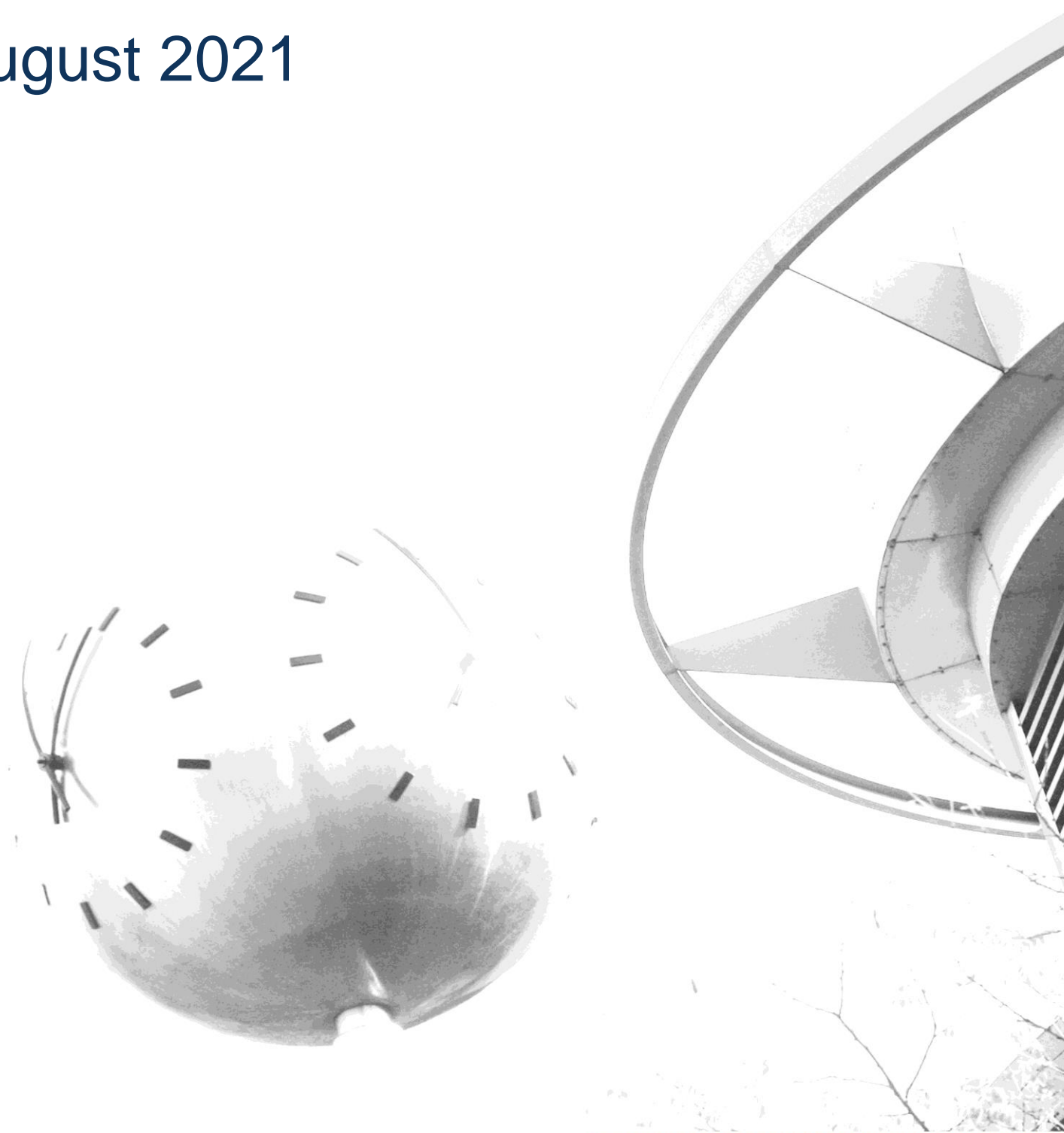


# Inclusion and Diversity Policy (2021 – 2024)

August 2021



**Key Information (To correspond with Covalent)**

Author:	Ndunge Kivuitu
Section/Directorate:	Corporate Services
Service Impact Assessment:	3 December 2019
External Consultation:	Community Diversity Council 17 April and 28 June LGBTQi+ Network Group 19, July 2019 (Internal/ external) Basildon Disability Board 19 September 2019 Traveller Wellbeing Group 15 October 2019, Ndiigbo Basildon BAME Group Executive members 18 August 2019, Ndiigbo Basildon (all members) 28 September 2019 Community Diversity Council 16 September 2021 (review)
Internal Consultation:	Inclusion & Diversity Operational Group Meeting 17 July 2019 Basildon Disability Staff Group LGBTQi+ Network Group 19, July 2019 (Internal/external) Internal Staff workshops 30 September, 4 December, 20 January 2020, SLT, 28 January 2020 Housing and Communities Committee 25 February 2020, Communities and Wellbeing Committee 5 October 2021
Background Information:	PPD (Inclusion & Diversity) 24 October 2018 Equality Act 2010 Hate Crime Statistics Disability Confident Basildon Council Workforce Profile Basildon Borough Profile (JSNA 2019)
Policy Approval – Officer Level	Paul Burkinshaw, Director of Strategy and Governance
Policy Approval – Member Level	Previously - Housing and Communities Committee, 25 February 2020 Communities and Wellbeing Committee 5 October 2021 (Policy review)
Policy Review Date:	March 2024
Service Impact Assessment Review Date:	December 2023

## **Content**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Basildon Council Corporate Plan Ambitions</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Policy Statement and Objectives</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Outcomes and Priorities</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Context</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. What we mean by Community Leader and advocate</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>8. Other Inclusion Diversity &amp; Cohesion factors</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>9. Responsibilities</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>10. Monitoring and Measuring Success</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>11. Council Promises</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>12. Links to other Corporate Policies or Partner Documents</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1. Introduction

Basildon is five towns in one borough, with town centres in Billericay, Laindon, Pitsea and Wickford as well Basildon itself. Basildon is becoming increasingly diverse which is not only being driven by its proximity to London, but also due to good commuter access.

Basildon Council recognises and values the diversity of all people that live, work and visit the borough. The Council is committed to providing inclusive efficient, effective and relevant services to our residents and to ensuring that we are an inclusive employer.

As a public sector organisation, the Council has a statutory duty to ensure that equality, diversity and human rights are embedded into all its functions and activities as required by the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. The Equality Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in the community. It is underpinned by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies (and others providing public services) consider how different people will be affected by their activities. The PSED also seeks to ensure that the Council is delivering accessible services which meet different people's needs.

## 2. Basildon Council Corporate Plan (2021- 2024)

Basildon Council's corporate plan sets out three key ambitions for the years 2021 – 24 as follows:

**People:** *We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.*

**Place:** *We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.*

**Prosperity:** *We want Basildon to have a thriving, dynamic and diverse economy where all our communities benefit from increased opportunity and our workforce has the right skills for our local economy and beyond.*

The Corporate plan also sets out the following Inclusion and Diversity deliverable:

*"We will use our influence and work with partners to promote inclusion and diversity throughout the borough"*

## 3. Executive Summary

This aim of this policy is to set out the Council's

- The Council's Inclusion & Diversity Policy statement
- Objectives for 2021-2024
- Commitment to addressing inclusion, diversity, community cohesion and Human Rights
- Corporate vision for driving inclusion, diversity, community cohesion and Human Rights

It also sets out the Council's role:

- As a leader
- As a service provider
- As an employer
- In engaging partners and stakeholders
- In engaging with the voluntary sector and community sector groups
- In engaging with diverse communities

#### 4. Policy Statement / Vision

*“Basildon Council is committed to actively promoting inclusion and diversity as a community leader, as a service provider and as an employer. The Council will embed inclusion and diversity through its core business and work to ensure that no person or group of people living, working or visiting the Borough will be directly or indirectly discriminated against.”*

The Council will achieve its vision by delivering against the following objectives:

**Objective 1:** Creating Inclusive Services and Environments for All

**Objective 2:** Working with communities, partners, businesses to promote community cohesion

**Objective 3:** Encouraging communities to play their part in contributing to the pride of the borough

**Objective 4:** Be an employer committed to promoting inclusion and diversity within our workforce; and ensuring our workforce is reflective of the community we serve at all levels

**Objective 5:** Tackle discriminatory practice swiftly with a consistent approach that confidently reaffirms to all parties our organisations values

#### 5. Outcomes and priorities

The following are the outcomes and priority areas for the years 2021-2024

##### a. Outcome: An Inclusive Service Provider

Priorities: The Council:

- *Provides inclusive services*
- *Creates opportunities to involve customers and service users in shaping our services,*
- *Is considered as an authority that treats people fairly*

## **b. Outcome: An Inclusive Environment**

Priorities: The Council

- *Designs, introduces and manages a borough wide Inclusive Basildon accreditation scheme.*
- *Helps shape and develop Basildon's inclusive built environment.*
- *Helps shape and develop Basildon's inclusive natural environment.*
- *Designs, introduces and supports the sustainable management of core inclusivity and accessibility principles for town planners and town regeneration.*

## **c. Outcome - An engaged, vibrant and cohesive community**

Priorities: The Council

- *Engages with our diverse communities*
- *Encourages civic participation and works to promote civic pride*
- *Works with partners to create cohesive communities*
- *Works with key stakeholders to tackle all forms of discrimination*

## **d. Outcome – An inclusive employer**

Priorities: The Council

- *Has a workforce that is reflective of the community we serve at all levels*
- *Is considered to be an inclusive employer where everyone has an opportunity to fulfil their full potential.*
- *Is Disability Confident Level 3*

## **6. Context**

### **6.1 Defining Equality**

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the same opportunity to fulfil their full potential. This means that everyone has a fair chance to achieve their aspirations and ambitions, whether that be at work or in their personal lives.

Equality is focused within a legislative framework, the main piece of legislation being the Equality Act 2010. The Act is designed to:

- Address unfair discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

There are nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment (transgender), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

All local authorities are required to work within the legislative requirements of the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Duty is supported by general and specific duties.

The General duty requires local authorities to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The specific duties require local authorities to:

- Collect data on service users and workforce and publish these annually and
- Set equalities objectives at least every four years and demonstrate how they plan to meet these objectives

The Equality Act responsibility cannot be delegated. It is the duty of the Council to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 with regards to:

- Partnerships
- Contractors
- Shared services
- Hirers or those using council premises
- Grant recipients
- Those that we license

The Council must also ensure when working with partners it emphasises the need to comply with equalities legislation.

## **6.2 Defining Diversity**

Diversity is about recognising and valuing the full range of differences between people in the workplace and the community. Diversity is about 'harnessing, valuing and celebrating difference'. Whilst the legislation remains an important element, the scope of diversity goes further than the 'legal minimum' to allow for the exploration of differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. It means understanding one another by surpassing tolerance so that people's differences are truly valued.

### *Diversity in the workplace*

Promoting diversity in the workplace acknowledges that entry into the workplace, and an employee reaching their potential can be impacted or influenced by a range of factors beyond legislation. These include social, economic, educational backgrounds, professional background, hierarchal levels, working styles, personality profiles among other factors.

Diversity is also often used to describe the way an organisation looks and how well it serves its community. It paints a picture of different types of people at different levels in the organisation and how well different customer needs are met in service planning, commissioning and delivery.

#### *Diversity in the community*

Basildon Council recognises diversity in the community as something to be valued, celebrated and harnessed. However, the Council also recognises that diversity can also bring lack of familiarity and fear of change. It is therefore our role to understand this and address the perceptions and experiences that may promote fear and divisiveness within our communities.

#### *Why does diversity matter?*

Diversity matters because we live in an increasingly diverse and complex society in which identity and culture are far more multi-faceted and complex than they once were. We must be mindful of different needs brought about by changing communities and ensure that our services are sensitive and responsive to them. Diversity needs to be placed at the very centre of our planning and delivery of Council services. One vital pre-requisite for achieving this is the recruitment of a representative workforce that is key in equipping us to respond to the diverse needs all sections of our community.

### **6.3 Defining Inclusion**

Inclusion within the equality and diversity context is about ensuring no one is excluded when providing services or when recruiting employees. It is about thinking a little harder about how the exclusion could happen and closing the gaps, so that all communities benefit. If communities are to be at the heart of what we do, inclusion must happen from the onset of designing services, developing policies, engaging communities, as well as when recruiting employees.

## **7. What we mean by Community Leader and advocate**

Community Leaders have a shared responsibility in supporting their communities to thrive. Community leadership is the extra activity beyond our core service delivery. The community leader role is about both political leadership by elected members as well as managerial competency. It involves collaborating with people from all walks of life and inclusively representing their different views. It is also about how members and senior leadership promote an inclusive vision and strategy for borough and its diverse communities.

The following factors include our community leadership role:

- Inclusively engaging, empowering diverse communities and creating trust
- Building social capital, by creating an environment where people have a voice, and where they feel that they are able to influence.
- Ensuring services are inclusive, accessible, responsive and delivered to the agreed standards,
- Working to bring local partners together for the betterment of our community
- Holding partners to account and ensuring that services are joined up to make it easier for the community to access.



- Influencing a wider set of services – as community leader, the Council has the capacity to influence local partners and agencies acting to solve problems that may arise. This requires the council to extend its reach to influence issues and organisations beyond their direct sphere of control and responsibility.

Inclusion and Diversity is core to the Council's role as community leader. Engaging inclusively with our different communities regardless of their diversity factors (including geographic location), is key to achieving improved outcomes for the area and community as a whole.

## 8. Other Inclusion Diversity & Cohesion Factors

- *Our role in engaging partners and stakeholders*

As a council we recognise that we cannot work in isolation. There is greater value in working with partners to maximise opportunities for the benefit of the community.

The Council also recognises the voluntary and community sector can help us reach diverse communities as well as provide services. Similarly working with the business sector allows us to jointly address education, employment and skills and therefore economic prosperity, all of which help to make Basildon borough a good place to live and work.

- *Our role in building resilient and cohesive communities*

Basildon Council aims to build resilient and cohesive communities. By 'resilient', we mean people and communities that are able to cope with changes in their lives and communities. By 'cohesive', we mean that people from different backgrounds will enjoy good relations and live and work comfortably together.

Nationally, the country has experienced an increase in Anti-Semitism and islamophobia. On 16 January 2020, Basildon Council adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of Anti-Semitism and the All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) definition of Islamophobia. The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to tackling all forms of discrimination through the following statement:

*"This Council endorses and supports the UK Government's adopted definition of Anti-Semitism and the All-Party Parliamentary Group's definition of Islamophobia. This council reaffirms its policy of non-discrimination against anyone on grounds of sex, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity or nationality, disability, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, by ensuring that we are an inclusive employer and by offering services and opportunities for the whole community based on their needs.*

### *IHRA definition of Antisemitism*

According to the IHRA "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

### *APPG definition of “Islamophobia*

According to the APPG “Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

The Council recognises that changing demographic and the instant availability of social media can act as conduits to “increased fear”. The council will play a key role in understanding these factors in order to help maintain cohesive communities. This means utilising, online presence, social media and other channels to reach communities, as well as addressing diversity as something to be respected within the context of those common factors that unite us all.

- *Our role as a service provider,*

The Council needs to ensure that the way services are designed and delivered, take account of the diverse needs and specific needs of our customers. Services must use relevant information to align need to service delivery.

- *Our role as an employer,*

The Council has a responsibility to meet the diverse needs of its employees, for example by making reasonable adjustments for disabled (and other) employees. It also has a role to ensure that the workforce is equipped to meet the Council’s commitment to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. To do this the relevant training and development opportunities must be put in place and diversity/workforce monitoring utilised to shape improvement where relevant.

- Our role in engaging with diverse communities, the voluntary and community sector

Basildon Borough Council’s Consultation & Engagement Policy (2021) sets out the following policy statement and commitment to promoting effective consultation and engagement:

*Basildon Borough Council is committed to providing genuine opportunities for the community to contribute to and inform the decisions, policies and services that most affect them. It will use the insight gathered from engagement activity to better understand local need, whilst also maintaining a continues conversation with communities and businesses about the things that matter most.*

One of the key reasons for community engagement and involvement is to help the Council to understand how our services, policies and practices affect (or are likely to affect) those who use our services. This evidence can then be used to improve decision-making, for example, in policy and service development, and in identifying priorities for action. Examples of this include:

- Identifying particular needs, patterns of disadvantage, and poor relations between groups, and the reasons for these.
- Designing initiatives to meet needs and to overcome barriers.
- Identifying opportunities to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

- Understanding the relevance of functions to equality.
- Assessing the impact on equality of particular policies or proposals.
- Monitoring and evaluating initiatives, policies and programmes.
- Identifying ways to mitigate adverse impacts on certain groups.

To ensure that the views of diverse communities are captured, the Council has to consider the best ways to engage different communities and people. These include those communities that are seldom heard.

Engagement is not just about our communities. It is important to ensure that we are also capturing the diverse views of our employees as a way of understanding how we can continually improve the workplace.

- *Community Involvement*

‘Involvement’ is about working together. It covers a wide range of ways in which we encourage and support local people, community organisations, businesses and other partners to get involved in our work.

Under the Equalities legislation, local authorities are expected to involve people from all protected groups in decision making. In particular there is emphasis on the need to involve disabled people when designing policies, services, projects, etc. As such, we will involve communities in service/policy planning and design.

## 9. Responsibilities

All elected members, employees at all levels, union representatives, contractors and suppliers to the council have a role in ensuring they work to promote and embed diversity and inclusion to align with our vision and policy values. That involves paying due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion, working in a way that shows respect and consideration for others and challenging inappropriate behaviour/s or practice/s to remove barriers and avoid unfair disadvantage or discrimination.

Basildon Council will:

- Comply with Equality Act 2010 and any future equalities legislation.
- Adopt a proactive approach that includes a generic and innovative approach
- Ensure elected members, employees, union representatives, volunteers, contractors, suppliers (and others as relevant) are made fully aware of the council’s commitment to inclusion and diversity and how that affects their work.
- Monitor our policy objectives, strategy and training regularly to ensure activity continues to be relevant to organisational need
- Provide training / development and updates as appropriate.
- Have a designated Inclusion & Diversity lead at senior management level who will work with elected members and council officers to drive the inclusion, diversity and community cohesion agenda
- Expect all employees to be responsible for their personal conduct and acceptable standards, mainstreaming diversity, inclusion & cohesion in their duties, participating in events and activities and improving equalities performance in their areas/functions.

- Ensure that services assess the impact of their policies, strategies, projects, etc. on equality and human rights via Service Impact Assessments (SIAs)
- Create opportunities for communities to get involved in service planning and design
- Work with our partners to promote inclusion, diversity and community cohesion

## 10. Monitoring and measuring success

This policy will be implemented and monitored annually through an Inclusion & Diversity Strategy (2021 – 2024). Other delivery platforms will include additional strategies such as the Connecting Communities Strategy, Digital Inclusion Strategy, Consultation and Engagement Strategy, Workforce Strategy among others. The strategy will be a live document, which will take into account any national or local emerging issues.

The strategy will be monitored through the Council’s performance management framework and will be reported to the Inclusion & Diversity Operational Group and the Community Diversity Council.

## 11. Council’s Ambitions

Corporate Ambitions	Levels of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	None
1. <b>People:</b> We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.	<u>X</u>			
2. <b>Place:</b> We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.	<u>X</u>			
3. <b>Prosperity:</b> We want Basildon to have a thriving, dynamic and diverse economy where all our communities benefit from increased opportunity and our workforce has the right skills for our local economy and beyond.	<u>X</u>			

## 11. Links to other Corporate Policies or Partner documents

This policy also has links to the following plans, policies and strategies:

- Consultation and Engagement Policy
- Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Workforce Strategy

- Safer Basildon Strategy
- Connecting Communities
- Digital Inclusion Strategy

Monday to Friday  
10am to 5pm



**Basildon Council**  
BASILDON • BILLERICAY • WICKFORD

## For translations, Large Print and Braille please call

Para obtener traducciones, por favor llame al número (Spanish)

অনুবাদের জন্য দয়া করে ফোন করুন (Bengali)

Aby uzyskać pisemne tłumaczenie proszę dzwonić pod numer (Polish)

如需翻译，请拨打 (Mandarin)

O překlad prosím zavolejte (Czech)

若需翻譯，請致電 (Cantonese)

Чтобы получить перевод на русский язык, позвоните по телефону (Russian)

Tercüme için lütfen arayın (Turkish)

برای ترجمه با این شماره تماس بگیرید (Farsi)

Pour obtenir une traduction, composez le (French)

یۆ تەرجومە تەلەفۆن بکە یۆ ژمارەى (Kurdish)

للتّرجمة يرجى الاتصال (Arabic)

Per perkthim me shkrim ju lutem merni ne telefon (Albanian)

ભાષાંતર માટે કૃપા કરીને ફોન કરો (Gujarati)

ट्रांसलेशन के लिये कृपया कॉल करें: (Hindi)

Pentru traducere va rugam sunati (Romanian)

Untuk terjemahan harap hubungi (Indonesian)

Kwa tafsiri, tafadhali piga simu (Kiswahili)

ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ (Punjabi)

Kana muchida kuturikirwa, tapota ridzai runhare kuna (Shona)

Pre preklad prosim volajte (Slovak)

Nếu quý vị cần dịch tài liệu, xin vui lòng gọi theo số (Vietnamese)

# 01268207955



Customers with a hearing or speech impairment can contact us using the Text Relay service. Dial 18001 followed by the full telephone number of the service you require. Calls are charged at your telecommunications provider's standard rate.