

Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan Examination

Hearing Statement prepared by Sevenoaks District Council for Issue 2: Is the Local Plan's preparation compliant with the Duty to Cooperate [DtC] imposed by Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) [PCPA]?

The following statement provides the Council's response to the questions raised in respect of Issue 2 of the Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan hearing sessions, which relates to the Duty to Cooperate. Full details of this process are contained in the Duty to Cooperate Statement, submitted as document reference SUP006. The Council will expand on these responses at the hearing sessions, if it is appropriate to do so.

Q10. What has been the nature and timing of the co-operation and on which issues?

See answer to Q11 below.

Q11. Who did the Council co-operate with?

The Council has utilised established mechanisms of engagement with Duty to Co-operate bodies and the process of co-operation has been on-going since the initial stages of the Issues and Options document in 2017. A range of organisations have been involved in the process, including the relevant Statutory Organisations and neighbouring authorities.

Q12. Are there any failures in the DtC?

No. The Council believes it has complied with the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate.

Q13. Could the identified unmet housing need be accommodated in neighbouring authorities under the DtC?

Discussions undertaken as part of the Duty to Co-operate process indicate that neighbouring authorities are not in a position to accommodate any of the Council's unmet housing need.

Q14. Were any standing arrangements/protocols/memorandums of understanding in place?

The Duty to Co-operate process has made use of long-standing arrangements alongside new forums and meetings set up to consider the issues raised by the production of the emerging Local Plan. Specific forums have included the Kent Planning Policy Forum (KPPF), Kent Planning Officers Group (KPOG), chaired by officers from Kent County Council (KCC) to discuss cross-boundary issues. Liaison with statutory organisations takes place through this forum, outside of the plan-making process. The Council has also made use of the existing framework political meetings to ensure local members from across Kent are engaged with the process.

Q15. How has the co-operation influenced the preparation of the Local Plan?

The Duty to Co-operate process has influenced the Council's approach to housing delivery in that on-going discussions with neighbouring authorities have confirmed that they are not in a position to accommodate any of SDC's housing need. Further clarification of this position was provided in March 2018, through a facilitated workshop

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session chaired by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). Discussions with statutory bodies, including the Environment Agency and Highways England, have informed the development of policies and helped to confirm the deliverability and developability of proposed site allocations.