detailed policies and proposals which will then guide future development throughout the district. It is important that the whole core strategy remains grounded in the understanding of the key issues and challenges affecting the district for it to be locally distinctive and that these key issues remain the driving force for change.
- 2.3 The purpose of this technical document is to provide the necessary evidence and reasoned justification for set of key issues included in the Proposed Submission draft of the Core Strategy. The remainder of this paper will therefore outline the sources of information that have helped to understand what key issues are relevant to Tendring and ultimately detail why the key issues as listed in the Proposed Submission draft of the Core Strategy have been included as key issues facing Tendring.

¹ PPS12 is available at:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/regionallocal/localdevelopmentframeworks/pps12/>

3. Identifying the Key Issues

3.1 This Chapter sets out in detail how the 'Key Issues' proposed for inclusion in the Proposed Submission draft of the Core Strategy and Development Policies Document were developed. The first stage in developing the key issues involved identifying the main sources of information that were used to identify the key issues facing the district.

3.2 The sources of information included:

- analysis of the Tendring Sustainable Community Strategy – see Technical Paper 6 (Spatial Vision and Objectives);
- an understanding of the unique characteristics of the district – see Technical Paper 4 (Spatial Portrait);
- an understanding of national and regional planning policy and other relevant studies, plans and strategies – see Technical Paper 3 (Strategic Context); and
- the results of the 'Issues and Possible Options' public consultation.

3.3 It was recognised early on that the key issues likely to be included in the core strategy could be split into three main categories:

- Those based on specific problems that need to be addressed – these usually stem from a thorough understanding of the area and its characteristics;
- Those based on opportunities – these usually stem from something that needs to be taken into account (for example a major development that has district-wide implications); and
- Those based on requirements that need to be met – these tend to come from external sources like government (for example national and regional planning policy).

Key issues of local importance – Analysis of the Tendring Sustainable Community Strategy

3.4 PPS12 (Local Spatial Planning) makes it clear that the core strategy should be concentrating on devising a delivery strategy to deal with the particular issues which have been identified as of local importance. In order for the core strategy to be locally distinctive it should be fully aligned with the sustainable community strategy for the area. This technical paper identifies the main planning issues that emerged from a detailed analysis of the Tendring Sustainable Community Strategy (the detail of this analysis is contained in Technical Paper 6 (Spatial Vision and Objectives) which discusses in detail how the spatial vision and objectives section of the core strategy was developed).

3.5 The Tendring Sustainable Community Strategy, published in 2007 and reviewed in 2009, details a number of key issues facing the district. The document is organised around the following six themes which are considered to be the main issues facing the district:

- Weak economy.
- Poor health.

- Children and young people have poor start in life.
- Some areas experience crime and disorder.
- Some areas are deprived.
- Attractive environment that is vulnerable to change.

3.6 Extensive background research was carried out to inform the preparation of the Sustainable Community Strategy to gain a thorough understanding of the district's social, economic and environmental characteristics and the issues and challenges facing the district. Additionally, the Sustainable Community Strategy represents the shared views of the main stakeholders involved in shaping the future of the district and delivering local services in Tendring, which has resulted in a shared understanding of some of the bigger issues likely to affect the district, such as climate change and the economic downturn.

3.7 Looking closely at these six themes it was possible to distil the main *planning* issues to be addressed in the Core Strategy. The following sets out how these six priorities were expanded into a more suitable list of planning issues.

- **Weak economy**

It is agreed that this is also a key planning issue that needs to be addressed through the Core Strategy. Having a weak economy also has an impact on the affordability of housing and results in areas of deprivation. Tendring's weak economy is the result of poor transport links and the fact that the district has an ageing population due to so many young people moving out of the district to more prosperous areas. The proposed port expansion represents a major turning point in the district's economy so it is important it gets underway and is supported by the Core Strategy. Consequently, from this single issue five more key planning can be distilled that should be included in the Core Strategy.

- **Poor health**

Whilst it is agreed why this is a strategic issue in the Sustainable Community Strategy it is not considered to be a major planning issue in its own right. It is considered to be more of a symptom of other issues i.e. deprivation/weak economy and the fact the district has an ageing population.

- **Children and young people have poor start in life**

Whilst it is agreed why this is a strategic issue in the Sustainable Community Strategy it is not considered to be a major planning issue in its own right. It is considered to be more of a symptom of other issues i.e. deprivation/weak economy – which is further exasperated by the high number of young people who choose to leave the district and seek employment in areas with better prospects. This tends to have a negative effect on the quantity and quality of services and facilities for children and young people which is further exasperated by the fact the district has an ageing population. The planning problem therefore is the skewing of local demographics due to people migrating in and out of the district.

- **Some areas experience crime and disorder**

Whilst it is agreed why this is a strategic issue in the Sustainable Community Strategy it is not considered to be a major planning issue in its own right. It is considered to be more of a symptom of other issues i.e. deprivation/weak economy and the fact the district has an ageing population (i.e. higher perceived fear of crime and anti social behaviour).

- **Some areas of the district suffer physical, economic and social deprivation**

It is agreed that this is also a key planning issue that needs to be addressed through the Core Strategy. Deprivation is a very complex issue and often is the underlying cause of many other problems, such as crime and disorder, poor health, weakened economy, poor education, as demonstrated above.

- **Attractive environment vulnerable to change**

It is agreed that this is also a key planning issue that needs to be addressed through the Core Strategy but can be expanded further into two more planning issues (limited brownfield land and climate change and flood risk). The district's attractive environment is essentially under pressure for two key planning reasons. Having limited brownfield land means more greenfield land will be used to accommodate the new homes and jobs the Core Strategy must cater for. Unless sensible decisions are made there is potential for the erosion of the district's attractive environment. Similarly, the threat of climate change means there is the potential for areas of attractive environment to be lost through flooding and coastal change, the effects of which will be exasperated by climate change.

3.8 The above clearly demonstrates that the six strategic themes and priorities for the future of the district contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy are inextricably linked to one another by a complex web of connections and relationships.

3.9 This complexity means that making a change in one area may adversely impact another, even if it is well-intentioned. This demonstrates the sensitivity required by planners when planning for the future of areas affected by a complex web of issues. The preparation of the sustainability appraisal will be an essential tool as it helps to help reconcile any competing objectives to ensure only the most sustainable outcomes are pursued.

3.10 The following key planning issues emerged as a result of the above exercise:

- Areas of deprivation.
- Weak economy.
- Housing need.
- Limited brownfield land.
- Climate change and flood risk.
- Ageing population.
- Attractive environment.

- Weak transport links.
- Proposed port expansion.

Understanding the characteristics of the district

- 3.11 Technical Paper 4 (Spatial Portrait) sets out the characteristics of the district and effectively 'paints a picture' of Tendring as it is now. It sets out in detail the issues that face the district as a whole and also the issues that are only relevant in specific areas in the district (due to the unique geography of Tendring). This is achieved by splitting the district into seven sub-areas that share similar issues and characteristics.
- 3.12 This information is obtained from a wide variety of sources including the Census, existing documentation that was prepared to inform the Local Plan and technical studies prepared specifically to inform the preparation of the core strategy.
- 3.13 Following a careful and thorough analysis of the key findings it was possible to identify the following key planning issues:
- Tendring has an ageing population.
 - There is limited brownfield land.
 - The district has a rich historic environment.
 - The district has an attractive natural environment.
 - Tendring has a weak economy.
 - Many people are poorly educated.
 - Many people have health issues.
 - There is a lack of open space.
 - There are a number of deprived areas.
- 3.14 The above list echoes the list of issues that emerged from looking at the Sustainable Community Strategy for the area. The following sets out how each issue was identified from the information contained in the spatial portrait (see Technical Paper 4).

- **Tendring has an ageing population**

This is because there is a higher than average proportion of people who are 65 years of age or older which is exasperated by the fact there is a lower than average proportion of 25-44 year old residents. This is primarily because young people choose to move elsewhere where there are better employment prospects and improved quality of life.

- **There is limited brownfield land**

This was identified when carrying out an early search of the district's built up areas. This survey found that there is not much brownfield land available for new development unless major redevelopment was proposed, which is unlikely for Tendring. This places more pressure on finding suitable greenfield land around settlements to accommodate the new homes and jobs required in the district.

- **The district has a rich historic environment**

It is recognised that all parts of the district have an element of the built environment recognised for its heritage and conservation value. This is demonstrated by the fact that Tendring has 20 conservation areas and over 1000 listed buildings.

- **The district has an attractive natural environment**

This is demonstrated by the fact that around one third of the district is covered by formal landscape designations and the majority of the district's landscape characteristics are considered to be either moderately or highly sensitive. This demonstrates the need to ensure new development is carefully planned and settlements are carefully managed to prevent the unnecessary loss of the open countryside, quality landscapes and formal designated areas. The problem is exasperated by the fact that the district's more sensitive areas are located around the coast – which is where the district's main urban areas are also located.

- **Tendring has a weak economy**

There are a number of indicators that suggest Tendring has a weak economy. For instance, there is a lower than average population of economically active residents in the district.

- **Many people are poorly educated**

There are a number of indicators that suggest people in Tendring are generally poorly educated compared to people in the rest of the region.

- **Many people have health issues**

Around a quarter of people in the Tendring district suffer from limiting long-term illnesses.

- **There is a lack of open space**

There is nearly a 60 hectare-deficiency in recreational open space in Tendring. This is linked to other issues such as health and quality of life.

- **There are a number of deprived areas**

14% of residents in Tendring live in the most deprived areas in England.

Key issues of national significance set out in national planning policy

3.15 The Council's Core Strategy must be produced in accordance with national planning guidance. This guidance can take the form of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) / Statements (PPS), Government Circulars and Best Practice Guides which cover a variety of planning subjects. The purpose of national planning guidance is to ensure a consistent approach is applied across the country with regards to planning issues of national significance.

3.16 This section highlights the key issues of national significance set out in national policy that need to be addressed by local planning authorities through their LDFs. Technical Paper 3 (Strategic Context) discusses in some detail the specific requirements of national planning policy and how this has influenced the content of the Proposed Submission draft of the Core Strategy. The following provides a summary of the key issues of national significance that will need to be addressed by the Tendring LDF, in particular the core strategy:

- Promoting sustainable development;
- Planning for climate change; and
- Providing new homes and jobs.

3.17 Whilst it is recognised the core strategy should not simply repeat what is already contained in national planning policy, some of the thematic issues are so important and relevant to Tendring they should be included as key issues.

- **Promoting sustainable development**

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) sets out the government's overarching aims and objectives for delivering sustainable development, which has become firmly embedded within the whole planning system and is now recognised as an issue of national and even international significance. PPS1 expects local planning authorities to include policies in their LDFs to promote sustainable patterns of development and encourage sustainable lifestyles. There are many strands to sustainable development such as ensuring economic prosperity, healthy communities, effective use of available land, prudent use of resources and an awareness of the importance of the natural environment. 'Sustainability' therefore is considered to be such an important issue in its own right. However, it is unlikely the Core Strategy will include this as a key issue as the main challenge for local authorities is to understand how to interpret this issue locally. The key issues in the core strategy are therefore more likely to include sub-issues relating to sustainability, that need to be addressed.

- **Planning for climate change**

The PPS1 Supplement (Planning for Climate Change) identifies climate change as another key issue of national significance that local authorities need to ensure is addressed through policies in their LDFs. Policies should seek to encourage the prudent use of resources, support energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. Whilst this issue is important nationally and internationally, it is also important locally – particularly as Tendring is surrounded on three sides by water and its major settlements are located around the coast – which makes the district particularly

vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as increased coastal erosion and rising sea levels. The need to locate development away from areas at risk of flooding and coastal change and ensure development does not worsen the risk of flooding and coastal change is made clear in PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk) and its supplement (Development and Coastal Change).

- **Providing new homes and jobs**

PPS3 (Housing) outlines the need for local planning authorities to ensure that sustainable, affordable homes are provided to create (and maintain) sustainable communities. It is important that the needs of all sectors of society are met, for example the specific needs of young people; elderly people; gypsies and travellers and people living in both urban and rural communities. It is agreed that housing need is therefore a very important planning issue which must be addressed through the LDF in Tendring. The issue becomes a key local issue due to the high proportion of elderly people in the district and the fact Tendring has a large rural heartland and a high need for affordable housing – particularly in the district’s most deprived areas.

PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) sets out policies for economic growth set against the overriding need for economic growth to be sustainable (which can often be overlooked particularly if there are problems with the economy at the local level. There are a number of factors linked to economic growth including transport and infrastructure, which also need to be carefully considered by local authorities preparing their LDFs. PPS4 places greater emphasis on making best use of existing assets when planning for economic growth – for example attractive landscapes, historic built environment, the open countryside to help promote tourism. It also encourages the regeneration of run-down areas and the strengthening of existing centres before seeking new locations in unsustainable locations. The need to plan for sustainable economic growth is particularly important for Tendring – where there are a number of indicators that suggest Tendring has a weak economy and is not performing as well as it should be (i.e. higher than average levels of unemployment and low educational achievement). These problems are exasperated by the geography of the district and skewed demographics – key problems already highlighted earlier on in this chapter.

Key issues of regional significance set out in regional planning policy

- 3.18 Although the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the area (the East of England Plan) has now been revoked by the government, it did help to shape the key issues contained within the Proposed Submission draft Core Strategy prior to its revocation.
- 3.19 Specifically for Tendring, the East of England Plan identified the number of new homes and jobs that were required in the district. It also identified issues relating to strengthening and diversifying Tendring’s economy, highlighted areas in need of regeneration and the need for improved strategic infrastructure within the district. Additionally, the East of England Plan highlighted the potential of tourism and port expansion at Bathside Bay as key opportunities for Tendring – which in turn can be added to the list of key issues.

Other Studies and Strategies

- 3.20 Technical Paper 3 (Strategic Context) discusses in some detail how a number of other studies and strategies have influenced the content of the Proposed Submission draft of the

Core Strategy. From these studies it is possible to highlight a number of new key issues relevant to Tendring that haven't been identified previously:

- The employment study highlights the importance of Bathside Bay for future employment opportunities – in particular the ancillary sectors that could benefit as a result of the port development and the 'knock on effect' such a major development is likely to have on the rest of the district.
- The employment study also highlights the need to improve the district's strategic transport network and infrastructure links – in particular improving accessibility to existing networks and links wherever possible.
- The employment study highlights the potential for the district to improve its tourism product and take advantage of advances in the alternative energy industry and a shift away from manufacturing to increased reliance on the service industry.
- The Council's Regeneration and Tourism strategies highlight the potential to strengthen and diversify the district's economy through tourism – making best use of the district's existing assets wherever possible.
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (and its update) highlights the importance of providing homes for all people, including providing affordable homes, to meet the high demand and need for housing in Tendring.

Results of the 'Issues and Possible Options' public consultation

- 3.21 Between 23 March and 1 May 2009 the Core Strategy Issues and Options Document was placed on public consultation, in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2008. The public were invited to comment on the document, which comprised of a series of questions designed to stimulate debate and get people thinking about the content of the core strategy.
- 3.22 The discussion document contained the following list of proposed key issues which were based on an understanding of the requirements from the strategic context, the facts and figures contained in the spatial portrait and discussions between council officers and key stakeholders involved throughout the preparation of the core strategy:

Key Issues proposed in the Issues and Possible Options Discussion Document:

- **Areas of Deprivation:** Clacton and Harwich are identified as 'Priority Areas for Regeneration' in the East of England Plan as they contain neighbourhoods with severe levels of deprivation where unemployment and ill health are common and where average life expectancy is as low as 70 years. Walton-on-the-Naze is also recognised locally as an area of deprivation.
- **Weak Economy:** Lack of high-paid jobs, higher than average unemployment, low educational achievement and a lack of skills which is most acute in Clacton and Harwich. Higher paid jobs are more abundant outside the district and there is a high level of daily commuting out of the district, mainly to Colchester and London.
- **Housing Need:** There is a significant shortage of affordable housing throughout the district, mainly social rented accommodation. This problem is particularly acute in Clacton and Harwich.

- **Limited Brownfield Land:** The supply of previously developed ‘brownfield’ sites within the district is limited and therefore the majority of new growth will need to be on greenfield land.
- **Climate Change and Flood Risk:** The District is surrounded by the coast and estuaries and many residential and commercial properties lie within areas at risk of tidal flooding; a risk that is expected to increase year on year as a consequence of global climate change. Areas affected include parts of Harwich, Clacton (particularly Jaywick), Walton-on-the-Naze, Brightlingsea, Lawford and St. Osyth parish.
- **Ageing Population:** Tendring is very popular as a place in which to retire; particularly in the areas of Clacton and Frinton. This has led to an imbalance in the population structure which puts pressure on local health services.
- **Attractive Environment:** The area has a wealth of attractive landscapes, areas of historic character and important wildlife designations including Hamford Water and the Colne Estuary which need to be safeguarded.
- **Weak Transport Links:** Strategic transport links within the district are weak; particularly north-south links between the Clacton and Harwich areas.
- **Proposed Port Expansion:** Harwich port has planning permission to be expanded into Bathside Bay which will create a significant number of new jobs in the Harwich area and bring about the potential for associated jobs in industry and warehousing within the area.

3.23 Readers were invited to comment on these key issues and provide other issues they felt should be included in the core strategy. The following provides a summary of the comments received that resulted in changes being made to the proposed key issues. The detailed consideration of all the comments received can be found in the Regulation 25 Consultation Report.

3.24 Many people requested changes that would essentially set out what needs to be done to address each issue. This content is more appropriately contained in the vision and objectives, and more detailed policies that will make up the remainder of the core strategy.

- **‘Weak economy’ key issue**

Many respondents suggested that the weak economy key issue should be expanded to set out why the district has a weak economy compared to neighbouring authorities. On reflection it is agreed and so it is suggested that the issue be reworded to acknowledge that the lack of a strong manufacturing industry, the peripheral location of the district (including poor transport links) and the fact many people choose to leave the district in search of better prospects elsewhere are reasons why Tendring has a relatively weak economy compared to its neighbours. In particular, the key issue should be reworded to reflect that the problems associated with a weak economy are more acute in the district’s coastal towns.

- **‘Housing need’ key issue**

A few people suggested that this key issue should reflect the fact that the district is an attractive retirement destination. It is agreed that the key issue should be reworded to acknowledge that there is a high demand for market housing in Clacton due to many people wishing to retire to the area.

- **‘Limited brownfield land’ key issue**

A number of respondents disputed the fact that there is limited brownfield land in Tendring. The list of key issues is informed by a detailed analysis of the area’s characteristics and the key issues that have emerged from the robust evidence base underpinning the Core Strategy. The key issue will therefore continue to acknowledge that there is a lack of brownfield land in Tendring and that the level of growth required by 2026 will need to be on greenfield land. The key issue should also be reworded to acknowledge that this may involve some negative environmental impacts as a result of the permanent loss of some areas of agricultural land.

- **‘Climate change and flood risk’ key issue**

On reflection, it is proposed to make ‘climate change’ a separate key issue in the Core Strategy. This is to acknowledge the importance and relevance of the issue to Tendring – which is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change to its coastal location in the East of England. The remaining flood risk key issue will be expanded to include the issue of coastal change – which is particularly problematic for Tendring, given it is surrounded on three sides by water.

- **‘Ageing population’ key issue**

Some respondents disagreed with the way the Discussion Document portrayed an ageing population as a negative issue. Whilst it is agreed having an ageing population is beneficial in some respects, it must also be acknowledged that an ageing population generates some negative issues – particularly when combined with the fact that people generally live longer and younger people tend to leave Tendring in search of better employment prospects. The key issue should be reworded to include these issues and state that an ageing population is likely to threaten the district’s long-term economic future.

- **‘Attractive environment’ key issue**

Some respondents felt the key issue lacked reference to the historic built environment. It is therefore agreed that the key issue should be reworded to acknowledge the district’s historic built assets. On reflection, the key issue should be reworded to reflect the fact that the district’s attractive environment is sensitive to the development pressures stemming from new jobs and homes needed to meet local demands and address the social and economic issues facing the district. The importance of the district’s assets to the tourist economy should also be acknowledged.

- **‘Weak transport links’ key issue**

On reflection, the ‘weak transport links’ key issue should acknowledge that the transport problems experienced in Tendring are exasperated by the dispersed nature of the district’s settlements that surround a large rural hinterland (where transport

services are stretched and accessibility is poor) and that problems are mostly caused by people commuting out of the district and people travelling into the district during the summer months. Furthermore, the key issue should be amended to recognise that the rural road links between north and south of the district are particularly poor.

- **'Proposed port expansion' key issue**

A number of respondents felt that there was an over-reliance on the Bathside Bay proposal within the list of key issues. However, the Council must remain optimistic about the delivery of Bathside Bay (and associated upgrade to the A120) in the current economic climate and concede that the timing of the development is now much more difficult to predict. Reword the key issue to reflect the fact that the timing of the development and its benefits will be difficult to predict with any certainty. The key issue should also acknowledge the likely increase in freight will be an impact. One respondent felt that Bathside Bay would result in fewer jobs than anticipated as most of the operations on site will be automated. Whilst an element of the operations at Bathside Bay will be automated the Council is confident about the number of jobs predicted. It is important to remember that the total number of jobs attributed to Bathside Bay also includes jobs generated by port-related activities and ancillary businesses/operations associated with the port. Reword the key issue to acknowledge the wider jobs associated with the port that will be generated.

3.25 The final list of 'key issues' recommended for inclusion in the proposed submission draft of the Core Strategy is contained in Chapter 4 of this technical paper.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 The purpose of this section is to set out the recommended set of 'Key Issues' to be included in the Proposed Submission draft of the Core Strategy and Development Policies Document.
- 4.2 The following Key issues have emerged from an understanding of the issues contained in the district's Sustainable Community Strategy, a detailed analysis of the current state of the district and requirements of national and regional policy and other important plans, strategies and programmes. They also embrace comments received during the Issues and Possible Options period of consultation.

Key Issues recommended for inclusion in the Tendring Core Strategy:

- **Addressing the Economy:** Historically Tendring has a weaker economy than its neighbouring districts largely due to a lack of a strong manufacturing base, its peripheral location and poor transport links. The district particularly suffers from a lack of high-paid, high-skilled jobs, higher than average levels of unemployment, low educational achievement and a general lack of skills. These problems are more acute in the district's coastal towns. Higher paid jobs are generally found outside the district there is a high level of daily commuting out of the district (mainly to Colchester and London) and young people tend to migrate out of the district to areas with better employment prospects.
- **Improving Transport Links:** Although the district is relatively well served by rail, sections of the A133 are frequently congested with high levels of commuting, seasonal traffic and freight movements which impacts significantly on marketing of the district. The rural road links between the north and south of the district are also poor and because the district has a dispersed geography, public transport services are stretched with a consequential reliance on private car use.
- **Tackling the Decline of Traditional Maritime and Tourism Industries:** Historically, the district's urban areas' economies evolved out of their coastal locations and maritime and tourism industries which provided jobs for local people and gave each town a unique identity and purpose. Over the years, these traditional activities have declined leaving behind areas of extreme deprivation and unemployment.
- **Dealing with Areas of Deprivation:** Clacton and Harwich are identified as priority areas for regeneration as they contain neighbourhoods with severe levels of physical and social deprivation. Parts of Jaywick, Clacton Town Centre and Dovercourt are some of the most deprived in the country. Walton-on-the-Naze is also recognised as a deprived area, mainly as a result of its seasonal economy. High levels of unemployment and benefits, poor housing and ill health are typical problems in these areas.
- **Remedying a Shortage of Affordable Housing:** There is a significant shortage of affordable housing throughout the district, mainly social rented accommodation. This problem is particularly acute in Clacton and Harwich where low-incomes and unemployment are major contributing issues to the number of people who cannot afford normal market housing. For Clacton, this problem is compounded by a high demand for market housing with many people moving into the area to retire.

- **Dealing with the Needs of an Ageing Population:** Tendring is a popular retirement destination due to its coastal location, particularly Clacton and Frinton. This popularity, combined with people generally living longer and poor employment prospects for younger people, has led to an imbalance in the population structure of the district putting pressure on local health services and threatening the district's long-term economic future.
- **Addressing Health Inequalities:** Tendring has higher than average levels of long-term ill health and disability which is, in part, related to its ageing population. There is also significant health inequality with life expectancy in some of the district's deprived coastal areas being almost 10 years lower than some of its affluent rural areas. This puts significant strain on local health care provision with many of the required specialist services are only available in Colchester, some 20 miles from Tendring's largest built up areas.
- **Protecting and Enhancing our Attractive Environment:** The district has large areas of unspoilt open countryside and a wealth of attractive natural and historic landscapes including areas of importance to nature conservation, particularly around its coast and estuaries. It also contains many buildings of historic and architectural importance, many of which are found in Conservation Areas. These assets are key to the district's attractiveness and its tourist economy but, at the same time, are sensitive to the development pressures stemming from new jobs and homes needed to meet local demands and address the social and economic issues facing the district. The protection and enhancement of these assets in the face of major growth is a significant challenge for the district.
- **Minimising the Impact of New 'Greenfield' Development:** The supply of previously-developed 'brownfield' sites within the district is limited and therefore the majority of the new growth that is required will need to be on 'greenfield' land. This growth notionally involves some negative environmental impacts as a result of the permanent loss of some areas of agricultural land.
- **Planning for Port Expansion:** A new Container Port is due to be built on Bathside Bay which will create a significant number of new jobs in the Harwich area including associated jobs in industry, warehousing and logistics but will bring about an increase in freight activity. Much of Harwich's economic future is dependent on this development. However, due to the global recession, the timing of the development is difficult to predict with any certainty.
- **Responding to Climate Change:** Whilst climate change is a global issue, coastal areas like Tendring are most likely to be directly affected. Therefore, the district must play its part in reducing carbon emissions to secure a long-term sustainable future.
- **Anticipating Flood Risk and Coastal Change:** Surrounded by water, the district is particularly vulnerable to the threats of flooding and coastal change which are likely to become more serious in the future as a consequence of climate change. The district's main built-up areas are all located around the coast, so many properties lie within areas potentially at risk. These include parts of Harwich, Clacton (particularly Jaywick), Walton-on-the-Naze, Brightlingsea, Lawford and St. Osyth with coastal erosion being a particular issue for parts of Walton and Clacton and their respective tourism-based economies.