



Statement of Cooperation

Between:

Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Stroud District Council

1. Context

The Gloucestershire local planning authorities are working together, within the context of the Duty to Cooperate, to ensure that future Local Plans properly address strategic planning and cross boundary issues. In particular, the Gloucestershire authorities have worked together on an update of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

A Memorandum of Understanding covering all of the Gloucestershire authorities within the Strategic Housing Market Area is currently being prepared separately.

This Statement of Cooperation has been prepared as part of the ongoing commitment of the above authorities to work together. The statement has been prepared specifically to address the fact that emerging Local Plans covering these authorities' areas are currently at different stages of preparation. There is therefore a need to co-ordinate and align production of Local Plans to ensure that objectively assessed needs can be accommodated effectively.

The authorities within Gloucestershire may seek to agree other statements of cooperation as and when specific needs arise.

2. Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy

The adjoining authorities of Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council are currently producing a Joint Core Strategy (JCS). A draft for consultation was published in October 2013. There is currently a target submission date of August 2014.

The evidence underpinning the draft JCS suggests a possible requirement (derived from the OAN evidence) of between 33,200 and 37,400 new homes and land to support between 21,800 and 28,200 new jobs (2011-2031) to meet objectively assessed needs arising from the three authorities within the JCS area. The range reflects different scenarios regarding the recovery of the economic climate and a return to trend in household formation.

The draft JCS is currently proposing 33,200 new homes and land to support 21,800 jobs. This level of growth is expected to meet the identified needs for the JCS plan period, as envisaged at the current time, although the appropriate level will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals. The draft JCS currently envisages a review five years following adoption of the JCS and periodically thereafter taking into account the most up to date evidence available at that time (Policy SP1 of draft JCS).



The draft JCS states that if evidence suggests that additional provision of homes or land for employment is required, the review will consider the appropriate response, including the possible need for additional allocations, the early release of safeguarded land, a further green belt review and working with neighbouring authorities under the Duty to Co-operate (Policies SP1 and SP3 of draft JCS).

The Chair of the JCS Programme Board wrote to neighbouring authorities within Gloucestershire on 19 August 2013 to alert authorities to the possibility that the JCS authorities "may need to come to you with a formal request for assistance under the duty to co-operate" in the event that either more than 33,200 homes are needed for the JCS authorities' area to meet a more buoyant economy or the identified sites do not come forward in a timely manner due to the significant infrastructure requirements and long lead in times associated with the large urban extensions.

3. Stroud Submission District Local Plan

Stroud District Council is in the final stages of preparing a Local Plan which was approved for submission in July 2013 and published for pre-submission consultation in September 2013.

The draft Local Plan was submitted for examination in December 2013.

The draft Local Plan includes a commitment for an early review within five years to consider housing proposals designed to meet the clearly identified needs of another planning authority in the housing market area (Policy CP2 of submission Plan).

4. Agreed Statement

A Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared to cover all of the Gloucestershire authorities to ensure constructive, ongoing and active engagement in issues relevant to spatial planning matters.

Within this wider Gloucestershire context, Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council agree to the following actions:

- 4.1. The four councils will take a strategic approach in their Local Plans and will seek to develop a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements within the relevant local authority boundaries. Consideration will be given to meeting unmet requirements from another local planning authority in the housing market area where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.



- 4.2. The four councils will work together to agree a site assessment methodology to assess the development potential for housing and employment to meet unmet needs arising from within their areas. The methodology should be based upon the principles of delivering sustainable development, as defined by the NPPF and will include a range of considerations including accessibility to facilities, policy and environmental designations and constraints (e.g. Green Belt, AONB, flooding), deliverability and viability issues. The proposed strategy of the JCS is one of meeting needs where they arise and where this cannot be accommodated, through urban extensions to Cheltenham and Gloucester, in accordance with the agreed JCS strategy. However Stroud may wish to consider alternative locations within their district to help meet unmet needs.
- 4.3. An independent consultant, appointed on behalf of the above authorities, will assess potential and existing urban extensions using the agreed methodology and recommend the most sustainable sites for consideration through future local plans. These recommendations will clearly identify the origin and scale of the objectively assessed needs that each site is intended to meet.
- 4.4. The JCS authorities will seek to adopt the JCS by Spring 2015, put in place district plans to deliver the proposed strategy and will regularly monitor future needs and the delivery of the JCS development strategy. Discussions to address any shortfalls in meeting the OAN as the JCS continues to progress to pre submission and its submission stage, will be arranged as necessary, but at the earliest opportunity to consider options.
- 4.5. The JCS authorities will monitor continuously and will review at regular intervals and no more than five years from adoption, the housing and employment policies contained within the JCS.
- 4.6. Within five years from adoption of the Stroud District Local Plan, or December 2019, whichever is the sooner, Stroud District will review the housing and employment policies contained within the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, to include consideration of any unmet development and infrastructure needs arising from within another authority in the housing market area.
- 4.7. The JCS authorities and Stroud District Council will work together to co-ordinate their Local Plan review processes to ensure that development needs are planned for in a co-ordinated way.
- 4.8. Where a site within Stroud District performs better in sustainability terms than sites located outside Stroud District at meeting the objectively assessed needs arising from another authority in the housing market area, as assessed through an agreed site assessment methodology, Stroud District Council will consider those housing proposals, including through an early review of the Local Plan as per the recommendations proposed to Policy SP2 of the Stroud District Local Plan.

5. Signatures and Date

Signed: *M. Shuttles* Date: *25 June 2014*

Gloucester City Council

Signed: *[Signature]* Date: *27 May 2014*

Cheltenham Borough Council

Signed: *[Signature]* Date: *9 June 2014*

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Signed: *[Signature]* Date: *16 August 2014*

Stroud District Council

(These signatures relate to the cooperation that was agreed at the meeting on 31 January 2014 in Gloucester City as whilst the statement was supported in was not signed at the meeting.)



Addendum to Statement of Cooperation between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Stroud District Council.

The Statement of Cooperation as written reflected the Draft JCS (October 2013). Since this time, the Pre Submission version of the JCS (April 2014) has been approved by all three JCS authorities which has been updated from the Draft JCS to reflect revised evidence to support the objectively assessed need. It also updates the way in which the three councils will respond to any need for additional provision of homes or land for employment, which refers to any such review considering the appropriate response including the possible need for additional allocations, the early release of any safeguarded sites and the need for assistance from other neighbouring authorities, as part of the duty to co-operate.

As per the three JCS councils meetings on 7, 8, 9 April 2014 and the approved Presubmission JCS, the evidence underpinning the Pre Submission JCS suggests a requirement (derived from the OAN evidence) of between 30,500 and 38,000 new homes and land to support between 21,000 and 28,000 new jobs (2011-2031), to meet objectively assessed needs arising from the three authorities within the JCS area.

The Pre Submission JCS is currently proposing 31,000 new homes and land to support 28,000 jobs to meet the identified needs for the JCS plan period.