

LOCAL PLAN – DUTY TO CO-OPERATE UPDATE

Item HP 24/24 referred from Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee of 21 May 2024

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health provided an update on the duty to co-operate, partnership working and reporting.

Members were reminded that the Duty to Co-operate was a legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant authorities and bodies constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic planning matters.

A simple guide to strategic planning and the duty to co-operate was attached at Annex 1.

Government considered that effective and on-going joint working was integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified Local Plan. It was intended that joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure was necessary, whether development needs that could not be met wholly within a particular area plan could be met elsewhere. It was good practice for local authorities to keep an accurate record of meetings undertaken with neighbouring authorities and other bodies. These would inform the preparation of statement of common ground later in the plan making process.

A record of engagement providing a summary of contact between the Borough Council and neighbouring authorities from July 2021 was attached at Annex 2. Members were advised that since the publication of the agenda, a further request to assist with unmet need had been received from Sevenoaks District Council. The record of engagement would be updated accordingly.

***RECOMMENDED:** That the contents of the report and the legal requirements regarding the Duty to Co-operate as part of the Local Plan process be noted.

***Recommended to Cabinet**