

MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039

**Duty to Cooperate Statement of
Compliance**

July 2024

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Introduction

This Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance sets out how Mid Sussex District Council has complied with the Duty to Cooperate during the preparation of the District Plan. The statement provides details of all cooperation, outcomes reached, any outstanding/unresolved issues, and details of Statements of Common Ground and Memoranda of Understanding that have been agreed with other local authorities or public bodies.

Duty to Cooperate Framework

Background

1. The Council published a Duty to Cooperate Framework in 2015 to set out its approach to meeting the duty to cooperate. The Framework provides a robust and transparent process to guide cooperation with the relevant local authorities and public bodies. The Framework sets out the relevant strategic planning issues requiring cooperation with neighbouring and nearby local authorities and public bodies. It was also intended to enable cooperation to be monitored, the outcomes achieved recorded and the frequency of engagement with the relevant authorities/public bodies set out. In particular, the framework would enable the Council to demonstrate that engagement had been constructive, active, ongoing, collaborative, diligent and of mutual benefit, as required by legislation and national policy.

Update for the District Plan 2021-2039

2. The content of the Duty to Cooperate Framework 2015 remains relevant for the District Plan 2021 – 2039, given it is a review of an existing adopted plan, and has continued to provide the structure for duty to cooperate engagement during the preparation of the plan. The key purpose and principles are still relevant.

Key relationships and bodies

3. The prescribed duty bodies are set out in Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Of the bodies listed, the following are considered relevant to Mid Sussex District Council:

- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes England
- NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board
- West Sussex County Council (the Highway Authority)
- National Highways
- Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

The duty also applies to the prescribed bodies below. However, given the strategic issues identified, the Council consider it would be unnecessary and not effective to actively seek cooperation with them or the Plan area is not covered by such body:

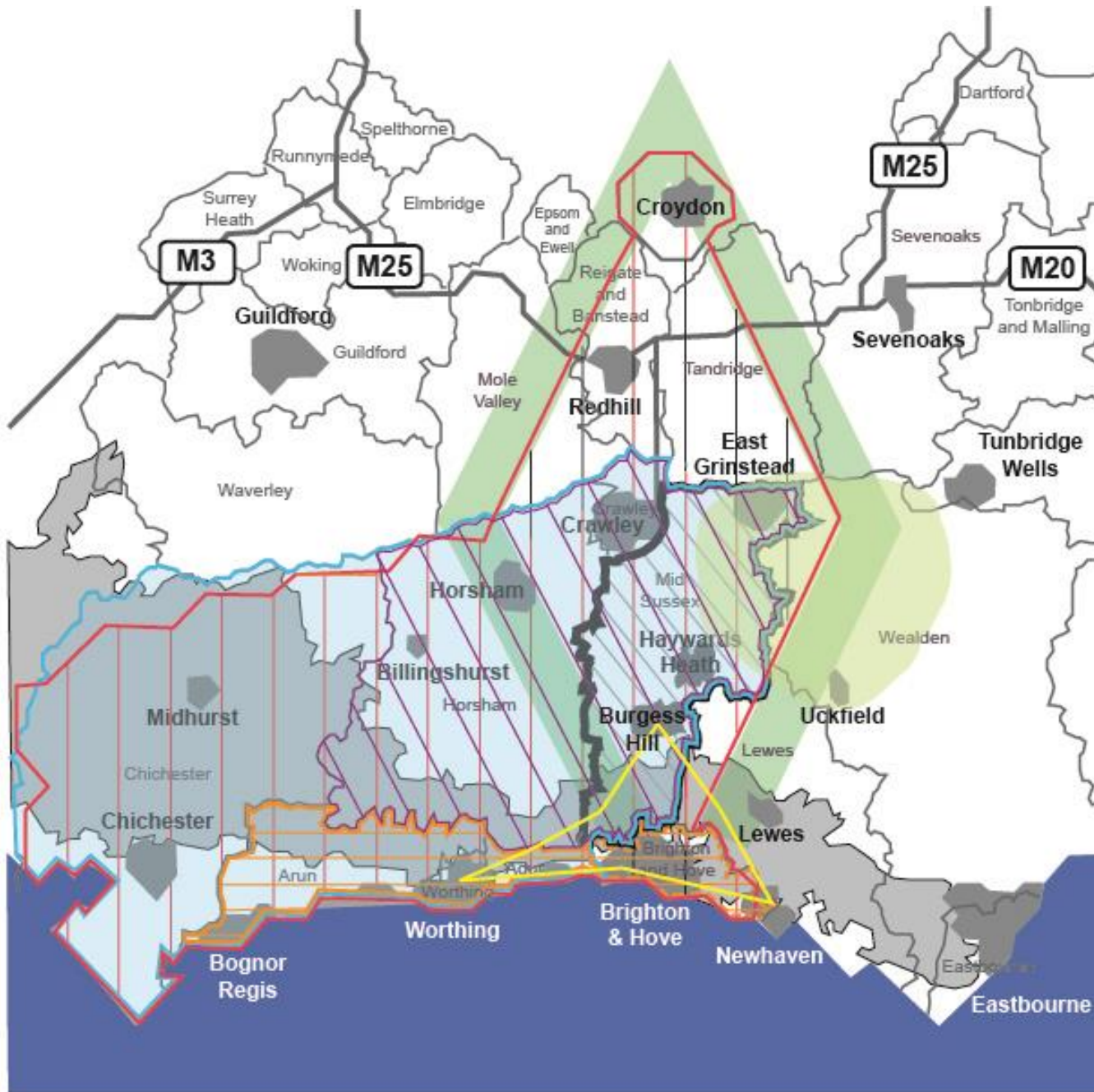
- The Mayor of London
- Transport for London
- Marine Management Organisation
- The Office of Rail Regulation
- Integrated Transport Authority

Mid Sussex District Council has also co-operated with a number of other public bodies including the following:

- West Sussex County Council (Education, Flood and Waste Authority)
- Neighbouring and nearby Local Planning Authorities:
 - East Sussex County Council
 - Surrey County Council
 - Within the primary Housing Market Area: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council
 - Other adjoining authorities: Brighton and Hove City Council, Lewes District Council, South Downs National Park, Tandridge District Council, Wealden District Council
- Network Rail
- Sussex Police
- South East Coast Ambulance
- Sport England
- Sussex Wildlife Trust
- West Sussex Fire and Rescue
- Relevant utility and infrastructure providers



Duty to Co-operate Framework



-  Mid Sussex District
-  District boundaries
-  South Downs National Park
-  Coast to Capital LEP
-  Gatwick Diamond Initiative
-  Ashdown Forest
7km zone of influence
-  North West Sussex
Housing Market Area
-  West Sussex Coastal
Housing Market Area
-  West Sussex Co-Operative
West Sussex Chief Executives
Joint Planning Board
-  Greater Brighton City Deal

4. The Council is also a member of the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board (WS&GBSPB). It comprises representatives of LPAs across West Sussex with West Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, Lewes District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority. It seeks to identify those spatial planning issues that impact across the wider area and agree strategic priorities and policies to guide longer term strategic growth in a coordinated and well considered matter. The Strategic Planning Board agreed to commence work on Local Strategic Statement 3 (LSS3), which will cover the period 2030 – 2050, with the commissioning of evidence base studies. This includes a study of projected housing and employment needs, transport impact, infrastructure needs and spatial options to deliver the development needs and infrastructure. Following the enactment of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and intended repeal of the Duty to Cooperate, the WS&GBSPB are considering their future role.

Co-operation with the prescribed bodies

The Council continues to work with partners such as National Highways, the Highway Authority, Natural England, the Environment Agency, and NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board, to bring forward the necessary infrastructure required to deliver the District Plan Spatial Strategy, as follows:

- The Environment Agency – involved in the Water Cycle Study and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment evidence base work, as well as supported the development of the joint planning policy on water neutrality.
- Historic England – have been consulted during the District Plan preparation, including advice on heritage policies formation and individual site allocations.
- Natural England – have been involved during the District Plan preparation, and particularly with the Habitats Regulations Assessment work.
- Homes England – have been involved in development proposals outside the District Plan process and consulted during the Plan process.
- NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board – have been kept informed of the progress of the District Plan, and invited to identify infrastructure projects to address additional need as a result of proposed growth.
- West Sussex County Council (the Highway Authority) – have been closely involved with the District Plan development for traffic modelling, wider involvement included education, library, flooding, archaeology, waste and mineral advice.
- National Highways – involved with the District Plan preparation and attended regular meetings, mainly in respect of impacts on their network.
- Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – have been kept informed of the progress of the District Plan.

Co-operation with neighbouring authorities

5. The following provides a high-level summary of the engagement carried out with neighbouring authorities to date which is relevant to the production of the submission draft District Plan. In particular, engagement has taken place within the two formal groupings of authorities:

- Northern West Sussex
- West Sussex and Greater Brighton

Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)

6. The Northern West Sussex authorities are:

- Mid Sussex
- Crawley
- Horsham

7. The authorities meet on a regular basis (every 8 weeks or sooner if required) alongside West Sussex County Council to update on local plan progress, discuss joint evidence findings, cross-boundary strategic issues such as housing, employment, education and transport and seek outcomes to support them.

8. The three Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area authorities have agreed two Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) – the Northern West Sussex SoCG and a Northern West Sussex Housing SoCG (July 2024).

9. The Housing Needs SoCG confirms agreement on the HMA boundary, the housing need positions, approach to site selection and priority order for assisting with any unmet need arising should an authority have the ability to do so after meeting their own needs. It sets out a clear understanding of each other's housing need and supply positions and documents the considerations the HMA have made in determining the quantum of housing need that can be met within the HMA, considering all options. This has formed the basis for the position set out in policy DPH1: Housing of the submission draft District Plan in relation to over-supply. Further details are set out in a separate Housing Need Topic Paper (July 2024) within the evidence library.

West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board

10. The local authorities on the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board are:

- Mid Sussex
- Adur
- Arun

- Brighton and Hove
- Chichester
- Crawley
- Horsham
- Lewes
- Worthing
- South Downs National Park Authority

11. The West Sussex & Greater Brighton (WS&GB) Strategic Planning Board was formed to identify and manage strategic planning issues within that area and to support better integration and alignment of strategic spatial and investment priorities. It was initially made up of the coastal West Sussex local planning authorities together with Brighton & Hove City Council and Lewes District Council but was expanded to include the authorities within the Northern West Sussex HMA (Mid Sussex, Crawley and Horsham).

12. The Board, which comprises lead Councillors from each of the LPAs works in an advisory capacity with all decision-making through the individual member authorities. The partner authorities have committed financial resources to commission and prepare joint evidence base work.

13. This work will continue to be ongoing, and a Statement of Common Ground is being prepared to set out the latest position related to this work. Whilst all authorities within this group have sought options to maximise housing supply, factors such as Water Neutrality (which has significantly impacted delivery in Crawley, Chichester, Horsham and the South Downs National Park) have significantly constrained the amount of development that can be delivered within the current set of plans being prepared. This position will be kept under review.

Crawley Borough Council

14. Regular meetings are held to update each other on progress with local plan reviews and outcomes of evidence base studies. Housing provision, infrastructure and transport are identified as the key cross boundary strategic issues. Ongoing engagement and discussion have focussed on growth proposed at Crabbet Park, east of Crawley (policy DPSC2), and the potential infrastructure pressures that might arise in Crawley, particularly around transport and education. Crawley's submission draft plan identifies an unmet need; the current oversupply of housing identified in the submission draft District Plan could contribute to this unmet need. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed and a specific SoCG between the authorities and promoter of Crabbet Park is being prepared.

Horsham District Council

15. Regular meetings are held to update each other on progress with local plan reviews and outcomes of evidence base studies. Housing provision and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation are identified as the key cross-boundary strategic issues. Ongoing engagement and discussion have focus on the capacity of both authorities to help meet the residual housing need arising from Crawley Borough Council, the third authority within the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area (i.e. the Council's principal housing market area). A Position Statement from Natural England setting out that all development within Horsham District must be water neutral has placed significant constraint coming forward within the area, directly impacting on their ability to meet their own housing need and that arising from other areas.

16. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed.

Wealden District Council

17. Regular meetings are held to update each other on progress with local plan reviews and outcomes of evidence base studies. Housing provision, Gypsy and Traveller provision and Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA have been, to date, identified as the key cross boundary strategic issues. Whilst housing provision is defined as a strategic issue, the respective SHMAs for each authority do not identify each other as having a primary housing link in housing market area terms and as such each respective authority is not expected to meet any unmet housing needs arising.

18. Ashdown Forest demands ongoing joint working and engagement between the two authorities and wider SAMM Partnership and Working Group which contributes to the overall delivery of the agreed SAMM Strategy.

19. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed.

Tandridge District Council

20. Ongoing engagement and discussion has focused around transport matters associated with the A22/A264 corridor which runs through both districts. Work has been progressing on a joint study, led by Surrey County Council, to determine an appropriate package of interventions along the corridor to ease traffic impacts and improve safety. Details of the MSDC Local Plan Strategic Transport Study outcomes and strategy for mitigation have been shared with Tandridge.

21. Whilst this is an important strategic cross-boundary issue, this is largely related to existing infrastructure issues within this vicinity and not as a direct result of proposals within the submission draft District Plan (albeit there may be some contributory impact).

22. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed.

Lewes District Council

23. The Council invited Lewes to feed into the early stages of developing the Plan's evidence base, specifically the draft site selection methodology. Lewes also attended focussed joint authority meetings to engage in the emerging Transport evidence, led by Mid Sussex District Council. Other cross boundary matters are housing provision and Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA.

24. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed.

Brighton and Hove City Council

25. Regular meetings are held to update each other on progress with local plan reviews and outcomes of evidence base studies. Housing need, employment provision, Gypsy and Traveller provision and Transport have been, to date, identified as the key cross boundary strategic issues. Given the constraints faced by BHCC in meeting their housing need, much of the discussions between the authorities has been on the District Plans spatial strategy, site selection process and approach to maximise delivery. Mid Sussex subsequently commissioned a study to explain the development potential of previously developed site Mid Sussex, in response to the comments from BHCC.

26. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed.

South Downs National Park Authority

27. There is ongoing engagement with the South Downs National Park Authority. There is shared interest and participation by the Council and the South Downs National Park Authority in strategic cross-boundary issues such as water neutrality, nature recovery and Ashdown Forest and both parties attend the same partnership groups on these matters. The Council has liaised with the South Downs National Park Authority during the preparation of the evidence base for the District Plan. In particular, the Council requested comments from the South Downs National Park Authority on the initial conclusions of the work to assess the potential impact of the SHELAA sites on the setting of the South Downs National Park. Comments from the NPA have been reflected in the 'Setting of the South Downs National Park – assessment of the SHELAA sites' background Paper (REF). Further, engagement with the SNPA has taken place regarding the master planning for the Sustainable Community at Sayers Common (DPSH3) to ensure no adverse impact on the setting of the National Park from the development.

28. A SoCG between the authorities has been signed.

Implementing the Duty to Co-Operate

Approach followed

29. The Council has sought to take a constructive approach to engaging with duty to cooperate bodies during the course of preparing the Mid Sussex District Plan through:

- Inviting comments on evidence base studies from relevant bodies;
- Duty to Co-Operate meeting with officers of adjoining local authorities to share progress on plans, explore the opportunities for and scope joint evidence work and discuss and agree the way forward on cross boundary issues;
- Subject specific meetings with appropriate bodies to discuss and progress strategic issues, for example with West Sussex County Council (WSSCC and National Highway on transport studies/modelling;
- Respond to local plan consultations of other relevant local authorities;
- Attendance at meetings of the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board;
- Attendance at meetings of West Sussex Planning Policy Officers Group and West Sussex and Greater Brighton Planning Officers Group which provides an opportunity to share information and discuss common issues with officers of neighbouring authorities and more widely;
- Involvement in Sussex Local Nature Partnership local authority network which provides an opportunity to access information and resources, knowledge sharing events and forums for sharing experiences and best practice across councils with a focus on the implementation of the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain and development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy;
- Working with other authorities affected by the issue of water neutrality in the Sussex North Water Resource Zone and other relevant stakeholders on development of an evidence base and attendance at meetings of the Chief Executive Board, Lead Officers Group, Planning Policy Working Group, Offsetting Implementation Group and Development Management Working Group;
- Ongoing letters, emails and meetings with neighbouring authorities and other bodies to discuss and progress strategic issues.

Regulation 19 consultation

Representations on the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 were invited between 12 January and 23 February 2024. Details of the representations received and the main issues raised are set out in the Statement of Consultation (Regulation 22(c)). The Council received representations on the Regulation 19 District Plan from the following Duty to Co-Operate and prescribed bodies:

- Crawley Borough Council
- Horsham District Council
- Wealden District Council
- Tandridge District Council
- Lewes District Council
- Brighton and Hove City Council
- South Downs National Park Authority
- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Homes England
- NHS Property Services
- West Sussex County Council
- National Highways

30. Schedule 2 of Appendix 2 of the Statement of Consultation provides a summary of the submitted representations, including objections made to the soundness of the District Plan. The Council have sought to discuss these where appropriate with the relevant DtC bodies and the action that could be taken to resolve the issues identified by them.

31. The Council have considered the representations and produced a response to them. For a number of representations, the Council consider a modification could be made to the District Plan that would overcome the issue raised. In the case of other representations made, the Council are of the view that the Plan is sound as drafted and no modification is required. Proposed modifications are set out in the schedule of proposed modifications (Doc ref: DP2).

32. There were no representations from local planning authorities or other prescribed bodies to the effect that the Council had not complied with the Duty to Co-Operate.

Statements of Common Ground

33. The Council have prepared SoCG with a number of bodies, which provide further detail of the engagement and cooperation that has taken place.

34. The council are also party to a joint SoCG (July 2023) on water neutrality in the Sussex North Water Resources Zone with Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Chichester District Council, South Downs National Park Authority and West Sussex County Council. The SoCG has also been endorsed by Southern Water, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Joint evidence with neighbouring local authorities

35. The Council has worked effectively with neighbouring local authorities on evidence to support plan-making where there are cross-boundary implications, such as housing and employment needs across the wider housing and functional economic market areas. Evidence documents are available on the Council's website at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-2021-2039-evidence-base/>.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

36. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides an overview of the housing market geography and relationship between Mid Sussex and other areas in housing market area terms.

37. A joint SHMA was commissioned by West Sussex authorities in 2009. It confirmed that there is a Housing Market Area (HMA) comprising Mid Sussex district, Crawley borough and Horsham district. This was referred to as the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area.

38. The Northern West Sussex Authorities (Mid Sussex, Crawley and Horsham) have a long history of joint work on the SHMA following this initial study. Since 2009, updates have been carried out to reflect the Local Plan timetables for the individual local authorities to support plan making. Dependant on timescales, this has either resulted in a joint commission, or separate commissions with each authority using the same consultants and project briefs to ensure consistency.

39. In each version of the SHMA, the HMA boundaries have been reviewed. Each iteration of the SHMA has confirmed that the HMA boundaries remain unchanged from the initial conclusions reached in 2009. This has been the starting point for each authorities' Local Plans with respect to determining strategic cross-boundary housing need and supply links.

40. The NWS HMA authorities commenced plan-making (for the Reviewed plans) at different times. Therefore there was not an opportunity to prepare a joint SHMA this time. However, the three authorities shared briefs, objectives and methodologies for the work and employed the same consultant to ensure that the findings were compatible. The findings of each of the authorities' SHMAs were shared as the work progressed.

41. A Statement of Common Ground related to housing has been signed by the constituent authorities. The SHMA confirms the position of the HMA, local housing need and makes recommendations on the housing needs of different groups to inform policies within the Plan.

Economic Growth Assessment (EGA)

42. A joint Economic Growth Assessment was prepared for the Northern West Sussex Authorities (Mid Sussex, Crawley and Horsham) in 2020, followed by a focused update for Mid Sussex in 2020 and 2022. The joint EGA assessed economic trends, market analysis and employment projections for the plan period for each of the respective authorities and assessed need and demand on a Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) basis. The Northern West Sussex authorities worked collectively to commission the work and have reflected the findings within their respective Local Plans. Whilst it has been necessary to commission individual updates, the authorities kept each other informed of any findings that would have cross-boundary implications and ensured the same consultant and methodologies were used for consistency.

Water Cycle Study

43. In 2020, a water cycle study was prepared jointly by Mid Sussex District Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. The aim of this work was to identify water supply and wastewater treatment demand for the respective plans, accounting for planned growth across the catchment (noting that water supply and wastewater treatment does not respect authority boundaries). This work identified a potential impact on the Arun Valley designated sites due to water levels and abstraction. Subsequent work identified a need to move towards water neutrality within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone and there is continued co-operation between local authorities to collaborate and develop joint policies and a water offsetting scheme for developers (see below).

Strategic Priorities and Cross Boundary Matters

44. A number of broad strategic matters with possible cross-boundary implications were examined in the early stages of the preparation of the District Plan, through evidence gathering and initial meetings from 2020 with Duty to Co-Operate bodies. Through the District Plan preparation process, the list of strategic matters and co-operation activities has been kept under review.

Strategic Priorities

45. As a result of the process outlined above, the District Plan is built on three priority themes supported by 15 strategic objectives which are linked to strategic policies:

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Policies
1. Sustainable development and adaptation to climate change	DPS1, DPS2, DPS3, DPS4, DPS6, DPB1, DPE1, DPE3
2. Maintaining settlement identity and character	DPB1, DPE1, DPE3
3. Protect valued landscape	DPN1, DPN2, DPC1, DPC4, DPC5, DPC6, DPB1
4. Protect build and historic environment	DPB1, DPB4
5. Create and maintain green infrastructure	DPS1, DPN1, DPN2, DPN3, DPB1
6. Infrastructure to support sustainable communities	DPN3, DPI1, DPI2, DPI3, DPI8
7. Encourage business and thriving local enterprise	DPE1
8. Opportunity to live and work within communities	DPT1
9. Create and maintain town and village centres	DPE4, DPE5, DPE6
10. Support strong and diverse rural economy	DPE4
11. Support Mid Sussex as a visitor destination	DPC1, DPC4, DPC5
12. Support safe, healthy and inclusive communities	DPB1, DPB4, DPT1, DPH1, DPH2, DPH3, DPH4, DPH5, DPH6, DPH7, DPH8, DPH9, DPI8
13. Provide housing to meet community needs	DPH1, DPH2, DPH3, DPH4, DPH5, DPH6, DPH7, DPH8, DPH9, DPI8
14. Create accessible environments	DPB1, DPT1
15. Provide cultural leisure and sporting facilities	DPN3, DPC1, DPT1

46. Using the strategic objectives and the outcomes of the on-going Duty to Co-Operate process the following strategic planning issues have been identified:

- (i) Meeting housing need
- (ii) Jobs and employment
- (iii) Transport
- (iv) Infrastructure
- (v) Environment

47. The specific issues between the Council and affected parties are discussed in more detail in Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs), along with how issues have

been considered during the plan-making process and outcomes and agreements reached, in accordance with the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance. These strategic issues and the outcomes of cooperation are also summarised below.

Meeting Housing Need

48. The requirement to identify and meet objectively assessed housing need for market and affordable housing is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. This includes consideration of any unmet needs from neighbouring authorities or neighbouring housing market areas. In addition, the need for Travellers is also set out in national policy.

Strategic Planning Issue 1 – Meeting Housing Need
<p>Key Strategic Partners: Crawley Borough Council Horsham District Council Brighton and Hove City Council</p> <p>Other Strategic Partners: West Sussex County Council Wealden District Council Lewes District Council Tandridge District Council</p>
Actions
<p>Action: Addressing under supply in the Northern West Housing Market Area</p> <p>Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council</p> <p>Outcome: The three authorities that make up the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area have worked collaboratively and on an ongoing basis to address the unmet housing need in the NWSHMA.</p> <p>Through the ongoing liaison, sharing of evidence and challenging of each others' work, the authorities are able to agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each authority has undertaken an assessment of capacity for development within their boundaries, taking account of opportunities and constraints (including cross-boundary) and site suitability and achievability in accordance with the principles established in the NPPF.

- There are no further suitable and/or deliverable sites on or close to administrative boundaries which could contribute towards increasing housing supply within this plan period.
- Options for increasing supply have been explored.
- subject to meeting individual housing needs and establishing that there is potential to assist other authorities with unmet need, assistance should be prioritised as follows:
 - Priority 1: Northern West Sussex HMA.
 - Priority 2: Coastal West Sussex HMA.
 - Priority 3: Other adjacent and nearby HMAs where it is justified by each individual authority.

A list of meetings between the parties is set out in Appendix 1.

A Northern West Sussex Housing Need Statement of Common Ground has been signed.

Date: 2021 and ongoing

Action: Consideration of meeting unmet need in Mid Sussex

Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council

Outcomes: Submission Draft policy DPH1 set out the housing requirement and sources of housing supply that will be delivered over the Plan period. The indicates that there will be an oversupply of 996 dwellings, for resilience to housing delivery in Mid Sussex, should any sites not be delivered. This provision also serves as a contribution towards unmet need arising in the NWSHMA.

The Housing Need Topic Paper (2024) provides an update to the housing requirement and housing supply as a result of the change to the Standard Method (March 2024) and an updated Housing Land Supply to 1st April 2024. The topic paper also takes into account proposed modification to the end date of the Plan. Collectively these updates would increase the oversupply to 1,042 dwellings.

A Northern West Sussex Housing Need Statement of Common Ground has been signed.

As a result of this work, the housing need within the Council's primary HMA would not be met. In accordance with the agreed hierarchy, this means there is no oversupply which could support housing need arising outside this HMA. This information has been shared with other authorities.

Date: 2024

Action: Collaboration with neighbouring local authorities on evidence of housing need, including Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Lewes District Council, Tandridge District Council, Wealden District Council, Brighton and Hove City Council.

Outcome: Regular meetings were held between the authorities on an individual and joint basis to share progress with plans and raise issues relevant to the group.

The Northern West Sussex authorities (Mid Sussex, Crawley and Horsham) met, and continue to meet, on a regular basis to discuss, consider and address strategic issues (including Biodiversity Net Gain, infrastructure (health and education), active travel and public transport, climate emergency agenda and opportunities for joint working. Colleagues from WSCC were also invited to meetings to provide an update on Waste & Minerals Plan and Transport Plan and contribute to the discussions on cross boundary issues.

In addition to the Northern West Sussex meetings, the Council held a series of 'show and tell' meetings with neighbouring authorities. Early in the plan process the Council set out the background to the preparation of the District Plan Review, the scope of the review, what key pieces of evidence base were being prepared and shared emerging outcomes.

The Council invited the authorities to scrutinise the evidence base. The authorities agreed to take the opportunity to consider the evidence base and feedback any questions/ comments.

Subsequent individual and joint meetings were arranged, following Regulation 18 and 19 consultations, to enable the opportunity for authorities to discuss emerging Plans and the position of relevant strategic cross boundary issues. Authorities also discussed and agreed to prepare, or share drafts where started, statements of common ground.

Dates: Meetings between the Northern West Sussex authorities are held on a regular basis. Scheduled meetings with other authorities were held prior to key stages of each other's plans.

Action: Review and preparation of site selection methodology and engage with neighbouring local authorities.

Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Lewes District Council, Tandridge District Council, Wealden District Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, Chichester District Council, Adur-Worthing Councils, West Sussex County Council,

East Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council, South Downs National Park Authority.

Outcome: The site selection work was presented to the stakeholders at a joint Duty to Cooperate update meeting and in subsequent individual meetings and correspondence. The Council undertook a focussed consultation where stakeholders were invited to comment on the site selection methodology and criteria for assessing potential allocation sites. Stakeholders could also suggest new criteria.

A number of comments on the methodology were received. The comments were reviewed, and adjustments made to the methodology, where appropriate and necessary. The comments also fed into other areas of work (including AONB and setting of SDNP topic papers).

A similar exercise was carried out with members of the Developer Liaison Group. This Group is formed of local planning consultants, agents and developers. The Group meets on regular occasions to enable the Council to provide an update on Planning matters, raise key topics of interest (i.e. introduction of new adopted guidance) and invite the Group to share knowledge and expertise from their respective areas.

The comments received to the focussed consultation and the Council's response can be found in Appendix 3 of the Site Selection Methodology¹.

Date: Autumn 2021

Jobs and employment

49. National policy requires Local Plans to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver jobs. This includes identifying sites to meet identified needs. Levels of proposed new employment and new housing are intrinsically linked, to accommodate anticipated growth.

Strategic Planning Issue 2 – Jobs and Employment

Key Strategic Partners

Crawley Borough Council

Horsham District Council

Brighton and Hove City Council

¹ [District Plan 2021-2039 Evidence Base - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

Other Strategic Partners

West Sussex County Council

Lewes District Council

Tandridge District Council

Wealden District Council

Actions**Action: Preparation of evidence – updated Northern West Sussex Economic Growth Assessment**

Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council

Outcome:

1. Joint commission of consultants to update the 2014 Northern West Sussex Economic Growth Assessment having regard to the revised National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Provide an up-to-date, robust and comprehensive joint evidence base for employment and economic development to 2036 across the Northern West Sussex authorities.

Agree the degree of inter-relationship between the three authorities with a need for ongoing and continued joint-working and effective management of strategic issues across the economic sub-region.

2. Subsequent Mid Sussex focused update to inform the approach to economic growth and employment land policies within the Plan for the period to 2038.

Regular meetings were held between the authorities on an individual and joint basis to share progress with plans and raise issues relevant to the topic.

Date: 1. 2020, 2. 2022

Action: Preparation of evidence - Engagement with neighbouring local authorities on other evidence such as the Retail Study and Tourism

Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, Lewes District Council, Tandridge District Council, Wealden District Council

Outcome: Regular meetings were held between the authorities on an individual and joint basis to share progress with plans and raise issues relevant to the group the parties agree with the findings of the evidence and support employment policies and allocations on the significant housing allocation sites.

Date: from 2021

<p>Action: Participation in Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities</p> <p>Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Epsom and Ewell, Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Mole Valley District Council, Reigate and Banstead District Council, Surrey County Council, Tandridge District Council and West Sussex County Council.</p> <p>Outcome: The Gatwick Diamond local authorities meet to discuss cross-boundary and strategic issues, such as Coast to Capital LEP, Ashdown Forest, London Plan and Gatwick Airport</p> <p>Date: ongoing since 2017</p>
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Transport

<p>Strategic Planning Issue 3 – Transport</p>
<p>Key Strategic Partners National Highways West Sussex County Council East Sussex County Council Surrey County Council</p> <p>Other Strategic Partners Tandridge District Council Crawley Borough Council Horsham District Council Lewes District Council Wealden District Council</p>
<p>Actions</p>
<p>Action: Preparation of evidence – Mid Sussex Strategic Transport Model (MSSTM) and local junction modelling.</p> <p>Agree methodology for Transport Modelling/ Study, including scenario modelling. Production of Strategic and Local Junction Modelling, Merge Diverge Assessment, Safety Study, define, design and cost sustainable and highway mitigation and deliver associated reporting.</p> <p>Partners: West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) and National Highways (NH).</p> <p>Outcome: MSDC commissioned development of a Strategic Transport Model to assess the forecasted cumulative impacts on the highway network. Outcomes of the</p>

modelling have influenced the special strategy, and ongoing engagement involving the site promoters of the three significant (1000+ houses) site allocations has informed the development of a package of sustainable travel mitigations to support the reduction in private vehicle trips being generated by the planned development. In addition, highway mitigation has been developed at locations on the county council's network to encourage diversion of longer trips onto more strategic highway routes away from severely affected locations on more minor or urban routes.

At Submission, work with each of the partners is ongoing as further evidence is developed.

Ongoing work includes:

- Modelling a further refined development Scenario (6);
- Further development of sustainable travel mitigation packages which are being delivered by the significant sites;
- Covid implications assessment work – to determine lasting impacts on transport patterns and behaviour and understand implications in modelling terms and to ensure impacts are not overestimated;
- Merge / Diverge Assessment on National Highways network, designing and costing necessary mitigation;
- Safety Study, designing and costing necessary mitigation;
- Apportionment for necessary mitigation to inform the IDP and demonstrate derivability of the necessary mitigation;
- Final mitigation 'do something' modelling.

Date: MSDC have liaised with West Sussex County Council (WSSC), (at times on a weekly basis), throughout the plan making process. MSDC have also liaised with National Highways throughout the process including specific meetings during Spring 2023, Winter 2023, Spring 2024 and Summer 2024; WSSC were present at each of these meetings. At all stages of the Transport Study, the views of WSSC and National Highways were sought on model building, validation, scenario testing and emerging results to ensure the work was carried out to the relevant standards and to the satisfaction of these key bodies. A list of meetings is set out in Appendix 1.

Cross-boundary matters:

Action: MSDC hosted a transport focused briefing prior to the start of the Regulation 19 consultation (December 2023) to reflect on key matters in the Regulation 18 representations, provide a summary overview of key changes in the modelling work

and an update on progress since Reg18 and most recent modelling results, along with setting out next steps and remaining tasks in the lead up to Examination.

Partners: East Sussex County Council (ESCC), Surrey County Council (SCC), WSCC, Tandridge District Council, Lewes District Council, Horsham District Council and Wealden District Council.

Outcome: ESCC and SCC, expressed concern regarding potential cross-boundary impacts on the transport network arising from planned growth.

All key strategic and other strategic partners were invited to join a transport summit prior to the commencement of the Regulation 19 consultation to share the available evidence, receive any questions and inform them of next steps in the lead up to Submission and Examination in Public.

ESCC and SCC requested further information and production of specific modelling data to inform their understanding of the potential impacts. A follow up call was held with SCC for clarification purposes and evidence circulated to each authority (April 2024).

Outcome of this is that SCC raise no objection however have expressed a difference in opinion between Mid Sussex Council and Surrey County Council regarding the mode shift forecasts and the potential change in motorised vehicular trip generation in relation to trips to and from Crabbet Park and Salfords/ East Surrey Hospital.

The parties have agreed to work together to understand whether there are additional practical measures that can be implemented to keep potential trip increases in the Smallfield area to a minimum. It should be noted that the impacts are not 'Severe' and therefore remain compliant with the NPPF.

In conjunction with this and in acknowledgement of existing traffic congestion issues along the A22 / A264 corridor, a joint Corridor study underway, led by SCC in partnership with WSCC and supported by Tandridge DC and MSDC - the study seeks to identify a package of measures to help address existing highway capacity and safety issues on the network. Any necessary mitigation proposed on this corridor to address the emerging District Plan impacts will ensure it would not prejudice the outcomes of this study.

ESCC have been reviewing the additional data to better understand the potential impacts on their network. However, ESCC do not have any in-house transport modelling experts and are at the time of drafting considering securing external consultants to support them. MSDC have offered to host a meeting with its retained consultant Systra and ESS/their consultant to further assist. It should be noted that the impacts are not 'Severe' and therefore remain compliant with the NPPF.

Date: MSDC liaised with neighbouring authorities Tandridge DC, Horsham DC, Lewes DC and Wealden DC, along with WSCC, ESCC and SCC, hosting a transport focused meeting in December 2023 and held follow up discussions with ESCC and SCC throughout Spring 2024. In addition, several meetings with Tandridge DC and SCC have been held with a focus on the A22 / A264 corridor study work during Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Spring 2023, Winter 2023.

Date: 2022 onwards

Action: Statement of Common Ground

Partners: SCC, ESCC, WSCC, NH

Individual Statements of Common Ground are being developed with each of the partners and will be submitted upon completion.

Date: Ongoing

Infrastructure

50. A key consideration for the District Plan is the additional demand on existing infrastructure as a result of new development and how this can be accommodated and/or mitigated. Infrastructure covers transport (although discussed in a separate section), healthcare, education, energy, utilities, emergency services and waste management.

51. The majority of engagement has been through the development of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), with communication via email and meetings since summer 2022. The IDP is a key evidence base document and sets out details of the infrastructure identified by the Council and other service providers as being needed to support the delivery of new development across the district up to 2039.

Strategic Planning Issue 4 – Infrastructure

Key Strategic Partners

Environment Agency

National Highways

West Sussex County Council

Other Strategic Partners

Mid Sussex District Council (open space and leisure)

National Gas Transmission

National Grid

Network Rail

NHS Sussex – Integrated Care Board

Open Reach
Southern Gas Network
South East Coast Ambulance
South East Water
Southern Water
Sussex Police
Thames Water
UK Power Network

Actions

Action: Preparation of evidence – Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Partners: Mid Sussex District Council (open space and leisure), National Gas Transmission, National Grid, National Highways, Network Rail, NHS Sussex – Integrated Care Board, Open Reach, Southern Gas Network, South East Coast Ambulance, South East Water, Southern Water, Sussex Police, Thames Water, UK Power Network, West Sussex County Council

Outcome: Service providers have worked alongside the Council to advise on the impact of the District Plan growth would have upon their services and facilities. As a result, the requirements for services, facilities and appropriate mitigation measures to support the District Plan growth have been assessed and agreed with all partners.

The most part of infrastructure issues impact directly on the plan area itself, there will be cross-boundary implications in terms of transport (as set out in the above sections). Health infrastructure needs may also need to be addressed beyond the district boundary, whereas education infrastructure may be delivered within the plan area and also address need from neighbouring authorities Lewes District and Crawley Borough. Engagement with relevant service providers and neighbouring authorities should help determine the infrastructure needs required to support new development when and where they arise.

Date: Regular focussed or wider meetings from 2022 with infrastructure providers, formal engagement with infrastructure providers via questionnaires and follow-up emails/meetings, regulatory consultation

Action: Preparation of evidence – Water issues

Partners: Environment Agency, South East Water, Southern Water, Thames Water, West Sussex County Council, Natural England and neighbouring authorities

Outcome:

1. A Gatwick sub-region Water Cycle Study prepared jointly by Mid Sussex District Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, and Reigate and

Banstead Borough Council to identify water supply and wastewater treatment demand for the respective plans, accounting for planned growth across the catchment. Mitigation to move towards water neutrality within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone has been included in the Plan. Continued co-operation between local authorities to collaborate and develop joint policies and a water offsetting scheme for developers.

2. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) update is being prepared working closely with the Environment Agency, to provide detailed data on flood risk for proposed allocations, and the development of Sequential and Exception tests to support the proposed approach set out in the District Plan. This is an update to the existing SFRA which has fully informed the site selection process – the update reflects recent changes to the PPG. It is not expected to have any impact on the sites selected for allocation.
3. South East Water attended Scrutiny Committee for Planning, Economic Growth and Net Zero in March 2023 to discuss resilience and future planning of their services. It was recognised that there is sufficient capacity to appropriately accommodate the proposed plan growth and this is reflected in their representations.

Date: 1. 2020, 2. 2024 (ongoing), 3. March 2023

Action: Plan preparation – Education

Partners: West Sussex County Council (Education), relevant site promoter

Outcome: West Sussex County Council (Education) has been closely involved in agreeing District Plan requirements for education provision to address early years childcare, primary and secondary education needs. Regular meetings and ongoing dialogue helped refine relevant policies and initiate more detailed apportionment work with support from relevant site promoters. This three-way dialogue has enabled on site education requirements to be reflected in master planning work at an early stage.

Date: from 2022 and ongoing

Action: Plan preparation – Open space, sport and recreational facilities and Community facilities

Partners: Mid Sussex District Council (Open space and leisure), relevant site promoters

Outcome: Mid Sussex District Council (Open space and leisure) has been closely involved in developing in agreeing appropriate requirements for open space, sport and

recreational facilities as well as community buildings, in particular for significant sites. Regular meetings and ongoing dialogue helped refine relevant policies and the IDP.

Date: from 2022

Action: Plan preparation – Developing planning obligations

Partners: Mid Sussex District Council (Open space and leisure), Sussex Police, NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board, West Sussex County Council

Outcome: The Council worked in partnership with relevant providers to review and update the requirements to ensure that appropriate level of financial contributions is secured from new development across the district. It contributes to identifying clear funding routes for infrastructure projects needed to support the growth identified in the Plan.

Date: from 2021

Environment

Strategic Planning Issue 5 – Environment

Key Strategic Partners

Natural England
High Weald National Landscape Partnership
Environment Agency
South Downs National Park Authority

Other Strategic Partners

South East Water
Southern Water
Crawley Borough Council
Horsham District Council
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Wealden District Council

Actions

Action: Joint Water Cycle Study (2020) prepared by MSDC, Crawley, Horsham, and Reigate and Banstead, and ongoing engagement with local authorities in the Sussex North Water Resource Zone regarding water neutrality.

Partners: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, Environment Agency, East Sutton and Surrey Water, Thames Water, Southern Water, South East Water

Outcome: The above partners commission consultants to produce a Gatwick Water Cycle Study (2020). The Study assesses the potential issues relating to future development within the Gatwick sub region and the impacts on water supply, waste water collections and treatment and Water Quality.

Date: 2020

Action: Ongoing engagement with Natural England on Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Partners: Natural England

Outcome: The Council has met regularly with Natural England where required. This included specific meetings to discuss the HRA, particularly the outcomes at Regulation 19 stage proposed representation to the Plan. Natural England concurs with the conclusions of the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Date: May 2024

Action: Participation in the Ashdown Forest Working Group, leading to Statement of Common Ground (led by Wealden District Council).

Partners: Wealden District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Lewes District Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Tandridge District Council, South Downs National Park Authority, Crawley Borough Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, Brighton & Hove City Council

Outcome: Air quality monitoring is in place and a joint transport model is being prepared.

Date: Ongoing – meetings are scheduled as needed.

Action: Participation in the Ashdown Forest SAMM Partnership.

Partners: Wealden District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Lewes District Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Tandridge District Council, Conservators of Ashdown Forest, Natural England

Outcome: Ongoing partnership work for the implementation of the Joint SAMM Strategy. Co-ordinated visitor surveys were last undertaken at Ashdown Forest and at the SANG sites in 2021.

Date: Ongoing – meetings are scheduled as needed.

Action: Participation in the High Weald National Landscape Partnership and Joint Advisory Committee.

Partners: High Weald National Landscape Partnership including the 15 local authorities.

Outcome: The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 will be adopted in Summer 2024 (replacing the 2019 version). This is the Council’s policy for the management of the AONB and for the carrying out of its functions in relation to it. The AONB Management Plan is also a material consideration in planning decisions. There is other ongoing partnership work and preparation of guidance to support planning functions, for example, the High Weald Housing Design Guide and guidance on dark skies.

Date: Ongoing. The Joint Advisory Committee meets twice a year, Management Board meets three times a year and the Officer Steering Group meets twice a year with other meetings arranged as needed.

Joint Working on Strategic Issues

Water Neutrality

52. Water neutrality is a cross-boundary issue that affects a small part of Mid Sussex District. This area lies within Southern Water’s Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ), within which water is mains-distributed by Southern Water. As well as this area of Mid Sussex District, the WRZ covers Crawley Borough, Horsham District, parts of Arun District, Chichester District, and areas located in the South Downs National Park. To protect nature conservation sites, development in the WRZ must demonstrate that it is water neutral.

53. The local authorities are working together in partnership to consider water neutrality matters, addressing issues and seeking solutions. In particular, the local authorities are working to develop the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS).

54. There are several leadership and technical working groups under a formal governance structure (including Chief Executives, technical officer leads and external bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency) which cover both Planning Policy and Development Management matters.

55. Planning officers at the Council attend the monthly Water Neutrality Lead Officers Group (WNLOG) and Planning Policy Working Group. The Planning Policy Working Group comprises local authority officers whilst WNLOG includes representatives from the Environment Agency and Natural England as well as the local authority officers. The group meetings tend to have regular agenda items such as those shown in the table below:

Water Neutrality Lead Officers Group	Planning Policy Working Group
Executive Board update	Local Plan progress and updates
Policy update	Updates to water neutrality documents
Development Management update	Water Neutrality Project Manager update
Environment Agency update	
Natural England update	
Water Neutrality Project Manager update	

56. The Submission draft District Plan includes a policy on water neutrality, which reflects the agreed joint local authority approach. This is being tested first through the Crawley Local Plan examination, which is nearing completion awaiting the receipt of the Inspector’s report, following consultation on Main Modifications.

Ashdown Forest

57. Ashdown Forest lies within Wealden District and is adjacent to the north-east boundary of Mid Sussex. The potential impacts arising from the District Plan that are likely to have a significant effect on Ashdown Forest are recreational disturbance to protected breeding birds from an increase in visitors to Ashdown Forest and atmospheric pollution affecting the heathland habitat from increased traffic and associated nitrogen deposition. The draft District Plan includes a policy on Ashdown Forest which reflects the agreed strategic solution.

58. There is a strategic approach in place for recreational pressure for the Ashdown Forest SPA. One aspect of the mitigation required for recreational pressure is Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) financial contributions from relevant development. The Joint SAMM Strategy is a strategic co-ordinated approach to mitigation in partnership with Lewes, Sevenoaks, Tandridge and Wealden District Councils, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Natural England, and the Conservators of Ashdown Forest. The SAMM Partnership for Ashdown Forest is actively working to deliver access management projects to address issues arising from visitor pressure and undertake visitor monitoring at both Ashdown Forest and the operational Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) sites for Ashdown Forest.

59. The Ashdown Forest Working Group is a group of local authorities working together to consider a strategic approach to considering air quality at Ashdown Forest in order to inform Habitat Regulations Assessments for Local Plans. The Ashdown Forest Working Group has commissioned joint air quality monitoring. The Ashdown Forest Working Group has also commissioned consultants to develop joint transport modelling for Ashdown Forest and the transport model is currently being developed. The local authorities that are members of the Ashdown Forest Working Group are Wealden, Mid Sussex, Lewes, Sevenoaks, Tandridge and Rother District Councils, Tunbridge Wells, Crawley, Eastbourne and Hastings Borough Councils, the South Downs National Park Authority, and Brighton & Hove City Council.

Gatwick Airport

60. Gatwick Airport is located to the north west of the District, within Crawley's administrative boundary. The social, economic and environmental impacts of the airport extend across a wide geographical area. Local Authorities neighbouring the airport have a long history of collaborative working to consider and respond to airport matters, at officer and member levels.

61. In July 2023 Gatwick Airport Limited submitted a Development Consent Order application seeking permission to bring the Northern Runway into routine use. This is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008, and will be determined by the Secretary of State for Transport. The 10 Local Authorities surrounding

the airport are working collaboratively, including joint commissioning of consultants and legal advisors to be in a strong position to respond to the DCO application effectively and efficiently. This joint working has enabled Local Authorities to share resources and knowledge enabling cost savings and efficient working practices.

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

62. An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an area of land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for its outstanding natural beauty. The statutory purpose of the landscape designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, and AONBs have the highest status of protection nationally in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Nearly 50% of Mid Sussex District is within the High Weald AONB.

63. From November 2023, AONBs have been renamed as National Landscapes. This change reflects the importance of these protected landscapes alongside the National Parks and to engage with a wider audience. It is important to note that the High Weald National Landscape remains an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty insofar as all policy, legislation and guidance applies to the designated landscape.

64. The Council attends and contributes to the High Weald National Landscape Partnership. The Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) includes the 15 local authorities whose areas are covered by the High Weald AONB designation: Ashford Borough Council, Crawley Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Kent County Council, Mid Sussex District Council, Rother District Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Surrey County Council, Tandridge District Council, Tonbridge and Malling District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Wealden District Council and West Sussex County Council. The JAC also includes representatives from co-opted organisations such as the Forestry Commission and the CLA.

65. One of the main tasks for the High Weald National Landscape Partnership is to work jointly to produce and review the High Weald AONB Management Plan. The High Weald AONB Management Plan is the policy for looking after the High Weald AONB in order to achieve the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the High Weald AONB. The Management Plan covers a range of local authority functions, and in particular it can be used to guide environmental land management and climate change strategies. The Management Plan is a material consideration in the planning process, including plan-making, site allocations and assessing the impact of development proposals or other changes on the High Weald AONB.

66. The High Weald Housing Design Guide was prepared by the High Weald AONB Partnership, which includes the 15 local authorities with land in the AONB, to support the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan. The High Weald Housing Design

Guide aims to give succinct, practical and consistent advice to set clear design expectations for new housing development within the High Weald AONB, to help ensure higher quality and landscape-led design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character, and is embedded with a true sense of place, without stifling innovation and creativity.

67. The High Weald National Landscape Partnership also works together on other matters that affect the High Weald National Landscape including deer management and regenerative agriculture.

Ongoing and effective engagement

Site Selection Methodology and Outcomes

68. At a joint authority Duty to Cooperate meeting in September 2021, the Council outlined the envisaged site selection process for the District Plan review. The draft methodology was circulated to the group and comments were invited. The Council also offered further meetings on a 1:1 basis if desired. The comments received are reported in the Site Selection Methodology paper and have informed the final methodology.

69. The draft methodology was also presented at the Developer Liaison Group meeting held by the Council in October 2021. The Group is made up of developers, planning consultants, architects, and West Sussex County Council. Officers from the Council's Housing and Development Management Teams were also invited. The Group were given the opportunity to comment on the methodology.

70. The District Council held individual sessions with Crawley, Horsham and Brighton & Hove authorities to explain the early findings resulting from application of the Site Selection methodology. The purpose of this was to demonstrate the extent to which Mid Sussex could seek to meet its housing need, the extent to which it could contribute towards unmet need arising elsewhere, and the environmental and infrastructure implications of this.

Transport (WSCC/NH) and Transport Summit

71. Regular meetings have and will continue to be held to develop and refine the evidence requirements related to transport. Engagement has resulted in agreement on the development of the Strategic Transport model with the County Council (in their role as Highways Authority) and the scope and content of the evidence to be developed and mitigation required to meet their approval.

72. Transport summit - Meetings have and will continue to be held with neighbouring Highways Authorities (East Sussex and Surrey) to understand any cross-boundary matters and provide additional information/modelling data as required to support their understanding of the model outputs and address any concerns. Neighbouring local authorities (Lewes, Tandridge, Wealden, Horsham) have also attended a group update session with focused discussion meetings with individual authorities arranged as required to understand cross-boundary implications resulting from the proposals within the submission draft District Plan and mitigation proposals.

West Sussex County Council – Education

73. The Council and Education Team at WSCC meet regularly to discuss the potential education needs arising from the new planned growth, including early years, primary, secondary, sixth form and SEND. For the purpose of primary and secondary school planning by WSCC, the Plan area is split between four school planning areas, three of which will accommodate a significant site over the plan period.

74. Engagement has resulted in requiring primary education provision on-site at the three significant sites, with associated secondary education at two of the significant sites and financial contributions from the remaining allocations which is set out within individual policies and captured within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

75. Following from early years funding mechanisms at April 2024, on-site delivery of early years provision has been identified on all three significant sites to accommodate the likely rise in demand for places. Partnership working is continuing to ensure that need arising from the proposed growth identified in the Plan is addressed as further measures are due to come into force later in 2024.

76. Joint working is continuing to identify land for future SEND need across the district and beyond the district boundaries.

77. Whilst for the most part, education infrastructure proposed will primarily mitigate the impacts of the proposed growth arising from the District Plan, it has been outlined that neighbouring school catchments may be relying on infrastructure delivery within the Mid Sussex District. Namely, school places within Crawley Borough can be volatile in particular due to the unknown of refugee families being moved to the town. Secondary school places have also been impacted with the growth in demand from primary places from 2012, with currently a shortage in places. In addition, the investigation for the provision of new SEND places may cater need from the wider area. Continued engagement with West Sussex County Council and neighbouring authorities should help determine the infrastructure needs required to support new development when and where they arise.

78. Where relevant, meetings between WSCC, the Council and the promoters of significant sites were held to discuss the specific on-site needs and delivery.

NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board

79. The Council has worked with NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (previously known as the Sussex CCG) to identify likely health care needs arising from planned growth within the District Plan. Regular meetings have been held with NHS Sussex ICB focussing on primary health care requirement and associated mechanisms for funding and delivery.

80. To date, NHS Sussex ICB has not identified need for the new standalone provision, rather additional patient registrations will be accommodated via enhancement and expansion of existing primary care surgeries across the district.

81. This engagement has resulted in translating these requirements into policy via the use of financial contributions and is captured within the IDP. Ongoing discussions will further clarify the appropriate projects to support growth through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Ashdown Forest

82. The Ashdown Forest SAMM Partnership meets regularly to discuss the implementation of the Joint SAMM Strategy.

83. The Ashdown Forest Working Group meets as required to discuss strategic cross-boundary air quality matters.

Water Neutrality

84. The Council contributes to various regular leadership and technical working groups for water neutrality matters. A joint planning policy has been developed and work is ongoing to develop a water offsetting scheme (SNOWS).

Conclusion

85. This statement demonstrate how Mid Sussex District Council has worked closely with West Sussex County Council, neighbouring authorities, statutory agencies and other Duty to Co-Operate bodies to address strategic issues identified in preparing the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039.

86. It is considered that the Council has a positive record throughout the preparation of the District Plan of cooperation. The Council has undertaken collaborative working on joint evidence base studies (where appropriate), ongoing engagement with infrastructure providers through the IDP and discussions with neighbouring authorities and others on the identified strategic issues. The outcomes of this engagement have shaped and informed the development of the District Plan.

87. The Council recognise that the Duty to Co-Operate is an ongoing requirement and will continue to engage with neighbouring authorities and other bodies through the delivery of the District Plan and the development of their own plans and strategies. The Council will publish addendum reports and additional/updated Statements of Common Ground as required to reflect further progress.

Appendix 1

Record of meetings

Northern West Sussex Authorities – Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council

Year	Number of meetings
2021	3
2022	8
2023	5
2024	3

West Sussex County Council - Transport

Year	Number of meetings
2021	Q3 – 1 Q4 – 2
2022	Q1 – 1 Q2 – 4 Q3 – 1 Q4 - 2
2023	Q1 – 3 Q2 – 2 Q3 – 2 Q4 - 7
2024	Q1 - 14 Q2 - 7 Q3 - 1