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Statement of Common Ground

Between

**Winchester City Council and Basingstoke & Deane
Borough Council**

August 2024



Winchester
City Council

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1. Introduction

A Statement of Common Ground (to be referred to throughout as SoCG), of which concerns strategic cross-boundary matters, is a written record of the progress made by strategic plan-making authorities (and other prescribed bodies¹) during the process of (non-exhaustive) producing or reviewing a local plan. It documents the effective co-operation between the parties and outlines matters that are common ground (agreed) and areas of disagreement. Introduced by the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework, strategic policy making authorities are required to produce, maintain, and keep up to date a SoCG to highlight the agreements on cross-boundary strategic issues.

The SoCG (and associated Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance - to be published to support the Winchester City Council Regulation 19 consultation) is used to demonstrate at examination that respective authorities (and relevant bodies) have cooperated on cross-boundary matters; and that the plan has been prepared in a positive and effective manner, therefore meeting the soundness test². The document assists in presenting evidence that plans are deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries. Furthermore, it is also part of the evidence required for local planning authorities to demonstrate that they have complied with the legal compliance of the Duty to Cooperate.

This interim version of the Winchester City Council and Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council SoCG will form part of the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance to inform the Regulation 19 Publication consultation. It documents the outcomes of co-operation to date in preparing the local plan in order to inform and shape a positively prepared and justified strategy. In doing so it addresses, has been produced in accordance with, and takes account of the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework³ (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance⁴ (PPG), relevant planning acts, and any other applicable information.

This document therefore sets out the current position regarding points of common and/or disagreement on relevant strategic cross-boundary matters and for the purpose of this consultation, can be read as a standalone document.

¹ [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2700/contents/part-2/section-1)

² [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/344222/nppf-2019.pdf) para 35

³ [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/344222/nppf-2019.pdf)

⁴ [Plan-making - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making) Maintaining Effective Cooperation

2. Legislation

The “Duty to Cooperate” was introduced by Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)⁵ from Section 110 of the Localism Act (2011)⁶ as a strategic planning mechanism to replace regional spatial strategies. It places a legal duty on Local Planning Authorities, County Councils and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively, and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan and marine plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

Strategic matters regarding plan-making refers to: *“sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for or in connection with infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.”* (Section 33A, (4)(a))

Additionally, paragraph 20 of the NPPF outlines the strategic policies that a local plan should address, resolve, and where necessary, make provision for, these being:

- a) *“Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
- b) *The provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
- c) *Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and*
- d) *Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”*

Paragraphs 24 – 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises this duty and considers effective, joint working between relevant bodies as integral to a positive and well-prepared strategy. Paragraph 26 also identifies joint working as helping to determine additional infrastructure, and whether development needs that cannot be wholly met within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere. PPG paragraphs 029 – 033, and 075 provide further information on meeting the Duty to Cooperate, explains the differences between the Duty to Cooperate and a SoCG, illustrates how the Duty to Cooperate is considered during examination, and how the Duty to Cooperate should be addressed during plan review.

Further to this, two of the four “tests of soundness” of Local Plans (NPPF Paragraph 35) directly relate to the Duty to Cooperate, specifically:

- a) *“Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;*
- c) *Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground”*

In regard to the production of a SoCG, paragraph 27 of the NPPF specifically states:

⁵ [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/24/section/33A)

⁶ [Localism Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/22/section/110)

“In order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these. These should be produced using the approach set out in national planning guidance and be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide transparency.”



The Plan Making chapter of the PPG and in particular the *Maintaining Effective Cooperation* section (paragraphs 009 – 028) provides additional information and guidance on how authorities should (non-exhaustive): produce a SoCG, what cross-boundary matters should be included, carrying out effective cooperation, activities documented, functional geographical area, and preparation and publication.

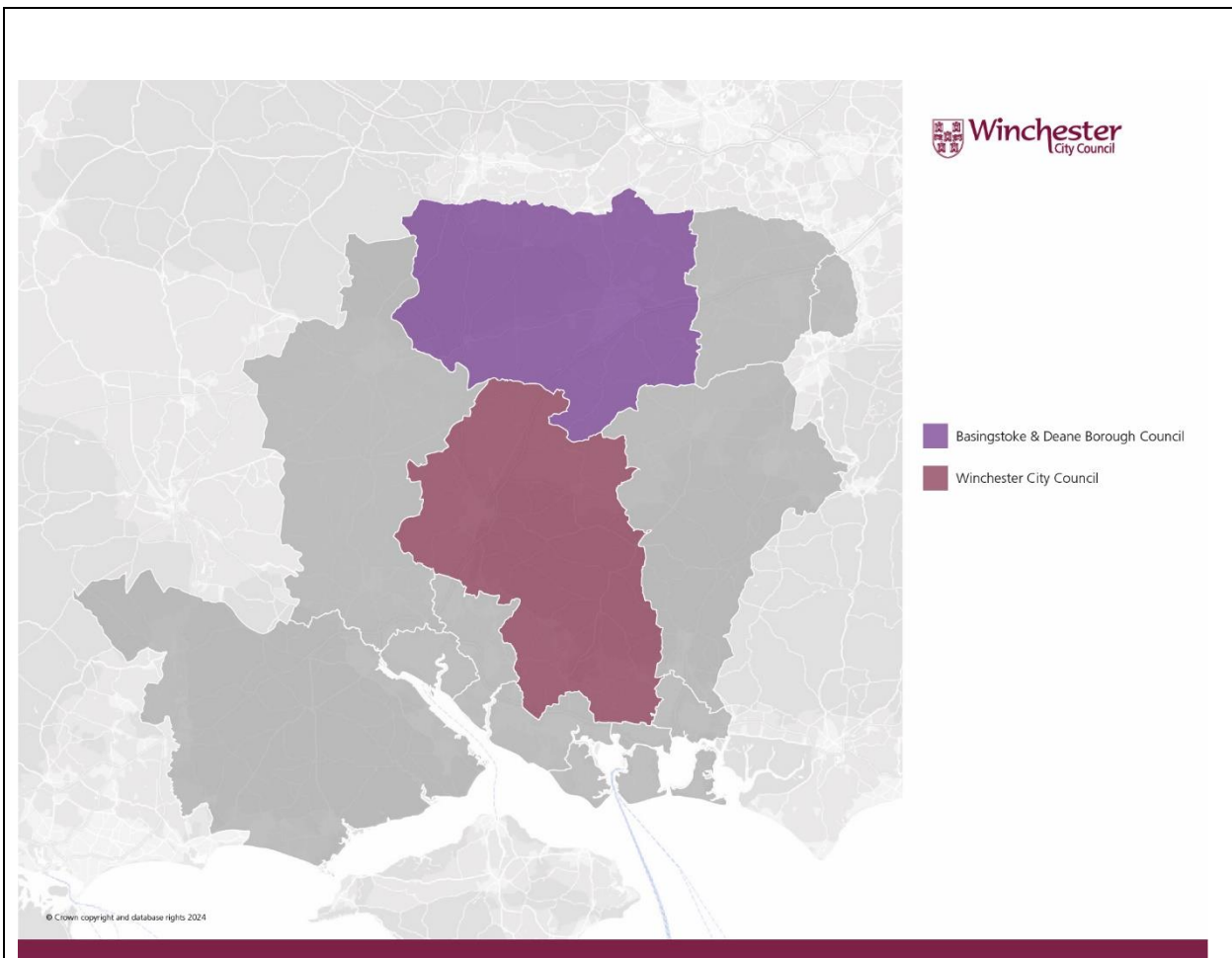
The Government consulted upon reforms to national planning policy during December 2022 as part of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB), stating that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) will remove the Duty to Co-operate, but that the duty will remain in place until those provisions come into effect. To secure appropriate engagement between authorities where strategic planning considerations concern cross-boundary matters, the Government intends to introduce an alignment policy as part of a future revised Framework. Further consultation on what should constitute the alignment policy is anticipated to be undertaken.

The LURA was enacted during November 2023, and now includes provisions to remove the legislation that imposes the Duty to Co-operate. However, these provisions have not yet been enacted and will ‘come into force on such day as the Secretary of State may by regulations appoint’. Transitional arrangements mean that the Duty to Cooperate will remain for plans submitted for examination before June 2025 and adopted by December 2026.

3. Statements of Common Ground

This section comprises the interim Statement of Common Ground that Winchester City Council and Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council have entered into in support of the authorities' respective Local Plan review. This statement demonstrates the current understanding of points of common ground and where necessary, areas of disagreement, for relevant strategic cross-boundary matters.

1. List of Parties involved:	
Winchester City Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	
2. Signatories:	
<p>Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon, or where there are areas of disagreement, this statement documents the issue, and that both parties confirm their respective position.</p> <p>It is agreed that these discussions will inform the Winchester City Council Local Plan 2020 - 2040 and the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Local Plan Update 2021 -2040; both parties will continue to work collaboratively to meet the Duty to Cooperate obligations and will both continue to work proactively on the key strategic cross boundary issues identified in this document.</p> <p>For Winchester City Council the Statement of Common Ground is signed by Julie Pinnock, Corporate Head of Planning & Regulatory Services.</p> <p>For Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council this Statement of Common Ground is signed by Jeni Jackson, Head of Planning and Infrastructure.</p>	
Signed: 	Signed: 
Name: Julie Pinnock	Name: Jeni Jackson
Position: Corporate Head of Planning & Regulatory Services	Position: Head of Planning and Infrastructure
Winchester City Council	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
3. Strategic Geography	
<p>This section will outline the strategic geographical relationship between the authorities delineating the geographical positioning, recognising primary travel routes and the individual economical and housing areas.</p> <p>The section will also provide a brief update of the plan-making process to date and anticipated timeline for adoption.</p>	



Map demonstrating the strategic geographical relationship between Winchester and Basingstoke & Deane

The Basingstoke and Deane borough is situated to the north of the Winchester administrative area with the south of the borough bordering both the Winchester and East Hampshire districts. The M3 forms the main connecting route into the district from Basingstoke and Deane, of which passes through Basingstoke on into the north of the Winchester district, through to the city and then travels south into the borough of Eastleigh. The other connecting route that passes from the west of the borough is the A34 of which briefly cuts through the Test Valley district on into the north of the Winchester district and ends at the city of Winchester. In addition, both local authorities are well connected by rail with the trainline running north to south. Both authorities are in the County of Hampshire but only Winchester forms part of the Partnership for South Hampshire group. There is little to note in regard to strategic matters for both authorities with each authority having their own FEMA and HMA.

Winchester City Council:

The existing WCC Local Plan Part 1 (JCS with the SDNPA) was adopted during March 2013 with the Local Plan Part 2 Housing and Employment allocations adopted during April 2017) and Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpersons Development Plan Document (Traveller DPD) (adopted 2019) forming the Development Plan as a whole. Work on the emerging plan began during 2018 with public consultation on a Strategic Issues and Priorities consultation taking place Feb – April 2021 followed by a draft plan Regulation 18 consultation occurring during Nov – Dec 2022.

Subsequent to the two Regulation 18 consultations, a Regulation 19 consultation is scheduled to take place in Sept 2024. Following this, it is anticipated that the Local Plan will be submitted to the Inspectorate by October/November 2024 with the Examination early in the New Year and once adopted will replace the existing development plan.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council:

The Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029 was adopted in May 2016 and sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the Borough until 2029, the proposed locations for development and policies which will be used in determining planning applications. The Local Plan covers the administrative area of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. The Local Plan replaces the 'saved' policies of the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan Review (1996-2011).

Following a review, the Council took the decision in 2018 to update the Local Plan. The Council carried out the first public consultation, the Issues and Options consultation in late 2020. The Regulation 18 draft Local Plan Update consultation took place between 22 January and 4 March 2024. The subsequent Regulation 19 Publication Plan is anticipated for consultation during winter 2024/25 with submission anticipated for spring 2025, examination summer 2025, and adoption in late 2025. The implications of the proposed changes to the NPPF were being considered at the time of writing.

4. Strategic Matters

This section sets out where agreement has been reached on cross-border strategic matters, or where further work to reach common ground is required. Duty to Cooperate meetings have taken place over the course of the Local Plan review to discuss and resolve matters presented as part of the plan preparation, details of which and minutes documenting the outcome of the meeting(s) will be included in the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance that will assist the Regulation 19 consultation.

At the time of writing this Statement of Common Ground, the strategic cross-boundary matters identified that concern both authorities are:

- Meeting identified housing needs within the district and wider unmet housing needs
- Meeting the identified need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation within the district and wider unmet needs
- Meeting the Authorities' commitments to Climate Change
- Achieving Nutrient Neutrality

The following demonstrates areas of common ground and/or details of disagreement or where further work is required, and will be updated throughout the plan-making process:

Housing

Winchester City Council:

The emerging Local Plan aims to deliver sufficient land to meet the housing need for the Local Plan area and, in assessing the housing requirement for the plan-period, the amount of existing pipeline development is taken into consideration. The Standard Method output has established an overall need for Winchester District over the plan-period of 13,565 dwellings; the Standard Method is

updated on an annual basis with the first 4 years from 2020 resulting in yearly needs for 685, 666, 707 and 691 dwellings (2,749 total). The remaining 16 years of the plan-period (2024-2040) equates to 676 dwellings per annum i.e., 10,816, totalling 13,565 dwellings.

It remains WCCs intention to meet the Standard Method housing need of the Local Plan area. In addition to this the plan makes provision for an 'unmet needs allowance' to help with meeting the (currently undefined) unmet needs of neighbouring authorities in accordance with the Partnership for South Hampshire's 2023 'Spatial Position Statement'.

The below table illustrates the overall position in terms of housing need and supply for the Winchester District (as at 1st April 2023):

Winchester District Housing Need		Winchester District Housing Provision	
Standard Method need for Plan period 2020-2040 (see Table H1)	13,565	Completions since start of Local Plan period (2020-2023)	3,170
Unmet Needs Allowance (for unmet need in neighbouring authorities)	1,900	Outstanding planning permissions	6,780
		Other Commitments (previous Local Plans incl. SDNP)	745
		Windfall development	1,895
		Additional allocations made in this Local Plan	2,875
Total District Housing Requirement	15,465*	Total District Housing Provision*	15,465

* Includes approximately 350 dwellings within the South Downs National Park part of Winchester District

The table relates to housing need and supply for the whole of Winchester District, reflecting the area covered by the Standard Method figure. The Local Plan area excludes that part of the District within the South Downs National Park, where it is assumed that about 350 dwellings will be completed. The remaining housing requirement for the Local Plan area is 15,115 dwellings (15,465 – 350 = 15,115).

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council:

The emerging Local Plan aims to deliver sufficient land to meet the housing need for the area and in assessing the housing requirement for the plan-period, the amount of existing pipeline development will be taken into consideration where relevant.

The Standard Method indicates that at 1 April 2023 the housing need was 850 dwellings per annum (dpa). In line with the Standard Method calculation at the time, the draft Plan (Regulation 18) set out a strategy to accommodate 16,180 new homes over the nineteen year plan period. Two years of this period have already passed, reducing the requirement to 14,450.

In light of local infrastructure constraints and the characteristics of the proposed strategy, rather than delivering the homes at a consistent rate across the Plan period, it was proposed that the homes

would be delivered in line with a 'stepped trajectory'. This would require the delivery of fewer homes in the first five years of the Plan, and then the borough will 'catch up' over the rest of the Plan period.

The Council is in the process of rolling forward the boroughs housing requirement to 1 April 2024. Further consideration will also need to be given to any changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, including the methodology for calculating Local Housing Needs. It remains BDBC's intention to meet housing needs within their administrative boundaries.

Agreed Position:

It is agreed that both WCC and BDBC are planning to deliver sufficient housing to meet their individual local housing needs within their administrative boundaries. Both authorities are in agreement in continuing with the Standard Method output and WCC welcomes the BDBC intention to meet their own need within the borough.

Whilst there is currently no unmet need arising from either authority to be planned for, both Councils agree to continue to monitor housing need and will revisit the agreed position should they need to, at a later date following the update of relevant evidence.

Both Councils agree in continuing to work collaboratively on cross-boundary matters.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs

Winchester City Council:

In support of the Local Plan review, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment⁷ has been produced to inform the likely need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation over the plan period. The GTAA breaks down the overall Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople need into 4-year bands. The need identified takes into account unauthorised pitches, pitches with temporary planning permission, concealed and doubled-up households and movement from bricks and mortar in the first 4 years. The total net new household formation is then applied proportionately across the remaining 4-year bands.

The GTAA identifies an overall need over the period to 2039 for:

- 115 pitches for Gypsy and Travellers that met the PPTS planning definition of a traveller
- 85 pitches for Gypsy and Travellers that at the time of preparing the GTAA did not meet the planning definition of a traveller
- 27 plots for Travelling Showpersons that met the PPTS planning definition of a traveller
- 6 plots for Travelling Showpersons that at the time of preparing the GTAA did not meet the planning definition of a traveller.

The consultants were also appointed to prepare a Pitch Deliverability Assessment (PDA) with the objective to provide advice on the suitability, availability, and achievability of any existing private Gypsy and Traveller sites (with permanent planning permission) to assist in meeting the identified accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers.

The Council has undertaken further work following the GTAA to take account of changes to the definition of travellers in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites and changes in traveller needs and on

⁷ [2022 10 31 Winchester GTAA Final Report \(5\).pdf](#)

key sites. This has reduced the overall need for pitches, particularly for gypsy travellers and has examined various potential sources of supply. A Gypsy and Traveller Topic Paper has been produced to evidence this work, which reaches the following conclusions on traveller pitch / plot needs and supply:

	Gypsy traveller (Years 0-5)	Gypsy traveller (Years 6-19)	Travelling showpersons (Years 0-5)	Travelling showpersons (Years 6-19)
Pitch / plot need	51	40	22	13
Pitch / plot supply	38	90	11	6
Surplus / Shortfall	-13	+50	-11	-7

There is scope to meet the need for about 68 additional gypsy traveller pitches through the intensification or expansion of existing sites. In addition, the Council is seeking to bring the former public site at Tynefield (Whiteley) back into use and to expand the number of pitches provided to about 30 and there is scope to achieve about 30 additional pitches, if needed, through windfall provision.

The need for plots for travelling showpeople is much more modest and there is scope to provide about 17 additional plots through site intensification or expansion and maintaining travelling showpersons' use of plots at The Nurseries, Shedfield.

As a result, the Council expects to be able to meet gypsy traveller needs over the Local Plan period as a whole, but is unable to identify sufficient available and deliverable sites to meet current needs (years 0-5, 2022-2026). For travelling showpersons, the Council is unable to meet either short-term or longer-term needs.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council:

The council has commissioned an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and this will identify future needs for pitches over the plan period.

Whilst needs are not known at present, the Local Plan Update will set a strategy for providing accommodation for Gypsy and Travellers, in light of identified needs. This is likely to include the delivery of pitches through the intensification of existing pitches and also on larger housing led allocations as the council considers that this is likely to constitute the most effective method of meeting the requirements set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). The council conducted a further call for sites in summer 2024 and this did not result in any additional available sites that the council was not already aware of. Further work will be completed to ensure a suitable strategy is reflected in the Plan once needs have been identified.

The borough has a significant need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, with a very limited number of sites available to meet needs. The current strategy of allocating pitch provision on larger greenfield housing sites is being implemented but is taking time to deliver.

Agreed Position:

Both WCC and BDBC have updated or are in the process of updating their evidence base to support the delivery of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.

WCC has made contact with BDBC by way of sending formal 'unmet need' letter (copy of letter can be found in the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance) requesting assistance in meeting the demonstrable need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. WCC are unable to meet their own need with the land made available to them. This has been evidenced in the GTAA and Pitch Delivery Assessment, Call for Sites, SHELAA exercises, and the Gypsy and Traveller Topic Paper 2024.

At present, there is no unplanned need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation arising from Basingstoke and Deane Borough on which it is seeking assistance from WCC. However, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council is currently updating its Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and will further review needs and a strategy to meet needs in its forthcoming Local Plan Update. Multiple call for sites consultations have been conducted to inform the Local Plan Update, most recently in summer 2024 and this has failed to identify any suitable sites for such provision. As such, it will be necessary to identify a suitable strategy through the Local Plan to accommodate needs (once identified) with very limited opportunities.

It is agreed that both authorities have/will exhaust and evidence all potential avenues of delivering an adequate level of development to meet the assessed/emerging need within their own district/borough. Neither area are in a position to assist in meeting the needs of neighbouring authorities.

Climate Change

Winchester City Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019 and adopted a Carbon Neutrality Action Plan in January 2020. Winchester City Council is committed to becoming a carbon neutral local authority by 2024, whilst aiming for the wider district to be carbon neutral by 2030. BDBC declared a climate emergency in September 2019 with the aim of making council operations carbon neutral by 2025 and working towards becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2030. This is supported by a Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy (2021) which identifies the role of the Local Plan Update in reducing carbon emissions across the borough.

Both authorities will continue to engage and co-operate where necessary, to meet their respective targets.

Nutrient Neutrality

On 16 March 2022 Natural England updated guidance and evidence in relation to the nutrient pollution issue in the Solent area; both authorities are within the Solent catchment area in regard to the protection of SSIs for the purposes of Nutrient Neutrality.

Natural England has advised that there is a likely significant effect on several of the Solent's European Sites from development, therefore, any new housing schemes and other proposals which have a high volume of water use within the River Itchen catchment area will need to prevent any increase in nutrients into the Solent European Sites in order for them to be 'nutrient neutral'.

It is agreed that there are currently no potential strategic nitrogen or phosphorus mitigation schemes within the Basingstoke & Deane borough. WCC are currently looking into potential schemes within the WCC administrative area, however, are not in a position to provide more detail at this time, but if in a position to do so in the future, will make any scheme available for purchase.

Both authorities will continue to monitor the situation and update where necessary and continue to monitor potential schemes outside of the respective authoritative areas. Furthermore, both

authorities are continuing to work with PfSH through the Water Quality Working Group to coordinate and implement Solent catchment-wide solutions.

5. Governance Arrangements

For the purpose of this document, and to evidence the cooperative process undertaken between Winchester City Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, it has been decided that the final signing of the Statement of Common Ground is by the Head of Planning and Infrastructure for Basingstoke & Deane and for Winchester City Council Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

6. Timetable for review and ongoing cooperation

Winchester City Council will continue to work collaboratively with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to address strategic matters that, in addition to the above, arise through the plan-making process or require a resolution where there is yet to be an agreed matter. This will occur on an ongoing basis and relate to the timings of the relevant regulatory stages that the respective authorities are at during the plan-making process. The aim is to resolve any outstanding matters through regular meetings where cross-boundary strategic matters will be addressed.