



Duty to Cooperate Statement November 2024

Basildon Borough Council

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Statement

- 1.1.1 This Duty to Cooperate Statement sets out how Basildon Borough Council has complied with the Duty to Cooperate during the preparation of the Local Plan. The statement provides detail of all cooperation that has taken place in the Local Plan process and how the Council plans to continue cooperating with other local authorities and public bodies post adoption of the Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 The Basildon Borough Council Local Plan is currently at Regulation 18 stage. The submission of the plan is anticipated in 2026 in line with the Local Development Scheme¹.
- 1.1.3 The statement is supported by Basildon Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)² and the Statement of Community Involvement Addendum for the South Essex Plan³. The statements formalise the proposals for consultation on planning applications, planning appeals, planning enforcement and preparation of Local Plans and other planning policy documents. The Council's Authority Monitoring Report⁴ provides an annual report on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme required under Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

¹ Basildon Council, Local Development Scheme 2024-2026: [Basildon Council - Local Development Scheme \(LDS\) 2021-2023 - 12th Edition](#)

² Basildon Council, Statement of Community Involvement – Third Revision – February 2023 : [Basildon Council - Statement of Community Involvement - Third Revision - February 2023 Edition](#)

³ Basildon Council, Statement of Community Involvement Addendum for the South Essex Plan: [South Essex Authorities - Statement of Community Involvement Addendum for the South Essex Plan - June 2020](#)

⁴ Basildon Council, Annual Monitoring Report 2022 – 2023: [Basildon Council - Authority Monitoring Report - 2016/17](#)

2. Legislative and Policy Context

2.1 Localism Act 2011

2.1.1 The Duty to Cooperate (DTC) was introduced through Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011. This requires local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with other local planning authorities, County Councils and other prescribed public bodies when preparing development plan documents. Compliance with DTC forms part of the independent examination of development plans. In addition to demonstrating that the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the DTC, local authorities must demonstrate how joint working has influenced policy outcomes within the Plan in order for the plan to be found sound and legally compliant at examination.

2.1.2 The Council will need to co-operate with different bodies on different issues. Therefore, the report must clearly identify those organisations we need to work with on strategic and cross boundary issues. As defined by NPPF Paragraph 20, the key strategic and cross boundary issues are:

- a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure, and other commercial development.
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat).
- c) community facilities (such as health, education, and cultural infrastructure); and,
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built, and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2.2 Defining the Prescribed Bodies

2.2.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Part 2: Duty to Cooperate, Regulation 4) prescribes which bodies are subject to the Act:

- Environment Agency.
- Historic England.
- Natural England.
- Homes England.
- NHS.
- Essex County Council (Education, Flood and Waste, Highways Authority).
- The Mayor of London.

2.2.2 The duty also applies to the prescribed bodies below. However, given the strategic issues identified, the Council consider it would be unnecessary and not effective to actively seek cooperation with them, or that the Plan area is not covered by such a body:

- The Civil Aviation Authority.
- The Office of Rail Regulation.
- Transport for London.
- The Marine Management Organisation.

2.2.3 Basildon Borough Council have cooperated with a number of other public bodies including the following:

- Local Town, Parish, Village Councils/members of the Association of Basildon Local Councils (Billericay Town Council, Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council, Great Burstead and South Green Village Council, Little Burstead Parish Council, Noak Bridge Parish Council, Ramsden Bellhouse Parish Council, Ramsden Crays Parish Council, Ramsden Crays Parish Council, Shotgate Parish Council, Wickford Town Council)
- Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (Castle Point Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Brentwood and Rochford Borough Councils, Thurrock Council).
- South Essex Councils: Castle Point Borough Council, Southend City Council, Brentwood and Rochford Borough Councils, Thurrock Council.

2.2.4 There are other local authorities where the Council considers it has a functioning relationship, but engagement is less frequent and limited to Essex-wide forums. These are the other Essex Local Planning Authorities (Tendring District Council, Colchester City Council, Maldon Borough Council, Uttlesford District Council, Braintree Council).

2.2.5 In addition to this, there are historic relationships with the former Thames Gateway growth corridor (London Borough of Havering, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, London Borough of Newham, Greater London Authority) where correspondence now mainly occurs through non-planning mechanisms.

2.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

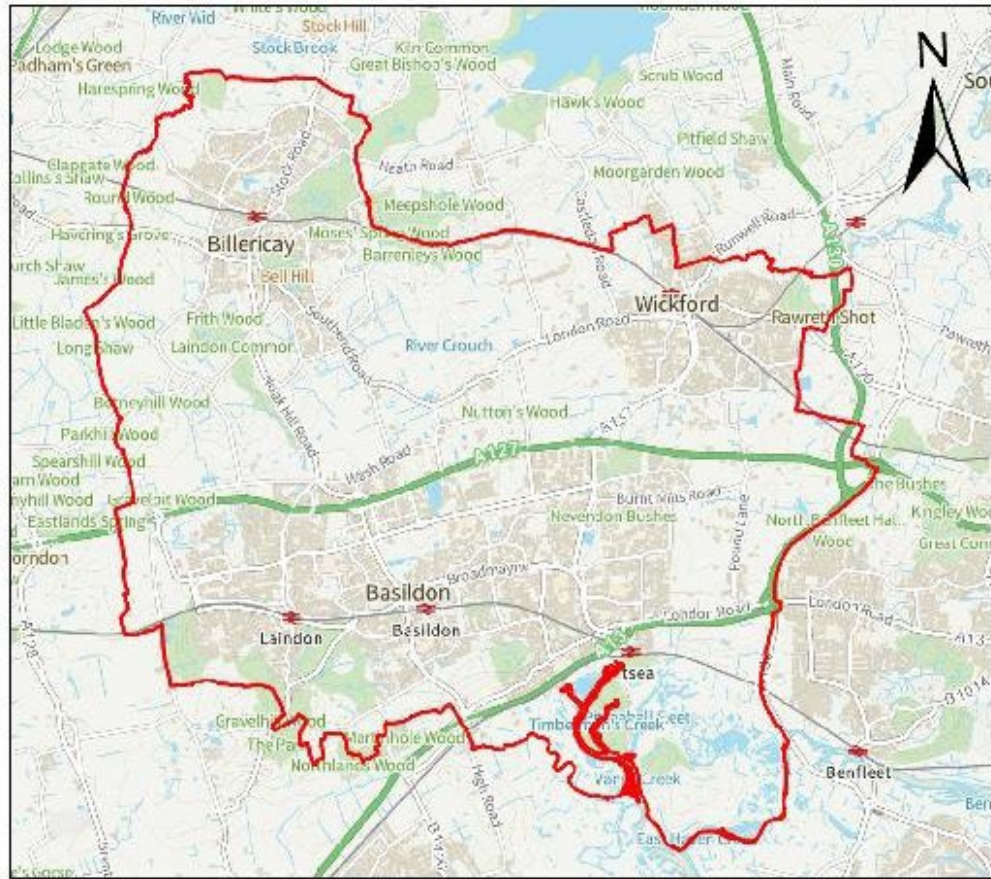
2.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was last updated in December 2023. Paragraphs 24 to 27 outline the Duty to Cooperate and provide guidance on maintaining effective cooperation. Paragraph 27 states the importance of 'preparing and maintaining a statement of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these'.

2.3.2 The framework is accompanied by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which provides the stages for the preparation of Statements of Common Ground. A new consultation draft NPPF was published in July 2024 following the general election and a change of Government. It is expected that an updated version of the NPPF will be published in 2025.


3. Geographical Context

- 3.1 Basildon Borough lies at the heart of South Essex, 30 miles east of the City of London, covering an area of approximately 42 square miles.
- 3.2 The Borough comprises the urban areas of Basildon (including Laindon, Noak Bridge and Pitsea), Billericay and Wickford and the three serviced villages of Bowers Gifford, Crays Hill, and Ramsden Bellhouse. Its main settlements are separated by countryside designated as Green Belt, containing several smaller rural settlements. The Green Belt contains two unserviced villages and thirteen plotland settlements. Basildon is the principal town in the borough and offers the widest range of services and facilities.
- 3.3 Basildon Borough Council falls within the South Essex Housing Market Area.
- 3.4 Figure 1 shows the administrative boundary of Basildon Borough Council, with Figure 2 demonstrating the fourteen wards that are located within the Borough.
- 3.5 Figure 3 shows the wider area surrounding the boundary that Basildon Council works closely with, such as the neighbouring Local Authorities in South Essex.
- 3.6 Figure 4 shows the wider context surrounding Basildon Borough.

Figure 1: Basildon Borough Council Boundary



Legend

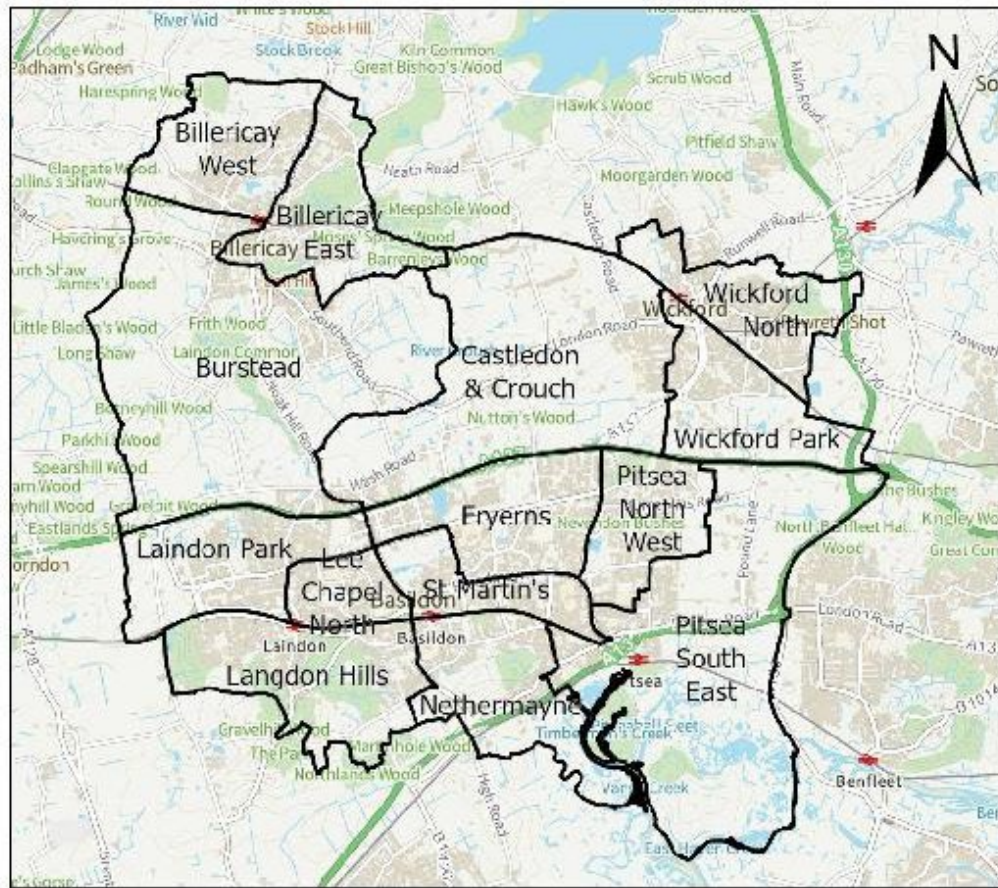
 Basildon Borough Boundary




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Figure 2: Basildon Borough Council Ward Boundaries



Legend

 Basildon Borough Council Wards

1 0.5 0 1 2 3 4
 Kilometers

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Figure 3: Basildon Borough Council Surrounding Local Authorities



Legend

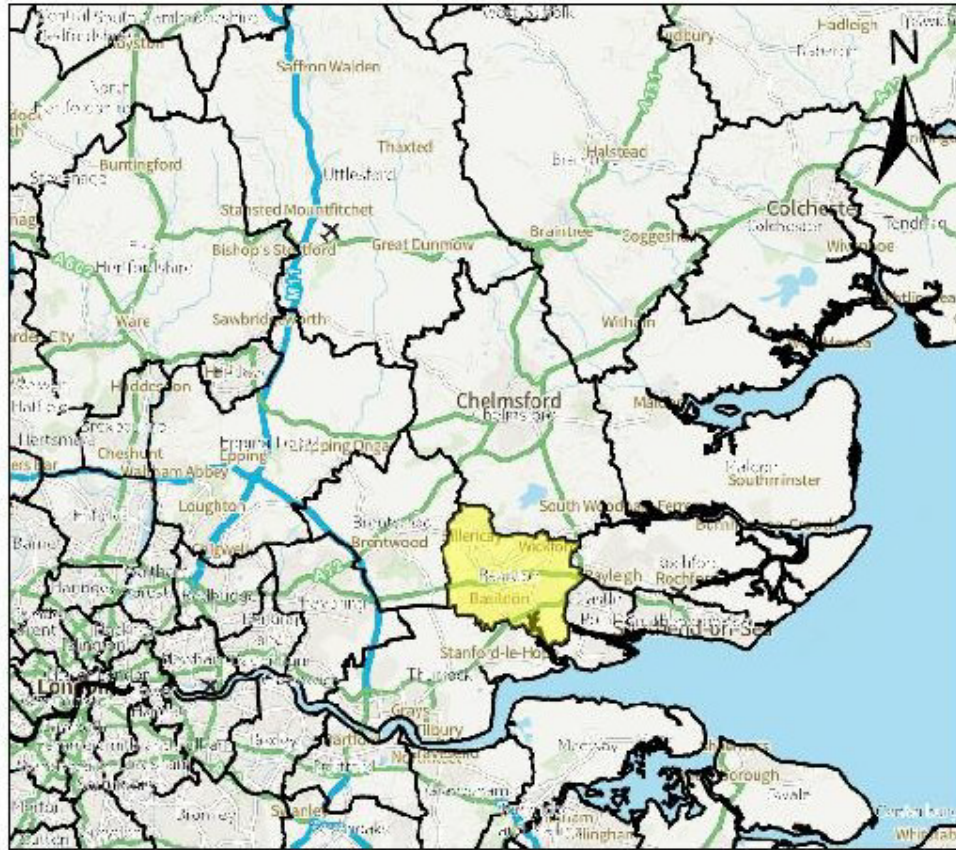
- Basildon Borough Boundary
- Local Authority Districts



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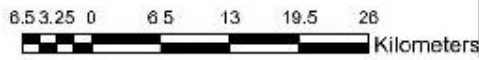


Figure 4: Basildon Borough Council Wider Locational Context



Legend

- Basildon Borough Boundary
- Local Authority Districts



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4. Basildon Borough Council Local Plan Timeline

- 4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all Local Planning Authorities publish and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS's role is to set the timetable for preparing any documents of the Basildon Borough Local Plan.
- 4.2 The Local Development Scheme 2024-2026⁵ has been prepared to reflect changes to the Local Plan work programme since the previous Local Development Scheme was adopted in 2022.
- 4.3 Following on from the Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation that concluded in September 2023, Basildon Borough Council is progressing with the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Consultation.
- 4.4 The Statement of Consultation summarises the Planning Policy and Implementation Team's analysis of the responses to the Regulation 18: Issues and Options Consultation and sets out proposed next steps to develop a draft Local Plan. The summary of key issues and next steps are contained in appendix 3.
- 4.5 Further consultation on the draft Local Plan will follow in 2025. It should, however, be noted that following the submission stage (Regulation 22), the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) is responsible for determining the timetable as PINS appoint Inspectors to hold the Examination. The dates against Regulation 24, 25 and 26 are therefore approximate.

⁵ Basildon Council, Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2024 – 2026: [Basildon Council - Local Development Scheme \(LDS\) 2021-2023 - 12th Edition](#)

Figure 5: Basildon Borough Council Adopted Local Development Scheme 2024-2026

Basildon Borough Local Development Scheme: 2024 to 2026

Stages	Estimated Timescale
Regulation 18 – Preparation of a Local Plan (including consultation)	Consultation Winter 2024
Regulation 19 – Publication of a Local Plan (including consultation)	Consultation early Spring 2025
Regulation 22 – Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State	Submission Summer 2025
Regulation 24 – Independent Examination	From Autumn 2025
Regulation 25 – Recommendation from the Independent Examiner	Received in Spring 2026
Regulation 26 – Adoption of the Local Plan.	Adoption Summer 2026

5. Neighbourhood Planning

- 5.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 (amending the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) as a tool for local people and businesses to shape the development and growth of their local area.
- 5.2 While there are currently no adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) or Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) in the Borough, Basildon Borough Council has been meeting periodically with Local Parish, Town and Village Councils to discuss neighbourhood planning and the strategic matters such as housing and infrastructure that would need to be addressed in the plans. There is one draft NDP under preparation, for Noak Bridge. The Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council has also prepared a draft NDO.

6. Demonstrating compliance with the Duty to Cooperate

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 While the Council regularly meets with different departments of ECC, Basildon Borough Council has also been organising and participating in Duty to Cooperate meetings with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities on cross-boundary matters since it began preparation on this Local Plan in Q1 of 2023.
- 6.1.2 Figure 3 shows the neighbouring Local Planning Authorities surrounding Basildon Council as Castle Point Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Brentwood and Rochford Borough Council and Thurrock Council.
- 6.1.3 The Plan-making process is an iterative one and the Council has worked collaboratively for a number of years with a variety of partner organisations and authorities, stakeholders and infrastructure and service providers throughout the process of preparing the Plan. There is a long history of joint working on strategic planning matters both with Essex County Council and with neighbouring authorities at district and borough level.
- 6.1.4 The Basildon Local Plan process started with the Council hosting an Employment and Economic Development workshop in September 2022 to support the identification of issues and challenges during the early phases of Local Plan development. Appendix 4 provides the report summarising the key issues that were discussed, led by Lichfields, and attended from neighbouring authorities Brentwood Borough Council, Rochford Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Thurrock Council and Southend on Sea City Council.
- 6.1.5 This was followed by the publication of an issues and options draft for a period of consultation from July to September 2023. Appendix 1 sets out a summary of themes from the responses to the issues and options draft consultation stage of the plan.

6.2 Statements of Common Ground

- 6.2.1 A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a record of the progress made by the council and its partners to address cross boundary, strategic planning matters. They document where effective co-operation is taking

place during the plan-making process and identifies expected outcomes.

6.2.2 SoCG are used when the local plan is examined to demonstrate effective joint working across local authority boundaries. They form part of the evidence to show that the Council has complied with the duty to cooperate, and that there is an agreed approach to cross boundary issues between different boroughs.

6.2.3 All the Statements of Common Ground (NB: more than one if applicable) will be published at Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation stage.

6.3 Duty to Cooperate activities undertaken to date.

6.3.1 Activities undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan from the period are summarised in the following sections. Details will be kept up to date as work progresses on the plan.

6.3.2 Basildon Borough Council hosted an Employment and Economic Development workshop to support the identification of issues and challenges during the early phases of Local Plan development. Appendix 4 provides the report summarising the key issues that were discussed, led by Lichfields, and attended from neighbouring authorities Brentwood Borough Council, Rochford Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Thurrock Council and Southend on Sea City Council.

6.3.3 In addition to the ongoing meetings with neighbouring boroughs and bespoke forums, Basildon Borough Council wrote to neighbouring local authorities asking for assistance in meeting Basildon's unmet housing needs. Letters were sent to the following Essex Local Authorities: Braintree Borough Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Colchester City Council, Epping Forest District Council, Harlow Borough Council, Rochford Borough Council, Southend on Sea City Council, Tendring Borough Council, Uttlesford Borough Council, Maldon Council and Thurrock Council. The letter template can be found in Appendix 1 – Request for assistance under the Duty to Cooperate Letters.

6.4 Castle Point Borough Council

6.4.1 Duty to Cooperate Meetings: (Appendices 1a – Schedule of DTC Meetings)

- Quarterly DTC meetings with Basildon Council
- South Essex Joint Officer Group (JOG)

- Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA)
- National Grid Norwich to Tilbury
- Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Biodiversity Net Gain Essex LPA meetings
- Riverside Strategy Meetings

6.4.2 The key issues and outcomes arising from our strategic cross-matters discussions are summarised in Appendices 1a Castle Point Council Duty to Cooperate Statement Meeting Record.

Future Arrangements

6.4.3 Basildon Council will continue to meet with Castle Point Council at quarterly DTC meetings to discuss the progress with each local authorities Local Plan and the cross strategic matters across the borough boundaries.

6.5 Chelmsford City Council

6.5.1 Duty to Cooperate Meetings:

- Quarterly DTC meetings with Basildon Council
- South Essex JOG
- EPOA
- National Grid Norwich to Tilbury
- Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Biodiversity Net Gain Essex LPA meetings

6.5.2 The key issues and outcomes arising from our strategic cross-matters discussions are summarised in Appendices 1b Chelmsford City Council Duty to Cooperate Statement Meeting Record.

Future Arrangements

6.5.3 Basildon Council will continue to meet with Chelmsford Council at quarterly DTC meetings to discuss the progress with each Local Plan and the cross boundary matters and the implications on each local authority. Chelmsford Council have proposed a Statement of Common Ground to be signed by both authorities. Basildon Council will review Chelmsford proposal and action accordingly in subsequent DTC meetings.

6.6 Brentwood and Rochford Borough Councils

6.6.1 Duty to Cooperate Meetings:

- Quarterly DTC meetings with Basildon Council
- South Essex JOG
- EPOA
- National Grid Norwich to Tilbury
- Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Biodiversity Net Gain Essex LPA meetings

6.6.2 The key issues and outcomes arising from our strategic cross-matters discussions are summarised in Appendices 1c Brentwood and Rochford Councils Duty to Cooperate Statement Meeting Record.

Future Arrangements

- 6.6.3 Basildon Council will continue to meet with Brentwood and Rochford Council at quarterly DTC meetings to discuss the progress with each Local Plan and the cross strategic matters. Brentwood Council have proposed arranging a tri-borough meeting between Basildon Council, Brentwood and Rochford Borough Council and Thurrock Council to discuss housing and infrastructure requirements concerning the West Horndon and Lower Langdon development proposals.
- 6.6.4 Basildon Council and Brentwood Council will continue to meet to discuss National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury project, particularly as both Councils share concerns over the viability of any potential housing or employment allocations.

6.7 Thurrock Council

- 6.7.1 Duty to Cooperate Meetings:
- Quarterly DTC meetings with Basildon Council
 - South Essex JOG
 - EPOA
 - National Grid Norwich to Tilbury
 - Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group
 - Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Essex LPA meetings
- 6.7.2 The key issues and outcomes arising from our strategic cross-matters discussions are summarised in Appendices 1d Thurrock Council Duty to Cooperate Statement Meeting Record.

Future Arrangements

- 6.7.3 Basildon Council will continue to meet with Thurrock Council at quarterly DTC meetings to discuss the progress with each Local Plan and the cross strategic matters. Future arrangements to be made to facilitate a set of tri-borough meetings between Basildon Council, Brentwood and Rochford Council and Thurrock Council to discuss a coordinated approach to development around the three borough boundaries. Basildon and Thurrock Council's both welcome continued discussions on GTAA practice and implications for Local Plan development.

6.8 Essex County Council

6.8.1 Duty to Cooperate Meetings (Appendices 1e – Schedule of DTC Meetings)

- Fortnightly DTC meetings with Basildon Council
- South Essex JOG
- EPOA
- National Grid Norwich to Tilbury
- Essex Coast RAMS Steering Group
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Biodiversity Net Gain Essex LPA meetings
- Riverside Strategy

6.8.2 The key issues and outcomes arising from our strategic cross-matters discussions are summarised in Appendices 1e Essex County Council Duty to Cooperate Statement Meeting Record.

Future Arrangements

6.8.3 Basildon Council will continue to meet with Essex Council at fortnightly DTC meetings to discuss the progress with the Basildon Borough Council Local Plan. Essex County Council are instrumental in providing substantive consultation responses as Basildon Council progresses.

7. South Essex Partnerships

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Historically, Basildon Borough has formed part of the five authorities making up Thames Gateway South Essex; now referred to as part of the Thames Estuary Growth Area. South Essex has been confirmed as a Housing Market Area through work on the South Essex Housing Needs Assessment (SEHNA).
- 7.1.2 It was agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the relevant Leaders and Chief Executives in February 2017 that the Council would work with these other South Essex authorities on a Joint Strategic Planning Framework. Since that time, work has been undertaken at a Leader and Chief Executive level to prepare a South Essex 2050 Vision that provides an aspirational framework for better joint working across South Essex, but which now also incorporates Brentwood Borough to the west.

7.2 South Essex Councils (SEC)

- 7.2.1 A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in January 2018, between Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Essex County, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Councils which agreed to jointly work on 'place vision' for the region. The partnership has formed the South Essex Councils (SEC) group, formerly known as the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA).
- 7.2.2 At this stage there is no confirmation from the Joint Committee of the South Essex Councils on its intention to continue work on the Joint Strategic Plan. Progression of local plans in the South Essex area is currently the priority. This could change if joint strategic planning becomes a mandatory part of the development plan system, and likewise may be affected by the outcomes of any possible future Local Government reorganisation.

7.3 South Essex Joint Officer Group (JOG)

- 7.3.1 The Joint Officer Group (JOG) continues to provide an important forum for discharging our Duty to Cooperate obligations, as well as the continued joint commissioning of local plan evidence where this is required.

- 7.3.2 All South Essex boroughs and Essex County Council participate in JOG meetings. These are held monthly, and consider matters of a cross-boundary nature, as well as providing an opportunity to discuss relevant planning matters, including updates on local plan progress.
- 7.3.3 Through indicative discussions at JOG early in the plan preparation process, it became apparent that neighbouring South Essex boroughs would be unable to assist in meeting Basildon's housing numbers in the South Essex Housing Market Area. Historically, all the South Essex partner boroughs have struggled to meet their own housing targets. For example, the Castle Point district is much smaller than Basildon, whereas Brentwood borough is almost 90% Green Belt, while the Southend council area is heavily constrained by the sea. All these areas have challenges in finding available sites to meet their own needs. The fellow South Essex boroughs were also unable to assist in meeting the lower housing target proposed through the previous withdrawn Local Plan.
- 7.3.4 As the Council's urban capacity evidence shows that around 10,000 homes are deliverable on brownfield sites, approximately 47% of the Standard Method requirement – which falls to 37% against the proposed revised method, the Local Plan's spatial strategy would therefore have to propose extensive Green Belt release.
- 7.3.5 The evidence that has been commissioned at South Essex level, including housing market assessments, can be used individually by Local Planning Authorities in the preparation of their local plans where they consider it appropriate to do so.

7.4 Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) - Appendices 1f - Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA)

- 7.4.1 On an Essex-wide level the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) has been working across Essex to develop shared evidence base work such as the Greater Essex Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF), the Essex Unmet Housing Need Protocol and the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This will be expanded to ensure that the need for transit sites can be addressed.
- 7.4.2 Representatives from across Essex have been meeting at EPOA events such as Chief Officer Meetings, Policy Forum, and Urban Design Forum every quarter, discussing a range of cross-strategic matters such as Local Plan progress, National Policy updates, resourcing and other operational matters affecting Local Authorities.

7.5 Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)

- 7.5.1 Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, Local Planning Authorities have a legal obligation to assess the impacts of new development on internationally important wildlife sites and, where necessary, put mitigation measures in place to minimise any harm. Basildon Borough Council is one of twelve partner local planning authorities working together in partnership with Natural England to mitigate habitat disturbance from recreational activities through a series of mitigation measures, which are to be funded by developer contributions from residential development schemes.
- 7.5.2 RAMS seeks to implement a series of positive land and recreational management measures, funded by financial contributions from new development to help mitigate recreational disturbance on European designated sites along the Essex Coastline.
- 7.5.3 Basildon Council has been collecting developer contributions towards the RAMS project since November 2020. Funds are transferred on a quarterly basis to Chelmsford City Council (CCC) who manage and administer all the developer contributions towards RAMS on behalf of all the Essex authorities.
- 7.5.4 Basildon Council meets with the other Essex partner local planning authorities and Natural England through frequent RAMS Steering Group meetings as well as splinter workshop discussions around revisions to the RAMS Tariff. The partnership meetings allow for a cross strategic breakdown of the activities and timeline of the RAMS project, as well as the discussion on potential risks, issues, and opportunities to be fully addressed and discussed.

7.6 Essex Flood Partnership Board and The Executive Flood Officers Group

- 7.6.1 Basildon Borough Council are a member of the Essex Flood Partnership Board and The Executive Flood Officers Group, alongside Essex County Council, Environment Agency, Thames Water, Anglian Water, Essex County Fire and Rescue Services, Braintree District Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Colchester Borough Council, Epping Forest District Council, Harlow District Council, Maldon District Council, Rochford District Council, Tendring District Council, Thurrock Council, Southend on Sea Borough Council and Uttlesford District Council.

7.6.2 The online meetings covered implementation of SuDS, the Essex Capital Flood Programme, Anglian Water and partner updates on related projects and schemes.

7.7 Essex Coastal Forum

7.7.1 The Essex Coastal Forum was established in 2011 following the development of the Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), to seek to ensure the incorporation of that Plan and others into a wider coastal agenda. The Forum includes coastal local authorities, government agencies and key stakeholders that meet three times a year to consider and discuss a wide range of coastal projects and initiatives. Information is also distributed to a wider range of stakeholders who can also ask to attend meetings.

8. Wider Joint Working

8.1 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury

- 8.1.1 National Grid's proposed 400kv grid reinforcement between Norwich and Tilbury. The project was previously known as East Anglia Green. The Norwich to Tilbury (N-T) route is intended to be developed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
- 8.1.2 Norwich to Tilbury (N-T) is a proposal by National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) to reinforce the high voltage power network in East Anglia between existing substations at Norwich Main in Norfolk, Bramford in Suffolk, and Tilbury in Essex, as well as connecting to new offshore wind generation in the North Sea.
- 8.1.3 Since the N-T project was unveiled in 2021, and, in conjunction with the other host Local Authorities in Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk, as well as the relevant County Councils, the Council has repeatedly questioned why the use of overhead pylons is appropriate. The N-T project was the subject of two non-statutory consultation rounds in 2022 and 2023, with a statutory consultation following in 2024.
- 8.1.4 The Council has been working closely with Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council to commission a piece of viability work to assess the impact of overhead pylons on property prices, given the potential questions this creates in terms of the viability of any potential housing or employment allocations which the Council may wish (or need) to make near to Basildon borough's western boundary. The route itself crisscrosses the boundary in between Brentwood and Basildon several times before entering Thurrock and continuing its trajectory southwards to Tilbury.

8.2 Emerging County Wide Strategic Network

- 8.2.1 Basildon Borough Council attended the Emerging County Wide Strategic Network, which was an inception workshop for local authorities within and adjoining Essex, to discuss and prioritise cross boundary Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) routes.
- 8.2.2 A metric was explored to prioritise including but not limited to, condition of pathways, lighting, safety, directness, proximity to existing and future allocations, proximity to education facilities, and proximity to services.

8.2.3 One of the common themes raised throughout discussion was the desire for national guidance in the implementation and creation of sustainable transport infrastructure, including funding streams to assist with such projects.

8.2.4 The result of the meeting saw a positive outlook from all those involved with further workshops for cross strategic matters to be discussed being planned.

9 Government Departments/Agencies and Local Government Associations

9.1 Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

9.1.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is a ministerial department, previously the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

9.1.2 Basildon Council meets with the MHCLG on a regular basis to discuss its Local Plan progress and timetable scheduling.

9.2 Natural England

9.2.1 Natural England is the governmental advisor for the natural environment in England.

9.2.2 Basildon Borough Council has cooperated with Natural England through the RAMS Steering Group, as well as through the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) forum for Local Authorities, which is chaired by the Planning Advisory Service and the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy Supporting Authority meetings.

9.3 Homes England

9.3.1 Homes England is the executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

9.3.2 Basildon Borough Council has cooperated with Homes England on a case-by-case basis concerning funding grant schemes.

9.4 Environment Agency

9.4.1 The Environment Agency are a UK government agency affiliated with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) working to protect and improve the natural environment.

9.4.2 The Environment Agency were a key body supporting the review of the Basildon Borough Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024. Collaboration at meetings with the consultants and Basildon Council, as well as reviewing the documents and models and providing advice effectively supported the production of the work.

9.5 Historic England

9.5.1 Historic England is a non-departmental public body promoting the protection of the historic environment.

9.5.2 Basildon Borough Council has cooperated with Historic England on a case-by-case basis concerning applicable planning applications.

9.6 Planning Advisory Service (PAS)

9.6.1 The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) is part of the Local Government Association and run fourteen projects funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Defra, and Natural England. PAS provide advice, support, and training to Local Authorities.

9.6.2 Basildon Council has met with PAS at the start of Q1 2024 to discuss Local Plan progress and supporting advice on Local Plan development. PAS chair the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) forum for Local Authorities holding weekly to fortnightly network meetings enabling Local Authorities to discuss and problem-solve BNG related issues and queries.

9.7 Marine Management Organization (MMO)

9.7.1 The MMO was created in 2009. MMO's is a public body that manages fisheries, marine licensing, marine planning, and marine conservation in the UK.

9.7.2 Its purpose is to protect and enhance the marine environment, and support UK economic growth by enabling sustainable marine activities and development. The Council follows Central Government's guidance on Marine Planning¹.

9.7.3 While Basildon Council does not regularly meet with MMO, from time to time it does participate in workshops which MMO host, and responds to any relevant consultations.

¹ [Local council guide; marine planning](#)

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 This statement has been prepared to accompany the draft Regulation 18 stage Basildon Local Plan consultation and forms part of the evidence baseline position. At this stage, it sets out the strategic issues and provides a basis for ongoing engagement with neighbouring authorities and other relevant bodies.

Appendix 1 – Sample letter requesting assistance under the Duty to Cooperate

Date: 5 November 2024
Department: Planning Strategy and Implementation Team
Tel. No: 01268 533333 (Option 5)
Email: planningpolicy@basildon.gov.uk

Sent via email to XXXXX

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER THE DUTY TO COOPERATE

I am writing to your authority under the Duty to Cooperate (DTC) to enquire whether it can assist Basildon Borough Council in meeting its housing needs. A requirement of the DTC legislation is for planning authorities to engage constructively, with a view to finding solutions to address strategic matters which have cross-boundary implications.

Following its Issues and Options consultation during Summer 2023, the Council will consult on a draft Regulation 18 Local Plan for consultation in November 2024 which will identify draft site allocations for growth, as part of an overall strategy for meeting the borough's identified growth needs. When adopted, the Plan will eventually replace the Saved Policies from the Basildon District Local Plan (1998).

Responses to last year's Issues and Options consultation identified that housing provision is a major issue for the new Local Plan. There was some support for releasing land from the Green Belt, however many responses equally looked to protect it.

Using the Government's Standard Methodology, Basildon Borough's assessed housing need (adjusted to take account of the latest affordability ratio, published March 2024) is 1,039 homes per year or 20,780 homes over the lifetime of the Local Plan. The Government is proposing a new Standard Method which would increase this to 1,291 homes per year or 27,111 over the Plan period, including a buffer. New evidence work, including a new Green Belt Assessment, indicates there is unlikely to be sufficient land available to meet housing needs in the borough, as around 10,000 homes can be accommodated in the urban area, giving a significant deficit against the overall requirement.

In addition, Basildon Council has a need for at least 235 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and at least 13 Travelling Showpeople plots. To date, no suitable land has been identified in the urban area. While the Council must explore the release of land from Green Belt, alternative options must also be explored to identify further capacity given the lack of brownfield sites in the borough.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Lyons
Executive Director for Growth and Partnerships
Basildon Borough Council



Appendix 2 – Duty to Cooperate Statement Meeting Record

Appendices 2a - Castle Point Borough Council

Quarter and year	Date	Attendees	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions or future engagement
Q4 2023	24th October	[REDACTED]	DTC Meeting - Castle Point and Basildon - 24.10.2023.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basildon Local Plan and general update – working on the consultation statement and making progress with evidence base. Castle Point Local Plan and general update – currently finalising consultation report, proposed engagement plan for young people and making progress with evidence base. Discussion around recent meetings with DLUHC. Cross boundary matters and co-operation on identified projects. Neighbourhood plan update from Basildon. Next meeting scheduled and invited sent for 30/1/2024.
Q1 2024	30th January	[REDACTED]	DTC Basildon and Castle Point 30.01.24.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC advised CP that council have been assessing the responses received to the Reg 18 Local Plan consultation and ran an all-member briefing. BC responded to the Secretary of State's intervention letter and have met PAS and DAC.



		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [REDACTED] 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning to discuss issues around the local plan and revising the current LDS by the DLUHC deadline of 12 March. • CP have responded to their own intervention letter and highlighted that a plan may be submitted by April 2025. • Basildon LCWIP has been refreshed with a new study at regulation 19 stage. • Essex County Council dealing with Essex wide and CP LCWIPs. BC have commented on crossings at the A130, Saddlers Farm and the connection of Wickford and Rochford. • Both authorities provided an update on periods for completing our respective key evidence base documents. • BC advised CP that Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council are currently consulting on their Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO). BC has a legal duty to assist. • CP consultation on Biodiversity Net Gain closes on 5th February. Comments to be shared in next meeting. • BC is looking to update its local validation list with guidance on BNG, as currently cannot produce an SPD.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC looking to create an advice note for applicants on net zero. CP discussed net zero with their members who are on board - the Essex Net Zero policy is technically and legally viable.
Q2 2024	30 th April	[Redacted]	DTC Basildon and Castle Point 30.04.24.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC Local Plan update – Reg 18 Draft Local Plan consultation by the end of the year. Retail & Leisure, GB studies complete. Employment study expected soon. Undertaking a Plotlands Study. Currently reviewing urban capacity sites. CP Local Plan update – I&O consultation planned for July. Transport, SFRA, Economic, IDP, Design Code studies underway. Soon to progress Riverside Strategy with Basildon. Shared update on recent discussions with DLUHC. The importance of meeting GTA needs to be raised further at Essex Planning Officers Association. Potential to ask PINS for advice on a collective policy approach for Essex authorities. Discussed current AI capabilities to speed up consultation analysis. Agreed to share techniques and CP to arrange tech demo by Future Fox.



Q2 2024	13 th May	See BC and RDC table.	DTC - BBC, CPBC, ECC, RDC.docx	See BC and RDC table.
Q3 2024	30 th July	[REDACTED]	DTC Basildon and Castle Point 30.07.24.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPBC local plan update - launched issues and options consultation, asking residents views on every potential view on every potential urban & Green Belt sites. Essex Place services to conduct a landscape assessment of each green belt site, current issue with speculative applications at appeal. • DAC planning to conduct greenbelt review. Transport consultants work underway. Exploring use of AI for consultation responses. • Review LNRS documents and opportunity mapping. Community engagement conducted to build trust and address key issues. • Reg. 18 consultation planned for November with Scrutiny committee on 15th August as an opportunity to present draft policies. Spatial and Growth Options being sent to LUC for appraisal as part of IIA. Raised risk of upcoming NPPF reform.

Q4 2024	30th October	[REDACTED]	30.10.24 Meeting Minutes BBC and CPDC UD.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To discuss potential allocations on boundary of Castle Point and Basildon.
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Appendices 2b - Chelmsford City Council

Quarter and year	Date	Attendees	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions or future engagement
Q2 2024	6 th June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chelmsford • London • Basildon • Essex County • Rochford • Braintree • Brentwood • Castle Point • Maldon • East Hertfordshire • Epping Forest • Harlow • Havering • Hertfordshire • Enfield • Redbridge • Waltham Forest • Southend-on-Sea • Tendring • Thurrock • Uttlesford 	Microsoft PowerPoint - LPA DTC Meeting June 2024 - Copy (sharepoint.com)	<p>Review of Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments will inform Reg. 19 Local Plan. • Final round of consultation in early 2025. • DTC engagement continues throughout the review. • Further evidence will inform the pre-submission version.
Q4 2024	15 th October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] 	15.10.24 DTC Meeting Minutes Chelmsford and Basildon.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RD to send over Norwich to Tilbury viability work once received from ECC. • Statement of common ground signed by both councils and share plans as early as possible.

		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• [REDACTED]		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chelmsford's Reg. 19 will be visible from the 9th of December.• Next meeting agenda: review statement of common ground, review of consultation for both councils, additionally review local plans for both councils.
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Appendices 2c - Brentwood Borough Council (BC) & Rochford District Council (RDC)

Quarter and year	Date	Attendees	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions or future engagement
Q1 2023	24 th February	[REDACTED]	2023 02 24 Basildon Brentwood DtC meeting.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future DTC meetings with Rochford. • Conversations around transport evidence. • Continued need for cross boundary discussions. • Keeping updated regarding evidence base.
Q2 2024	13 th May	[REDACTED]	DTC - BBC, CPBC, ECC, RDC.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPBC seeking options for Reg. 18 consultation. Seeking to put forward a potential land option. • Discussing Northwest Thunderley site in CPBC and the effects on highways, BBC/BC & REDC. • CPBC discussing potential option with ECC as highways authority, and both BBC and RDC as neighbouring authorities, impacted by the infrastructure changes. • BBC assisting with Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet

		<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Redacted] 		<p>Parish Council with NDO which is out for consultation. Potential for shared strategic growth opportunity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDC key roads around site create a sense of it being “land locked” could create issues with sustainable travel. ECC issues with access and how it could cause issues with long-term plans for Fairglen interchange. Issues with typology of existing site and viability could be an issue. BBC update draft local plan consultation come out at the end of the year. RDC update end of summer draft consultation. CPBC look at options following Reg. 18 consultation in the summer head towards Reg. 19.
Q3 2024	25th September	<p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	<p>25.09.24 Basildon and Brentwood DTC meeting minutes.docx</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basildon to contact Brentwood about Gypsy and Traveller enforcement work. Arrange a DTC meeting between Basildon and Brentwood early next year to liaise about any work completed. Specific meeting with Thurrock, Brentwood, and Basildon to liaise about Dunton Hills Garden Village and growth issues around the borough boundaries.

Appendices 2d – Thurrock Council

Quarter and year	Date	Attendees	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions or future engagement
Q4 2023	13 th December	<p>[Redacted Attendees]</p>	<p>Duty to Cooperate Meeting - Basildon and Thurrock Dec 23 - Thurrock Amendments Jan 18 2024 (002).docx</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basildon Local Plan Update – uncertainty whether the Local Plan can proceed in line with the current LDS given government reforms. RH highlighted that Thurrock had made limited representations to the recent Reg 18 consultation. • Thurrock Local Plan Update – proposing a draft site - based plan before Christmas and a consultation until late February. • West Horndon and Lower Langdon proposals – explanation of the need for cross-boundary discussions • Specialist Housing Needs work - discussion that a joint specialist housing need assessment would be useful, and discussions will continue via JOG. • Financing for the South Essex Employment Land Work – A sub-regional ELAA under preparation and commissioned at South Essex Councils level excluding Thurrock. Review the money that was reclaimed. • Thurrock Employment and Housing Study – Thurrock

				has recently published EDNA and ELAA as part of the Reg 18 consultation. Discussion that additional evidence assessing the balance of labour supply and housing need required.
Q4 2024	23 rd October	Basildon Attendees: [REDACTED] Thurrock Attendees: [REDACTED]	23.10.24 Thurrock Meeting Minutes with changes.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basildon – to send the Savills viability report to Thurrock. • Looking to set up tri-borough meeting.

Appendices 2e - Essex County Council (ECC)

Quarter/year	Date	Attendees	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions and/or future engagement
Q1 2023	25 th January	[REDACTED]		
Q2 2023	18 th April	[REDACTED]		Head of School Organisation & Place Planning – ECC and BBC Education Plans and S106 Contributions.
Q2 2023	21 st April	[REDACTED]		LCWIP Refresh – Commissioning Delivery Manager
Q2 2023	29 th June	[REDACTED]		LCWIP – EPOA Parking Guidance Workshop. Discussion of revised parking guidance.
Q4 2023	24 th November	[REDACTED] (WSP), Billericay Town Council, Great Burstead South Green, Little Burstead, AOL, Ramsden Bellhouse, Ramsden Crays, Wickford Town, Shotgate, Rayleigh Town, Hockley (Essex), Rochford Parish, Great Wakering, Hullbridge, Hawkwell, Ashingdon, Canewdon, Barling magna, Rawreth, Essex Council		South Essex LCWIP: Meeting to discuss helping refine cycle and walking networks in Essex. Contributing local knowledge to the maps.
Q1 2024	7 th March	[REDACTED]		LCWIP
Q2 2024	1 st May	[REDACTED]		



		[REDACTED]		
Q2 2024	13 th May (meeting with BBC, RDC, CPBC, & ECC)	See BC and RDC table.	DTC - BBC, CPBC, ECC, RDC.docx	See BC and RDC table.
Q2 2024	15 th May	[REDACTED]		
Q2 2024	23 rd May	[REDACTED]		
Q2 2024	5 th June	[REDACTED]		Statutory Consultation District Councils
Q2 2024	19 th June	[REDACTED]		
Q3 2024	3 rd July	[REDACTED]		

Q3 2024	17 th July	[REDACTED]		
Q3 2024	31 st July	[REDACTED]		LCWIP and Local Plan
Q3 2024	21 st August	[REDACTED]		ECC – BBC meeting
Q4 2024	23 rd October	[REDACTED]	23.10.24 Essex County Meeting Minutes.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP – to send data request. • MR – liaise with Jacobs about the review period required. • LR – • To look at timeframes so that ECC are aware of when work will flag. • Will send over timetable. • List and map of PPA's and applications provided. • Share high level transport policy with ECC.
Q4 2024	7 th November	[REDACTED]	07.11.24 BBC and ECC meeting minutes.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving forward an agenda to be circulated for future meetings to ensure the correct topics are discussed in the DTC meeting. • MJ – will have an ECC internal response, looking at timing for requesting the circulation of key work. • 18/12/24 target for discussing key points. • LR new year will have a timetable from ARUP for meeting requirements – to be circulated with ECC. • In new year Steph Kober

				<p>will have a flooding document available – LS to be CC in emails relating to this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Once have revised LDS will share with ECC. Will revise in Jan. 2025.• LS has requested the GIS layers for the sites, LR to share after cabinet meeting.
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Appendices 2f - Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA)

Quarter and year	Date	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions or future engagement
Q1 2023	23 rd February		
Q2 2023	20 th April		
Q2 2023	27 th June	EPOA Policy Forum Meeting Minutes 27 June 2023.docx	<p>GTAA update. ORS started transit site work and doing interviews. Suggested that sharing GTAA data between LPAs.</p> <p>BNG SPD update including request for competent surveys and how to ensure quality of data received.</p> <p>LNRS update mapping and timeline of work set out within presentation.</p> <p>General local plan progress update from all councils.</p>
Q3 2023	13 th July		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on emerging Biodiversity Net Gain SPD • Briefing on Parking matters • Essex-wide training opportunities
Q3 2023	19 th September	EPOA minutes - 19 September 2023.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from Roy Warren at Sports England. • LNRS update – collaborating with supporting authorities to continue monthly meetings. • BNG draft template circulated and adopted locally. • Discussion of minerals local plan going through reg 18 consultation.
Q3 2023	21 st September		Presentation given on new parking guidance.
Q4 2023	12 th December	EPOA Minutes - 12 December 2023.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essex Climate Action Commission and ECC reminder. Included being carbon net zero by 2025. Wider consequential benefits link to wider objectives. • Aligning policies with climate targets. Input into DM process to ensure planning app. Meet standards. Essex Design Guide published. • Next steps are embedding policy approach into the new local plans. • Monitoring and implementation plan – developed by ECC. • Update on build costs – 3-7% uplift. LNRS update – draft plan and opportunity for mapping. DEFRA guidance on targets delayed which is also required.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BNG currently digesting Defra guidance, then advise LPAs. • GTAA update – awaiting an update from ORS. • Essex Coastal Protection Belt Review.
Q4 2023	14 th December		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on proposals to review the RAMS tariff
Q1 2024	27 th February	EPOA Minutes - 27 Feb 2024.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of hot food take aways and local plans introducing policies to address obesity. • LNRS update – draft and associated maps being reviewed by Local Nature Partnership Board which is independent of ECC. Urban opportunities to be presented to the board. Engagement methods employed with landowners. • BNG template SPD update. EPOA subgroup created a template SPD last year. LPAs raised by the potential inclusion of a draft S106 as part of the SPD. • GTAA several authorities who have received preliminary analysis. Issues were raised to the availability of accompanying maps. • New homes standard, EPOA have signed on behalf of LPA's. Positive takeaways include that LPAs can go beyond the standard.
Q2 2024	23 rd April	EPOA Minutes - 23 April 2024.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals local plan update. Consultation extended. • IDP discussion ECC have inputted a larger strategic site and smaller rural sites. • Health presentation raised point of making HIA more than a tick box exercise. • GTAA meeting with ORS, will provide an update after. • Rest of the meeting providing updates for other relevant topics.
Q2 2024	5 th June		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPOA urban design forum
Q2 2024	18 th June	EPOA Minutes 18 June 2024.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFRA assessment conducted. LPAs should conduct SFRA for their assessment. SFRA will help various parties consider flood risk. • GTAA update with concerns raised over reports published and

			<p>timescales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BNG guidance and report due to published in July. • LNRS launched supporting authority consultation. • Supported and specialist housing need ECC as the care authority has a particular set of interests and objectives for providing the right support for independent living.
Q2 2024	20 th June		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion about RAMS tariff revisions, • Digital partnership and replacing relevant software in each authority to deliver cost savings. • Local Nature Recovery Strategy • Gypsy and Traveller work. • Significant appeals from each Essex LPA • Parking standards and connectivity tool • Updates from officer EPOA forums
Q3 2024	4 th September		
Q3 2024	10 th September	<p>EPOA Guidance Standard IDP BRIEF - (13 08 2024).docx</p> <p>EPOA PP Forum (10 09 2024) IDPs Brief.pptx</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local flood authority took lead on updating attendees of IDP proposed standard work brief. • Covered draft standard brief/template now produced. • Discussed water challenges in the county as well as the strategy and recommendations for future water use and strategy in the county. • Additionally discussed water supply and quality in the county.
Q3 2024	26 th September		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECC Presentation on planning and public health • Presentation on parking standards • Presentation on specialist and supported housing • General discussion about national planning reforms • General discussion with ARU staff about Green Belt.
Q4 2024	7 th November		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion about air quality. • Recruitment and retention of planners across south Essex • Update on Gypsy and Traveller work – most boroughs now have their studies. • Discussion on getting the right people attending officer EPOA meetings given high workloads.
Q4 2024	4 th December		
Q4 2024	17 th		

	December		
Q1 2025	5 th March		

Appendices 1g - South Essex JOG

Quarter and year	Date
Q1 2023	9 th January
Q1 2023	16 th January
Q1 2023	13 th February
Q2 2023	10 th April
Q2 2023	8 th May
Q2 2023	12 th June
Q3 2023	10 th July
Q3 2023	14 th August
Q3 2023	11 th September
Q4 2023	9 th October
Q4 2023	13 th November
Q4 2023	11 th December
Q1 2024	8 th January
Q1 2024	12 th February
Q1 2024	11 th March
Q2 2024	8 th April
Q2 2024	13 May
Q2 2024	10 June
Q3 2024	8 July
Q3 2024	12 August
Q3 2024	9 Sept
Q4 2024	14 Oct
Q4 2024	11 Nov
Q4 2024	9 December
Q1 2025	13 January
Q1 2025	10 February
Q1 2025	10 March

Appendices 1h - National Grid Norwich to Tilbury

Quarter and year	Date
Q1 2023	26 th January
Q1 2023	23 rd March
Q2 2023	25 th May
Q2 2023	19 th June
Q2 2023	27 th June
Q3 2023	4 th July
Q3 2023	5 th July
Q3 2023	25 th July
Q3 2023	27 th July
Q3 2023	9 th August
Q3 2023	10 th August
Q3 2023	13 th September
Q3 2023	20 th September
Q3 2023	26 th September
Q3 2023	28 th September
Q4 2023	5 th October
Q4 2023	24 th October
Q4 2023	20 th November
Q4 2023	23 rd November
Q4 2023	28 th November
Q4 2023	29 th November
Q4 2023	11 th December
Q4 2023	12 th December
Q1 2024	16 th January
Q1 2024	17 th January
Q1 2024	25 th January
Q1 2024	2 nd February
Q1 2024	5 th February
Q1 2024	20 th February
Q1 2024	28 th February
Q1 2024	19 th March
Q1 2024	20 th March
Q1 2024	28 th March
Q2 2024	2 nd April
Q2 2024	16 th April
Q2 2024	17 th April
Q2 2024	19 th April
Q2 2024	23 rd April
Q2 2024	1 st May
Q2 2024	8 th May
Q2 2024	15 th May
Q2 2024	20 th May
Q2 2024	21 st May
Q2 2024	22 nd May
Q2 2024	23 rd May
Q2 2024	30 th May

Q2 2024	5 th June
Q2 2024	18 th June
Q3 2024	16 th July
Q3 2024	17 th July
Q3 2024	25 th July
Q3 2024	18 th September
Q3 2024	25 th September
Q3 2024	26 th September
Q4 2024	9 th October
Q4 2024	16 th October
Q4 2024	20 th November
Q4 2024	28 th November

Appendices 1i - Essex Coast Recreation Disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategy
(RAMS) Steering Group

Quarter and year	Date	Attendees	Minutes or handouts	Agreed actions or future engagement
Q1 2023	27 th March	[REDACTED]	RAMS minutes March 2023 Final.docx	Notes and reviewing actions from previous meeting. Circulating a strategy log. Looking at mitigation meetup planning. RAMS tariff 2023/24 – general queries of the tariff. Brief discussion of changing the RPI base.
Q2 2023	18 th April			
Q4 2023	3 rd October			
Q1 2024	15 th February			
Q1 2024	27 th February	[REDACTED]	RAMS Minutes 27 February 2024 draft.pdf	Notes and actions from previous group meeting. Discussion of future housing figures. Additionally, reviewed habitats and site data to be collated on SharePoint. RAMS contributions, tracker circulated for everyone to review. RAMS review and Natural England Update and Feedback.

Q1 2024	28 th March			
Q2 2024	21 st May		RAMS Minutes 21st May 2024.pdf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Mitigation Meetup: outcomes from the day include the need to set up a national hub/body for strategic partnership collaboration. • Annual Delivery Plan – confirmed team focusing efforts on beach nesting bird sites and partnership with Share Our shores. • RAMs review working group to oversee the RAMs review progress. • Interim Investment Proposal – to start discussions on in perpetuity investment discussed. • Housing figures review.
Q3 2024	1 st July			
Q3 2024	28 th August			
Q3 2024	17 th September		RAMS Minutes 17th September 2024 draft.docx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and circulate a hard copy for others to input into. • To add an updated timeline to SharePoint and send this around the Steering group members. <p>To send out draft partnership agreement and timeline for responses.</p>
Q4 2024	7 th October			

Q4 2024	26 th November			
Q1 2025	21 st January			
Q1 2025	11 th March			
Q1 2025	27 th March			

Appendices 1j - DLUHC

Quarter and year	Date
Q1 2023	31 st January
Q1 2024	9 th January
Q1 2024	13 th February
Q1 2024	23 rd February
Q2 2024	23 rd April
Q2 2024	21 st May
Q2 2024	4 th June
Q2 2024	18 th June
Q3 2024	2 nd July
Q3 2024	16 th July
Q3 2024	30 th July
Q3 2024	13 th August
Q3 2024	27 th August
Q3 2024	10 th September
Q3 2024	24 th September
Q4 2024	8 th October
Q4 2024	22 nd October
Q4 2024	5 th November
Q4 2024	19 th November
Q4 2024	3 rd December
Q4 2024	17 th December
Q4 2024	31 st December

Appendices 1k - Planning Advisory Service

Quarter and year	Date
Q1 2023	28 th March
Q1 2024	12 th January
Q1 2024	19 th January
Q2 2023	12 th June
Q3 2023	11 th September
Q3 2023	9 th October

Appendix 3 – Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation Summary of main issues and next steps⁶

Next Steps

All the responses have been considered and will be used to help inform the next stage of the Local Plan (Draft Local Plan). This Statement of Consultation states how the comments have been taken into consideration and will be used to inform the preparation of the Draft Local Plan.

This will take place alongside ongoing discussions with infrastructure providers about their services, such as education, healthcare, flooding and highways and the completion of evidence base documents covering topics including employment, retail, the green belt, sports facilities, flood risk and an urban capacity assessment.

The Draft Local Plan will also need to reflect national guidance including the December 2023 update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The following table summarises the responses the council received to each chapter of the consultation document, and the proposed next steps.

Summary of main issues and next steps		
Chapter	Planning Policy Comments	Next Steps
Our Vision and Strategic Objectives	<p>Generally, there were three main themes arising; protecting the environment, delivery of infrastructure and some opposing views between delivering new homes and preserving the Green Belt. These comments are considered in more detail under their respective chapters.</p> <p>An emphasis on protecting the environment is consistent with national planning policy and should form an additional theme for the Local Plan.</p> <p>Generally, there was support for all themes, with the lowest level of support being for 'Capitalising on Local Tourism Opportunities'. Consideration should be given to making this part of the theme of economic development rather than a strategic theme.</p> <p>No clear new themes have arisen, but there is a need to make some themes clearer. In particular, 'Delivering New Homes' and 'Protecting and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a theme around sustainable development including the issues of protecting the environment, climate change and biodiversity and renewable energy. • Continue to work with Essex County Council and Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board to assist with the ongoing delivery of infrastructure. • Revisit the strategic themes for the Draft Local Plan.

⁶ Basildon Borough Council, New Local Plan Regulation 18 Issues and Options Statement of Consultation (2024): [BASILDON DISTRICT COUNCIL](https://www.basildon.gov.uk/)

	Enhancing the Quality of the Local Environment'.	
Strategic Matters and Key Issues	<p>There is strong support across all respondents that the Local Plan period should span a longer duration than the minimum 15-year period and should start earlier than 2027 as proposed. The reasoning is to include planning applications that are submitted prior to 2027, to address housing need, to plan for growth and to be better aligned with the evidence timeframe.</p> <p>The proposed Local Plan period spanning 2027 to 2042 is in line with NPPF requirements (Paragraph 22) that states that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from adoption to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities.</p> <p>Residents raised the importance of the need for a Local Plan, highlighting the current risk of speculative development without up-to-date policies. Developers raised the importance of the local plan meeting our housing needs fully.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking account of best practice, continue to work with relevant organisations including statutory consultees (such as Essex County Council) in developing the draft local plan policies. • Propose a review of the local plan timeframe and continue to engage with residents to ensure that the matters raised are addressed. • Taking learning and guidance into account in strategy policy making and development.
Delivering growth and continued prosperity	<p>The majority of respondents support Brownfield Development as their preferred option for allocating land for future development, as well as supporting the preservation of the current extent of the greenbelt. These views are in line with the NPPF (Paragraph 124c) that states planning policies and decisions should give substantial weight to the value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basildon Borough Council (BBC) has commissioned a Green Belt Assessment. • Taking ongoing learning and national policy guidance into account in strategy policy making and development. • Continuing to work with statutory consultees and neighbouring local authorities in developing the draft local plan policies.



	<p>of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs.</p> <p>While, respondents raise the importance of Brownfield development, it should be noted that according to the 2017 Greenbelt Review, 63% of Basildon Borough is made up of Greenbelt. The next steps of the process will address the full extent and opportunity of land within the urban areas of all parts of the borough in advance of the release of land from the green belt.</p> <p>The preservation of agricultural land for food production and the preservation of open spaces is a common theme amongst respondents. Some comments stated that Greenbelt should not be differentiated into Greenbelt agricultural land, and Greenbelt other uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that our emerging draft policies reflect Greenbelt evidence and policy guidance. • The Council is undertaking an urban capacity assessment which will provide an up to date qualitative and quantitative assessment of the Borough's urban area's potential to accommodate growth. This assessment will help to inform the spatial options to ensure the Local Plan prioritises the recycling of Brownfield Land and promotes a balance of spatial options in line with the NPPF. • Continue to liaise with stakeholders in developing the local plan.
<p>Tackling Climate Change</p>	<p>There is strong support for tackling climate change from all respondent groups. There is also support for solar panels on roofs and other renewable energy generation in the Borough. This support is reiterated in national policy.</p> <p>There is concern raised by developers, agents and landowners as well as residents and other groups over development viability, and how this viability could be negatively impacted by excessive net zero policy requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with statutory consultees in developing the draft local plan policies. • Continue to work with Greater Essex authorities through the climate policy support group to develop net zero carbon local plan policies. • Encourage the endorsement of the Essex Climate Action Commission report and its recommendations to develop local plan policies. • Produce evidence base on renewable energy and net zero carbon development to support policy development. • Develop draft local plan policies, that aim to tackle climate change, whilst ensuring



		they do not negatively impact development viability.
Enhancing Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure	<p>There is strong support for enhancing biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure from all respondent groups. There is also support for stronger protection of biodiversity and preserving the Green Belt. This is supported through national policy.</p> <p>There are mixed views over biodiversity net gain and going above the required 10% policy level, with concern around viability raised by developers, agents and landowners. However, residents, local authorities, statutory consultees and other groups are supportive of an increase over the 10% policy level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with statutory consultees in developing the draft local plan policies. • Ensure existing Essex wide evidence base is utilised in policy development, including the Essex Green Infrastructure Principles and Standards (2022) and Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020). • Continue to review biodiversity net gain (BNG) legislation and guidance as it develops. • Work with Greater Essex authorities alongside the Essex Biodiversity Net Gain Officer to develop local plan policies and supporting guidance around BNG. • Develop draft local plan policies, considering going above 10% BNG, and ensure the policies do not negatively impact development viability. • Continue to feed into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) process alongside Essex County Council and other authorities.
Healthy and Sustainable Communities	<p>The strongest support was for promoting active and sustainable transport, creating high quality public places and providing greenspaces and sports facilities. There was no significant objection to any of this theme.</p> <p>Responses have advocated linking the topics of "healthy and sustainable communities" and "creating beautiful places" within policy making.</p> <p>An updated National Planning Policy Framework published after the consultation emphasises the role of authority wide design codes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a new open space assessment, including consideration of the accessibility of open spaces. • Complete the production of an up-to-date Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement Plan. • Incorporate this learning into any future Basildon Borough Design Codes. • This learning will inform the development of policies in the Draft Local Plan.



	<p>Future design codes could support the delivery of healthy and sustainable new communities.</p> <p>Residents highlighted the need to facilitate the private car alongside promoting sustainable modes of transport.</p> <p>There is strong support from developers to deliver large scale development sites to deliver the sufficient infrastructure needed.</p> <p>There is strong support from residents to protect the green belt.</p>	
<p>Creating Beautiful Places</p>	<p>There was significant support for heritage and conservation. Over 50% of respondents identified it as the most important factor, followed by a sense of place and a clear identity. Overall, there was very little support for places that are built to last and stand the test of time.</p> <p>From developer, landowners and agents, the importance of a design codes is emphasised. There is strong support from statutory consultees for collaborative working to achieve beautiful design. There is strong support from residents, developers and statutory consultees to adopt a design code with various inclusions. This is consistent with national policy.</p> <p>There is strong support from developers to locate development in the most sustainable locations of the borough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the endorsed Essex Design Guide produce a borough narrative. Produce a settlement hierarchy to identify the most sustainable locations for growth.

<p>Improving Access to Housing</p>	<p>Housing provision is a major issue for the local plan. There are objections to the 'Standard Method' of calculating housing need. National Planning policy (NPPF Dec 2023) states that the 'Standard Method' is the starting point for establishing housing needs. This establishes the minimum levels of housing need and can only be departed from if exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Residents have also been clear on the need for various forms of affordable and specialist housing.</p> <p>There is significant support for the provision of affordable housing, in particular social housing, family size housing, housing for older people and housing for those seeking to downsize. This has implications for the delivery of housing, as housing on brownfield sites (reusing previously developed land), is not always able to deliver affordable housing, unless government grants are made available.</p> <p>Flatted development is generally a more common form of development in central brownfield locations. There appears to be a range of specialist housing priorities but helping those unable to rent or buy on the open market is showing the greatest level of support. This has implications for the amount of housing which needs to be delivered. Generally, there is support for delivering a mixed range of housing to meet our local needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission updated evidence on housing need including the need for affordable housing and various forms of specialist housing. • Prepare an Urban Capacity Study to understand to what extent housing needs can be met in the urban area. • Urban capacity will be taken into account when developing housing policies for the Draft Local Plan. • Preparation of relevant evidence and ongoing consultation with statutory bodies to inform the Local Plan draft policies. • The Council has jointly commissioned an Essex-wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to provide an assessment of current and future accommodation needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) communities to inform the new Local Plan policies relating to the GTTS community. • Preparation of relevant evidence and ongoing consultation with statutory bodies will inform the Local Plan draft policies.
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	<p>There was strong support for the expansion of existing sites to meet the need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) sites in the borough. A large proportion of residents opposed the allocation of new gypsy and traveller sites, and those who supported allocating new sites preferred new allocations to be on brownfield land, transit sites or council / housing association run sites.</p> <p>There is an endorsed cross Essex approach promoting the use of a range approaches to meet the provision for the GTTS community.</p> <p>A large proportion of respondents were opposed to the allocation of gypsy and traveller sites and opposed development in the Green Belt. However, a large proportion also proposed maximising the use of existing sites and improving the quality of existing sites.</p>	
<p>Prosperous Economy</p>	<p>The majority of respondents supported the provision of more employment premises in the existing employment areas.</p> <p>There was demand for a wide range of employment spaces but the greatest level of demand was for technologies including energy and green technology and life sciences and health care. There was also significant demand for digital and creative services.</p> <p>Overall, respondents want to see the creation of better and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking account of best practice and working with relevant organisations including statutory consultees to develop the policies for the draft Local Plan. • Consider the combined viability of draft Local Plan policies to ensure they do not negatively impact development viability. • Ensuring infrastructure improvements are fully costed so do not jeopardize proposals from coming forward or being built out. • Continued implementation of the internal planning obligation protocol and close working with



	<p>higher value jobs, with some diversification of the economy logically flowing from this. This is consistent with the NPPF's expectations on economic growth.</p> <p>New development can clearly help to achieve these aims, however it will place particular emphasis on the approach to seeking planning obligations for Employment and Skills and the priorities which are sought.</p> <p>Easing the problem of local skills shortages can only be addressed through the delivery of appropriate training and education courses, which does require a suitably supportive national and regional policy to be in place, and not only in the context of the Town Planning sphere.</p>	<p>Economic Development on the approach to employment and skills contributions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the employment evidence base for the local plan.
<p>Resilient Town Centre</p>	<p>Overall, residents want to see improvements to town centres, including better quality shopping and facilities, as well as public realm improvements.</p> <p>The need for more infrastructure & better public transport is a feature which is noted across the whole issues and options consultation, which will be realised through development and redevelopment.</p> <p>Valid concerns are also expressed about parking charges, business rates and the cost of shop leases. Although these are not matters which the Local Plan can control, they are relevant in the overall debate about town centre viability and footfall levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking account of best practice and working with relevant organisations including statutory consultees to develop the policies for the draft Local Plan. • Assess the combined viability of draft Local Plan policies to ensure they do not negatively impact development viability. • Ensuring infrastructure improvements are fully costed so do not jeopardize proposals from coming forward or being built out. • Continue to work with other key internal stakeholders, including Economic Development and Regeneration, to help in coordinating relevant visions and investment opportunities to improve the



		respective town centres on an ongoing basis.
Promoting Sustainable Transport	<p>There is strong support from residents and statutory consultees to prioritise improvement in active travel, such as walking and cycling, and public transport. This strongly reflects national policy.</p> <p>Many of our residents consider that it is important to plan for electric vehicles.</p> <p>There is widespread support for factoring in how well connected an area is when considering its potential for growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance provided by National Highways and Essex County Council (Local Highway Authority) and Sport England will inform the development of draft Local Plan policies. • Basildon Council will engage with railway and bus operators to understand the capacity of the network. • Produce an up-to-date Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement Plan which includes consideration of links to public transport. This will prioritise north to south links. • Site selection methodology will prioritise the sustainability of a location to include the proximity of services with walking and cycling distance and the quality of connections to public transport. • Continue to work with other South Essex local authorities on strategic transport links.
Securing Sufficient Infrastructure	<p>Various types of infrastructure have been suggested for prioritisation by all respondent groups. The importance of infrastructure has been highlighted by both residents and other groups, and developers have highlighted that the delivery of different types of infrastructure should be prioritised in accordance with their level of need.</p> <p>Residents and developers have highlighted the importance for all new development to be supported by sufficient Infrastructure. There is strong support from residents and developers to prioritise transport infrastructure and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a draft Local Plan which will allow the preparation of an updated IDP to assess the existing provision of infrastructure throughout the Borough. • Consider what additional infrastructure will be required in the future to support the growth allocated in the draft Local Plan. • Taking account of best practice and working with relevant organisations including statutory consultees to develop the policies for the draft Local Plan. • Continued implementation of the internal Section 106 protocol to secure and allocate funding.



	<p>health facilities. There is also strong support from residents, developers and other groups to consider education needs and to prioritise education facilities.</p> <p>This has implications for the spatial strategy for growth as typically development on brownfield sites and previously developed land can only deliver very limited infrastructure. To deliver substantial new or improved infrastructure, in particular new health provision and new schools, major new allocations in the range of 5,000-10,000 new homes are often needed.</p> <p>The need to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been highlighted by both residents and developers and the lack of current sufficient Infrastructure in certain areas of the Borough has been raised as a concern by many residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the combined viability of the draft Local Plan and planning obligations policies to ensure they do not negatively impact development viability. • Continue to publish the Infrastructure Funding Statement to increase public awareness of the contributions secured through planning obligations, and to ensure transparency on how contributions have been spent and how they will be spent in the future.
<p>Spatial Options to Delivering Growth</p>	<p>There is strong support for prioritising the densification of existing urban areas as a spatial option from all respondent groups. It was also noted that urban densification will need to address a number of design challenges to produce high quality development. Respondents also advocated for the density, scale, character and design of new development to be appropriate for the local context. This has implications for the number of homes which can be accommodated on urban sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distribution of housing growth will be considered in greater detail as the Local Plan develops. The sustainability of potential options or locations for housing growth will be a fundamental consideration and will be informed by comments provided as well as existing and emerging evidence. • The Council is undertaking an urban capacity assessment which will provide an up to date qualitative and quantitative assessment of the Borough's urban area's potential to accommodate growth. This assessment will help to inform the spatial options to ensure the Local Plan prioritises the recycling of brownfield land and



	<p>There is also strong support from developers, agents and landowners (and some residents) to utilise low quality green belt sites to accommodate growth through a balance of spatial options, in line with national policy. A number of developers, agents and landowners promoted a particular site for development and advocated for varying spatial options, with urban extensions having the most support within this respondent group.</p> <p>However, a number of residents advocated for the preservation of the Green Belt as well as for protecting blue and green infrastructure.</p> <p>There is also strong support from all respondents for new development to be located in proximity to existing infrastructure and / or new development to deliver the new infrastructure needed. Seeking to deliver growth through urban extensions in well serviced, sustainable locations would support the aim to locate development in proximity of existing infrastructure. In order to deliver new settlements with sustainable new infrastructure, in particular new GP and Education provision, major new allocations in the range of 5,000-10,000 new homes are often needed.</p> <p>A number of respondents reiterated their support for many of the previously emerging themes. The following dominant themes have been made in addition to these:</p>	<p>promotes a balance of spatial options in line with the NPPF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has commissioned a Green Belt assessment which will provide an up to date qualitative and quantitative assessment of the Borough's Green Belt, against the five purposes of the Green Belt established in national policy. This assessment will help to inform the new Local Plan, particularly with respect to potential housing and employment locations. It should be noted that the Council's approach to Green Belt must accord with national policy. • The preparation of relevant evidence and ongoing consultation with statutory bodies will inform the Local Plan spatial options and draft policies which are programmed to be consulted on in 2024.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some residents and other groups were opposed to the standard method of calculating housing need. • Respondents across all groups promoted sustainable and active travel and emphasised the importance of incorporating this within new development. 	
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The Statement of Consultation was presented to an All Member Briefing on the 1 February 2024.

The Statement of Consultation was reviewed by Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on the 1 February 2024. [Basildon Council - Agenda for Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 1st February, 2024, 7.00 p.m. \(basildonmeetings.info\)](#). It was agreed that the Planning Service will bring a Consultation Plan to a future Prosperity Scrutiny Committee for review.

OPTIONS

1. Approve the recommendations set out in this report; or
2. Approve the recommendations set out in this report following amendments. However, these changes would need to be considered by officers to determine whether they are justified and appropriate to make.
3. Not approve the recommendations set out in this report. However this means that Basildon Council would not comply with its published Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out how it will develop a new Local Plan. It is therefore not recommended that this option is pursued as the Council faces compliance and service effectiveness risks. On the 19 December 2023 Basildon Council received a letter of intervention from the Secretary of State requiring the Council to revise its LDS. Any failure to comply with the LDS would increase the risk of further Government intervention.

LEGISLATION/POLICY

- Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance

GENERAL INFORMATION

Corporate Plan Ambitions

The Local Plan has a key role to play in delivering the promises in the Corporate Plan by ensuring that land is available in the borough to help encourage growth and development.

Appendix 4 – Report on Basildon Borough Council Employment and Economic Development Workshop 2022

A NEW LOCAL PLAN FOR BASILDON BOROUGH

REPORT ON THE EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

(DUTY TO COOPERATE)

26 SEPTEMBER 2022



Duty to Cooperate Workshop on Employment and Economic Development, 26 September 2022

On 26 September 2022, Basildon Council hosted an “Employment and Economic Development” workshop at the Cordite Room in Wat Tyler Centre, Pitsea. This is intended to be the first in a series of themed workshops to help identifying issues and challenges for the next Basildon Local Plan.

The workshop was attended by the Council’s planning policy team, the Council’s economic development team, as well as planning officers from the neighbouring Brentwood, Rochford, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Thurrock and Southend Councils. The event was facilitated by Lichfields.

Participants were split into two groups. The morning session identified Basildon-centric issues, with the afternoon being dedicated to wider South Essex matters, although there was a degree of overlap between the themes discussed. After a short introduction where participants introduced themselves and gave a short overview of the stage that the respective authorities’ Local Plan production had reached, the presentations and group exercises began.

Morning Session - Session 1: Key Economic Issues for the New Basildon Local Plan

Discussions centred around three questions which highlighted the concatenated nature of the issues that the Local Plan must find solutions for.

1) What are the key economic opportunities and challenges in Basildon?

The Challenges identified raised the following points:

Employment and Skills

- Although housing costs have risen nationally, the lack of qualifications and lower earnings among residents is a key contributor to the housing unaffordability in Basildon. This, critically, also locks people out of many jobs available locally. However, it also places emphasis on the importance of seeking employment and skills contributions through planning applications. It is clear there is a need for local skill uptake to fill more technical roles and diversify the economy.
- On the same point there is a lack of coherent post-18 progression for people across South Essex. This can result in younger people moving away from the area, and contributes towards the out-commuting of residents for higher-paid work in other areas.
- Although job growth has occurred across the South Essex boroughs, and the logistics sector is strong, in some ways this is not all good news. Demand for warehousing has grown due to the increased popularity of e-commerce, and is predicted to grow further. However, the wages in warehousing/storage etc are fairly low. This contributes towards wider issues re. affordability of housing.

Politics and Social Issues

- Competition between the different independent authorities for investment.

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- Local Plans need to consider 15/20 year periods. There are clear tensions with this and the shorter-term thinking inherent in political cycles, especially where 1/3 of a Council is up for re-election every 12 months. The trade-offs required by the planning process are often not fully understood by politicians.
- Many different Government departments are now involved in setting policy which affects planning (e.g. DEFRA and Natural England are driving the Biodiversity Net Gain and Nutrient Neutrality (NN) policies) and the different regimes do not appear to talk to each other. Two quick examples were given of this, which were pertinent:
 - 1) Through the NPPF, the Government places great importance on housing delivery. However, where the NN advice applies it has paralysed the planning process for Councils. No applications cannot be determined until applicants return to their proposal and retrospectively address soil depletion - yet soil quality is not addressed directly within the NPPF.
 - 2) How would DEFRA BNG rules apply to housing delivered via permitted development (PD), as infrastructure contributions cannot be sought from PD? MHCLG seems to want more housing built via PD. Also new warehousing units often must be built in Green Belt land given their large land-take and access requirements. How will construction deliver a 'BNG' in such circumstances, if applications wouldn't be permissible without making such provision and is 'built' on a site previously undeveloped site? Where Councils do not have a 5YHLS in place, any vacant brownfield employment land is often likely to be lost to housing uses given the greater viability of residential alongside the need for housing. That reduces the scope for industrial build to be accessible via public transport, but simultaneously it will reduce the scope for new urban green spaces?
- Where there is the political will to regenerate an area, then that will help. However, should the decision be to target digital nomads/entrepreneurs to relocate, it can't be overlooked that much or all of their business can be done online. The requirements of such people are cheap floorspace, reliable high speed internet (although non-planning matters such as tax rates may have an impact on where businesses do locate). Dunton Hills are trying to do this (cheaper floorspace/housing etc). If digital nomads are sought, there would need to be some recognition that Basildon's competition is not limited to Southend, London or Chelmsford, but includes overseas locations such as Serbia, Portugal, Estonia and places further afield where Governments have been looking to attract such people and their companies through easing visa rules, and the cost of living and generally doing business is lower than in the UK.
- It can't be discounted that Brexit and the ability to trade within the EU Single Market may also influence the final decisions which investors take. "Build it and they will come" is not necessarily going to be the case any more.
- The Government's new Enterprise zones may be a possible way to assist investment, and rolling back red tape in such areas, plus lower tax/business rates. However, any decision to bid for funding to set up such a Zone will again need political buy-in at multiple levels. These zones can be seen as both an opportunity and a challenge, examples given included the risk of Freeport diverting investment into Thurrock which may have otherwise gone elsewhere. It was recognised these can result in investment but if the jobs created are mostly low paid, logistics, storage and admin/processing work, that will create challenges in other policy areas and in itself doesn't do anything to upskill workers or diversify the economy.

- Is there a perception of Basildon being “rough”? Similarly to the above point on digital nomads, that again doesn’t automatically mean “build it and they will come”. Linking to the above points, why would an investor look to choose Basildon over e.g. Southend, Basingstoke, Sunderland etc. if everywhere else is trying to regenerate and improve?

Land availability and Land Use

- Basildon, and some other authorities such as Brentwood, have high proportions of Green Belt land. This means a lack of available land for development. However, the ongoing competition for land uses (employment/housing) contributes to the inflation of land prices. High housing prices will mean that mortgage and rent costs high, with a knock-on effect for disposable incomes.
- Overlap between residential care homes and employment needs. Care facilities will become increasingly important given the aging demographic.
- The South Essex Plan focusses on larger towns such as Basildon, but leaves the smaller areas such as Castle Point out.
- From a planning perspective: although it is a growth sector, warehousing also has a high land take and low, resultant job density compared to e.g. offices.
- However, some elementary sectors (manufacturing) are also in decline with many businesses in distress. Additional Brexit red tape has been detrimental to exporters.
- A127 Corridor relatively inaccessible by public transport.
- There is a lack of modern and flexible mixed-use space in town centres. This may not change in the near future due more working from home. There is also a lack of Class E floorspace in residential areas of Basildon. It means that any such uses must either go in town centre, or on industrial parks which often require access via private cars.
- Questions were asked of national policy given the challenges and uncertainties caused by ongoing planning reforms. This included some debate as to whether, overall, Class E is a good or bad thing. It was noted that the impacts vary from town to town and district to district, and it is now harder to justify the use of Article 4 directions across large areas such as an entire town centre. This can be particularly difficult in areas where plan-led regeneration is sought, where landowners and national policy will be quite happy to market units as “Class E” to help keep space occupied. Nurseries can become restaurants, restaurants could become offices. Changes of use within Class E are not classed as ‘development’ and do not need planning permission. Offices can also be converted to housing under permitted development rights which is problematic where, like in Basildon, there is no SYHLS. All of these changes make it harder for Councils to control changes of use, especially where they are undesirable, and can undermine any attempt at rebranding.
- Within the NPPF, housing is seen as an acceptable town centre use. Reference was made to a recent appeal decision at Eastgate in Basildon Town Centre, it is unclear how a scheme of 2,800 homes would help a town centre if key shopping floorspace is lost given the quantum of development proposed and its wider implications, or if the Government considered this sort of scenario in mind when creating earlier reforms including “the presumption of sustainable development”.

- Some more general points were raised, e.g. given Basildon's New Town heritage, might it help Basildon to look at e.g. Harlow/Hemel Hempstead/Basingstoke etc in terms of understanding renewal? The challenge being that a traditional approach of benchmarking against neighbouring towns may not always provide the answers, or the best comparator?
- Freeport at Tilbury is likely to have a knock-on effect on job creation in other areas. It poses other questions too linked to wider duty-to-cooperate matters. If Freeport delivers 20,000 jobs as is touted and Thurrock can't take the housing, where do the homes go given Basildon's lack of land, and Southend's constrained by the sea. It also links into wider questions as to how any of London's unmet needs (both housing and employment land) should be broken down between the different South Essex boroughs.

Opportunities

- It was felt there are opportunities in fields such as digi-tech as part of the industrial renewal. Basildon is also part of the travel to work area of Southend. Inward investment is taking place there which may begin to spill over in time.
- Manufacturing may make Basildon more resilient against some of the negative effects of home working.
- There is also scope to capitalise on the good transport links to and from London. Southend Airport has its own post-Covid challenges, but is an important sub-regional asset and very close to the Borough.
- The Government's new Enterprise zones are both an opportunity and a challenge. It can be a way to assist investment, via cutting 'red tape' and lower tax/business rates. But, e.g. will the Tilbury Freeport divert investment there which may have otherwise gone elsewhere? Also if jobs created are mostly low paid, logistics, storage and admin/processing work, that will create challenges in other policy areas and, in itself, such jobs won't do anything to upskill workers or diversify the economy.

2) What can/should the Council do to address these?

Technical solutions included seeking closer working with politicians and taking them on 'the journey' of plan preparation from an early stage to reduce the risk of future pivots in position. The importance of political support was highlighted. It was again noted that in South Essex, the different ASELAs authorities are competing against each other for investment.

With regards to evidence gathering, regular monitoring of the various town centres is important to assess changes of use and vacancy rates.

However, the risk of 'planning by appeal' also was raised and is ongoing for an authority without an up-to-date Local Plan or a five year housing land supply. That undermines any attempts at setting a longer-term vision. The public sector is not involved in innovation funding at all, but in any case its finances and ability to do so is limited.

3) How can we ensure the next Local Plan provide the conditions for businesses to invest/expand, and adapt?

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There was a degree of overlap between the discussion here and in questions 1 and 2. For example, although it was recognised that employment areas could be protected for employment uses, national policy facilitates and assists the conversion of employment land for housing uses. It is critical therefore to ensure that there is no oversupply of land for any particular use.

It was also highlighted that development along the A13, another key employment corridor, is constrained as there would be a need to build over the rail line. This is problematic.

It was recognised that the planning process does not operate in a 'silo'. At a time with many macro-level economic questions, and high inflation, it may be difficult to direct investment into areas which the Market is unsure how to respond to.

Investment decisions will, in part, also be reliant on political support, particularly if the land take requires development in a sensitive area, which may be permissible given the back doors of the "significant and demonstrable" harm tests of the NPPF, and its requirements to place significant weight on the need to support economic growth.

However, delivering the conditions for business to invest/expand is also reliant on the wider public perception of an area. If a town/neighbourhood has a negative stigma whether it is fair or unfairly perceived, it will be difficult and time consuming to turn that view around.

Session 2: Basildon Economic Development

- 1) How do we translate corporate plan objectives & Eco Dev vision into the new Local Plan?
- 2) What could be the Planning Policy Responses to support delivery of these objectives?

There was a degree of overlap between the first two questions. In both questions, the need to support developers when creating Employment & Skills plans is highlighted given the lack of up-to-date local policy. Basildon has no formulas to set in-lieu payments. This poses questions as to how non-compliance is pursued and raises the spectre of how much money has been lost, and how this translates into lost placement opportunities.

Other ways in which the objectives and vision can be unified is to link the Local Plan to the Corporate Plan (and work undertaken at sub-regional level as far as possible), and for the Local Plan to be seen as a delivery mechanism for a Corporate Plan or an Economic Development vision. Such a course of action would tie the various projects together.

There is scope to do this as the NPPF expects Local Plans to be reviewed every five years. Similarly, the lifespan of a Corporate Plan is much shorter than a typical Local Plan. A single evidence base would also help. There is certainly no benefit to different departments commissioning similar pieces of work, and especially if they reach contradictory conclusions! However, although cross-boundary commissions can occur, or different authorities can look to use the same consultant(s) or using identical methodologies, in practice these approaches may not be possible given that local plans are at different stages of preparation.

- 3) What are the barriers to increasing the availability/quality of commercial premises?

The first question, to which the answer is unclear is that of a possible drop-off in activity linked to deteriorating economy. If inflation remains high it is likely to have implications for the viability of schemes with existing but unimplemented planning permissions. Pre-fabricated construction is likely to grow in importance going forwards, but this may pose questions as to whether it would

create less scope for construction apprenticeships given that E&S policies and contributions typically promote these. Returning to an earlier issue, will the Freeport at Tilbury mean that a greater share of public money and investment is likely to be directed towards that scheme, and if so, what does this mean for everywhere else? This could be important in an era where additional restraints on public sector spend is likely.

More co-working and shared spaces are also needed. The theme of Public Transport and accessibility was raised again, with specific reference to matters such as how could employees get to work in certain areas if only using public transport? Logistics employers typically operate shift patterns, and someone starting work at 8, 9 or 10pm may be able to catch the bus, but when their shift finishes at 5 or 6am how would they get home if they don't drive? Buses are all private companies and their finances have been battered by Covid, so what support/incentives would employees need in order to work at certain locations if extra bus routes are not an option.

It was noted again that employment land is being lost to housing, especially in Billericay. Although further allocations for employment land can be made through the Local Plan, its likely to need more green belt release to address some of these issues, which again needs political agreement.

It was acknowledged that the PPG requires plan-makers to give full consideration of long term economic prospects. However, there appears to be far too much uncertainty at present. Although it is not immune to downturns, overall, the UK had come to be viewed as a political and economically stable country by the Markets, and a safe country in which to invest. The Brexit process has affected that view, and although it was said in jest, comparisons were drawn between the current record of 4 PMs in 6 years (Cameron, May, Johnson and Truss) and certain football clubs where the owners regularly fire their managers. Nonetheless, the serious message here is that frequent changes of leadership are clearly incompatible with setting a long term vision and giving the stability, confidence and consistency which investors - particularly those from overseas - need to make critical decisions. Many UK manufacturers are now setting up EU subsidiaries to avoid Brexit red tape. This must pose serious and genuine questions around whether or not the UK will see the same levels of foreign investment going forwards. In tougher economic conditions it is critical for Basildon to get the "basics" right, or it will lose out on investment – which will be even more important if lower levels of investment flow into the UK in the first place.

Afternoon Session - Session 3: Economic issues & relationships across South Essex

After a short presentation by Essex County Council's Economic Infrastructure Manager, the subject moved to a wider, sub-regional level discussion. Again, the three-question format was used to tease out participant answers and stimulate discussion.

1) To what extent do you consider there is a shared understanding of economic issues across South Essex & how may these influence Basildon's future Economic Needs?

Here it was felt that there is a shared understanding of issues faced across the boroughs, but the governance arrangements are not there from a planning position. For example, although it has long since been defunct, the absence of a regional tier of spatial planning at either Essex or East of England creates a big chasm from planning at the local level (e.g. Basildon or Brentwood alone) to national policy.

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Secondly, all of the authorities are working to different local plan timetables. This doesn't help or facilitate the process of joint working on evidence, and makes it challenging to align approaches across different local authority boundaries.

A third observation was around the JSP work, the JSP is not a statutory document. Do all of the Councils know what they want from the JSP work? Even if they do, this is noted that different views may also lead to dissatisfactory outcomes. There are further challenges around education and highways due to the two-tier system of governance in Essex, unitary authorities have it easier in this respect.

Where fiscal contribution are sought under Section 106 the developer pays money to a Council but full payment may not be received until a project has completed, or all of the homes are delivered. If predictions come to light and local authorities we become more cash-strapped we will repeatedly hear the mantra that "planning is a problem" yet with regard to infrastructure provision, it is actually "development" that is a problem. Furthermore there are no old-style Urban Regeneration Companies any more to co-ordinate the investment and infrastructure.

There were follow on questions and observations from this, such as what is the vision for ASELA going forwards? Although the policy issues are shared across the boroughs, there may be a lack of understanding around the drivers of employment migratory behaviours. For example, Basildon was comfortable accommodating unmet employment land needs from London – this approach was reflected in the emerging local plan policies (which has now been withdrawn). But there were no specific commitments within South Essex. This is something which must be re-visited in the future as it is likely to play out regardless of policy, similarly to housing, so it's important that it's accommodated within policy. As noted earlier, it was unclear what demands the Freeport at Tilbury will create, and how its development may affect other boroughs.

2) How should we reflect strategic drivers of change (e.g. Freeport/A127 corridor etc)

Here it was noted that rents are likely to continue rising, due to shortage of supply and demand in market. However, it is not possible to solve problems across boundaries without a clear subregional vision. That again poses questions on how do you then address what e.g. Freeport will deliver, or the strategic implications of it and spill over of needs?

On the positive side, this could give more opportunities for boroughs to collaborate, but better to have multi-authority group work rather than individual councils seeking discussions with Thurrock around Freeport. There may be scope for something such as an "A127 Taskforce" to be created given the employment corridor links the M25 to Southend, and contains employment allocations in Brentwood, Basildon, Rochford and Southend itself.

Public transport constraints were noted. However, how do we actually achieve behaviour change (i.e. less driving) without the investment in new services, routes, Metro or tram systems?

Regarding local plans, the risk of Government intervention or possible 30 month timetables for preparation and adoption, it was felt this could help with getting 'momentum' behind a Local Plan. However, it might equally lead to people skipping over the more complicated & time consuming sub-regional issues, possibly leading to commitments to early review. The 30 month preparation period still doesn't address that Local Plans would be prepared in line with an authority's LDS, and they also need to address issues specific to a particular borough. The faster timetable doesn't in itself mean that greater scope for joint working would be possible in the future – that is an issue which needs better coordination at a higher level of governance (i.e. akin to the former regional planning system).

3) How do we ensure a complementary strategy across South Essex to support economic growth?

There was a degree of overlap between the answers to questions 2 and 3, problems can't be solved at the subregional level without a clear subregional vision. It poses questions on how do you then address what sub regional drivers e.g. Freeport will deliver, the strategic implications of it and spill over of need and how such need is distributed. On the positive side, this can give more opportunities for boroughs to collaborate, but better to have group work rather than bi-lateral discussions.

There may be scope to use same consultants for evidence to help with delivering consistency in methodologies etc, across borough boundaries. Or for ASELA to be involved with commissioning a strategic evidence base covering the South Essex Area – noting this already happens with the SHMA work. Any such further work could then be complimented by additional local evidence supporting wider South Essex objectives. Essex is not strategically orientated unlike for example Oxford - not particularly spatially coherent/distinctive in terms of employment. The ELAA attempts to unpack businesses needs and the suitability of different locations.

Also, could there be scope for any investment opportunities to be communicated strategically at ASELA level?

Session 4: Linking economic issues to wider local plan matters (e.g. housing, transport etc)

1) What are the key interdependencies between the economic issues and other aspects of preparing the Local Plan?

Here, it was felt that the notion of placemaking is important. Setting a very clear vision around what kind of identity we want a borough to have going forwards. If we start with vision, and get that right then we commission evidence. That doesn't always happen. There may be the possibility to produce an E class study, which will cover retail, employment and leisure issues, reflecting the diversity of uses which are within Class E. Housing affordability, in-commuting and out-commuting plus skills and wage levels mean there is a competitiveness with other Local Authorities across the sub-region.

Public transport availability is critical. Rail journeys to other parts of Essex can still require passengers to make a journey into Central London first which is more expensive, will take much longer, and acts as an incentive to use cars for such trips. There is a lack of options running from north to south. Also the patchwork of private operators in Essex mean that journeys between different operators' bus services is not as seamless as is the case in other areas, including London, due to governance arrangements.

2) What might be the critical choices/trade-offs to be considered through formulating the new local plan?

As under question 1, the choices are linked to the need for a clear vision and understanding what the authority wants and what the authority has to offer. E.g. if no development in town centres/brownfield, have to build in Green Belt (non-negotiable). If Green Belt is prioritised, this protection is then afforded greater weighting than economic and social factors. The trade-off here is

that, if and where the premises aren't available in e.g. Basildon, companies will locate in Brentwood/Rochford/Another Borough where such space may be available. Notably, Brentwood's new Enterprise Park at Dunton Hills is at the borough boundary and fronts onto the A127.

Simultaneously, if there is no Green Belt release, densification inevitably occurs, altering the character of an area. This might be seen as more sustainable, and 'good' in some quarters, but poses other questions such as whether the type of housing coming forward at Basildon Town Centre satisfactorily address the needs of residents now.

In addition, even if current needs are addressed to an extent by the appeal schemes, might this change in the future with an ageing population whose first preference is unlikely to be living high up in tower blocks?

Further choices and trade offs were identified around Climate Change and Net Zero. One option is for Net Zero to underpin the whole Plan. Higher environmental standards can be sought in development at relatively little additional cost, this also gives a branding opportunity for developers if additional measures or technology is included in a home which can help to reduce utility bills.

At the same time, electric vehicles (EV) may be zero emissions when driven, but their use does not address concerns about traffic congestion or road safety matters. Walking, cycling, public transport is prioritised over private car use in the NPPF, the fuel source of the vehicle is not relevant. How far does national planning policy actually go in supporting EV use? Billions of pounds of investment in new charging points will be needed across the UK to underpin EV use, but might that start to divert investment away from public transport improvements? It will be difficult to retrofit EV charging points into blocks of flats. What will the rising cost of electricity mean for EVs, or transport per se?

In light of East Anglia Green and the land-take implications of that new power route from Norwich to Tilbury, might similar new power lines be needed in Essex or elsewhere to ensure the National Grid can keep up with the demand for electricity that will be required in future? Will there be any new technologies which emerge or re-emerge over the coming years? And where would Fracking fit into this?

Does a Council choose to use Standard Method, or do further work to establish its own need (e.g. Basingstoke)? Alternatively the example of Elmbridge could be followed, in preparing a plan which doesn't meet seek to housing needs in full because of high volumes of Green Belt. If the latter is chosen, what is the impact on the economy, or the in-commuting/out-commuting balance? Can such an approach be shown to conform to national policy given the NPPF must be taken as a whole?

3) What evidence is required – how do we ensure that this is aligned?

Further work around Class E is critical. As earlier, looking to use the same consultants for evidence to ensure consistency in the methodologies could be helpful. Green Belt studies are important given the shortage of land and the development needs of the area. However, securing and maintaining political support for decisions taken is just as important as any evidence study.

**ATTENDANCE LIST FOR BASILDON COUNCIL'S EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP - 26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

CONFIRMED EXTERNAL ATTENDEES	JOB TITLE	COMPANY/LOCAL AUTHORITY
██████████	Senior Director	Lichfields
██████████	Associate Director	Lichfields
██████████	Principal Planner	Southend
██████████	Senior Planner	Chelmsford
██████████	Planning Policy Team Leader	Rochford
██████████	Planning Policy Manager	Castle Point
██████████	Senior Planner	Brentwood BC
██████████	Strategic Planning Manager	Thurrock BC
██████████	Principal Planner	Essex County Council
██████████	Economic Infrastructure Manager	Essex County Council
CONFIRMED INTERNAL ATTENDEES	JOB TITLE	
██████████	Head of Planning	Basildon BC
██████████	Planning Strategy & Implementation Manager	Basildon BC
██████████	Principal Planner	Basildon BC
██████████	Principal Planner	Basildon BC
██████████	Principal Planner	Basildon BC
██████████	Principal Planner	Basildon BC
██████████	Graduate Planner	Basildon BC
██████████	Graduate Planner	Basildon BC
██████████	Head of Economic Development	Basildon BC
██████████	Economic Development Officer	Basildon BC
██████████	Economic Development Officer	Basildon BC
██████████	Economic Development Officer	Basildon BC

