

North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet

23 November 2023

South Yorkshire Combined Authority Statement of Common Ground

Report of Councillor S Pickering Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place

Classification: This report is public

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PURPOSE / SUMMARY

To advise Cabinet on a Statement of Common Ground relating to strategic planning that has been prepared by the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To endorse the contents of the Statement of Common Ground; and
2. To authorise the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place to sign the document on behalf of North East Derbyshire District Council.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – 15/11/2023

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

There are no specific financial implications arising from being party to the Statement of Common Ground.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

All Councils currently have a legal duty to cooperate with neighbouring local planning authorities and other public bodies to maximise the effectiveness of policies for strategic matters in Local Plans. This document forms part of that process for North

East Derbyshire and the Council will need to take account of it when reviewing the local plan in terms of what the key aims and outcomes are under this statement. A Cabinet decision should be made on whether to sign the document, given the strategic nature of the contents.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

There are no adverse staffing implications directly arising from the content of this report. The Statement of Common Ground covers a range of issues on which North East Derbyshire will be updating its own evidence base e.g. housing and employment land availability but this work will be required as part of updating the current Local Plan.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	None
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabinet / Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SAMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes Details: Ward Members

Links to Council Plan priorities or Policy Framework including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.

All

REPORT DETAILS

1 **Background** *(reasons for bringing the report)*

- 1.1 Strategic policy-making authorities are required to cooperate with each other, and other bodies, when preparing, or supporting the preparation of policies which address strategic matters. This includes those policies contained in local plans (including minerals and waste plans) and spatial development strategies.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that these authorities should produce, maintain, and update one or more statement(s) of common ground, throughout the plan-making process. Local planning authorities are also bound by the statutory duty to cooperate.
- 1.3 The duty to cooperate was created in the Localism Act 2011 (which amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local and Marine Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 1.4 The duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree. But local planning authorities should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before they submit their Local Plans for examination.
- 1.5 Local planning authorities must demonstrate how they have complied with the duty at the independent examination of their Local Plans. If a local planning authority cannot demonstrate that it has complied with the duty then the Local Plan will not be able to proceed further in examination.
- 1.6 A statement of common ground is a written record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. It documents where effective co-operation is and is not happening throughout the plan-making process and is a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries. In the case of local planning authorities, it also forms part of the evidence required to demonstrate that they have complied with the duty to cooperate

2. **Details of Proposal or Information**

- 2.1 The South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority has been developing a Statement of Common Ground in consultation with officers of all of the constituent (Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster) and non-constituent (Bassetlaw, Chesterfield, Bolsover and Derbyshire Dales as well as North East Derbyshire). Derbyshire County Council would also be a signatory to the Statement of Common Ground. The draft version of the Statement of Common Ground is attached to this report at appendix 1. This document would update and replace the previous Joint Statement of Common Ground agreed in

October 2020, which covered the former Sheffield City Region (SCR) geography.

- 2.2 The draft Statement of Common Ground focusses primarily on the following strategic matters:
1. Energy and Climate Change.
 2. Housing.
 3. Employment.
 4. Transport.
 5. Natural Environment.
 6. Waste; and
 7. Digital Connectivity.
- 2.3 In addition, current working arrangements on several other strategic matters are summarised in the Statement in order to illustrate the range of shared interests being progressed. These are developing and will continue to be reviewed in future updates of this Statement. They include:
- Green Belt.
 - Minerals Planning.
 - Peak District National Park; and
 - Health.
- 2.4 In relation to energy and climate change, the draft statement commits the Councils to work towards carbon neutrality by 2050 and to collaborate where appropriate to accelerate progress towards a carbon neutral region. There is a commitment to liaise with neighbouring authorities regarding cross boundary impacts of specific sites, to work together to develop and support the implementation of the Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan and to develop a consistent approach to managing surface water run off and flood risk.
- 2.5 In relation to housing, the draft statement commits the Councils to ensuring that each Local Planning Authority plans for their own housing need within their own Local Authority boundary, having regard to national planning policy and allowing flexibility for agreements between individual authorities as necessary. There is a commitment to ensure that Local Plans across the region will ensure the quantum of housing required to deliver growth ambitions across the Region is being met and that Housing Market Areas are agreed between Authorities. This statement should be read within the context of the Standard Method approach to determining housing need, which will be reviewed at a District level as part of the evidence base work that will underpin future iterations of the North East Derbyshire Local Plan.
- 2.6 In relation to employment, the draft statement commits the Councils to planning for their own employment land needs within their own Local Authority

boundaries, taking account of economic evidence and aligning to housing growth. There is a commitment to sharing evidence and monitoring progress on the delivery of allocated employment land and the loss of existing employment floorspace. Logistics (storage and distribution) uses are specifically mentioned as economic development that will be delivered across the region.

- 2.7 An updated economic strategy will come forward as part of the Local Plan evidence base review and this will inform the North East Derbyshire position on this issue but sites such as Markham Vale are allocated for commercial uses in the current Local Plan.
- 2.8 In relation to transport, the draft statement commits the Councils to working together to ensure that cross-boundary impacts of development and transport interventions are fully considered and mitigated. Reference is made to supporting the objectives of the existing Transport Strategy for the Sheffield City Region, whilst retaining flexibility to adapt to shifts in national and regional policy.
- 2.9 Reference is made to commitments around producing the Transport Plan for the East Midlands and securing developer contributions to promote public transport and active travel improvements. This work will be led by Derbyshire County Council in our region but North East Derbyshire will be a key stakeholder in this process.
- 2.10 The Natural Environment section of the Statement of Common Ground refers to Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The District Council is progressing work with Derbyshire County Council and the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust in relation to both of these.
- 2.11 In Derbyshire, the County Council are responsible for Waste and Minerals matters. The District Council will be consulted on matters in this regard, but the Statement of Common Ground applies mainly to the County's duties in this regard.
- 2.12 In relation to digital connectivity, the draft Statement commits the Councils to helping to bring forward a range of local and regional interventions to improve digital connectivity, improving speeds and addressing gaps in provision. The existing Local Plan does not contain a policy on telecommunications and this is a matter that can be considered as part of the evidence base review.
- 2.13 On Green Belt matters, the draft Statement refers to the existing common assessment method for reviewing Green Belt and commits Councils to adopting this where appropriate to ensure a consistent approach.
- 2.14 Cabinet will note that para 4.2.3 (page 15) of the draft Statement refers to Sheffield City Council's situation in terms of planning for less than the number of houses that is produced by the standard method calculation. There was an exchange of letters between North East Derbyshire District Council and Sheffield City Council in January/February 2023 which confirmed that this Council could not assist Sheffield City Council in meeting its unmet need when

applying the uplift to the standard method for calculating the City's housing need. The draft statement simply covers this matter in a factual way.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council will be able to demonstrate that it has addressed the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 with regards to the duty to co-operate.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Not signing the statement of common ground would risk being found to have not addressed the requirements of the Localism Act when submitting a future Local Plan for examination by the Planning Inspectorate. This would result in significant delays in the delivery of an updated Local Plan for the District, with the knock-on effect being weaker defence against speculative development.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft version of the Statement of Common Ground.
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Click here to enter text.	