



**South East Strategic Leaders and South East England Councils
(Examination in Public IDs 2448 and 3133)
London Plan: Examination in Public – Matter M5
Duty to Cooperate**

M5 – Irrespective of matter M4, did the Mayor engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis during the preparation of the Plan:

- a) with all relevant local authorities and other prescribed bodies in London; and
- b) all relevant local authorities and prescribed bodies outside London on strategic and cross boundary matters in the wider South East?

The following text forms a response to the questions raised in Matters M5 and M6, as SESL and SEEC's comments regarding political engagement with councils in the wider South East relate to both Matters.

SESL/SEEC comments

Political engagement

1. This response focuses on political engagement through Wider South East partnership arrangements established in 2015. Leaders and senior councillors from local authorities in the South East and East of England, and London, met periodically with London's Deputy Mayor for Planning and senior GLA officials, and annually with the Mayor, to discuss common strategic planning and economic growth issues. These meetings included discussions about the draft London Plan and the Mayor's emerging policies. They also provided a forum to discuss shared issues of concern across the wider South East, such as tackling barriers to housing delivery, economic growth and strategic infrastructure.
2. These on-going fora for wider South East political engagement were established following work initiated by the Mayor, SEEC and the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) to achieve more effective collaboration on key strategic policy and infrastructure investment across their areas. Following roundtables for council leaders and key partners in 2014, regular arrangements were set up in 2015 to enable political dialogue across the wider South East. This included annual Wider South East Summits with the Mayor, to which all wider South East Leaders and Local Enterprise Partnerships were invited to engage on key issues including the Plan, housing, infrastructure and economy.
3. A smaller Political Steering Group provided a forum for taking forward priorities and engagement between political representatives of councils in

the wider South East and the Deputy Mayor. This Group initiated, steered and agreed strategic collaboration activities across the wider South East. A small group of officers working in the partner organisations supported the work of the Political Steering Group and preparations for summit meetings.

4. These political engagement arrangements focused on strategic issues across the wider South East, rather than duplicating or replacing more locally-focused engagement between individual local authorities outside London and their neighbours within London. It is important to note that this political engagement was not intended to replace the Mayor's statutory need to consult regarding the London Plan.
5. In developing the new London Plan this engagement provided useful opportunities for council leaders to share views on key issues and concerns with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and senior GLA officials. These opportunities built a constructive dialogue between the Deputy Mayor and the wider South East.
6. The key interdependencies between the wider South East and London were discussed by the Wider South East Political Steering Group and recognised, at a high-level, in the Plan. SESL and SEEC welcomed the Plan's acknowledgement of London's setting, its neighbours and key relationships.
7. Whilst it is rightly the role of councils outside London to plan for their areas, the Mayor's Plan will have implications for our areas given the interrelationships. We welcome acknowledgement in Policies SD2 and SD3 of the importance of on-going political engagement. It will be important to build on this going forward. However, we identify below three key aspects of the Plan where we would welcome the Inspectors' input to request greater clarity to help ensure mutually beneficial outcomes for London and the wider South East. We make substantive comments on these in submissions to Matters for the relevant Examination sessions.

i) Further details are required on how the Mayor will meet his aim to meet all London's housing within its boundaries.

The Plan should include further information on how this 50% increase on current delivery will be achieved, how the gap of 1,065 homes per year will be filled, and what happens after the Plan's initial 10-year targets. If not addressed, these will create uncertainty which could not only hinder delivery of the London Plan, but also impact negatively on the wider South East's local growth plans and their capacity to meet local needs. We will address this issue further in Matters M18 and M19.

ii) Detail on implementing the Mayor's focus on only 'willing partners' outside London who might want to help accommodate some of London's growth as 'a prudent long term contingency' if London cannot meet its housing needs.

The Plan needs to specify how this will work in practice and the benefits that would accrue to interested councils in the wider South East as well as London. For example, councillors in the wider South East have suggested

that a framework or list of options would help local authorities outside London understand what benefits could be on offer. We will address this further in relation to Matter M10.

iii) Detail regarding joint working on wider South East infrastructure.

Further information is needed on how the Mayor can support the need for infrastructure investment required to underpin planned growth outside London. Clarification is also needed to make clear that many of these investments are needed to support existing wider South East plans/priorities, not additional growth from London or further commuting into the capital. We will address this further in relation to Matters M10 and M76-80.