

6th February 2018

Policy Projects and Resources Committee

South Essex Vision 2050

Report of: *Philip Ruck – Chief Executive*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *This report is public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to explain the work undertaken by Leaders and Chief Executives of South Essex Councils to create a vision and sense of place for the area. (commonly known as South Essex Vision 2050).
- 1.2 To explain the reason for the formation of a Joint Committee with the title of the Association of South Essex Local Authorities;
- 1.3 South Essex Councils are defined as Brentwood, Basildon, Thurrock, Southend, Rochford, Castle Point and Essex CC.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members support the co-ordinated approach with neighbouring authorities on strategic place shaping in the South Essex 2050 Vision.**
- 2.2 That Members agree and support a programme of further collaboration on key strategic place shaping to support much needed infrastructure and economic growth to underpin delivery of the local plan.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The local authorities in South Essex have for some time been defined as Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock and Essex County Council. In June 2017, Brentwood was incorporated in the group, given its close relationship with Basildon, Thurrock and key infrastructure affecting the area, such as the A127.

- 3.2 There is a long established tradition of working in partnership on strategic matters, one which Brentwood wishes to maintain. An example of this work includes the Strategic Flood Risk Assessments., amongst others.
- 3.3 Following discussions regarding devolution at an Essex level, and having regard to the duty to cooperate, which is vital in ensuring that Brentwood has a successful and deliverable Local Development Plan, Leaders and Chief Executives of the South Essex authorities have come together to describe overarching strategic principles for South Essex, especially around infrastructure and economic growth.
- 3.4 The evidence of the willingness to co-operate and fulfilling the Duty to Co-operate can be clearly evidenced in the letter that has been signed by all Leaders of the ASELA sent to the Secretary of State – see Appendix A
- 3.5 The Leaders and Chief Executives of South Essex have met on a regular basis since the summer of 2017.
- 3.6 The purpose of the discussions has been to start to prepare a strategic “vision” for the area, which embraces a range of public and private enterprises that together have the ability to create a sense of place.
- 3.7 The work has an interim title of “South Essex Vision 2050” and its intention has been to describe a joint “place-based” vision, together with the growth and strategies necessary to support this, the infrastructure required in the area, and how local authorities might work together to deliver these aspirations.
- 3.8 It is accepted and agreed by the Leaders and Chief Executives that the shared mutual ambitions for South Essex collaboration and joint working. It is only by working more closely together the major challenges in the area can be addressed, and opportunities taken forward.
- 3.9 Consequently following extensive discussion, working together the Leaders and Chief Executives have agreed on eight industrial and infrastructure strategic priorities for the area;

1. *Place leadership, proposition and brand*

2. *Opening up spaces for development (green infrastructure, housing and commercial)*

3. *Transforming transport connectivity*

4. *Supporting our seven sectors of industrial opportunity:*

- *Advanced manufacturing*
- *Construction*
- *Environmental technologies and energy*
- *Digital and creative services*
- *Finance and business services*
- *Life sciences and healthcare*
- *Transport and logistics*

5. *Shaping local labour and skills markets*

6. *Creating a fully digitally-enabled place*

7. *Securing a sustainable energy supply*

8. *Enhancing health and social care through co-ordinated planning.*

3.10 South Essex Leaders and Chief Executives are committed to continuing with the “vision” work beyond January 2018. This includes formalising the collaboration by creating an Association to:

- Prepare an initial statement of intent explaining what has been done through the work shop programme and how it is intended to take the collaboration forward
- Build a forward plan of work to fully develop the outline proposition and ideas created through the work shop programme
- Implement a wider engagement plan and programme

This includes three key tasks

- Design a place proposition to promote South Essex
- Take a joined – up and strategic approach to infrastructure and economic growth
- Co-ordination of an infrastructure strategy

3.11 The attached MOU (Appendix B) provides clear background as to the activities of ASELA

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 The co-operation in South Essex and determination to succeed for the prosperity of the whole of the South Essex area requires this activity and there are no real delivery vehicles other than ASELA that can achieve this with acceptable timeframes.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 In order to fulfil the obligation of the Duty to Co-operate as required for the Brentwood LDP to be accepted, and to promote and deliver much needed infrastructure and economic growth, Brentwood must engage with the surrounding boroughs.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 The Council is committed to make Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

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Financial implications are yet unknown for the south Essex vision 2050 collaboration.

The Council has sufficient reserves to fund any financial costs that may arise, and will be reported back to Committee appropriately.

Legal Implications

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- 8.1 The Localism Act 2011 places a legal duty on local planning authorities and other defined bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross-boundary matters. It is not a duty to agree but local planning authorities must make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation before they submit their Local Plan for examination. The cooperation should produce effective and deliverable policies on strategic cross boundary issues.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

None.

9. Background Papers

none

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – ASELA Letter to Secretary of State

Appendix B – ASELA MOU

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