

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE CABINET MEETING OF 29th NOVEMBER 2021

PUBLIC REPORT: Y

EXEMPT REPORT: N

Report Title	Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics (October 2021)
KEY DECISION	N
Report Author	Tess Nelson – Strategic and Local Planning Manager
Purpose of Report	To recommend that the Council becomes a signatory to the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics (October 2021).
Reason for Decision	To become a signatory to the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (SoCG), together with the other local authorities within the Leicester and Leicestershire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA). The key strategic matters covered in the SoCG under the Duty to Cooperate are; the need for Large Warehousing and Logistics floorspace to 2041, and next steps to ensure the needs of the sector are appropriately planned for across L&L. The SoCG commits signatories to joint working on long term strategic planning for strategic warehousing & logistics growth across Leicester and Leicestershire.
Portfolio (holder)	Cllr King (Strategy), Cllr Bateman (Planning)
Corporate Priorities	PLACE: An enterprising, vibrant place CO 2 Wider Employment Choice
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications associated with this recommendation.
Risk Management Implications	Not signing the SoCG would place the Council at considerable risk of being unable to fulfil our Duty to Cooperate. Failure of the Duty to Cooperate would result in an inability to adopt a future Local Plan. It could undermine future partnership working on strategic cross boundary planning matters across Leicester and Leicestershire.
Environmental Implications	No environmental implications from this recommendation have been identified.

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Legal Implications	Becoming a signatory to the SoCG is not legally binding on the Council but reasserts the existing commitment on behalf of the Council to joint working on long term strategic planning for strategic warehousing and logistics growth across Leicester and Leicestershire.
Equality Implications	No equality implications from this recommendation have been identified.
Data Protection Implications	No data protection implications from this recommendation have been identified.
Consultation	No consultation has taken place.
Options	<u>Not signing the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics (October 2021)</u> – This option is not recommended since it would risk undermining the ability of the Council to successfully demonstrate that the Duty to Cooperate has been met. Failure of the Duty to Cooperate would result in an inability to adopt a future Local Plan. It could undermine future partnership working on strategic cross boundary planning matters across Leicester and Leicestershire.
Background Papers	None
Appendices	Appendix A: Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics (October 2021).
Recommendations	<p>i) That Cabinet and Council note the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics (October 2021).</p> <p>ii) That Cabinet recommend to Council that the Council becomes a signatory to the Statement of Common Ground (Appendix A).</p>

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local authorities have a duty to collaborate to address strategic planning matters. The Duty to Cooperate is the mechanism for ensuring that this happens. The Duty requires ongoing constructive engagement on the preparation of development plan documents and other activities in relation to the sustainable development and use of land.
- 1.2 Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) are a means of demonstrating the Duty to Cooperate is met, as evidence of effective ongoing collaboration and engagement between partner authorities. A SoCG is a written record of the

progress made by strategic plan-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters.

2. Key Facts

- 2.1 The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is set out at Appendix A.
- 2.2 The SoCG has been prepared by each of the authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire (L&L) working in collaboration. Its purpose is to set out how the Duty to Cooperate has been met in relation to the following strategic issues: the need for Large Warehousing and Logistics floorspace to 2041, including the next steps to ensure the needs of the sector are appropriately planned for across L&L, in order to demonstrate that all the authorities are working together to meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate. The SoCG is being considered by each of the L&L authorities for signing.

Summary of Statement of Common Ground

- 2.3 The SoCG (Appendix A) commits partner authorities to cooperating on strategic cross boundary matters, including working towards agreeing the distribution of large warehousing need in the future. To do this it affirms the authorities continuing commitment to cooperate and sets out a series of next steps to inform an approach to meeting the L&L need as recommended by joint evidence. The SoCG does not seek to agree the actual distribution of large warehousing need at this stage, merely the ongoing work necessary (including joint monitoring of allocations and consents across L&L) in order to work towards a future agreement on distribution.

Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Warehousing Need, Supply and Shortfall

- 2.4 The SoCG confirms the authorities all agree that the, [Warehousing and Logistics in Leicester and Leicestershire : Managing growth and change Study \(April 2021\)](#) ('the study') is the most up-to-date evidence on the needs of the sector across L&L. Figures are set out in Tables 1 and 2 of the SoCG.
- 2.5 The study, commissioned jointly, identifies a need for L&L as whole, rather than individual districts. Given the scale of need identified this is a strategic cross boundary issue that authorities agree should be addressed through the Duty to Cooperate.
- 2.6 The study recommends that L&L need to provide for 2,570,000 sqm of additional strategic warehousing floorspace between 2020 and 2041. Taking account of the updated supply position (set out in the SoCG), this leaves a shortfall of 718,875 sqm at rail served sites and 301,293 sqm at non-rail served sites which should be planned for to 2041.

Next Steps – Planning for Future Needs to 2041

- 2.7 The SoCG confirms that authorities agree the Areas of Opportunity (AoO) identified by the study represent the most likely general broad areas for new Large Warehousing and Logistics up to 2041.
- 2.8 Paragraph 3.12 of the SoCG also sets out the steps to help inform an approach to meeting the L&L need which maintains an appropriate supply across the AoO, in terms of geography and trajectory, as recommended by the study. These steps include collectively; monitoring progress at the L&L level, understanding the geography and phasing of current supply, identifying deliverable and developable sites for large warehousing.
- 2.9 The SoCG does not set out the distribution of the shortfall in need to 2041. Instead, it sets out the ongoing commitment to a programme of further work to inform an approach. The statement will be reconfirmed and updated as necessary.

Conclusion

- 2.10 The study was first published in May 2021. The SoCG supports Charnwood's Local Plan and commits all authorities within L&L to actively engage in future work to plan for the strategic warehousing sector. This is an on-going legal duty under the Duty to Cooperate, applying to all authorities regardless of their stage on the local plan-making cycle.

3 Next Steps

- 3.1 All local authorities within the Leicester and Leicestershire Functional Economic Market Area are considering the SoCG for signing through governance processes during autumn / winter 2021.
- 3.2 If approved, officers will arrange for the Council to become a signatory to the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics Need (October 2021) (see Appendix A).