

# SANDWELL LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

## Hearing Statement

<b>Representor ref number/ Representor</b>	51- Dudley MBC
<b>Matter</b>	1 – Legal and Procedural Requirements
<b>Relevant issue</b>	Issue 1a - Whether the Council has complied with the Duty to Cooperate in the preparation of the Plan.
<p><b>Q1.1 In preparing the plan did the Council engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with neighbouring authorities and relevant prescribed bodies (as defined in Regulation 4 of the 2012 Local Planning Regulations) on matters having a significant impact on at least two planning areas? Is this engagement fully documented and evidenced?</b></p> <p><b>Q1.2 Have all Statements of Common Ground been submitted consistent with the expectations of the NPPF and the associated Planning Practice Guidance? Have they all been signed by all relevant parties?</b></p> <p><b>Q1.3 Has cooperation with other local planning authorities produced effective and deliverable policies on strategic cross-boundary matters? What specific outcomes have resulted from engagement undertaken in preparing this plan? Including in relation to: a. housing needs (including for travelling communities) b. employment need c. transport and infrastructure d. natural and historic environment e. minerals and waste.</b></p> <p><b>Q1.4 Are there any relevant strategic matters that have not been specifically identified and addressed on a cross-boundary basis, or any concerns that have been raised by any nearby local authority or prescribed body regarding duty to cooperate compliance that remain unresolved? a) If so, which matters or concerns and why is this the case? b) What was the Council's response?</b></p> <p><b>Q1.5 In overall terms, has the duty to cooperate been discharged? Is there any substantive evidence to indicate that the Council has failed to discharge its duty to cooperate in a manner consistent with NPPF paragraphs 24-27 during the preparation of the submitted plan?</b></p> <p>The Council's response to the Regulation 19 Consultation in November 2024 confirmed that the Council considers the obligations of the Duty to Cooperate have been met, noting the ongoing work under the Duty to</p>	

Cooperate to address the housing and employment land shortfalls identified across the Black Country Authorities, including agreeing a methodology for apportioning contributions from other local authorities towards the housing shortfalls.

Since our Regulation 19 representations further progress has been made in respect of these matters including:

- An updated GBBCHMA Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) [SA/ED37] has been published with additional signatures. The focus of this SoCG is to confirm those local authorities who had evidenced a shortfall in meeting their housing needs and where contributions have been made by other local authorities in contributing towards such shortfalls and to agree an approach by which those contributions are apportioned to the shortfall area. This SoCG has now been signed by all the local authorities, apart from Telford and Wrekin, who have agreed to the principle of contributing to the unmet needs to the Black Country and signing an updated version of the SoCG once this is available (as per document SA/ED38).
- The Black Country FEMA SoCG addressing matters related to the Black Country Authorities employment land shortfall has been published and has also been signed by the great majority of local authorities (see document SA/ED36).

This progress demonstrates the ongoing, constructive dialogue that has taken place to address the relevant strategic matters under the Duty to Cooperate.

From Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's (MBC) perspective, we consider that all the strategic matters requiring cross-boundary cooperation have been identified relevant to Sandwell MBC and Dudley MBC. This is detailed further within the SLP Duty to Cooperate Statement (submission version) [DtC 001] and the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council and Sandwell Borough Council (which is for the Dudley Local Plan (November 2024) [SA/ED11]).

At page 20, the SLP Duty to Cooperate Statement (submission version) [DtC 001] reflects Dudley Council's representations submitted at Regulation 19 in respect of site-specific matters for proposed allocations within Sandwell. It is noted that proposed amendments to Allocation SM2 at Appendix B seek to address these concerns (modification reference PAM51 within document SA/ED3).