



**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

Rob Walsh
By email

James Blythe ACMA
*Deputy Director, Local
Government Stewardship and
Interventions*

**Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local
Government**
2nd Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

15 July 2026

Dear Rob,

I am writing to thank you for agreeing to be the Lead for the Non-Statutory Review into Basildon Borough Council. This letter formally appoints you on behalf of the Secretary of State. You are appointed alongside Sharon Bridglalsingh who will act as Governance Reviewer and Margaret Lee who will act as Finance Reviewer.

The Department issued Basildon Borough Council with a Best Value Notice today following concerns around governance, culture and financial management. As part of the expectations set by that Notice, the Secretary of State has commissioned this non-statutory review to provide independent challenge and assessment of the Council's progress.

Officials will be in touch shortly to work with you to finalise the terms of reference and agree the practical arrangements for the review.

We ask that you complete your work as soon as practicable and no later than 30 October 2026. In carrying out the review, you should meet with key individuals and stakeholders and consider any documentation, evidence and representations that you consider relevant, including material that may be confidential.

You will be entitled to a fee for the time you spend undertaking this review, together with reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out your duties. The Department anticipates that the review will require up to 25 days. Fees are set at £1,000 per day. These limits should not be exceeded without prior approval of the Secretary of State.

To support your work, the Department will provide dedicated secretariat, communications and IT support.

I have also enclosed the terms of appointment, which I would be grateful if you could sign and return at your earliest convenience.

My team will be available to discuss your role, the review and how you intend to proceed in more detail. If you have any questions, please get in touch at any time.

Yours sincerely,

JAMES BLYTHE

Deputy Director, Local Government Stewardship and Interventions