

Agenda

Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday, 4 December 2024

Time 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT

Quorum = 16

Pages

Recording and Privacy Notice

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1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Visitors and members of the public who are unfamiliar with the building and procedures are advised that:

- (a) The fire alarm is a continuous loud ringing. In the event that a fire drill is planned during the meeting, the Chair will advise of this.
- (b) Exit routes from the chamber are located on each side of the room, one directly to a fire escape, the other to the stairs opposite the lifts.
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- (d) Anyone unable to use the stairs should make themselves known during this agenda item.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the meeting held on 2 October 2024 (Minute Nos. 285 – 302) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) or disclosable non-pecuniary interests (DNPIs) to declare in respect of items on the agenda. Members with a DPI in an item must leave the room for that item and may not participate in the debate or vote.

Aside from disclosable interests, where a fair-minded and informed observer would think there was a real possibility that a Member might be biased or predetermined on an item, the Member should declare this and leave the room while that item is considered.

Members who are in any doubt about interests, bias or predetermination should contact the monitoring officer for advice prior to the meeting.

5. Mayor's Announcements

6. Questions submitted by the Public

To consider any questions submitted by the public. (The deadline for questions is 4.30 pm on the Wednesday before the meeting – please contact Democratic Services by e-mailing democraticservices@swale.gov.uk or call 01795 417330).

7. Questions submitted by Members

To consider any questions submitted by Members. (The deadline for questions is 4.30 pm on the Monday the week before the meeting – please contact Democratic Services by e-mailing democraticservices@swale.gov.uk or call 01795 417330).

8. Leader's Statement

9. Motion - School Breakfast Clubs

Swale Council welcomes the Chancellor providing £30m in the Government's Budget for thousands of schools to set up breakfast clubs.

By providing free breakfasts, schools will be ensuring all students start the day fed and ready to learn irrespective of their home situation. Families will additionally benefit from the peace of mind knowing that cost of living pressures will not ever result in their children starting the school day hungry and attendance will not be affected by something so solvable as hunger.

Swale Council resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to write to both MPs representing Swale to welcome this new government funding for school breakfast clubs and to seek their support for all schools in Swale to be able to take advantage of it.

Proposed by: Councillor Dolley Wooster
Seconded by: Councillor Karen Watson

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 10. | Urgent Motion - White Ribbon Day 2024 | 5 - 6 |
| 11. | Urgent Motion - Letter to MP | 7 - 8 |
| 12. | Audit Committee Annual Report - 2023/24 | 9 - 24 |
| 13. | Faversham Neighbourhood Plan Referendum - to follow | |
| 14. | Local Plan Review - Local Plan Employment Sites | 25 - 64 |
| 15. | Vision, Objectives and Growth - to follow | |
| 16. | Local Development Scheme - to follow | |

Issued on Tuesday, 26 November 2024

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in alternative formats. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, please contact democraticservices@swale.gov.uk. To find out more about the work of the Council, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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Swale Borough Council Notes that White Ribbon Day 2024 was observed on 25th November and coincides with the United Nation's Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Council acknowledges the significance of this day in raising awareness about men's violence against women and girls, and the importance of prioritising Primary Prevention to stop violence from happening in the first place.

The council acknowledges the work of the community safety team and the use of safer streets funding to protect the health, safety and well being of women and girls in Swale, particularly those who are victims of domestic abuse. Council also acknowledges the incredibly hard work of the voluntary sector in Swale, in particular SATEDA, Clarion and New Leaf who continue to provide high quality services to some of Swale's most vulnerable women who have fled the most horrific circumstances.

The council recognises that the Autumn budget failed to recognise the need for funding to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls and expresses concerns that funding streams from the Police and Crime Commissioner are coming to an end.

The council recognise the ongoing need to address and prevent violence against women and girls, and the need to engage men and boys throughout society. This includes in education, in workplaces, communities and online.

The council acknowledges the critical role that we play in shaping and implementing policies that prioritise preventing violence against women and girls and helping to create a more equal society where all individuals, regardless of gender, can live freely without the fear of violence.

Council calls upon all Members to:

- Include the Primary Prevention of violence against women and girls within all policy and strategies across all the council's departments, alongside responses to gender-based violence.
- Develop and implement comprehensive Primary Prevention strategies involving and across all sectors of society, online and offline, including education, health care, the criminal justice system, transport industry, the third sector and private businesses.
- Reaffirm the councils commitment to implement Chapter 3 of the Istanbul Convention, which focuses on prevention measures, especially focusing on engaging men and boys through education, workplaces and leisure and sport organisations.
- To call on the Government to increase investment and statutory sources of funding for specialist organisations working on Primary Prevention initiatives aimed at addressing the underlying factors contributing to violence against women.

Council instructs the following:

The leader of the council, along with all group leaders, write to central government requesting further funding to tackle VAWG in Swale.

The Leader of the council, along with all group leaders write to SATEDA, Clarion and New Leaf thanking them for their hard-work and dedication in supporting victims of domestic abuse and victims of VAWG.

The council use social media to encourage men to take the pledge of the white ribbon campaign.

By endorsing this motion, we not only acknowledge the importance of White Ribbon Day 2024, but also reinforce our dedication to preventing men's violence against women and girls from happening in the first place.

Proposed: Cllr Tom Nundy

Seconded: Cllr Karen Watson

This council condemns the words and attitudes attributed to Kevin McKenna MP in the Guardian article by Polly Toynbee.

There is a need for housing that local people can afford - not housing principally aimed at those moving in from London which local people can rarely afford. McKenna's comments that "60% of residents commute to London" is both inaccurate and is not something that represents sustainable communities. 4 hours commuting each day is bad for health, social cohesion and domestic stability. It is something that needs challenging not championing.

McKenna's comments about local Councils not having the power to hold developers to account is in itself a reason to oppose such developments unless they have local support - not a reason for Whitehall to step in and take over.

Instead of looking to Whitehall to determine planning, McKenna should be fighting for Councils to have a level playing field and not allow developers to constantly bypass democracy when they choose to.

This council instructs the Leader to formally convey in writing our disappointment at Kevin McKenna MP's comments and attitude.

Proposed: Cllr Monique Bonney

Seconded: Cllr Mike Baldock

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Council Meeting	
Meeting Date	04 December 2024
Report Title	Audit Committee Annual Report - 2023/24
EMT Lead	Lisa Fillery – Director of Resources
Head of Service	Kathy Woodward – Head of Audit Partnership
Lead Officer	Kathy Woodward – Head of Audit Partnership
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2023/24 (appendix I) is noted.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report details how the Audit Committee effectively fulfilled its duties during 2023/24. This report provides assurance to the Council that the Committee has monitored and addressed issues of governance, risk management and internal control throughout the year.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Audit Committee is required to monitor internal and external audit activity, review and comment on the effectiveness of the Council’s governance framework and review and approve the Council’s annual statement of accounts.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 To note the Audit Committee Annual Report as attached in Appendix I, including the CIPFA checklist to demonstrate how the committee has fulfilled its duties.
- 3.2 That the Chairman of the Audit Committee presents the report to a meeting of the Full Council setting out how the Committee has discharged its duties.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 The production and presentation of an annual report is required by this Committee’s terms of reference. Therefore, no other alternative could be recommended.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The draft report was sent to the Chairman of the Audit Committee for consultation prior to submission for this meeting.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	None identified at this stage.
Financial, Resource and Property	The role of the Audit Committee includes the review of the financial reports for the Council, including the approval of the Annual Statement of Accounts.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Audit Committee Annual Report 2023/24

8 Background Papers

Audit committee reports and agendas for 2023/24.

SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Audit Committee

2023/24

Annual Report



1. Introduction by Chairman of Audit Committee

As the Chair of the Audit Committee, it is my pleasure to introduce the annual report, providing an overview of the Committee's activity during the Municipal Year 2023/24.

The Council continues to face challenges from the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, rising inflation and economic pressures facing the authority. As a committee, we have maintained our focus on the issues facing the Council from a risk, control, and governance perspective. This report looks back and gives us opportunity to reflect on the activity and achievements of the Committee during the Municipal Year 2023/24.

The Committee has discharged its responsibility to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and the associated control environment. We have also provided robust scrutiny and challenge of the Authority's financial performance.

During 2023/24 the Committee met six times and I was pleased to note, among the highlights, the sign off of the 2022/23 Annual Accounts, consideration of the Council's risk management processes and a positive opinion on the Council's control and governance from our internal auditors.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Members and Officers that have supported the Committee over the last year. Their professionalism, integrity, and openness have helped us to discuss, challenge and debate key issues and agree solutions and improvements where appropriate to do so.



Councillor Simon Clark – Audit Committee Chairman

2. Purpose of the Audit Committee Annual Report

Under CIPFA best practice the Audit Committee should produce an annual report on its performance to Full Council. This report summarises the work of the Audit Committee during 2023-24 and how it has fulfilled its duty. To assess its performance the following key areas have been considered, as aligned to CIPFA best practice:

- Purpose of the Committee
- Membership and Attendance
- Performance in delivery of its Terms of Reference
- Compliance to CIPFA Audit Committee Best Practice Self-Assessment
- Conclusions including training and development

3. Purpose of the Committee

The Audit Committee operates in accordance with the [Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities](#). This guidance (updated in 2022) sets out the purpose of an Audit Committee and is published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA). The guidance states:

CIPFA's Position Statement:

Audit Committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework. Their purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements. The committee's role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance risk and control gives greater confidence to all those charged with governance that arrangements are effective.

The committee has oversight of both internal and external audit together with the financial and governance reports, helping to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

The Committee is independent from management and other Committees, this is important as it ensures that duties can be discharged in line with the agreed Terms of Reference (attached as an appendix to this report). This includes rights of access and reporting lines direct to statutory officers, the Head of Audit Partnership and appointed external auditors where appropriate.

The Committee is not a substitute for the management function of internal audit, risk management, governance, or any other sources of assurance. The role of the Committee is to examine these functions and to offer views and recommendations on the way in which these functions are managed and conducted.

The production and presentation of an annual report is required by the Committee's Terms of Reference. The purpose of this report is to outline where the Committee has gained assurance during the year, particularly over areas of governance, risk management, Standards, and internal control.

4. Membership & Meetings

During 2023/24 the Audit Committee was comprised of nine Members and met six times, including a meeting to elect the chairs only as part of the annual council meeting on 18 May 2023

The Committee is supported throughout the year by senior officers and managers of the Council who are regularly present. In addition, the Council's External Auditors (Grant Thornton) regularly attend meetings of the Committee.

The following table outlines Member attendance at 2023/24 Audit Committee meetings.

Name	Role	17-Apr-23	17-May-23	24-July-23	23-Oct-23	24-Jan-24	19-Feb-24
Cllr Simon Clark	Chair	Apologies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cllr Derek Carnell	Vice-Chair	✓ (Chair)	✓	✓	Apologies	Apologies	✓
Cllr Andy Booth	Member		✓	✓	Apologies	✓	Apologies
Cllr Ann Hampshire	Member	Absent					
Cllr Angela Harrison	Member	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Cllr Mike Henderson	Member	Apologies	Apologies	✓	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Cllr Denise Knights	Member	✓					
Cllr Rich Lehmann	Member		✓	✓	✓ Virtual	✓ Virtual	Apologies
Cllr Peter Marchington	Member	Absent					
Cllr Pete Neal	Member	Apologies					
Cllr Tara Noe	Member		✓	✓ (Virtual)	✓	✓	✓
Cllr Richard Palmer	Member	✓		Apologies	✓	✓	✓
Cllr Dolly Wooster	Member		✓	Apologies	✓	✓ Virtual	✓
Cllr Tim Gibson	Visiting Member	✓ Substitute					
Cllr Elliot Jayes	Visiting Member	✓ Virtual					
Cllr Ann Cavanagh	Visiting Member			✓ Substitute	✓ Virtual		
Cllr Angie Valls	Visiting Member			✓ Substitute			
Cllr Chris Palmer	Visiting Member				✓ Substitute	✓ Substitute	
Cllr Tony Winckless	Visiting Member				✓ Virtual		
Cllr Claire Martin	Visiting Member					✓ Substitute	

The Committee is supported throughout the year by senior officers and managers of the Council who are regularly present, including:

- Chief Executive
- Director of Resources
- Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance
- Head of Mid Kent Audit Partnership
- Audit Delivery Manager
- Audit Planning Manager
- Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning
- Climate Change Officer

All Committee agendas, papers and minutes are available on the [Council's website](#)

5. Delivery of the Committees Terms of Reference

The Audit Committee have drawn on a variety of sources of assurance to fulfil their responsibilities. During 2023/24 the Committee considered, examined and made decisions on the following areas within its Terms of Reference:

Finance Activity
<p>Treasury Management Outturn Report for 22/23 – July 2023</p> <p>The report presented to Members was prepared in line with the CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management. It included Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy Statement on Financing and Investment Activities. Members approved the Treasury Management Stewardship report for 2022/23, and the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators.</p>
<p>Mid-Year Treasury Management Review for 23/24 – Jan 2024</p> <p>This report was presented to Members. It outlined the mid-year outturn position on treasury management transactions for 2022/23, including compliance with treasury limits and Prudential and Treasury Performance Indicators. Members noted the report, and the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators.</p>
<p>Annual Financial Report 2022/23 and Audit Findings Report – Oct 23 and Jan 2024</p> <p>The report was presented to Members. It outlined the Council's Annual Financial Report for 2021/22 and included the External Auditors Findings report and the Letter of Representation for the Committees consideration. Members noted the External Auditors Findings report and approved the Annual Financial Report and Letter of Representation.</p>
<p>Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 – Jan 2024</p> <p>The report presented to Members included Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy Statement on Financing and Investment Activities. Members approved the Treasury Management Strategy report for 2023/24, and the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators.</p>
Internal Audit Activity
<p>Internal Audit and Assurance Plan 2023/24 – April 2023</p> <p>The internal Audit plan for 2023/24 was presented to members for their approval. Members approved the 2023/24 plan, and noted there was enough resource to deliver the plan independently and without inappropriate influence from management.</p>
<p>Annual Internal Audit Report & Opinion 2022/23 – July 2023</p> <p>The annual assurance report on the Council's Internal Control, Governance, and Risk Management activities was presented to Members. The report concluded that the Head of Audit was able to provide sound assurance with no qualifications to the opinion. Members noted the opinion, and the Head of Audit Partnership's assurance of independence and conformance with the standards</p>
<p>Interim Internal Audit & Assurance Report 2023/24 – Jan 2024</p> <p>The internal audit update report presented to Members, detailed the progress against the audit plan for 2023/24. Members noted the report</p>
<p>Outstanding Audit Actions Update – Feb 2024</p> <p>The Committee requested and received an update on the outstanding audit actions relating to Planning Obligations. Progress was discussed and noted.</p>
External Audit Activity
<p>External Audit Plan 2022/23 – April 2023</p> <p>External audit presented to Members the report which included an overview of the scope, cost, and timing of the audit for 2022/23. Members noted the External Audit Plan.</p>
<p>External Audit Annual Report 2021/22 and 2022/23– April 2023 and Jan 2024</p>

The Annual Financial Reports for 2020/21 and 2022/23 were presented to Members. The report issued an unmodified audit opinion. This meant that no major adjustments were required to the Council's annual financial report.

External Audit Progress Report 2022/23 – July 2023

The progress on the 2022/23 audit was presented to the committee. Members noted the progress.

Other Activity

Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23 – Oct 2023

A report on the activity of the Audit Committee was presented to members. It outlined the attendance of members, details the Terms of Reference for the committee, and activity of the committee throughout the year. The Audit Committee Annual report was agreed by Members, and the Chair of the Audit Committee will present the report to Full Council to discharge their duties.

Risk Management Annual Update 2022/23 – April 2023

The report detailed for Members the Council's risk management framework arrangements. Members noted the risk management framework arrangements.

6. CIPFA Self-Assessment of Good Practice

The 2022 CIPFA Audit Committee Guidance provides a framework for assessing the Audit Committee against good practice. Where an Audit Committee has a high degree of performance against the good practice principles, it is an indicator that the committee is soundly based and has in place a knowledgeable membership. These are the essential factors in developing an effective Audit Committee. A regular self-assessment should be used to support the planning of the Audit Committee work programme and training plans.

This can be found at Appendix B. It will also inform this annual report.

Assessing the Audit Committee against that framework, the following areas were identified for development:

- Review the Committees Terms of Reference to determine if any further improvements could be made in line with guidance available.
- An assessment be undertaken of the committee's knowledge and skills.
- Develop training and support arrangements for committee members following the knowledge and skills assessment.
- Evaluate how the committee adds value to the organisation and explore obtaining feedback on the committee's role within the organisation.
- Develop and action plan to support the committee.

There was one area of non-compliance on the subject of appointing an independent member to the committee. It is considered best practice for Audit Committees to have an independent member and is the recommendation of standard setters in the field, however, this committee has decided that it will not appoint an independent member at this time and will be reviewed again following the next Local Elections.

7. Conclusions

Whilst the Audit Committee generally complies with the CIPFA Position Statement and the self-assessment, there are some areas that could be improved upon for full compliance (see section 6 for details).

The committee understand the importance of receiving training to keep its skills and knowledge current and has regularly undertaken training throughout 2023/24, including the following to support the committee's development:

- Overview of the Audit Committee, Annual Governance Statement, and Internal Audit
- Statement of Accounts
- Treasury Management

These sessions have been well attended by members of the committee.

The Audit Committee has worked in partnership with the Council's Internal and External Auditors and received support from Officers. This has provided robust and effective independent assurance to the Council on a wide range of risk, governance, and internal control issues.

In addition to receiving and commenting on regular reports and attending training and development opportunities, the committee also makes recommendations to other committees and officers of the council on important items that arise through the committee's discussions.

Through this review the Audit Committee can demonstrate that it has appropriately and effectively fulfilled its duties during 2023/24 and this can also be seen as set out in the respective minutes.

Appendix A – Audit Committee Terms of Reference

Membership: Nine (9) Members

Purpose: The purpose of the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority’s financial and nonfinancial performance to the extent that it affects the authority’s exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process.

Audit Activity	Regulatory Framework	Accounts
To consider the Head of Audit Partnership’s annual report and opinion, and a summary of audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the council’s governance arrangements, and any report from Internal Audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.	To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive or a Director or any Council body. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the Council.	To review and approve the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether there are concerns arising from the financial statement or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Policy and Resources Committee or the Council.
To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of Internal Audit Services, including consideration and endorsement of Internal Audit Plans.	To monitor council policies on ‘Whistleblowing’ and the ‘Antifraud and Corruption Strategy’.	To consider the external auditor’s report to those charged with governance on issues from the audit of the accounts.
To consider the external auditor’s annual letter, the report to those charged with governance, and any specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.	To consider and comment on the authority’s Annual Governance Statement and agree its adoption as part of the approval of the annual accounts.	To be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies (Note: Council is responsible for adopting the Treasury Management strategy and policy).
To oversee the appointment of the Council’s external auditor, comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and ensure that it gives value for money.	To consider the council’s arrangements for governance and whether adequate safeguards are in place to secure compliance with its own and other published standards and controls and best practice.	To present an annual report to the Council providing assurance that the responsibilities of the Committee have been met.

Appendix B

CIPFA Self-Assessment of Good Practice – Swale Borough Council

Self-assessment of good practice

This appendix provides a high-level review that incorporates the key principles set out in CIPFA's Position Statement and this publication. Where an audit committee has a high degree of performance against the good practice principles, it is an indicator that the committee is soundly based and has in place a knowledgeable membership. These are the essential factors in developing an effective audit committee.

A regular self-assessment should be used to support the planning of the audit committee work programme and training plans. It will also inform the annual report.

Good practice questions	Does not comply	Partially complies and extent of improvement needed*			Fully complies
	Major improvement	Significant improvement	Moderate improvement	Minor improvement	No further improvement
Weighting of answers	0	1	2	3	5

Audit committee purpose and governance

1	Does the authority have a dedicated audit committee that is not combined with other functions (eg standards, ethics, scrutiny)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Does the audit committee report directly to the governing body (PCC and chief constable/full council/full fire authority, etc)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Has the committee maintained its advisory role by not taking on any decision-making powers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Do the terms of reference clearly set out the purpose of the committee in accordance with CIPFA's 2022 Position Statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Do all those charged with governance and in leadership roles have a good understanding of the role and purpose of the committee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Does the audit committee escalate issues and concerns promptly to those in governance and leadership roles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Does the governing body hold the audit committee to account for its performance at least annually?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Good practice questions	Does not comply	Partially complies and extent of improvement needed			Fully complies
	Major improvement	Significant improvement	Moderate improvement	Minor improvement	No further improvement
Weighting of answers	0	1	2	3	5
8 Does the committee publish an annual report in accordance with the 2022 guidance, including:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compliance with the CIPFA Position Statement 2022 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> results of the annual evaluation, development work undertaken and planned improvements 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how it has fulfilled its terms of reference and the key issues escalated in the year? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Functions of the committee					
9 Do the committee's terms of reference explicitly address all the core areas identified in CIPFA's Position Statement as follows?					
Governance arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Risk management arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Internal control arrangements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> financial management value for money ethics and standards counter fraud and corruption 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual governance statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Financial reporting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assurance framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal audit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
External audit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10 Over the last year, has adequate consideration been given to all core areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11 Over the last year, has the committee only considered agenda items that align with its core functions or selected wider functions, as set out in the 2022 guidance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12 Has the committee met privately with the external auditors and head of internal audit in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Good practice questions	Does not comply	Partially complies and extent of improvement needed			Fully complies
	Major improvement	Significant improvement	Moderate improvement	Minor improvement	No further improvement
Weighting of answers	0	1	2	3	5

Membership and support

13 Has the committee been established in accordance with the 2022 guidance as follows?					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separation from executive 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A size that is not unwieldy and avoids use of substitutes 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of lay/co-opted independent members in accordance with legislation or CIPFA's recommendation 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Have all committee members been appointed or selected to ensure a committee membership that is knowledgeable and skilled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Has an evaluation of knowledge, skills and the training needs of the chair and committee members been carried out within the last two years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Have regular training and support arrangements been put in place covering the areas set out in the 2022 guidance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Across the committee membership, is there a satisfactory level of knowledge, as set out in the 2022 guidance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Is adequate secretariat and administrative support provided to the committee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19 Does the committee have good working relations with key people and organisations, including external audit, internal audit and the CFO?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Effectiveness of the committee

20 Has the committee obtained positive feedback on its performance from those interacting with the committee or relying on its work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 Are meetings well chaired, ensuring key agenda items are addressed with a focus on improvement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
22 Are meetings effective with a good level of discussion and engagement from all the members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23 Has the committee maintained a non-political approach to discussions throughout?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Good practice questions	Does not comply	Partially complies and extent of improvement needed			Fully complies
	Major improvement	Significant improvement	Moderate improvement	Minor improvement	No further improvement
Weighting of answers	0	1	2	3	5
24 Does the committee engage with a wide range of leaders and managers, including discussion of audit findings, risks and action plans with the responsible officers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
25 Does the committee make recommendations for the improvement of governance, risk and control arrangements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
26 Do audit committee recommendations have traction with those in leadership roles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
27 Has the committee evaluated whether and how it is adding value to the organisation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 Does the committee have an action plan to improve any areas of weakness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29 Has this assessment been undertaken collaboratively with the audit committee members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subtotal score	0	0	8	42	105
Total score					155
Maximum possible score					200**

Full Council	
Meeting Date	4 th December 2024
Report Title	Local Plan Review – Local Plan Employment Sites
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson, Head of Place
Lead Officer	Natalie Earl, Planning Manager (Policy)
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That members note the potential employment sites available for allocation through the Local Plan; and 2. That members recommend the employment sites recommended by Policy and Resources Committee on 11th September 2024 for consultation through the Regulation 18 Local Plan.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the discussion had at both Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group (PTPWG) on 8th August 2024 and at Policy and Resources Committee (P&R) on 11th September 2024. The report and minutes of both meetings are provided in Appendices I – IV.
- 1.2 As part of preparing the Regulation 18 consultation document for the Local Plan (LP) it is now timely for Members to discuss, and set out their preferences for, employment sites for allocation. The PTPWG discussion paper set out the evidenced need figure for employment allocations (73ha of industrial land and 1.1ha of office space) through the LP, and the available sites to meet that figure.

2 Background

- 2.1 The discussions at both PTPWG and P&R encompassed the suitability of the proposed sites for different types of employment use and the need for clearly written allocation policies within the Local Plan (LP) to guide design, landscaping, access and usage. Members raised concerns about employment uses with frequent HGV movements being located in rural areas.
- 2.2 The sites that are in existing use but proposed for allocation, would have LP policies drafted to allow their uses to be intensified, and those with landscape and heritage interests would have those concerns addressed through their policies.
- 2.3 Members proposed a motion that the Leader of the Council write a letter to the Local Government Authority (LGA) seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to

include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations. This letter has been sent.

- 2.4 Links to the Employment Land Review 2018 and the recent Employment Land Review Update 2024 can both be found in section 8 of this report under 'Background Documents.' The sites being recommended for employment allocation are those that were assessed in the ELR Update as sites with "good" and/or "possible" prospects to meet Swale's employment need. There are therefore deemed to be the most suitable sites to allocate for employment uses.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 At 11th September P&R, members recommended to Council:

That the preferred sites set out in the PTPWG report, with the exclusion of sites CSF30, CSF47, and CSF50, if no housing development be put forward to the site, for consultation through the Regulation 18 Local Plan.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Members could instruct officers to look for employment sites not currently assessed through the Employment Land Review Update (ELR) but these would then need to be assessed with the same methodology used in the ELR and this would require work not currently timetabled. It is also unlikely that any significant sites would come forward due to the extensive call for sites undertaken and the detailed knowledge of the borough and local economy that the Economic Development and Planning teams have, who have both been unable to find any other suitable sites.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Consultation on employment allocations will be undertaken through the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Local Plan is responsible for delivering the spatial elements of the Corporate Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Employment Land Review is a statutory, budgeted piece of evidence base.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Preparation of a Local Plan is carried out under a national legislative and regulatory framework.

Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	<p>The Local Plan will be supported by its own Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment at each key stage in decision making.</p> <p>The sustainability appraisal process appraises the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan from the outset. In doing so it helps ensure that Plan making decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development.</p> <p>Habitats regulations assessments test if a Plan and the site allocations and policies within it could significantly harm the designated features of a site or sites protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.</p> <p>Drafting of the Plan and its Policies will also take in to account the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.</p>
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

Appendix I: 8th August PTPWG report: Potential Local Plan Employment Sites Discussion

Appendix II: 8th August PTPWG draft minutes

Appendix III: 11th September P&R report: Potential Local Plan Employment Sites Discussion

Appendix IV: 11th September P&R draft minutes

Appendix V: Table of potential sites assessed as 'good' or 'possible' in the ELR 2024

Appendix VI: Map showing the spatial distribution of potential sites from Appendix I Table

8 Background Documents

9.1 [Employment Land Review Update 2024](#)

9.2 [Employment Land Review 2018](#)

Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group	
Meeting Date	8 th August 2024
Report Title	Potential Local Plan Employment Sites Discussion
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson, Head of Place
Lead Officer	Natalie Earl, Planning Manager (Policy)
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members to discuss and note the potential employment sites available for allocation through the Local Plan; and 2. Members to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee their preferred sites for employment allocation for consultation through the Reg 18 Local Plan.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the potential employment sites that could be drafted into allocations in the Reg 18 Local Plan (LP).
- 1.2 As part of preparing the Reg 18 consultation document it is now timely for Members to discuss, and set out their preferences for, employment sites for allocation.
- 1.3 This discussion paper sets out the evidenced need figure for employment allocations through the Local Plan, and the available sites to meet that figure.
- 1.4 Providing the preferred employment sites for allocation in the Reg 18 LP will enable officers to complete strategic and site allocation policy writing and will also enable other pieces of evidence base such as Transport Modelling, the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment to move forward.
- 1.5 The Employment Land Review Addendum 2024 recommended a need to allocate 73ha of industrial land and this report sets out the available sites across Swale that could meet that need figure.

2 Background

- 2.1 The recently agreed Employment Land Review Addendum (ELR) 2024 found an additional industrial land need requirement of 73ha – with a demand of 48ha, plus a margin of 25ha. This is a higher requirement than that of 2018 ELR which concluded that 41ha of industrial and warehouse land was required. The ELR suggested that the Council could view the 48ha (of new land) as the minimum needed for the plan period, with the higher 73ha requirement (inclusive of the 25ha margin) the target to aim for.

- 2.2 The unmet industrial need should be met by new site allocations. In considering sites to meet this need the ELR assessed sites for their suitability and attractiveness to the market. An important consideration for the supply of industrial land is ensuring as much as possible is on the western side of the Borough and particularly in Sittingbourne/Isle of Sheppey where demand is highest and land is most accessible to the Swale labour force and the strategic road network.
- 2.3 Informal discussions with members on the quantum of employment land to be allocated, resulted in officers looking for allocations to meet the higher figure of 73ha.
- 2.4 The ELR assessed all of the sites that were submitted through the call for sites for employment and it identified only a modest number of sites with good prospects. These total 17.7 ha – enough to meet half the minimum need, and these are mostly on the western side of the Borough. Ten ‘possibly suitable/deliverable’ sites are identified, and could collectively potentially provide almost 100 ha of employment development land. The ELR considered the borough’s general industrial needs over the Plan period could be met from a selection of these sites. The Council therefore have a choice of sites within this list as the Local Plan only needs to allocate a maximum 73ha out of the possible 100ha on the list in Table I in Appendix I.
- 2.5 The choices for employment sites need to be looked at in conjunction with the potential housing sites to ensure the LP is promoting sustainable development and to reduce unsustainable commuting levels and patterns.
- 2.6 It is recommended that:
- most of the sites in the table in Appendix I in the column titled ‘Good’ are put forward for allocation as the ELR has assessed those as being the most suitable of all of the available sites. If all those sites are chosen, they add up to 17.7ha.
 - the two large sites in Faversham (SBC17/094 and CFS50) are allocated only if those sites are also to be allocated for housing to ensure that they are sustainable, mixed use developments.
 - the remainder of the allocations are chosen from those sites in Sittingbourne, Sheerness/Queenborough and Rural West as they are in the area identified by the ELR as most in demand by the market.
 - Informal discussions with members have indicated that sites CFS47, 30 and CFS50 are potentially the most constrained. Removing those sites would leave a total of 72.8ha against a target of 73ha.
- 2.7 There are interdependencies between housing and employment allocations which mean a decision on employment land may need to be revised if a subsequent positive decision, at a future meeting, on a housing allocation is for a mixed-use

scheme which requires the employment element in order for it to progress (if this employment element was not initially favoured by members).

Offices

- 2.8 The requirement for offices has shifted significantly since the 2018 assessment. Both the demand for and the availability of office space remain low and broadly in balance, with the market serving essentially local businesses. The unmet need for new office floorspace is just 1.1 ha. The ELR recommends that the focus should remain on the refurbishment of existing stock and/or providing good quality flexibly industrial/hybrid space.
- 2.9 Due to the relatively small need figure there are choices to be made. The employment policies within the Reg 18 Local Plan could be written to actively promote the upgrading of existing offices, or 1.1ha of office space could be specifically allocated within one of the larger mixed use allocations once those have been agreed upon.
- 2.10 Another option is to not allocate any office space and to continue to allow the market to deliver the small requirement for office space through speculative planning applications, ensuring that they meet the criteria within the LP general employment policies and the criteria of Permitted Development (PD) rights. However, with increasing levels of office space being lost to residential through PD planning applications it may be considered worthwhile allocating the 1.1 ha to ensure that it is delivered.

3 Proposals

Industrial Land

- 3.1 The proposal is that Members discuss and note the choice of potential employment sites for allocation which have been assessed through the ELR as good and possible (and are shown in the table in Appendix I) and recommend to Policy and Resources Committee their preferred sites for employment allocation for consultation through the Reg 18 Local Plan.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Members could instruct officers to look for employment sites not currently assessed through the ELR but these would then need to be assessed with the same methodology used in the ELR and this could lead to a delay in the overall LP timetable as it would require work not currently timetabled. It is also unlikely that any significant sites would come forward due to the extensive call for sites undertaken and the detailed knowledge of the borough that the Economic Development and Planning teams have of the local economy who have both been unable to find any other suitable sites.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The ELR is a piece of technical evidence and has therefore not been consulted on, however stakeholders can comment on its findings and how they have been interpreted at the Reg 18 stage of the LP consultation.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The proposals in the report align with the following Corporate Plan action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Local Plan with local needs and capacity at its heart.
Financial, Resource and Property	Through providing good quality employment space that meets the full demand, the Council will benefit through business rates and inward investment and through the provision of more employment opportunities for its residents.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Allocating an adequate quantum of employment land ensures the Council is meeting its statutory requirements as prescribed in the National Planning Policy Framework.
Crime and Disorder	No implications identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	Ensuring that the right employment is allocated in the right places to promote sustainable patterns of development could help to reduce out commuting and promote more sustainable patterns of commuting.
Health and Wellbeing	No implications identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	No implications identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

Appendix I: Table of potential sites assessed as 'good' or 'possible' in the ELR 2024

Appendix II: Map showing the spatial distribution of potential sites from Appendix I Table.

8 Background Documents

- 8.1 [Employment Land Review Update 2024](#)
- 8.2 [Employment Land Review 2018](#)

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Extraordinary Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 8 August 2024 from 6.00 pm - 7.53 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock, Monique Bonney (Vice-Chair), Cavanagh (Substitute for Councillor Karen Watson), Simon Clark (Substitute for Councillor Kieran Golding), Alastair Gould (Chair), Ben J Martin (Substitute for Councillor Charles Gibson), Julien Speed, Mike Whiting and Tony Winckless.

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Councillor Elliott Jayes.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Billy Attaway, Natalie Earl, Joanne Johnson, Chris Mansfield, Rachel Scott, Stuart Watson and Ceri Williams.

OFFICER PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Martin Ross.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (VIRTUALLY): Councillors Richard Palmer and Hannah Perkin.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Charles Gibson, Kieran Golding, James Hunt and Karen Watson.

166 Election of Chair

Councillor Mike Baldock nominated Councillor Alastair Gould to be Chair for this meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Tony Winckless. On being put to the vote, it was agreed.

Resolved:

(1) That Councillor Alastair Gould be elected as Chair for this meeting.

167 Election of Vice-Chair

Councillor Mike Baldock nominated Councillor Monique Bonney to be Vice-Chair for this meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Alastair Gould. On being put to the vote, it was agreed.

Resolved:

(2) That Councillor Monique Bonney be elected as Vice-Chair for this meeting.

168 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

169 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

170 Local Plan Review - Vision and Objectives and Growth Options - discussion

The Project Manager (Policy) introduced the report.

Councillor Mike Baldock moved the following motion: That the vision and objectives for the Draft Plan Regulation 18 document be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee. This was seconded by Councillor Monique Bonney. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

The Chair invited Members to make comments on each option under the growth strategy document as shown at table two of the officer's report.

Option 1, points raised:

- Increasing the number of housing developments by 30% near the Stockbury roundabout and A249 was not a viable option as the road network in that area was already at full capacity; and
- Sheppey and Sittingbourne already had too much development over the past few years.

Option 2, points raised:

- Large developments in the Western area of Swale were putting too much pressure on the road network and health services;
- Stockbury roundabout was designed to function up to 2038 based on the current numbers, increasing those numbers now would result in the roundabout not being fit for purpose;
- the Stockbury roundabout would not be able to be redeveloped again to accommodate for more housing; and
- the Western Area of Swale would struggle to fit in another large-scale roundabout.

Option 3, points raised:

- The Eastern Area of Swale had issues with its road networks as many of the roads were outdated.

Option 5, points raised:

- Did not think that this option would work but needed to keep it in the plan for consideration if the preferred options were not viable; and
- this option and option 4 should remain as potential developments if the preferred options were not viable.

Option 6, points raised:

- This was the preferred option as the Faversham area would be able to take on more pressure from the new developments;
- this option included a secondary school, which the borough desperately needed;
- the viability of this option was a big advantage;
- the option was going against the vision statement, and would destroy the local historic value of the Faversham areas;
- there had been no solutions to Operation Brock by the Government which meant large Heavy Goods Vehicles were using Brenley Corner roundabout as a turning point, causing large amounts of traffic in Faversham;
- having large strategic developments near a junction that needed government funding for improvement works would put extra pressure on the government to provide the works;
- Sittingbourne had 85% of the developments over the past few years and the

- development needed to be spread across the borough, not just in one location;
- the deliverability of the site was strong;
 - the Eastern Area of the Borough had better health services that would be able to cope with an increased pressure a strategic development would bring;
 - this option would rely on the improvement works to Brenley corner and without those works, the development would not be deliverable, so going ahead with this option would keep the pressure on the government;
 - if the Council took a strategic development approach to large-scale developments then it would result in better layout, design and services for residents in the borough;
 - needed to be mindful that placing large developments near Thanet and Canterbury district areas could result in increased pressure for those areas; and
 - doctor surgeries in Faversham villages were struggling to take on new patients due to the size of their facilities and developers were not always willing to give up land to build new surgeries.

Councillor Mike Whiting proposed growth option 6, in table two of the report, as the group's recommended option for Policy and Resources Committee. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock. On being put to the vote, it was agreed.

A member queried whether any of the other options should be considered for removal from draft Reg 18 consultation. The Project Manager (Policy) confirmed it would be reasonable to consider all alternative options, as this would help demonstrate the preferred option as a robust choice.

Resolved:

- (1) That the proposed vision and objectives for the Draft Plan Regulation 18 document be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee.***
- (2) That a growth strategy for the Draft Plan Regulation 18 consultation be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee, for progression to Reg 18 consultation stage, with option 6 being the preferred option.***

171 Local Plan Review - Housing historic delivery and Local Plan Review housing targets - discussion

The Project Manager (Policy) introduced the report.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, points raised included:

- The housing target was undeliverable;
- Members had still not seen the detailed housing target exception report, so were unable to make an informed decision;
- Swale had some of the worse National Health Service (NHS) numbers in the Country and increased housing developments would make this worse;
- it was a shame that Swale needed to accept such a high number of housing targets;
- was this figure just an estimate, or were officers expecting this target figure to be higher?;
- could the term 'housing need' be changed to 'housing target'?;
- needed to accept that this was not just about providing housing for future residents but providing further services to those residents already in the borough;

and

- needed to be aware that future development could only be expected to provide infrastructure related to its own needs, and could not be relied on to fill infrastructure deficits.

The Project Manager (Policy) responded to say that the figure in the report was based on 5% resilience buffer to the Local Housing need target, the resilience buffer was to allow for fluctuations and the possibility that sites did not make it through the examination process.

With regard to the point raised about the terminology, the Project Manager (Policy) responded explaining that it was required terminology from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Vice-Chair moved the following amendment to recommendation two: *That the balancing of housing need, be capitalised and defined with an asterisk explaining the definition of housing need according to the NPPF.* This was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock. On being put to the vote, the amendment was agreed.

It was noted that a later paper on the agenda would highlight that the consultation version of the new NPPF proposed a new standard methodology for the calculating housing 'need' which would require a further 336 units over the plan period. Planning for this figure at this stage would avoid revisiting conversations at a later point, assuming the consultation version of the NPPF did not change.

Councillor Mike Whiting proposed the recommendations as set out in the report, with the increase of the proposed growth by 336 units, and with the amended wording as minuted. This was seconded by the Vice-Chair. On being put to the vote it was agreed.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Local Plan housing target as set out in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the report, including the 5% buffer for consultation and examination resilience for the draft Plan Regulation 18 Plan consultation, be recommended to Policy and Resources Committee, along with the extra 336 dwellings set out in the current NPPF consultation.***
- (2) That the proposed growth within the draft Plan Regulation 18 consultation be 8,326 dwellings, including the review of the remaining Local Plan Bearing Fruits (1,703 dwellings), as well as the balance housing need (6,287 dwellings), and the additional units subject to the amended wording as minuted (336 dwellings).***

172 Potential Local Plan Employment Sites - discussion

The Planning Policy Manager introduced the report.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, which included:

- Agreed with the removal of site CFS47;
- some proposed sites would be suited to small-scaled developments as they were located in rural areas;
- needed to limit the potential sites on the local area and needed to keep designs within keeping of other buildings;

- it was not ideal to have large HGV's using rural, small country lanes to get to the sites;
- could more be done at Ridham Dockyard as it had the benefit of using the waterway usage and freight services were nearby?;
- rail freight at Ridham Dockyard was already in place, the site needed to be included in the local transport plan;
- officers should explore and seek for small-scaled employment land opportunities;
- what lobbying could the council do to get more land allocated for employment use and for schools to be included as employment land?;
- the Iwade area did not need any large scale developments but more employment type developments for the number of residents that lived in the area, why were there no sites recommended in Iwade?;
- it was important to get sites that had a large density of employment;
- the regulation 18 document allowed the Council to look for more dense employment opportunities; and
- the Council needed health services such as NHS to come and inform the Council on how much land they needed to deliver acceptable health services to the residents of Swale.

The Planning Policy Manager responded to points raised and said that Ridham Dockyard had some issues in the past with potential contamination and the neighbouring uses causing limitations for redevelopment. This had affected its overall score in the Employment Land Review, but she assured the working group that it was still a site that would be considered by officers as potential employment site development.

The Planning Policy Manager referred to the point made about any lobbying that could be done and advised that it was not proposed in the NPPF for schools to be included in the employment land opportunities so was not something that officers could recommend or look at. She added that there were no sites put forward in the Iwade area when officers went out for the call for sites of employment.

Councillor Mike Whiting moved the following motion: That the Working Group asked the Leader of Council to write a letter, to the Local Government Authority (LGA), seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

Councillor Mike Baldock proposed that sites CSF30 and 47 be removed from the list and that CSF50 site be removed if there was no housing development put forward on the site. This was seconded by the Vice-Chair. On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Resolved:

(1) That the potential employment sites available for allocation through the Local Plan be noted.

(2) That the preferred sites set out in the officer's report, with the exclusion of sites CSF30 and CSF47 and CSF50 if no housing development be put forward to the site, be recommended to the Policy and Resources

Committee for allocation, for consultation through the Reg 18 Local Plan.

- (3) That the Leader of the Council writes a letter, to the Local Government Authority (LGA), seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations.***

Chair

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel

Policy and Resources Committee	
Meeting Date	11 th September 2024
Report Title	Local Plan Review – Local Plan Employment Sites
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
SMT Lead	Joanne Johnson, Head of Place
Lead Officer	Natalie Earl, Planning Manager (Policy)
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That members note the potential employment sites available for allocation through the Local Plan; 2. That members recommend to Full Council the preferred sites set out in the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group (PTPWG) report, with the exclusion of sites CSF30 and CSF47, and CSF50 if no housing development be put forward to the site, for consultation through the Reg 18 Local Plan; and 3. That members recommend to Full Council a motion that the Leader of the Council to write a letter to the Local Government Authority (LGA) seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the discussion had at Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group (PTPWG) on 8th August 2024. The report and minutes of the 8th August PTPWG meeting are provided in Appendix I and II.
- 1.2 As part of preparing the Reg 18 consultation document it is now timely for Members to discuss, and set out their preferences for, employment sites for allocation. The PTPWG discussion paper set out the evidenced need figure for employment allocations (73ha of industrial land and 1.1ha of office space) through the Local Plan, and the available sites to meet that figure.

2 Background

- 2.1 The discussions at PTPWG encompassed the suitability of the proposed sites for different types of employment use and the need for clearly written allocation policies within the Local Plan (LP) to guide design, landscaping, access and usage.

- 2.2 The sites that are in existing use but proposed for allocation, would have their uses intensified and those with landscape and heritage interests would have those concerns addressed through their LP policies.
- 2.3 Members proposed a motion that the Leader of the Council write a letter to the Local Government Authority (LGA) seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations.
- 2.4 Recommendation 2 states that CSF50 will not be allocated for employment if no housing development be put forward for the site. However, please note that in the earlier committee report on Local Plan Vision and Growth Options, CSF50 is included in the preferred growth option being recommended for housing.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 At 8th August PTPWG, members resolved:
 - 1/ To note the potential employment sites available for allocation through the Local Plan;
 - 2/ That the preferred sites set out in the PTPWG report, with the exclusion of sites CSF30 and CSF47, and CSF50 if no housing development be put forward to the site, for consultation through the Reg 18 Local Plan; and
 - 3/ To propose a motion that the Leader of the Council to write a letter to the Local Government Authority (LGA) seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Members could instruct officers to look for employment sites not currently assessed through the ELR but these would then need to be assessed with the same methodology used in the ELR and this could lead to a delay in the overall LP timetable as it would require work not currently timetabled. It is also unlikely that any significant sites would come forward due to the extensive call for sites undertaken and the detailed knowledge of the borough and local economy that the Economic Development and Planning teams have, who have both been unable to find any other suitable sites.

5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Consultation on employment allocations will be undertaken through the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation.

6. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The LPR is responsible for delivering the spatial elements of the Corporate Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	The ELR is a statutory, budgeted piece of evidence base.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Preparation of a Local Plan is carried out under a national legislative and regulatory framework.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	<p>The Local Plan will be supported by its own Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment at each key stage in decision making.</p> <p>The sustainability appraisal process appraises the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan from the outset. In doing so it helps ensure that Plan making decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development.</p> <p>Habitats regulations assessments test if a Plan and the site allocations and policies within it could significantly harm the designated features of a site or sites protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.</p> <p>Drafting of the Plan and its Policies will also take in to account the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.</p>
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix I: 8th August PTPWG report: Potential Local Plan Employment Sites Discussion

Appendix II: Table of potential sites assessed as 'good' or 'possible' in the ELR 2024

Appendix III: Map showing the spatial distribution of potential sites from Appendix I Table

Appendix VI: 8th August PTPWG draft minutes

9. Background Papers

9.1 [Employment Land Review Update 2024](#)

9.2 [Employment Land Review 2018](#)

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Policy and Resources Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 11 September 2024 from 7.00 pm - 9.44 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chair), Monique Bonney, Lloyd Bowen, Charles Gibson, Tim Gibson (Chair), Angela Harrison, James Hunt, Elliott Jayes, Mark Last, Richard Palmer, Julien Speed, Ashley Wise and Dolley Wooster.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Steph Curtis, Charlotte Hudson, Joanne Johnson, Kellie MacKenzie, Claire Stanbury and Emma Wiggins.

OFFICERS PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Chris Hills, Larissa Reed and Ceri Williams.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Ben J Martin.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (VIRTUALLY): Councillors Carole Jackson and Tony Winckless.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Derek Carnell, Alastair Gould (Chair of the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group) and Rich Lehmann.

221 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

222 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 July 2024 (Minute Nos. 75 – 91) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

223 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

224 **Annual Delivery Plan and Performance Measures**

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods introduced the report which set out the Annual Delivery Plan (ADP), at Appendix I of the report, and associated performance targets at, Appendix II to the report.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, and points raised included:

- There were some typographical errors on the ADP: page 10 Action No. PTP80, bullet point 7 should read 'Undertaking a draft Reg 18 consultation' and bullet point 8 should read 'Undertaking a draft Reg 19 consultation; page 9 Action No. EP2 bullet point 7 should read 'Great East Hall';
- under Action No. EP2 the Duchy planning application had not yet been considered, would the land swap leave the Council open to pre-determination?; and
- in terms of the targets why were temporary accommodation and affordable homes were marked as not applicable?

In response the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods advised that the land swap was a separate piece of work under a different department but officers were mindful of the crossover. The Head of Housing and Communities explained that the temporary accommodation and affordable homes were more of a monitoring indicator at this stage, and the current affordable housing had already been granted permission.

Councillor Angela Harrison proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by the Vice-Chair.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Annual Delivery Plan, set out at Appendix I of the report, be agreed.**
- (2) That the performance targets that support the Annual Delivery Plan, set out at Appendix II of the report, be agreed.**

225 Scrap metal policy for adoption

The Community Services Manager introduced the report as set out in the agenda pack, which informed Members of the steps taken in reviewing the current Swale Scrap Metal Dealers Licensing Policy 2021 – 2024 including the public consultation. Members were asked to agree the revised Swale Scrap Metal Dealers Licensing Policy 2024 – 2027, set out at Appendix I to the report.

In response to questions from a Member, the Licensing Team Leader confirmed that ward councillors and Parish and Town Councils had been consulted on the document. She explained that due to theft of scrap metal the Government had ruled that payments for scrap metal could not be made by cash, only by cheque or electronic transfer. That would ensure there was an audit trail of where the scrap metal had come from. A Member said that cheque and electronic transfer payments were traceable.

The Vice-Chair proposed the recommendation, and this was seconded by Councillor Richard Palmer.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Swale Statement of Licensing Policy for Scrap Metal Dealers 2024 – 2027 be adopted and published on the Council's website on 1 October 2024.**

226 Amendments to the Swale Borough Council Pavement Licence Policy 2023 - 2026

The Community Services Manager introduced the report which informed Members of the steps taken in reviewing the current Swale Borough Council (SBC) Pavement Licensing Policy 2023 – 2026 brought about by changes to current legislation contained within the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2024. Members were asked to approve the revised Policy set out at Appendix I to the report.

The Chair invited comments from Members, and points raised included:

- Were officers confident that there would be sufficient resource in respect of the 14 day consultation period for the licences, particularly during the holiday periods?;
- how would the licensee deal with any damage caused to their street furniture by

- anti-social behaviour (ASB)?;
- did the Council have control over the quality of any proposed street furniture?;
 - were officers confident that there was sufficient resource to deal with enforcement and could any monies secured via enforcement be ring-fenced?; and
 - in terms of paragraph 2.4 (Type of furniture permitted) of the draft Pavement Licensing Policy, on page 55 of the report, considered the wording 'to our satisfaction' should be included.

In response the Community Services Manager said that there were several pieces of legislation requiring a very quick turnaround, so the Licensing Team were very attuned to tight deadlines and processes were in place to ensure those were met during holiday periods. The Licensing Team Manager clarified that whilst the consultation was for 14-days, officers then had a further 14 days in which to make a decision.

The Community Services Manager said that if licensees were experiencing ASB issues, then officers would discuss those with them, and most pavement licences required that street furniture was put away at night. If there were issues during the day officers would seek to liaise with key partners such as Kent Police. The Licensing Officer explained that photos of any proposed street furniture needed to be included with any application. If officers had any concerns they would speak to the applicants or refuse the application.

The Community Services Manager reported that once the policy was in place, officers would monitor how much it cost the Council to put a pavement licence in place. The fee was for the application and the Council could not charge extra for enforcement. Officers were confident that there was capacity within the Licensing Team to deal with enforcing the policy.

Councillor Monique Bonney moved the following amendment: That delegated authority be given to the Community Services Manager to insert appropriate wording within paragraph 2.4 (Type of furniture permitted) to ensure that if the street furniture proposed was not to the satisfaction of the Council, then the application be refused. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock. On being put to the vote the amendment was agreed by Members.

Councillor Mike Baldock proposed the recommendation, as amended, and this was seconded by Councillor Elliott Jayes.

Resolved:

- (1) That the amended Pavement Licensing Policy 2023-2026, as set out in Appendix I of the report, be agreed and delegated authority be given to the Community Services Manager to ensure that appropriate wording was included within paragraph 2.4 (Type of Furniture submitted) to ensure that if the street furniture proposed was not to the Council's satisfaction, the application would be refused.***

227 Review of the current Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005

The Community Services Manager introduced the report which asked Members to ratify the draft Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005, following the 6-week consultation, so that it could be presented to Full Council for formal adoption on 2 October 2024.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, points raised included:

- Reference to the European Parliament needed to be removed from page 8 of the document;
- the map on page 52 of the document was blurry and needed to be replaced;
- the deprivation map on page 57 of the document was for Kent not the Borough as stated so needed to be replaced; and
- considered the list of persons vulnerable to gambling on page 61 of the document, should refer to ex-prisoners rather than prisoners, and unsure what 'women potentially vulnerable to harm' meant?

In response the Community Services Manager said officers would check the document and review the list of, persons vulnerable to gambling and update the wording where necessary.

A Member asked that any amendments be highlighted when the document was considered by Full Council. This was agreed by Members.

The Vice-Chair proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Lloyd Bowen.

Resolved:

- (1) That the response to the public consultation on the draft statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 be noted.**
- (2) That the draft Statement of Principles be amended as minuted and endorsed and referred to Full Council on 2 October 2024 for formal adoption.**

228 Temporary Accommodation (TA) Budget Virement

The Head of Housing and Communities introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers. The report provided an update on the current controls in place to manage the Temporary Accommodation (TA) budget, and proposals for investment in resources within the Housing Options team, funded from the existing TA budget. Members were asked to approve a virement of £421k from the TA Budget to the Housing Salary Budget.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, and points raised included:

- Had some concerns but was satisfied that the Housing and Health Committee had considered the proposals in detail and was happy to recommend approval;
- referred to paragraph 2.10 of the report and queried what benefits there were to increasing monitoring from six monthly to quarterly?;
- there was a risk that inaction on this could result in an even higher financial pressure in this area in the future;
- important to approve this virement to enable the good work already achieved within the Housing Options team to continue;
- this was a significant virement and it was important that it was closely monitored;
- had no hesitation in supporting the virement as the Housing Options team were consistently looking at ways to improve the service and confident that if there were any issues officers would alert Members early on;

- would the funding secure the five existing posts within the team?; and
- had officers explored whether less staff could manage the project so less funding was required?

In response, the Head of Housing and Communities explained that increased monitoring would ensure transparency and that the proposals had been scrutinised by the Housing and Health Committee. She confirmed that the proposals would secure the five existing posts and allow additional posts to be secured where required within the service. Officers had undertaken extensive research on all available options. The staff restructure consultation, which would feed-into the proposals, had recently concluded and there were still areas where she had concerns about resources. The Head of Housing and Communities considered the proposals allowed enough resource to make a difference but warned anything less would create blockages within the flow of clients through the service.

The Head of Finance and Procurement added that regular monitoring would allow the council to make judgements around whether the best option had been put forward.

Councillor Angela Harrison proposed the recommendation, and this was seconded by Councillor Ashley Wise.

Resolved:

(1) That the virement of £421k from the Temporary Accommodation Budget to the Housing Salary Budget be approved.

229 Local Plan Review - Vision and Objectives and Growth Options

The Project Manager (Policy) introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers. The report sought recommendation to Full Council that the proposed Vision and objectives, and Growth Option 6 be taken forward for consultation to enable the drafting of the Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Report. He said the report had been considered by the Planning and Transportation Working Group (PTPWG) on 8 August 2024.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, and points raised included:

- Referred to Figure 2 on page 174 of the report and said that the PTPWG had made it clear that they were not happy with the phrasing 'meeting local needs' within the Revised Draft Vision;
- this was not local needs it was government targets and that should be made clear in the document;
- the proposed housing levels were unsustainable and beyond anything that the residents of the borough needed;
- would like the Faversham Community Land Trust document included within the minutes as it made it clear that Faversham would be taking a disproportionate amount of housing compared to the rest of Swale;
- considered the sentence "sympathetic and symbiotic" to be a nonsense sentence and Option 6 was neither of those things;
- the removal of reference to the A2 specifically in terms of air quality would result in a devastating failure on the Council's air quality commitment to the A2, and have "catastrophic consequences" for residents living along the A2 at Ospringe,

- Faversham, Dunkirk and Boughton;
- Faversham would not be a “thriving small historic market town” if it grew by 80% in 20 years;
 - Sittingbourne could not regenerate and do all the work it wanted to do on connectivity if it took no development and received no Section 106 funding;
 - the Isle of Sheppey could not meet its goals if took no development and received no Section 106 funding;
 - this was a plan letting down all the residents of Swale in its lack of ambition;
 - building thousands of new houses in Faversham would not secure funding to upgrade the Brenley Corner junction;
 - Faversham’s other problem motorway junction was running over capacity and dangerous, there was no mention of it for improvement in the document;
 - the dwellings proposed for Faversham would have to be towards Graveney and the solar farm located there. The Council had already deemed that site to be dangerous to residents in Faversham so how would the council’s Planning officers be able to support housing applications closer to it;
 - the Faversham Community Land Trust, Faversham’s Future, Faversham Society, and Faversham Town Council were already discussing how they could oppose the Local Plan;
 - it would not be appropriate to attach the Faversham Community Land Trust document to the minutes as this could set a precedent;
 - the areas of Sittingbourne and the Isle of Sheppey had taken 85% of the housing in previous years and this proposal would be a rebalance of the distribution of housing across Swale;
 - the PTPWG had considered the document thoroughly and supported their recommendation;
 - putting 4,000 dwellings in Faversham was not symbiotic or sympathetic and would ruin a historic and medieval market town;
 - would have preferred to see a recommendation for a strategic site in the west of the borough to disperse the development more evenly;
 - not sure how deliverable the proposals were in terms of highways;
 - there were only three Members representing the east of the borough on the PTPWG and considered that was unfair;
 - recommendation (2) should be amended to make it clear that all the options would be progressed through to the consultation;
 - at this stage Members were only being asked to agree to go out to consultation, not to agree a particular option;
 - Members were aware that wherever houses were put forward for development in the borough there would be issues, including highway issues, and felt that the Government were constantly asking Local Authorities to put forward the impossible;
 - improvements to Brenley Corner would certainly not happen without development;
 - there was no sustainable solution for the housing, and the government might need to make the decision and they would have to ensure the highway improvements were made;
 - historically the west of the borough had been “loaded” with housing but had not received the infrastructure to support it;
 - there was an east/west split across the borough in terms of housing development which had divided Members;

- the current infrastructure was at breaking-point;
- not upgrading Brenley Corner would adversely impact on neighbouring boroughs as well as Swale;
- affordable housing was desperately needed across the borough;
- the PTPWG had agreed that the housing targets for Sittingbourne town centre were too low, and work was being undertaken to address that;
- it was important to remember that there was still a lot of housing to be developed within the west of Swale from the previous Local Plan;
- the reports considered by the PTPWG showed that the greatest viability for delivering on biodiversity and affordability came from the east of the borough;
- we needed to get across to the Government that there could be no more development in Kent otherwise the garden of England would be lost;
- Kent County Council (KCC) were consulting on their Local Transportation Plan (LTP5), which was woefully inadequate for Swale. It spoke about an A2/M2 link road which in no way tackled the absolute deficit of public transport. As a higher tier authority KCC should be working alongside local authorities who had to put a Local Plan in place and plan for services that were needed;
- Swale were in a double deficit with the Government and KCC who did not understand the specific issues Swale faced with its transportation, health and education networks;
- the Chair of the PTPWG should have been invited to attend the meeting;
- there should be a briefing for all Members to assist them in understanding the various growth options;
- the Chair of the PTPWG had voted against option 6;
- the proposals would see approximately 75% of affordable and social rent being in Faversham; and
- affordable rent in Faversham was not affordable because it was lower than the local housing allowance rate. Those on housing benefits did not get their full rent covered when getting an affordable housing property in the Faversham area.

The Vice-Chair moved the following amendments: That the first line of the Revised Draft Vision be amended to read “It is 2040. Development in Swale has come forward to meet **imposed Government Targets**”. That point 1) of the Draft Objectives be amended to read “To provide for homes and jobs that are best suited to meet the **imposed Government Targets**”. This was seconded by Councillor Richard Palmer. On being put to the vote the amendments were agreed.

Councillor Angela Harrison moved the following amendment: That the item be deferred so that a Member briefing could be held to assist Members in understanding what they were being asked to agree. This was seconded by Councillor Dolley Wooster.

Members considered the amendment for a Member briefing and points raised included:

- Did not support a Member briefing as any Member could have attended the PTPWG and read the reports;
- Members/groups had a responsibility to know what each committee was considering and had the opportunity to inform themselves;
- could not support deferment or delaying the process; and
- rather than deferring the item a Member briefing could be arranged prior to Full Council.

Following discussion, the motion to defer the item was withdrawn by the proposer and seconder.

In response to comments from a Member, the Head of Place apologised that the wording for recommendation (2) did not make it clear that all the options would be consulted upon and suggested the wording be amended to read “as the Council’s preferred option, with a requirement for a Member briefing on all six options being progressed, prior to Full Council” to be added at the end of the paragraph.

In response to a question from a Member, the Project Manager (Policy) explained that it was necessary to put forward a preferred option otherwise six versions of the documents would be required which would be resource intensive. It was possible to test all the options through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which ran alongside the regulation 18 consultation. The SA would also provide recommendations on which options were considered the best in terms of sustainability.

The Vice-Chair proposed the recommendations, as amended. These were seconded by Councillor Richard Palmer. It was agreed that a recorded vote would be taken on both of the recommendations.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.1.19(2), a recorded vote was taken, and voting on recommendation (1), as amended, was as follows:

For: Baldock, Bonney, Bowen, T Gibson, Hunt, Jayes, Last, R Palmer, Speed, and Wise. Total equals 10.

Against: Harrison, C Gibson and Wooster. Total equals 3.

Abstain: Total equals 0.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.1.19(2), a recorded vote was taken, and voting on recommendation (2), as amended, was as follows:

For: Baldock, Bonney, T Gibson, Hunt, Jayes, R Palmer and Wise. Total equals 7.

Against: Bowen, Harrison, C Gibson, Last, Speed and Wooster. Total equals 6.

Abstain: Total equals 0.

Recommendations to Council

(1) That the proposed Vision and Objectives for the Draft Plan Regulation 18 document, as amended by the Policy and Resources Committee, be approved.

(2) That Growth Option 6 be progressed to regulation 18 consultation stage as the Council’s preferred option, with a requirement for a Member briefing on all six options being progressed, prior to Full Council.

230 Potential Local Plan Employment Sites

The Head of Place introduced the report which set out the discussion had at the PTPWG meeting on 8 August 2024. Members were asked to discuss, and set out their

preferences for, employment sites for allocation. The PTPWG discussion paper set out the evidenced need figure for employment allocations (73ha of industrial land and 1.1ha of office space) through the Local Plan, and the available sites to meet that figure.

The Chair invited comments from Members, and points raised included:

- Supported all three recommendations which were thoroughly discussed by the PTPWG;
- clarified that the PTPWG had made it clear that some sites would not be suitable for HGV type employment due to their location, and hoped that would be included;
- considered that site CSF50 was not sustainable as an employment site; and
- recommendation (3) could be agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee, it did not require a motion to Full Council.

Councillor Lloyd Bowen moved the following amendment: That recommendation (3) in the report, be amended to read: That Members agree that the Leader of the Council write a letter to the Local Government Authority (LGA) seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations. This was seconded by the Vice-Chair. The amendment was agreed by Members.

The Chair proposed the recommendations, as amended, and this was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

Resolved:

- (1) That the potential employment sites available for allocation through the Local Plan be noted.***
- (2) That the Leader of the Council wrote a letter to the Local Government Authority (LGA) seeking to persuade the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Deputy Prime Minister to include education and health as employment land, in the employment land calculations.***

Recommendation to Council:

- (3) That the preferred sites set out in the PTPWG report, with the exclusion of sites CSF30, CSF47, and CSF50, if no housing development be put forward to the site, for consultation through the Regulation 18 Local Plan.***

231 **Local Plan Review - Housing historic delivery and Local Plan Review housing targets**

The Project Manager (Policy) introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers. He said that recommendation to Full Council on the proposed housing target was required, as reported to the PTPWG on 8 August 2024. The report set out two main issues: Housing historic delivery up to 1 April 2024; and, Local Plan Review Housing target and balance of housing need. He referred Members to the recommendations for approval.

The Chair invited comments from Members, and points raised included:

- Could not support as Members had not had sight of the Exceptional Circumstances report;
- considered there were grounds to challenge the housing targets on a unsustainable transport basis;
- should defer the item until Members had read the Exceptional Circumstances report;
- referred to Table 4, on page 220 of the report, which stated that 231 houses were required under Neighbourhood Plan allocations, and said that the Faversham Neighbourhood Plan was expected to be passed within the next couple of weeks that figure would rise thus helping the wider targets;
- the proposed numbers were 'astonishing' and the number of planning permissions currently not built-out were 'significant';
- this was putting the current population at such a disadvantage that it was having a detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing;
- it would be remiss of the Committee to consider this item until they had received all the information required to make a decision;
- to build 17,000 houses and to get 3,000 in preferred areas, as viability dictated, they needed to be built in the most profitable areas, ie. rural areas, was extremely short sighted and utterly flawed by the Government; and
- what were the implications of this not going through to Full Council?

In response, the Project Manager (Policy) clarified that the Exceptional Circumstances report was almost complete, and available for consideration by the PTPWG. He referred to the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Autumn 2024 update report which would be considered by the PTPWG on 17 September 2024, which proposed a six month extension before the Regulation 18 consultation, so deferring the item would not delay the overall schedule.

Officers considered when the item could next be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee. The Chair confirmed that it was likely that the item would next be considered by the Vice-Chair Resources Committee at their meeting on 27 November 2024.

Councillor Lloyd Bowen moved the following motion: That the item be deferred until Members had been able to consider the Exceptional Circumstances report. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock. On being put to the vote the motion was agreed by Members.

Resolved:

- (1) ***That the report be deferred until Members had been able to view the Exceptional Circumstances report.***

232 **Forward Decisions Plan**

The Chair invited comments from Members which included:

- To review and scrutinise the Council's policies should be added to the list;
- the Sheerness Dockyard Conservation Review needs to be included; and
- there could be other things that would need adding to the list such as any

proposal to scrap the single person council tax discount which could impact on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

The Head of Place agreed to find out when the Sheerness Dockyard Conservation Review was scheduled and advise the Member in question.

Resolved:

(1) That the forward decisions plan be noted.

233 **Adjournment of Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm until 9.10 pm.

Chair

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel

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Appendix V: Table of potential employment sites assessed as ‘good’ or ‘possible’ in the ELR 2024

Site Reference	Site Name	Good (Potential developable area Ha)	Possible (Potential developable area Ha)	Positives	Constraints
Sittingbourne			32.6		
CFS34	Land adj. Kemsley Substation, ME10 2FE		5.0	Strong market area.	It is questionable how much of the site is available due to development needing to wrap around the existing electricity substation. There are also existing pylons/cables/pipelines on site and potential contamination.
SBC17/005	Land at Pheasant Farm (West), Howt Green		1.6	Good market area.	This would only be a small scale development and it is not in an established employment location. Access on to the A249 is poor.
SBC17/008	Land fronting East side Bobbing Hill		1.0	Good market area.	This would only be a small scale development and it is not in an established employment location.
CFS24 (and R1)	Ridham Dock – redevelopment		25.0	Owner interest. Strong market area.	There could be a possible loss of wharfage. However, the site promoter is exploring how dock activity

					could be rationalised as the dock facility is safeguarded through the Kent and Medway Minerals and Waste Local Plan, Existing employment uses would be intensified.
Sheerness/Queenborough		3.7			
CFS47	Land south of Cowstead Farm, Queenborough Road	3.7		Strong market area.	Partially within (southern tip) a Landscape Character Area and Flood Zone 2 and 3 and a coastal change management area.
Faversham			41.0		
SBC17/094	Land adj to A2 at Love Lane and West of Salter's Lane to Brenley Corner (Duchy of Cornwall site)		20.0	Large site. Likely to be market attractive.	It is in close proximity to the Kent Downs National Landscape (Former AONB) to the south, and in relatively close proximity to the Swale Level Area of High Landscape Value to the east. A railway line bisects the site. Potential Brenley Corner junction capacity and safety issues.
CFS50	Land east of Faversham Expansion		21.0	Large site. Likely to be market attractive.	The site is located within open countryside with a predominately flat open

					landscape and large buildings could impact on the setting of both of the nearby landscape designation areas.
Rural West		13.5	3.0		
SBC17/095	Hartlip Industrial Estate – southern expansion	5.9		Good market area. Extension to existing.	It is a remote location away from main industrial areas and it is unknown if it is available in the plan period.
REG3197	Land at Marshlands Farm, Lower Road, Minster	5.6		Good market area. Being actively promoted. Neighbouring existing estate.	Small scale, landscape constraints as the site is adjacent to farmland and close to the Elmley National Nature Reserve.
REG3044 (R10)	Newington Industrial Estate - southern expansion	2.0		Expansion of existing. Good market area.	Partially within the Kent Minerals safeguarded area and possible highway issues on to the A2.
SBC17/025	Land at Radfield Farm, London Road, Bapchild		3.0	Reasonable market area.	Small scale. Not an established employment area.
Rural East		0.5	16.1		
CFS5 (R8)	Waterham Industrial Estate – expansion East	0.5		Expansion of existing.	Weak market area where demand is weakest. Site would only appeal to local demand and viability could be challenging.
30	Dargate Plumpudding Lane		12.9	Owner interest.	Unproven market. Site could attract

					industrial/warehouse uses, but is located in the east of the Borough where demand is weakest. Site would only appeal to local demand but viability could be challenging.
LPR2470 (R15)	Lamberhurst Farm, Yorkletts - proposed southern expansion		3.2	Expansion of existing.	Landscape constraints will limit possibilities. Unproven market. The site is remote and accessed via a narrow country lane and lacks prominence to the A299. Site is only likely to be attractive to local occupiers who have links to the area. Viability is likely to be challenging in this area, as rents for units in this location will be lower than seen elsewhere.
TOTAL		17.7	92.7		

Source – ELR Update 2024: Table 6.2 Potential New Land (Assessed as Good or Possible in the ELR Update)



Swale Employment Land Review

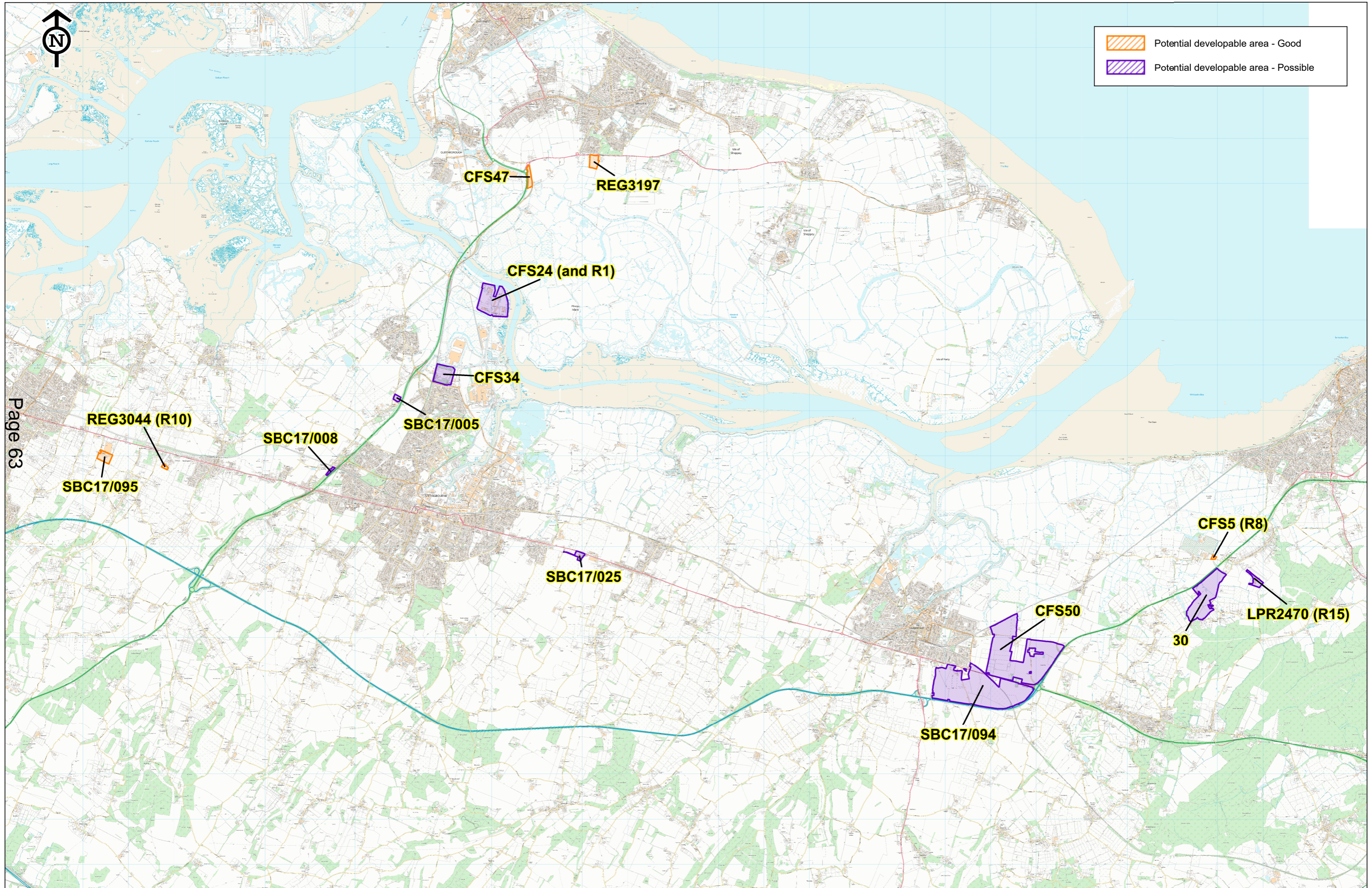
June 2024

Scale: NTS

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	Potential developable area - Good
	Potential developable area - Possible



CFS47

REG3197

CFS24 (and R1)

CFS34

REG3044 (R10)

SBC17/008

SBC17/005

SBC17/095

SBC17/025

CFS5 (R8)

LPR2470 (R15)

CFS50

30

SBC17/094

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