



Meeting	Ipswich Strategic Planning Area Board
Date	Wednesday 23 rd July 2025
Time	17:00
Location	Orwell Room, Grafton House, Ipswich
Attendees	Cllr Carole Jones (Ipswich Borough Council) (Chair) Cllr Mark Packard (East Suffolk Council) Cllr Sally Davies (Babergh District Council) Cllr Andrew Stringer (Mid Suffolk District Council) Cllr Paul West (Suffolk County Council) James Cutting (Suffolk County Council) (JC) Graeme Mateer (Suffolk County Council) (GM) Peter Freer (Suffolk County Council) (PF) Robert Hobbs (Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils) (RH) Dee O'Rourke (Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils) (DO) Ben Woolnough (East Suffolk Council) (BW) James Mann (Ipswich Borough Council) (JM) Andrea McMillan (East Suffolk Council) (AM) Jason Beck (East Suffolk Council) (JB) Isaac Plummer (East Suffolk Council) (IP)
Distribution	Attendees
Apologies tendered in advance	Anna Roe (Ipswich Borough Council) Luke Barber (Suffolk County Council) Philip Isbell (Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils)

Items:

	Item	Action
1.	Apologies for absence	
1.1	None.	
2.	Agreement of Action Notes from previous meeting	
2.1	Agreed.	
3.	Update on Suffolk wide working and preparations for new plan-making system	
3.1	AM provided an update on Suffolk wide working on Local Plans, including an overview of the timescales for each Local Planning Authority's (LPA) Local Plan preparation, noting that the timetables are broadly aligned. AM explained that while some pieces of evidence can be initiated before the full details of the new system are known, such as the Sustainability Appraisal, other elements like the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) will likely require more clarity before proceeding. This is being actively considered through Suffolk-wide collaboration, which is assessing what evidence is needed and at what geography it could be prepared. AM also explained that a paper is being prepared by Suffolk planning authorities to set out an approach to aligned working.	
3.2	Cllr Stringer identified the following for discussion – vision; co-ordination of Sustainability Appraisals; housing need that can be met in each area; common methodology for site assessment; aligned call for sites; cross-boundary infrastructure solutions; and shared evidence base and commissioning. Cllr Stringer , in response to AM's update, emphasised the importance of establishing a clear methodology for both the evidence base and the call for sites process to ensure alignment with the identified timetable. JC added that reforms might introduce changes affecting the evidence base and suggested that LPAs identify tasks that could be started or commissioned ahead of the formal announcement of reforms. Cllr Stringer	

3.3 3.4	expressed concern that waiting for reforms could lead to delays, reinforcing the urgency of progressing with certain tasks. In response to a question from Cllr Jones about the risk level of initiating the call for sites and site assessments, RH expressed a desire to begin the call for sites soon but stressed the need for a joint and consistent approach. RH also highlighted the importance of having employment site evidence beforehand to support a robust methodology. AM noted that East Suffolk Council (ESC) has already begun internal preparations for a call for sites. BW explained that the messaging used during the call for sites process will be important, and that the call for sites might also increase understanding of sites which might come forward in the absence of a five-year supply. AM emphasised the need for sufficient lead-in time to allow stakeholders to prepare and submit high-quality site information. Cllr Stringer questioned whether a tightly aligned start date for the call for sites across LPAs would ensure fairness and equal opportunity. Cllr Jones expressed interest in hearing feedback from the Suffolk-wide working meetings scheduled for August. BW explained that West Suffolk Council (WSC) are also a part of Suffolk wide working and it will be important to ensure WSC Members are also considered. It was agreed that officers will continue to finalise the work programme with a focus on taking forward evidence that can be undertaken in the short term. There was agreement that the methodology for call for sites should be aligned. A work programme will be presented at the next meeting.	Officers to report back on progress on Suffolk wide working and alignment of evidence and call for sites at the next meeting
4. 4.1	Overview of unmet need JM opened the discussion on meeting Ipswich's unmet need. It will be an iterative approach to establish unmet need which is dependent on a range of evidence. This includes housing tenure and open space studies. Some evidence should be available by early 2026, but it won't be until spring/summer 2026 that this evidence is more completely understood. JM urged the other authorities to continue their early preparation prior to this evidence/data being published.	

5.	Approach to strategic cross-boundary infrastructure	
5.1	Discussion related to this item had been covered in the items above	
6.	AOB	
6.1	None.	