

## Oxford Local Plan 2040

### Examination

### Initial Hearings

## Statement by Oxfordshire County Council

### Matter 2 – Duty to Cooperate

Tuesday 11 June 2024 (after Matter 1)

**Issue:** Whether the Council has complied with the duty to co-operate in the preparation of the Local Plan. N.B. the duty to co-operate concerns the preparation of the Local Plan as far as it related to strategic matters. This covers the period up to, but not after the submission of the Local Plan and strategic matters are defined in S33A (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Issues of soundness will be dealt with under other matters.

**Questions:**

*Housing needs and the housing requirement*

1. Who has the Council engaged with in terms of housing needs and the housing requirement? When did this take place and what form did it take?
2. What factors led to the decision to cease work on a joint plan for Oxfordshire?
3. How did engagement with other authorities in Oxfordshire change after this decision?
4. How and when did the Council engage with other authorities in Oxfordshire in relation to the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA)? Why was it only commissioned by Oxford City and Cherwell District Councils?
5. Why was the decision taken to assess housing needs on an Oxfordshire wide basis and then set out a distribution of this by individual district authorities? Were the other authorities involved in this decision?
6. What was the response of the other authorities to the Regulation 18 consultations on the issue of housing need and the housing requirement? How did the Council take this into account going forward?

7. How has the Council engaged with the other authorities in relation to the capacity of Oxford City to accommodate housing?
8. How and when did the Council discuss the conclusions of the HENA, the estimate of capacity, the resultant housing requirement and the implications for unmet need?
9. How and when did the Council directly request the other authorities to assist in accommodating unmet housing need? What implications did this have for cooperation?
10. What is the position of the other authorities in terms of the duty to co-operate in relation to this issue?

*Other strategic matters*

11. Are there any other genuinely strategic matters as defined by S33A (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, including any site allocations that may have cross boundary implications?
12. If so, taking each in turn, who has the Council engaged with? How and when did this engagement take place? What is the outcome of this engagement?

*Overall*

13. In overall terms has the Council engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in maximising the effectiveness of the preparation of the Local Plan?

**Response to all questions:**

1. There is a Statement of Common Ground between Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council, signed in March 2024, included in the Examination Library as COM.005, which addresses the duty to cooperate, noting the large number of areas that require cooperation between the County and the City and how discussions have continued during the preparation of the Local Plan. Oxfordshire County Council provided formal responses at each public consultation stage of the Local Plan preparation, namely in August 2021, November 2022, March 2023 and January 2024. The appendix to the Statement of Common Ground indicates that the City Council has considered the points made in our Regulation 19 response.