

# Runnymede 2030 Duty to Co-operate Review



**September 2017**

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## 1. Background

1.1 Runnymede Borough Council commenced the preparation of its new Local Plan in July 2014. Since this time, the Council has cooperated proactively and on an ongoing basis with partners on a range of cross boundary matters. Cooperation during the early stages of Plan production are detailed in:

-The Council's October 2015 Duty to Cooperate Scoping Framework

-The Council's July 2016 Duty to Cooperate Update Statement

-The Council's May 2017 Duty to Cooperate Update Statement

1.2 In June 2017, the Council appointed barrister Tim Leader to act in the capacity of Counsel and to provide professional legal advice to the Council throughout the remainder of the Local Plan process. The first part of Mr Leader's commission was to carry out a peer review of the key pieces of evidence which the Council had collated to underpin its Local Plan, to review its preferred spatial approach and to review the Council's Duty to Cooperate activities carried out during the preparation of the Local Plan to date.

1.3 To summarise, Mr Leader drew the following conclusions on the Council's Duty to Cooperate work:

1.4 The Council's approach to the duty has been substantially improved since the preparation of the previously withdrawn Local Plan Core Strategy under the previous version of the Plan. However:

-The outcomes achieved for be more clearly focussed.

-It is not always clear how unresolved issues are being addressed and how the Council is amending its strategy to achieve a positive outcome (for example in the area of meeting unmet housing need).

-It is unclear whether and to what extent elected members have been involved in the authorisation and validation of key issues and required outcomes and the conclusions and decisions that have flowed from the work that has been carried out in Runnymede and neighbouring authorities. This needs to be evidenced.

-The list of consultees is extensive. However, the purpose, method and results of engaging with many of them is unclear (as is whether or not engagement has actually taken place). Suggestion made that the list of consultees is reviewed and potentially more tightly focussed on key partners.

-It is not clear which group or groups are responsible for formulating outcomes and then monitoring, evaluating and "signing off" their delivery. The recording of compliance with the duty would therefore benefit from being more clearly structured, identifying the relevant lines of authority and the "authorising group" for the milestones that sit under each of the key issues and their related outcomes.

1.5 Overall, Mr Leader recommended that the Council prepare a concise, clear, stand-alone report which reviews the discharge of the duty to date. This report should review the list of strategic issues, catalogue the outcomes that have been achieved and explain how the "learning" from that process has been fed into plan making. It should also identify any additional cross-boundary matters that need to be addressed, specifying appropriate outcomes for each. The principal participants in the plan-making process going forward should also be identified, and an explanation given as to how

the process will be governed. The latter should specify the role of elected members in the process so that it is possible to evidence how important cross boundary decisions have been authorised. Each of these matters could be addressed by a statement of common ground. That would record neighbouring authorities' "buy-in" and lay the foundations for a more integrated, streamlined and focused approach to cooperation in the final phase of plan-making.

## 2. Introduction to this Review

- 2.1 This Duty to Cooperate Review is the stand alone report recommended by Mr Leader. The following chapters consider progress under the Duty for each cross boundary matter identified and reflect on the key questions raised by Mr Leader as well as those raised by David Hogger who criticised the Council’s approach to the Duty to Cooperate during the exploratory hearing into the Council’s now withdrawn Local Plan Core Strategy in 2014. At the end of each chapter, an action plan has been set to ensure that identified issues are resolved in a positive and timely manner.
- 2.2 With agreement with the Chairman of the Planning Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 it has been agreed that progress with the identified actions for each strategic cross boundary matter will be discussed and reviewed at the Local Plans Members Working Group (LPMWG) on a regular basis and new actions will be set as appropriate. Actions and progress will be recorded.
- 2.3 The first review of the Duty Co-operate actions for each topic took place at the LPMWG meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> October.
- 2.4 For each topic area within this document, a number of key questions are considered including those set out in the table below. In answering these specific questions, officers have reflected on the comments made by David Hogger in 2014. The comments made by Mr Hogger in relation to each question are set out below.

Question	Relevant comments made by David Hogger
Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?	Has cooperation been focused and thorough? Has there been any impetus or concerted effort to address the issues around strategic priorities? Has the Council learnt from and acted on conclusions from cooperation to date? Overall, has cooperation to date improved the likelihood of effective co-operation or progressed the matter in any significant way and they could not accurately be described as constructive
Overall, has cooperation been active to date?	Has Council has been sufficiently active in trying to garner co-operation? Has the Council pursued a range of methods to garner co-operation. Reliance on emails is not sufficient.
Overall, has engagement been ongoing?	Can the Council demonstrate that the principle of effective cooperation has been embedded in the Council's approach from the earliest stages of the Local Plan process (initial thinking stage)? Has the Council taken opportunities presented by partners to cooperate with them (i.e. have we attended all meetings that we have been invited to discuss cross boundary matters)? Has the Council suggested and/or arranged meetings

	with DtC partners regularly through the Local Plan preparation process? From reviewing the work carried out to date, could engagement be considered to be frequent or on going?
Overall, has engagement been collaborative?	Have appropriate mechanisms been put in place to engender cooperation? Has the Council had clear objectives which it is seeking to achieve from cooperation? Has the Council sought to set up joint committees, pursued joint planning policies and/or sought SoCG/MoU with partners (such activities demonstrate positivity and commitment to joint working)? Has the Council commissioned any joint studies?
Overall, has engagement been diligent?	Has the Council undertaken any in depth analysis of the issues facing the local planning authorities in the wider area? Following on from this, has the Council prepared a robust assessment of how the issues identified should be addressed? Is the Council genuinely committed to seeking a way forward?
Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?	Has the Council sought mutual benefit? If the Council has sought mutual benefit, has it been achieved? Does the Council think, based on cooperation carried out to date that it is possible to achieve a high level of mutual benefit? If not, does the Council have the evidence available to demonstrate that at least the achievement of mutual benefit has been sought?

### 3. Housing

#### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 3.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered to be a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

#### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 3.2 Yes, although it is considered that the following issue should also be added to the text listed in the 2015 DtC framework based on the responses from DtC engagement to date:

*Meeting any unmet needs from Runnymede and the wider HMA in the surrounding area given the high level of constraints resulting in an inability or unwillingness to offer practical assistance.*

#### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 3.3 Yes, it is considered that the outcomes are sufficiently clear.

#### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 3.4 The Council has made 5 formal approaches to each of the 19 LPA partners listed in the 2015 DtC Framework (+East Hants) during the course of Plan preparation to date. These approaches to partners followed RBC drawing the conclusion through the completion of a large part of its evidence base that it was unlikely that RBC would be able to meet its identified housing needs in full over the period of the Local Plan. All LPAs approached have been consistent in their responses that they are unable to assist in practical terms in helping to meet the housing needs of Runnymede. A number of these responses refer to a lack of functional links between Runnymede and the authority in question. Officers consider that the list of partners to be engaged with moving forward needs to be refocused. It is considered that a line needs to be drawn where the Council can evidence that there is unlikely to be any real chance of achieving positive outcomes with certain authorities and refocus its efforts on those authorities with which it has the closest functional links with, and those which the Council believes, following an assessment of constraints, have the best chance of assisting Runnymede meet any unmet needs. The carrying out of this assessment is an action to be carried out by the end of 2017.

#### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 3.5 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (where updates are provided every 3 weeks on progress with the Local Plan, including on the Duty to Cooperate), and informally through the LPMWG. The Council has also recently (September 2017) sought to involve members of 13 other Local Authority partners by contacting them through a

letter from the Chair of Planning Committee reminding them of their respective authority's Duty to Cooperate responsibilities and urging them to encourage their Officers to continue to liaise with Runnymede's officers in the pursuit of joint working to overcome difficulties. Responses have been received from 7 local authorities to date. Some of these authorities (5 in total) express a willingness to produce a SoCG with Runnymede although others (2 local authorities) have stated that they do not wish to work on the production of such a document with Runnymede. The remainder of Local Authorities approached have not responded at all at the current time.

- 3.6 The Council along with Spelthorne Borough Council (its HMA partner) has also established a Joint Member Liaison Group with an agreed Terms of Reference. The purpose of this group is to provide a joint forum under the Duty to Cooperate for exploring how the objectively assessed need for housing in the Runnymede-Spelthorne Housing Market Area (HMA) can be delivered. The group comprises officers and two elected Members from each authority; specifically the portfolio holder/chairperson for Housing and/or for Planning. Substitutes attend if necessary. The group has met 4 times to date.
- 3.7 The Leader of the Council sits on the Longcross Garden Village steering Group. One of the matters which is likely to form part of the discussions moving forward is the provision of the amount and types of housing to be delivered on this site.

#### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 3.8 Yes, it is considered that more frequent contact between Runnymede and the other LPAs than referred to above would not have resulted in any material beneficial changes to the outcome of the exercise.
- 3.9 Moving forward, an update of the SHMA is to be pursued. This will require the frequency of engagement with Spelthorne to increase whilst this work is completed.
- 3.10 It should also be noted that partners were consulted during the preparation of the SHMA and joint SLAA methodology during the early stages of Plan preparation. Duty to Cooperate partners were also consulted on the draft interim 2016 SLAA.

#### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 3.11 The clear and consistent response from other authorities has been helpful to the Council in confirming that it's neighbouring and nearby Local Authorities are unlikely to be in a position to assist Runnymede meet any meaningful proportion of its unmet housing needs. In light of this outcome, it is considered that the Council needs to change its strategy to meeting the housing needs of the Borough over the Local Plan period.
- 3.12 A NPPF compliant joint SHMA has been produced with Spelthorne Borough Council and a joint member liaison group established.
- 3.13 A joint methodology for the productions of Strategic Land Availability Assessments has been agreed with Spelthorne Borough Council.

#### **Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 3.14 No, in that the response from cooperation to date brings the Council no closer to ensuring that it achieves its preferred approach under SS5 which is to aim for a



housing target of 466dpa over the period of the Local Plan with any unmet needs arising from an OAN based on economic needs being met by neighbouring HMAs.

- 3.15 However there has been a positive response from a number of Local Authorities about signing a SoCG/MoU with Runnymede prior to examination as discussed above. This is considered to be a positive outcome of cooperation to date and draft content has been discussed although it is acknowledged that to date no SoCG/MoU have been signed.
- 3.16 The completion of two joint pieces of work with the Council's HMA partner (as referred to in paragraphs 3.12 and 3.13 above) has also assisted the Council in achieving positive outcomes.

**Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 3.17 The Council has been unsuccessful in finding any Local Authority partner that is willing/able to meet any unmet housing needs from Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan. Furthermore, a particularly difficult issue relates to the Council's partner authority, Spelthorne, whose progress with the evidence base for their Local Plan has been very slow due to resourcing in the team. This means that it is unknown whether Spelthorne will be in a position to meet any unmet needs from Runnymede and this is likely to remain the position when Runnymede Borough Council submits its Local Plan to the Secretary of State.
- 3.18 The recommended next steps are:

-By the end of 2017, carry out an assessment of functional links with Local Authorities listed in the 2015 DtC Framework and make recommendations to LPMWG about how the list of partners for engagement should be refined for DtC purposes moving forward. Arrange a LPMWG meeting for January 2018 to discuss. Cooperation will then be focussed on this reduced list of authorities.

-In terms of potential amendments to the Council's housing strategy in light of the DtC responses to date, putting the following options to Members at the next meeting of the LPMWG (on 03/10/17) to reduce unmet needs in Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan to reduce reliance on neighbours:

- Reducing the period of the Local Plan from 20 years to 15 to reduce the overall level of unmet housing need in Runnymede.
- Retain the plan period at 20 years but consider additional Green Belt releases in Runnymede to ensure that the Council can get closer to meeting its proportion of the OAN.

Members will be asked to provide some steer as to how officers should proceed.

-RBC has been proactive in requesting that partner LPAs sign a SoCG to set out their agreed position in relation to housing. The response to this request has been mixed. During/following the Council's Reg.19 consultation, the Council will seek to agree SoCG/MoU with all relevant authorities.

### **Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 3.19 Officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been focussed and thorough, although a positive response has not been received from partners in relation to meeting unmet housing needs from RBC. As demonstrated in paragraph 3.18 above, the Council has learnt from this and is seeking to agree changes to its strategy to meeting housing needs and refocussing its partners for future engagement with Members. It is considered that the changes suggested by officers will improve the likelihood of effective cooperation in a significant way moving forwards.

### **Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 3.20 It is considered that the Council has been sufficiently active to date in trying to garner cooperation. A number of formal approaches have been made to a large number of authorities. These have been written approaches in the first instance, but the Council has also offered to meet with representatives from each Authority to discuss the issues more fully. A number of meetings have been held with authorities to date. The Council continues to rely on Surrey PWG to share information on the matter of housing.

### **Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 3.21 Engagement is considered to have been embedded in the Council's approach since the earliest stages of Plan preparation, starting with the production of a joint SHMA with the Council's HMA partner Spelthorne Borough Council. As soon as it became apparent that it would be unlikely that the Council would be able to meet its proportion of the OAN in full, regular contact has been made at Officer, Chief Executive and Member levels with 20 Local Authority partners. Officers consider that the Council has positively taken opportunities presented to cooperate with partners and the Council has also sought to arrange meetings with partners to discuss identified issues in more depth.

### **Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 3.22 It is considered that the Council has been collaborative in its approach to cooperation on this cross boundary matter to date. A joint study (the SHMA) was commissioned on what is considered to be one of the key items of strategic, cross boundary interest for the preparation of the Local Plan. A joint SLAA methodology has also been agreed with Spelthorne Borough Council. Throughout the cooperation carried out to date, the Council has been clear about the objectives that it is seeking to achieve from cooperation (primarily meeting unmet housing needs from the Borough). SoCGs are being pursued with all relevant partners, to be signed in advance of the Council's EiP. There has been a mixed response from partners on signing SoCG with the Council. In a number of cases draft wording has been discussed.

### **Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 3.23 As noted in the commentary above, particularly in the 'next steps' section, one of the next steps recommended is for a further assessment of functional links with each LPA partner listed in the 2015 DtC Framework to be carried out with recommendations being made to Members about how the list of partners for engagement should be refined for DtC purposes moving forward. It is considered that the Council's proactive approach to cooperation in this area to date demonstrates that the Council is genuinely committed to seeking a way forward and seeking a positive resolution to the key issue identified. As noted in paragraph 3.18, officers have a number of suggestions for

Members to consider to ensure that identified issues are addressed prior to the submission of the Local Plan for examination.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 3.24 The Council has sought mutual benefit through cooperation to date although regrettably, mutual benefit has not been achieved in relation to the principal issue of others meeting unmet needs from Runnymede. As outlined in paragraph 3.18 however, Officers are suggesting that Members consider a number of amendments to its strategy to maximise the level of mutual benefit achieved from future cooperation.
- 3.25 The production of the SHMA and joint SLAA methodology with Spelthorne is considered to have been mutually beneficial.

## 4. Gypsies and Travellers

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 4.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 4.2 It is considered that the 2015 DtC framework shows that the Council clearly understands the key issue for this strategic matter. It is considered however that a second issue needs to be recognised, which is the ability of neighbouring/nearby Local Authorities to help meet any unmet needs for gypsies and travellers from Runnymede given their own constraints to development. This additional issue has been highlighted through Duty to Cooperate discussions with partners to date during the preparation of the Local Plan and needs to be recognised.
- 4.3 A number of GTAAs have recently been completed across Surrey and work on a number of others is currently underway (including Runnymede's). Once the majority of evidence is completed across the County on traveller needs, it may be that further discussions with partners will be required if it is apparent that needs will not be able to be met in full in Runnymede.
- 4.4 Another emerging issue also relates to the need for a transit site to be provided somewhere in the County based on the conclusions drawn in GTAAs elsewhere in the County. This workstream is being taken forward through the Surrey Chief Executives group with the support of SPOA and the Surrey Chief Housing Officers Group.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 4.5 It is considered that the outcomes are sufficiently clear. It is considered that a further outcome should be added, to clarify that an outcome currently being worked towards with partners is agreement being reached across Surrey on the provision of a transit site in the County.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 4.6 Officers consider that the list of partners to be engaged with moving forward needs to be reassessed. It is considered that a line needs to be drawn where the Council can evidence that there is unlikely to be any real chance of achieving positive outcomes with certain authorities, and where functional links are weak and refocus its efforts on those authorities with which it has the closest functional links with, and those which the Council believes, following an assessment of constraints, have the best chance of assisting Runnymede meet any unmet needs. The carrying out of this assessment is an action to be carried out by the end of 2017.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 4.7 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee, and informally through the LPMWG. The Council has also recently (September 2017) sought to involve members of 13 other LPAs by contacting them through a letter from the Chair of Planning Committee reminding them of their respective authority's Duty to Cooperate responsibilities and urging them to encourage their Officers to continue to liaise with Runnymede's officers in the pursuit of joint working to overcome difficulties.
- 4.8 The Leader of the Council sits on the Longcross Garden Village Steering Group. One of the matters which is likely to form part of the discussions moving forward is the provision of gypsy and traveller pitches on this site.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 4.9 Yes, the Council has made 5 formal approaches to each of the LPA partners listed in the 2015 DtC Framework for issues associated with gypsies and travellers during the course of Plan preparation to date. These approaches followed RBC drawing the conclusion through the completion of a large part of its evidence base (the Strategic Land Availability Assessment and 2014 Travellers Accommodation Assessment) that it was unlikely that RBC would be able to meet its identified needs for gypsies and travellers in full over the period of the Local Plan . Partner LPAs were asked if they would be able to assist the Council in meeting Runnymede's unmet needs. All LPAs approached have been consistent in their responses that they are unable to assist in practical terms in helping to meet any unmet needs for pitches arising from Runnymede. It is considered that more frequent contact between Runnymede and the other LPAs would not have resulted in any material beneficial changes to the outcome of the exercise.
- 4.10 It should also be noted that partners were also consulted during the preparation of the 2014 Travellers Accommodation Assessment during the early stages of Plan preparation.
- 4.11 Runnymede has also consulted partners on its draft methodology for carrying out its updated GTAA which is currently being produced and which will reconsider the issue of need for pitches and plots in Runnymede over the Local Plan period based on the amended definition of a traveller for planning purposes.

### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 4.12 The production of the 2014 TAA was in line with the published joint Surrey methodology in place at the time.
- 4.13 In relation to meeting Runnymede's unmet needs for pitches and plots, the clear and consistent response from other authorities has been helpful to the Council in confirming that it is going to need to rely on sources other than its neighbours as it attempts to meet its needs for gypsies and travellers as no Local Authority partner approach is willing or able to assist Runnymede in meeting any of its unmet needs.

**Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 4.14 No, in that the response from cooperation to date brings the Council no closer to ensuring that any unmet needs for traveller pitches and plots in Runnymede are met in the surrounding area.
- 4.15 There has been a positive response from a number of Local Authorities about signing a SoCG/MoU with Runnymede prior to examination. These SoCG would consider the issue of Gypsies and Travellers (where relevant). This is considered to be a positive outcome of cooperation to date and draft content has been discussed with the relevant authorities although it is acknowledged that to date no SoCGs/MoUs have been signed.

**Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 4.16 The Council has been unsuccessful in finding any Local Authority that is willing/able to meet any unmet needs for pitches and plots from Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan.
- 4.17 The recommended next steps are:

-Completing the updated GTAA which will provide an up to date assessment of the accommodation needs for travellers in the Borough under the new definition of a traveller as contained in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). Once it is known what the up to date level of need is, if it becomes apparent that Runnymede will still not be able to meet its identified needs in full, an action plan will need to be agreed with Members for resolving any identified issues.

- RBC has been proactive in requesting that partner LPAs sign a SoCG to set out their agreed position in relation to housing. The response to this request has been mixed. During/following the Council's Reg.19 consultation, it is recommended that the Council should seek to agree SoCG/MoU with all relevant authorities. At this stage, the Council's updated position in relation to the provision of traveller pitches will be clear (following the completion of its updated GTAA).

**Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 4.18 Officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been focussed and thorough although a positive response has not been received from partners in relation to meeting unmet needs for gypsy and traveller pitches from RBC. As demonstrated in the commentary above, the Council is currently updating its GTAA which is likely to have some bearing on the need for pitches in the Borough. If the updated GTAA identifies a level of need for pitches in excess of that which the Council is proposing to meet through its emerging Local Plan, an action plan will need to be agreed with Members to ensure that any identified issues relating to unmet needs are effectively resolved.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 4.19 It is considered that the Council has been sufficiently active to date in trying to garner cooperation. A number of formal approaches have been made to a large number of authorities. These have been written approaches in the first instance but the Council

has also offered to meet with representatives from each Authority to discuss the issues more fully. A number of meetings have been held with authorities to date. The Council continues to rely on Surrey PWG to share information on this topic.

#### **Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 4.20 Engagement is considered to have been embedded in the Council's approach since the earliest stages of Plan preparation. In the first instance, the Council produced a TAA for the Borough in 2014 in line with the agreed Surrey methodology which had been produced collaboratively by all Surrey Authorities and which was in place at this time of production. DtC partners were consulted on the draft 2014 TAA prior to it being finalised. As soon as it became apparent that it would be unlikely that the Council would be able to meet its needs for pitches as identified in the 2014 TAA in full over the period of the Local Plan, regular contact has been made at Officer, Chief Executive and Member levels with all Local Authority partners listed in the 2015 DtC framework. Officers consider that the Council has positively taken opportunities presented to us to cooperate with partners and we have sought to arrange meetings with partners to discuss identified issues in more depth.
- 4.21 Engagement with partners is continuing through the preparation of the Council's amended GTAA at the time of writing. This engagement is undertaken at key milestones during the project.

#### **Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 4.22 It is considered that the Council has been collaborative in its approach to cooperation on this cross boundary matter to date. The Council supported and endorsed the production of a pan Surrey methodology for producing GTAAs and completed its 2014 GTAA in line with this agreed methodology. Throughout the cooperation carried out to date, the Council has been clear about the objectives that it is seeking to achieve from cooperation (primarily meeting unmet needs for pitches and plots arising from the Borough). SoCGs are being pursued with all relevant partners, to be signed in advance of the Council's EiP. There has been a mixed response from partners on signing SoCG with the Council, however, in a number of cases draft wording has been discussed.

#### **Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 4.23 It is considered that the commentary above demonstrates that the Council is genuinely committed to seeking a way forward and seeking a positive resolution to the key issue identified, which is ensuring that identified needs for travellers in Runnymede are met in full. At the current time, it is unknown whether, based on the new definition of a traveller for planning purposes, there will be unmet need for pitches in the Borough over the period of the Local Plan. If it becomes apparent in December 2017 that identified needs in Runnymede cannot be met in full, an action plan will need to be agreed with Members which will seek to resolve identified issues.
- 4.24 The Council's commitment to producing the pan Surrey methodology earlier in the plan period is considered to demonstrate a diligent approach to the Duty to Cooperate, as is the Council's current involvement in the work which is ongoing at the time of writing to identify a transit site for travellers in the County, working alongside Local Authority partners.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 4.25 The Council has sought mutual benefit through cooperation to date although regrettably, mutual benefit has not been achieved in relation to the principal issue of others meeting unmet needs for gypsy and traveller pitches from Runnymede. This position may change once the Council has completed its updated GTAA.
- 4.26 The current work which RBC is involved in which seeks to identify a suitable location for a transit site in the County is considered to be mutually beneficial.



## **5. Economic Development**

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 5.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a robust framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 5.2 Yes, however it is considered that the issues identified in the 2015 DtC framework need to be supplemented with additional text which acknowledges that another issue is the ability of neighbouring/nearby Local Authorities to help meet any unmet needs for employment floorspace from Runnymede given their own constraints to development. This additional issue has been highlighted through Duty to Cooperate discussions with partners to date during the preparation of the Local Plan and needs to be recognised. This is principally an issue for B8 (storage and distribution) floorspace.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 5.3 It is considered that the outcomes contained in the 2015 DtC framework are clear but a key outcome is missing which is:
- 5.4 Ensuring that the Borough's identified B class employment needs are met over the period of the Local Plan in Runnymede or the wider FEA.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 5.5 Yes, it is considered that the partners, as set out in the 2015 DtC framework for this strategic issue, remain correct. Through cooperation to date, Hillingdon and Woking refer to a lack of functional links between Runnymede and these two authority areas. Officers remain of the opinion however that the FEA analysis is robust and evidences functional links with both Local Authority areas although it is recognised that Runnymede has stronger functional links with Elmbridge and Spelthorne for B class uses than Woking and this is supported by the work carried out by the Enterprise M3 LEP on commercial property areas. In regard to links with Hillingdon, the links between the two authority areas focus on links to Heathrow Airport specifically and not the wider Hillingdon Local Authority area.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 5.6 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee, and informally through the LPMWG. The Council has also recently (September 2017) sought to involve members of 13 other LPAs by contacting them through a letter from the Chair of Planning Committee reminding them of their respective authority's Duty to Cooperate responsibilities and urging them to encourage their officers to continue to liaise with Runnymede in the pursuit of joint working to overcome difficulties.

- 5.7 Although unrelated to the Duty to Cooperate, it is considered noteworthy that key stages of the development of the Enterprise Zone at Longcross have also been subject of discussion and decision making at Corporate Management Committee. Members were also consulted during the development of the Council's Economic Development Strategy and approved the final report at the Environment and Sustainability Committee. The recommendations from this strategy have been reflected in the Local Plan where relevant.

#### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 5.8 Yes, the Council has made 5 formal approaches to each of the LPA partners listed in the 2015 DtC Framework for economic development issues during the course of Plan preparation to date. These approaches followed RBC drawing the conclusion through the completion of a large part of its evidence base (the Strategic Land Availability Assessment and Employment Land Review) that it was unlikely that RBC would be able to meet its identified needs for B8 floorspace in full over the period of the Local Plan. Partner LPAs were asked if they would be able to assist the Council in meeting Runnymede's unmet needs. All LPAs approached have been consistent in their responses that they are unable to assist in practical terms in helping to meet the unmet B8 needs arising from Runnymede. It is considered that more frequent contact between Runnymede and the other LPAs would not have resulted in any material beneficial changes to the outcome of the exercise.
- 5.9 It should also be noted that partners were also consulted during the preparation of the Functional Economic Area (FEA) assessment, Town and Local Centres Study and the Employment Land Review (ELR) during the early stages of Plan preparation.

#### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 5.10 In relation to meeting Runnymede's unmet needs for B8 floorspace, the clear and consistent response from other authorities has been helpful to the Council in confirming that no DtC partner approached is willing or able to assist Runnymede in meeting its unmet needs for B8 floorspace.
- 5.11 The Council has produced the relevant evidence base documents following consultation with DtC partners (FEA assessment, ELR and Town and Local Centres Study). Generally consultees have supported the content of the evidence produced with the exception of Woking and Hillingdon in relation to the functional links with Runnymede for employment purposes.

#### **Has the cooperation to date helped us move towards our desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 5.12 No, in that the response from cooperation to date brings the Council no closer to ensuring that it achieves its preferred approach under amended spatial approach SS5 in the ASO consultation which is for a B8 allocation to be provided through the Local Plan but with unmet needs being met by FEA partners.
- 5.13 At the time of writing, in terms of the Council's FEA partners, only Woking has agreed to enter into a SoCG with Runnymede.

#### **Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

5.14 The Council has been unsuccessful in finding any Local Authority that is willing/able to meet any unmet needs from Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan for B8 floorspace. The recommended next steps are therefore:

-Putting the following options to Members at the next meeting of the LPMWG (3<sup>rd</sup> October) to reduce unmet needs in Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan to reduce reliance on neighbours:

- Reducing the period of the Local Plan from 20 years to 15 to reduce the overall level of unmet B8 need in Runnymede.
- Retain the plan period at 20 years but consider additional Green Belt releases in Runnymede to ensure that the Council can get closer to meeting its B8 needs in full.

Members will be asked to provide steer in terms of how officers should proceed.

-Officers have some concerns that the floorspace forecasts for B8 uses contained in the 2016 ELR may be unduly optimistic, as the level of demand forecast is not borne out on the ground in Runnymede in terms of the types of planning applications or pre-application submissions received. The 2016 ELR acknowledges that, 'Runnymede is not recognised as a particularly significant industrial location despite its location close to the M25 and there is generally a limited industrial market in Runnymede. The stock of industrial space is low and mostly concentrated on one site, the Thorpe Industrial Estate to the south of Egham' (para 6.30). Demand for space appears to be sub-regional in nature and driven by the proximity to Heathrow, rather than being locally driven demand. Officers recommend that further sense checking and sensitivity analysis occurs around the B8 projections in the Borough prior to Council's draft Local Plan consultation to tease out the level of locally generated need for B8 floorspace and to benchmark forecasted demand by reviewing alternative sets of forecasts.

-RBC has been proactive in requesting that partner LPAs sign a SoCG to set out their agreed position in relation to housing. The response to this request has been mixed. During/following the Council's Reg.19 consultation, it is recommended that the Council should seek to agree SoCG/MoU with all relevant authorities.

#### **Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 5.15 Officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been focussed and thorough, although a positive response has not been received from partners in relation to meeting unmet B8 needs from RBC. As demonstrated in the commentary above, the Council has learnt from this and in its Additional Sites and Options consultation proposed a B8 led allocation in the Local Plan to reduce the shortfall in unmet needs in the Borough.
- 5.16 At the current time it is also recommended that the Council considers amending its spatial strategy (in terms of reducing the Local Plan timeframe or removing additional sites from the Green Belt) to help reduce unmet needs.
- 5.17 Officers are also recommending that additional sense checking and sensitivity analysis is carried out around the Council's B8 projections to ensure that the evidence is robust.
- 5.18 The outcomes for unmet B8 needs will need to be considered with Members after the above two actions have been completed. The above actions are considered to demonstrate the Council's continued commitment to addressing the issues around strategic priorities. These actions are also considered to maximise the chances of

achieving effective cooperation on this strategic cross boundary matter moving forwards.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 5.19 It is considered that the Council has been sufficiently active to date in trying to garner cooperation. A number of formal approaches have been made to what are considered to be the most relevant DtC partners. These have been written approaches in the first instance but the Council has also offered to meet with representatives from each Authority to discuss the issues more fully. A number of meetings have been held with authorities to date.

**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 5.20 Engagement is considered to have been embedded in the Council's approach since the earliest stages of Plan preparation, starting with the production of the relevant evidence base studies. As soon as it became apparent that it would be unlikely that the Council would be able to meet its B8 needs in full, regular contact has been made at Officer, Chief Executive and Member levels with the LPA partners set out in the 2015 DtC framework and subsequent update statements. Officers consider that the Council has positively taken opportunities presented to them to cooperate with partners (particularly through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group which is discussed in a later chapter) and have sought to arrange meetings with partners to discuss identified issues in more depth.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 5.21 It is considered that the Council has been collaborative in its approach to cooperation on this cross boundary matter to date. The Heathrow Strategic Planning Group in particular cooperates on matters related to sub-regional employment needs generated by the airport and how these issues can be overcome by working collaboratively. This has been the key mechanism relied upon to engender cooperation to date, in combination with focussed cooperation with the individual Local Authorities listed in the Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework and update statements.
- 5.22 Throughout the cooperation carried out to date, the Council has been clear about the objectives that it is seeking to achieve from cooperation (primarily meeting unmet needs for B8 floorspace arising from the Borough). SoCGs are being pursued with all relevant partners, to be signed in advance of the Council's EiP. To date however, out of the Council's FEA partners, it is only Woking who has shown a willingness to enter into a SoCG with Runnymede. Draft wording for a SoCG has been discussed with this partner.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 5.23 As noted in the commentary above, officers are recommending a number of actions moving forward to address the issues that have been identified in a positive way. The Council's commitment to this DtC Review and development of an action plan for future cooperation is considered to demonstrate that the Council is genuinely committed to seeking a way forward and seeking a positive resolution to the key issue identified (ensuring that identified B8 needs generated from Runnymede are met).

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

5.24 The Council has sought mutual benefit through cooperation to date, in particular through offering to use the surplus office space provision which is forecast to be provided in Runnymede to offset under provision in other Local Authority areas if these areas are able to assist Runnymede in meeting unmet B8 needs arising from Runnymede. Regrettably however, mutual benefit has not been achieved. It is recommended that the Council completes the actions set out in paragraph 5.14 and then reviews its position.

## 6. Green Belt

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 6.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 6.2 It is considered that the issue set out in the 2015 DtC framework shows that the Council clearly understands the key issues relating to this strategic matter.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 6.3 Yes, it is considered that the outcomes are sufficiently clear.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 6.4 In line with the commentary provided in the Housing and Gypsy and Traveller sections of this review, officers consider that the list of partners to be engaged with moving forward needs to be reassessed. The carrying out of this assessment is an action to be carried out by the end of 2017.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 6.5 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (where updates are provided every 3 weeks on the Local Plan), and informally through the LPMWG. The Council has also recently (September 2017) sought to involve members of the other LPAs listed in the Green Belt chapter of the 2015 DtC framework by contacting them through a letter from the Chair of Planning Committee reminding them of their respective authority's Duty to Cooperate responsibilities and urging them to encourage their officers to continue to liaise with Runnymede in the pursuit of joint working to overcome difficulties.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 6.6 Yes. The Council has made 5 formal approaches to each of the LPA partners listed in the 2015 DtC Framework in relation to Green Belt matters during the course of Plan preparation to date. These approaches followed RBC drawing the conclusion through the completion of a large part of its evidence base that it was unlikely that RBC would be able to meet its identified needs for housing, traveller pitches and B8 floorspace in full over the period of the Local Plan even though it is proposed to remove a number of areas from the Green Belt through the Local Plan. Partner LPAs were asked if they would be able to assist the Council in meeting Runnymede's unmet needs. All LPAs approached have been consistent in their responses that they are unable to assist in practical terms in helping to meeting unmet needs from Runnymede. It is considered

that more frequent contact between Runnymede and the other LPAs would not have resulted in any material beneficial changes to the outcome of the exercise.

- 6.7 It should also be noted that partners were consulted during the preparation of the various Green Belt studies carried out in the Borough during the preparation of the Local Plan. This engagement included agreeing the methodology to be followed in each of the Borough Green Belt Review studies carried out in 2014 and 2017.

#### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 6.8 Through engagement to date, Runnymede has worked positively with Local Authority partners to ensure that there has been agreement in terms of the methodology that the Council should employ in its Green Belt Review work in 2014 and 2017. This is considered to be an important outcome of cooperation. The Council has commented on the methodology to be employed in adjoining local authority areas (where requested) to try and ensure a consistency in approach cross the wider area when carrying out Green Belt assessments.
- 6.9 In relation to other outcomes related to the Green Belt, it is considered that these outcomes are intrinsically linked to those associated with unmet needs for B8 floorspace, housing and gypsy and traveller pitches which are discussed in earlier sections of this document. As reported above, cooperation to date has confirmed that Runnymede is not able to rely on its Local Authority partners to meet any unmet needs generated from Runnymede as no Local Authority partner approached is willing or able to assist Runnymede in meeting any of its unmet needs.

#### **Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 6.10 No, in that the response from cooperation to date brings the Council no closer to ensuring that it achieves its preferred approach under SS5.
- 6.11 However there has been a more positive response from a number of Authorities about signing a SoCG/MoU with Runnymede prior to examination. This is considered to be a positive outcome of cooperation to date and draft content has been discussed with a number of partners although it is acknowledged that to date no SoCGs/MoUs have been signed.

#### **Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 6.12 The Council has been unsuccessful in finding any Local Authority that is willing/able to meet any unmet needs from Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan for housing, traveller pitches and B8 floorspace. The recommended next steps are:

-Putting the following options to Members at the next meeting of the LPMWG (3<sup>rd</sup> October) to reduce unmet needs in Runnymede over the period of the Local Plan to reduce reliance on neighbours:

- Reducing the period of the Local Plan from 20 years to 15 to reduce the overall level housing and employment needs in Runnymede.
- Retain the plan period at 20 years but consider additional Green Belt releases in Runnymede to ensure that the Council can get closer to meeting identified

unmet needs. This would also need to consider the sustainability credentials of different sites.

Members will be asked to provide some steer as to how officers should proceed.

-The Council is also currently reassessing its need for traveller pitches over the period of the Local Plan when assessed against the new definition of a traveller. It is considered that the outcome of this study needs to be awaited before deciding whether any future actions in this regard are necessary. B8 floorspace requirements are also to be reassessed. The Council is also producing its 2018 SLAA. Early indications are that the supply of homes in the Borough will increase following the further view of sites and consideration of capacity and following the amendments to the approach of calculating supply. These three work streams which are discussed in earlier sections may help to reduce the level of unmet needs in the Borough over the period of the Local Plan.

-RBC has been proactive in requesting that partner LPAs sign a SoCG to set out their agreed position in relation to matters related to the Green Belt as it is recognised that matters associated with amendments to the Metropolitan Green Belt are of cross boundary significance. However as amendments to Green Belt boundaries are generally entwined with meeting unmet needs, SoCGs will need to acknowledge this factor. The response to signing a SoCG with Runnymede has been mixed to date. During/following the Council's Reg.19 consultation, it is recommended that the Council should seek to agree SoCGs/MoUs with all relevant authorities

#### **Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 6.13 Officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been focussed and thorough, although a positive response has not been received from partners in relation to meeting unmet needs from RBC. As demonstrated in the commentary above, the Council has learnt from this and is seeking to discuss changes to its spatial strategy with Members and is seeking to re look at certain elements of its evidence base. It is considered that these work streams will improve the likelihood of effective cooperation in a significant way moving forwards.

#### **Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 6.14 It is considered that the Council has been sufficiently active to date in trying to garner cooperation. A number of formal approaches have been made to the relevant authorities as listed in the Green Belt section of the 2015 DtC framework. These have been written approaches in the first instance but the Council has also offered to meet with representatives from each Authority to discuss the issues more fully. A number of meetings have been held with authorities to date. The Council continues to rely on Surrey PWG to share information on this topic.

#### **Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 6.15 Engagement is considered to have been embedded in the Council's approach since the earliest stages of Plan preparation, starting with the agreement of the methodology to be used in its Green Belt Review work with partner LPAs. As soon as it became apparent that it would be unlikely that the Council would be able to meet its identified needs in full, regular contact has been made at Officer, Chief Executive and Member levels with the Local Authority partners listed in the DtC framework. Officers consider that the Council has positively taken opportunities presented to cooperate with partners (for example during the preparation of Green Belt work in partner Authority areas) and



have offered to arrange meetings with partners to discuss identified issues in more depth.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 6.16 It is considered that the Council has been collaborative in its approach to cooperation on this cross boundary matter to date through seeking the engagement of partner Local Authorities during the preparation of its Green Belt evidence.
- 6.17 Furthermore, throughout the cooperation carried out to date, the Council has been clear about the objectives that it is seeking to achieve from cooperation (primarily related to meeting identified development needs in the Borough). SoCGs are being pursued with all relevant partners, to be signed in advance of the Council's EiP. There has been a mixed response from partners on signing SoCG with the Council; however in a number of cases draft wording has been discussed with partners.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 6.18 As noted in the commentary above (see paragraph 6.12), officers are recommending a number of actions moving forward to address the issues that have been identified (relating to meeting unmet needs) in a positive way. The Council's commitment to this DtC Review and development of an action plan for future cooperation is considered to demonstrate that the Council is genuinely committed to seeking a way forward and seeking a positive resolution to the key issues identified.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 6.19 The Council has sought mutual benefit through cooperation to date although regrettably, mutual benefit has not been achieved in relation to the principal issue of others meeting unmet needs from Runnymede. It is recommended that the Council completes the actions outlined in paragraph 6.12 and as reproduced below and then reviews its position.

## **7. ~~Climate Change, Biodiversity and TBHSPA~~ Natural Environment**

**Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 7.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

**Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

### TBHSPA

- 7.2 Yes but it is considered that through engagement to date on the Local Plan, the key issue can be refined as follows:
- 7.3 Identifying sufficient SANG land to support preferred approach SS5 for the whole Local Plan period.

### Climate Change

- 7.4 Issues not clearly articulated at present. As a recommendation however it is considered that this chapter should be renamed 'Natural Environment' and issues associated with climate change should be dealt with in the flooding, Heathrow and transport areas of cooperation as appropriate.

### Biodiversity

- 7.5 Yes, it is considered that the Council does have a clear grasp of the issues.

**Are the outcomes clear enough?**

### TBHSPA

- 7.6 Could be more focussed as follows:
- Designating Chertsey Meads as a SANG following partnership working with NE.
  - Demonstrating that the Council has sufficient SANG land to support SS5 for the whole Local Plan period.

### Climate Change

- 7.7 Outcome is considered to be clear but for future working, outcomes will be set under the Heathrow, Flooding and Transport sections as appropriate

### Biodiversity

- 7.8 Yes, it is considered that the outcomes are clear.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

#### TBHSPA

- 7.9 Yes, it is considered that the partners as set out in the 2015 DtC framework for this strategic issue remain correct.

#### Climate Change

- 7.10 Relevant partners now highlighted in the Transport, Flooding and Heathrow chapters.

#### Biodiversity

- 7.11 Yes, however it is considered that the Woodland Trust could be added to the existing list.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

#### TBHSPA

- 7.12 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee, and informally through the LPMWG.
- 7.13 In addition, discussions on the TBHSPA continue to take place on a regular basis at Member level through the TBHSPA Joint Strategic Planning Board meetings.
- 7.14 Moving forward, Officers will need to engage with Members on the designation of Chertsey Meads as a SANG.

#### Climate Change

- 7.15 See relevant text in Flooding, Transport and Heathrow chapters.

#### Biodiversity

- 7.16 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee, and informally through the LPMWG.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

#### TBHSPA

- 7.17 Yes, Officers believe that frequency of cooperation has been appropriate.

#### Climate Change

- 7.18 See Flooding, Transport and Heathrow chapters

#### Biodiversity

- 7.19 Yes, Officers believe that the frequency of cooperation has been appropriate. Officers attend the Biodiversity working group of the Surrey Nature Partnership quarterly and cooperation has also occurred outside of these meetings as the Plan has been developed, as and when required, for example during the drafting of Local Plan policies.

## **Key outcomes achieved to date**

### TBHSPA

- 7.20 The Council has engaged positively with Natural England during the course of Plan preparation to date. Discussions with NE around the Council bringing forward additional SANG land at Chertsey Meads over the period of the Local Plan have been particularly beneficial.

### Climate Change

- 7.21 See Flooding, Transport and Heathrow chapters.

### Biodiversity

- 7.22 EA and SyNP have assisted the Council in the development of the relevant Local Plan policies. The Council has amended its preferred approach (to include separate BI and GI policies) in light of comments received from the EA. Information provided by the Woodland Trust has also assisted with the development of policies.

## **Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

### TBHSPA

- 7.23 Yes, engagement with Natural England in relation to bringing forwards Chertsey Meads as a SANG over the period of the Plan has helped the Council move towards achieving preferred spatial strategy option SS5. NE has also been consulted on the draft TBHSPA policy for the LP.

### Climate Change

- 7.24 See Flooding, Transport and Heathrow chapters

### Biodiversity

- 7.25 Yes, see text in paragraph 7.22 above.

## **Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

### TBHSPA

- 7.26 The Council still needs to confirm whether it will have sufficient SANGs to support its preferred housing strategy over the entire Plan period. This work is ongoing. If it is identified that there will be insufficient SANGs, cooperation will be required with neighbouring Local Authority areas to identify additional suitable and available SANGs land to support growth in Runnymede.

### Climate Change

- 7.27 See Flooding, Transport and Heathrow chapters.

### Biodiversity

- 7.28 None identified.

### **Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 7.29 Yes, officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been constructive. The cooperation has been focussed and officers have made a concerted effort to work with a range of partners to resolve issues where they have been identified. The Council is continuing to work with Natural England to try to resolve objections to the Council's housing strategy, based on insufficient SANGS to support growth over the whole period of the Local Plan. Officers continue to constructively engage with Natural England in this regard.

### **Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 7.30 Yes, it is considered that the Council has actively participated with a range of partners such as the SyNP, EA, the Woodland Trust and Natural England, as well as Local Authority partners throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. Engagement has been in the form of written correspondence (emails), meetings and attendance at the JSPB steering group and Officer group and SyNP working group.

### **Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 7.31 Engagement is considered to have been embedded in the Council's approach since the earliest stages of Plan preparation, as evidenced by the 2015 DtC Framework. Officers consider that the Council has positively taken opportunities presented to them to cooperate with partners and have sought to arrange meetings with partners to discuss identified issues in more depth. It is considered that following a review of the cooperation carried out to date, cooperation could be described as ongoing.

### **Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 7.32 It is considered that for both the issues of TBHSPA and Biodiversity there are established mechanisms in place which engender cooperation, namely the JSPB steering and Officer groups and the SyNP working group. It is considered that attendance and contributions at these groups demonstrate the Council's positivity and commitment to joint working on these strategic cross boundary issues. The Council is clear about what it is seeking to achieve from cooperation and continues to work towards the achievement of positive outcomes.

### **Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 7.33 If it becomes apparent that the Council has insufficient SANGS to support its preferred spatial strategy, an analysis of potentially suitable sites in Runnymede in the first instance, and then potentially adjoining Local Authority areas would be recommended for exploration. At the current time, officers have not reached this point and continue to work positively with Natural England to seek a positive resolution to the points they have raised. It is recommended that officers keep the position under review. Discussions will be had with Members if it is felt that the strategy needs to be amended.

### **Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 7.34 It is considered that the Council continues to seek mutual benefit by pursuing an ambitious growth strategy to meet identified needs whilst also seeking to provide sufficient mitigation for the TBHSPA and to protect and enhance biodiversity assets. In relation to both its biodiversity strategy and TBHSPA strategy, officers are of the

opinion that it is possible to balance growth in the Borough over the period of the Local Plan with an effective strategy for biodiversity and TBHSPA.

## 8. Transport

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 8.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 8.2 The issues have been set out in the Council's 2015 Scoping Framework but on reflection, this is at a rather superficial level. Following the evolution of the Plan from the initial thinking stage, in particular following the Reg.18 consultations carried out, it is considered that the issues could be more clearly refined as:

OVERARCHING ISSUE: The Borough's high accessibility brings with it associated problems of high dependency on the car with congestion having knock on effects for businesses and residents. Growth proposed over the period of the Local Plan could exacerbate these problems.

#### Other identified issues which need to be addressed

-Can the Borough meet its identified needs over the Plan period without causing unacceptable impacts on the local highway network and Strategic Road Network (SRN)?

-Consultation responses and the Council's evidence points to the A320 route which runs through the Borough being of particular concern. Can this route satisfactorily support the level of growth proposed in Runnymede and the adjoining local authorities?

-Will modelled increases in traffic movements over the Plan period have unacceptable air quality impacts?

-Through partnership working can a modal shift be achieved in the Borough to reduce reliance on the car to reduce congestion, improve air quality and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 8.3 Yes, but it is considered that a further outcome is required which is:

That the Council can demonstrate that growth in the Borough over the period of the Local Plan will not result in unacceptable air quality impacts.

- 8.4 It is also considered that the first outcome in the 2015 DtC scope should be amended as follows:

The completion of a Strategic Highway Assessment Report for the Borough, an Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and A320 feasibility

study (joint study working in partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council, Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council).

**Are all the partners still correct?**

- 8.5 Yes, it is considered that the partners as set out in the 2015 Scope for this strategic issue remain correct.

**Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 8.6 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (updates on progress with the Local Plan are provided at each meeting, which occur every 3 weeks), and informally through the LPMWG.
- 8.7 As an action for transport, it is recommended that the Council pursues the signing of a ToR or MoU with its A320 feasibility study partners. This would be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Committee/the Leader of the Council for Runnymede.
- 8.8 The Leader of the Council sits on the Longcross Garden Village steering Group. One of the matters which is likely to form part of the discussions moving forward is the provision of transport infrastructure on this site.

**Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 8.9 It is considered that the frequency of cooperation to date has been about right.

**Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 8.10 The key outcome achieved to date is that the Council has produced an Infrastructure Needs Assessment and transport modelling to underpin the Local Plan following consultation with DtC partners).
- 8.11 Other key pieces of evidence are currently being progressed including an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and A320 feasibility study which is a three borough study. Both of these two pieces of evidence incorporate significant elements of joint working with partners.

**Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 8.12 Yes, it is considered that cooperation to date is assisting the Council in effectively addressing the identified matters set out in paragraph 8.2 above. Effectively addressing these matters is the desired outcome in this instance.

**Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 8.13 The A320 feasibility study has been slow to get moving. Moving forwards it is considered that at the inception meeting on 5th October, Officers at Runnymede will need to seek assurances on the following key matter and report back to Members:

Timetable: Officers are concerned that the study has slipped by approximately 1 month already. There is concern about whether this lost time can be made up and also



whether any high level findings will be able to be provided to the Council in sufficient time to underpin its Reg.19 consultation and allow it to keep on track with its Local Plan timetable.

- 8.14 At this meeting it will also be explored whether a ToR/MoU needs to be drawn up for the study which are signed up to by the partner LPAs working on the study to demonstrate a commitment to continued and positive working on this strategic cross boundary matter.
- 8.15 In regard to the impacts of growth on air quality, it is considered that more could be done in this area and in this regard, the Council is working with Surrey Heath BC and RBWM to explore the possibility of producing a joint piece of work which would look at cumulative air quality impacts in the Sunnings/A30 area. The Council's HRA consultant will be advising the Council of air quality impacts on protected sites in the Borough.

**Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 8.16 Yes, officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been constructive. When issues have been identified (the A320 in particular), it was Runnymede who sought to explore joint working opportunities with Surrey Heath, Woking and Surrey County Council to resolve the potential issues identified.
- 8.17 Officers are also working constructively with Highways England (HE) to try and ensure that the concerns which they raised about the Council's highway modelling work which was carried out at the Issues and Options stage are addressed by the Council where possible. The Council made contact with HE in July 2017 to try and move this matter forward.
- 8.18 At the time of writing the impact of air quality is an emerging area where the Council is seeking to work with specialists and partners to resolve any identified issues.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 8.19 Officers consider that cooperation has been active to date and positive progress is being made to overcome potential issues. Officers are of the opinion that the Council has been active in garnering cooperation and a range of methods have been utilised for cooperation including written correspondence (email and letter), meetings and workshops.

**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 8.20 Officers consider that there are numerous examples to support the fact that cooperation has been ongoing throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. This has included: consulting partners on emerging evidence at the early stages of the process; hosting a stakeholder issues and options workshop in April 2016 which included a section on transport; actively moving forward the A320 work with the relevant partners since April 2017; actively engaging with HE, allowing them the opportunity to comment on the draft Reg.18 strategic highway modelling work; and meeting with HE to discuss the modelling work in July 2016. The Council also consulted HE, SCC and nearby local authorities on the Longcross Garden Village Infrastructure and Viability Assessment in 2017 and intends to share the Strategic Highway Assessment Report which has been produced to underpin the draft Local Plan with HE and other relevant partners in October 2017. The draft IOPA consultation document (July 2016) was also shared with DtC partners to provide an opportunity for informal comments to be made prior to the

formal consultation. The draft Local Plan consultation document will also be shared with key partners informally before the consultation commences.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 8.21 It is considered that the Council has been collaborative in its approach to cooperation on this cross boundary matter to date. A joint study is being commissioned on what is considered to be one of the key items of strategic, cross boundary interest, this being the A320 feasibility study. As an action moving forward the Council will be seeking to sign a ToR/MoU with its partners who are working on this study.
- 8.22 In terms of whether the Council has clear objectives that it is seeking to achieve, it has been acknowledged through this review that the objectives can be refined at this stage in the plan preparation process to ensure that they are sufficiently focussed. See paragraph 8.2 above where issues which the Council needs to address are clearly stated.
- 8.23 Officers are working with Surrey Heath and RBWM in relation to air quality matters in the Sunnings/A30 area.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 8.24 The Council's highways modelling which was published at the Issues and Options Stage and emerging draft Local Plan Strategic Highway Assessment Report (SHAR) consider the cumulative impacts of growth including committed developments in the surrounding area. The Council has also asked its consultants to specifically run a scenario in the Draft Local Plan SHAR which accounts for possible allocations coming forward at Martyrs Lane and Fair Oaks over the period of the Local Plan. This is on the basis of the findings of the Issues and Options highway modelling work and the contents of representations received during the Local Plan consultations to date, which identify the A320 as a corridor of potential concern. In light of these concerns it is considered that the Council has been diligent in its approach, driving forward the joint A320 study with partners. It is considered that commissioning this study with partners demonstrates a commitment to seeking a way forward.
- 8.25 The cooperation with HE to date and pursuing a meeting with them in October 2017 is also considered to demonstrate a commitment to resolving issues relating to the impact of the Plan on the SRN.
- 8.26 Analysis of air quality issues continues. Please see the text in 8.15 for details of how the Council seeks to take this matter forward.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 8.27 Officers consider that the Council has sought mutual benefit during the preparation of the Local Plan. Mutual benefit is being achieved through the A320 study. Mutual benefit is also being sought through engagement with HE as Runnymede is seeking to accommodate its preferred amount of growth whilst not having an unacceptable impact on the SRN. In this case, cooperation is ongoing. In relation to air quality, again mutual benefit is being sought to ensure that cumulative impacts across Local Authority areas will not cause unacceptable impacts although it is acknowledged that at the current time, this work is not well progressed.

## 9. Flooding

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 9.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 9.2 It is considered that the key issue could be more clearly expressed as:
- 9.3 Sustainably meeting the identified development needs over the period of the Local Plan given the range of constraints faced, including large areas of flood risk, and factoring in the risks posed by climate change.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 9.4 Yes, it is considered that the outcomes are clear

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 9.5 Yes, it is considered that the partners as set out in the 2015 Scope for this strategic issue remain correct.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 9.6 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (updates on progress with the Local Plan are provided at each meeting, which occur every 3 weeks), and informally through the LPMWG.
- 9.7 In addition, Runnymede's Members are invited to attend meetings of the River Thames Scheme Sponsoring Group which allows political oversight of the delivery of the scheme.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 9.8 It is considered that the frequency of cooperation to date has been about right. Partners have been consulted during the preparation of the Stage 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and on the draft consultation material which underpinned the IOPA consultation. The Environment Agency (EA) and Surrey County Council have also been consulted on draft policy wording for the draft Local Plan consultation. The EA has provided feedback on the Council's strategic sequential test methodology. The Council has engaged with both Surrey County Council and the EA at various stages during the production of the base and climate change modelling which will underpin the River Thames Scheme.

### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 9.9 Whilst a range of positive meetings and discussions with partners can be evidenced during the preparation of the Local Plan to date, there are considered to be no tangible outcomes at the current time. This is because the Council has been unable to complete its SFRA because the EA is yet to issue the River Thames Scheme base modelling and new climate change modelling which they have advised the Council to reflect in the evidence base. This modelling has been awaited for a number of months.
- 9.10 Without this modelling the Council is unable to finalise either its stage 2 SFRA or its strategic sequential test. The Council is also still awaiting a response from the Environment Agency on its amended Strategic Sequential Test methodology. This was sent to the Environment Agency in February 2017. The Council has chased the Environment Agency on this and a response is anticipated in October 2017.
- 9.11 The Water Cycle Study recommended by the Environment Agency has been commissioned but has not been completed at the time of writing.

### **Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 9.12 Despite the evidence base not yet being completed, the engagement to date with partners has been positive and helpful and officers consider that the engagement to date has helped the Council improve the evidence base and will help the Council achieve a sound local plan.

### **Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 9.13 See commentary in paragraphs 9.9 and 9.10 above. It is considered that nothing more can be done to speed up the delivery of the base and climate change modelling. However an interim position may need to be agreed with the EA if this updated modelling is not to be published imminently to avoid delays to the Local Plan process. In regard to the Environment Agency's comments on the Strategic Sequential Test methodology if a response has not been received by 13th October 2017, it is recommended that the Council escalates the matter within the Environment Agency.
- 9.14 Moving forward the Environment Agency has introduced a cost recovery framework and will charge the Council for advice outside of statutory consultations. Officers require steer from Members as to whether they wish to enter into such a framework with the Environment Agency. Officers have been advised that the turnaround time to respond to any request is likely to be at least 4-6 weeks which is challenging given the Council's ambitious Local Plan timetable. Officers to discuss with Members whether they would like to enter into a cost recovery agreement with the EA or not moving forwards.

### **Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 9.15 It is considered that cooperation on this strategic cross boundary matter has been focussed on the key issues and thorough. The Council continues to work proactively and positively with a range of partners to deliver the River Thames Scheme which is a strategic, cross boundary priority. The Council has also sought to informally consult the EA and Surrey County Council and other key partners during the preparation of the evidence base related to the matter of flooding which will underpin the Local Plan; this

work is ongoing. The Council has responded positively to feedback provided by partners through cooperation to date. Two key examples are the Council changing its preferred policy approach to the sequential test in light of comments received from the EA and also commissioning a Water Cycle Study on the recommendation of the EA. Such changes are considered to improve likelihood of effective and constructive cooperation.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 9.16 Officers consider that cooperation has been active to date and positive progress is being made to overcome potential issues. Officers are of the opinion that the Council has been active in garnering cooperation and we have utilised a range of methods for cooperation including written correspondence (email and letter), meetings and workshops.

**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 9.17 Officers consider that there are numerous examples to support the fact that cooperation has been ongoing throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. This has included: consulting partners on emerging evidence at the early stages of the process; hosting a stakeholder issues and options workshop in April 2016, which included a section on flooding. The draft IOPA consultation document (July 2016) was also shared with DtC partners to provide an opportunity for informal comments to be made prior to the formal consultation. Officers have met with partners to discuss the emerging RTS modelling and climate change modelling. The draft Local Plan consultation document will also be shared with key partners informally before the consultation commences.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 9.18 It is considered that cooperation to date has been collaborative. The Council has had a clear grasp of the objectives which it is seeking to achieve and has engaged with a range of partners during the preparation of the Local Plan to date in the pursuit of achieving its objectives. Whilst no joint studies have been commissioned, the RTS is a joint project in which the Council is an active partner. This is considered to be a clear example of where the Council is working positively and demonstrating a commitment to joint working on this strategic cross boundary project. The Council also regularly attends the Lower Thames Planning Officers Group meetings which consider a range of cross boundary issues associated with flood risk in the region. Again, this is considered to show the Council's commitment to partnership working. In September 2017 the Council met with the Environment Agency to discuss the implications of its cost recovery framework. At this meeting SoCGs were discussed and both the Council and the EA showed a commitment to signing a SoCG prior to the submission of the Council's Local Plan to the Secretary of State.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 9.19 It is considered that the extensive and ongoing engagement with partners throughout Plan preparation and the Council's willingness to amend its approach to respond to concerns raised demonstrates that the Council has been diligent in its approach to engagement and has shown a commitment to resolving identified issues.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 9.20 It is considered that the Council continues to seek mutual benefit by pursuing an ambitious growth strategy to meet identified needs whilst also seeking to limit development in flood risk areas. A sequential approach to development has been embedded into the Council's thinking from the outset of plan preparation as evidenced in documents like the Green Belt Review, Site Capacity and Site Selection work and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

## **10. Infrastructure: Education, Health, Utilities, Community and Culture, Open Space and Recreation**

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 10.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 10.2 It is considered that the 2015 DtC Framework shows an understanding of the key issues. However it is considered that under the 'issues' heading, there also needs to be recognition of the potential difficulties with funding infrastructure and ensuring its timely delivery to support growth.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 10.3 Yes, it is considered that the outcomes are clear.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 10.4 Yes, it is considered that the partners as set out in the 2015 scoping framework for this strategic issue remain correct.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 10.5 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (updates on progress with the Local Plan are provided at each meeting, which occur every 3 weeks), and informally through the LPMWG.
- 10.6 In addition, the members of the LPMWG have been invited to attend the upcoming infrastructure workshops which will help formulate the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 10.7 The Leader of the Council sits on the Longcross Garden Village steering Group. One of the matters which is likely to form part of the discussions moving forward is the provision of infrastructure on this site.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 10.8 It is considered that the frequency of cooperation to date has been about right. Importantly, partners have been consulted during the preparation of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment and are also currently being engaged during the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 10.9 The Council has produced an Open Space Study and an Infrastructure Needs Assessment, both of which have helped the Council understand where infrastructure improvements/additional capacity is required to support development proposed in the Local Plan.

### **Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 10.10 Despite the evidence base not yet being completed (the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, A320 feasibility study and Water Cycle Study still need completing), the engagement to date with partners has been positive and helpful and officers consider that the engagement to date is helping the Council move towards the preparation of a robust and complete evidence base which will support the Council's preferred Local Plan strategy (SS5).

### **Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 10.11 The Council's Water Cycle Scoping Study is not able to be completed at the current time as the Council is still negotiating with Thames Water about the wording of its licence agreement. Without the Council signing this agreement, the necessary information on waste water cannot be provided to the Council's consultants AECOM, and the study cannot be finalised. The Council's solicitor contacted Thames Water in early September and has since chased progress twice. A month later Thames Water has not yet responded. If a response has not been received by 13th October, it is recommended that the matter is escalated within Thames Water.
- 10.12 For commentary around the A320 feasibility study, see Transport section above.

### **Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 10.13 It is considered that the Council has carried out focussed cooperation with partners to date. This cooperation is ongoing at the current time and will become more thorough during the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). It is considered that the ongoing work on the IDP, Water Cycle Study and A320 feasibility study demonstrates a concerted effort by the Council to understand and address any issues related to the provision of infrastructure to support the growth in the Runnymede Local Plan. Where issues have already been identified (such as around the A320 corridor), the Council has responded positively and pursued a joint study to resolve identified issues. Overall, the actions undertaken by the Council to date are considered to have progressed the infrastructure evidence forward in a constructive and significant way.

### **Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 10.14 Officers consider that cooperation has been active to date and positive progress is being made to overcome potential issues. Officers are of the opinion that the Council has been active in garnering cooperation and a range of methods for cooperation have been utilised including written correspondence (email and letter), meetings (for example with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) during the Infrastructure Needs Assessment, during the scoping Water Cycle Study and during the A320 study) and workshops (upcoming, as part of the IDP).



**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

10.15 Officers consider that whilst the principle of effective cooperation was embedded into the Council's approach from the earliest stages of Plan preparation (as evidenced in the Council's 2015 DtC framework) the preparation of the infrastructure evidence base could potentially have started earlier in the Plan preparation process. However, since the work commenced after the IOPA consultation, cooperation has been ongoing. This has included during the preparation of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Water Cycle Study, A320 feasibility study and during the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Council has taken opportunities to attend meetings to discuss cross boundary matters as presented by partners (the CCG) and has also been proactive in arranging meetings (for example with Surrey Heath and Woking to discuss the A320 work) and workshops (as part of the IDP). It is considered that from reviewing the work carried out to date, engagement from the inception of the preparation of the infrastructure evidence has been frequent.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

10.16 It is considered that cooperation to date has been collaborative. The Council has had a clear grasp of the objectives which it is seeking to achieve and has engaged with a range of partners during the preparation of the Local Plan to date in the pursuit of achieving its objectives. The Council has sought to produce a joint study on the A320 (see commentary in Transport section above) and is pursuing active partnership working through the remainder of its infrastructure work. These approaches combined are considered to demonstrate a commitment to collaborative working with a range of partners.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

10.17 It is considered that the extensive and ongoing engagement carried out with partners throughout the preparation of the infrastructure evidence base demonstrates that the Council has been diligent in its approach to engagement and has shown a commitment to resolving any issues which are identified.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

10.18 Through its partnership working approach it is considered that the Council is able to demonstrate a commitment to achieving mutual benefit. The engagement with partners is helping the Council and service/infrastructure providers identify where and when additional capacity is required. This helps the Council formulate a robust Local Plan whilst also helping ensure that service providers can make sure that their service delivery plans account for anticipated growth in this area.

## 11. Heritage

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 11.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 11.2 The topic of heritage is only addressed briefly in the DtC Scoping Framework. However it is considered that the Council does have a clear grasp of the key issue which is to ensure that the Borough's heritage assets are not put at risk through the policies and proposals contained in the new Local Plan.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 11.3 Yes. Whilst the topic of heritage is only addressed briefly in the DtC Scoping Framework, it is considered that the Council does have a clear grasp of outcome which it is seeking to achieve which is the avoidance of harm to the Borough's heritage assets over the period of the Local Plan.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 11.4 Yes, Surrey County Council and Historic England continue to be the key partners for engagement as stated in the 2015 DtC Framework.

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 11.5 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (updates on progress with the Local Plan are provided at each meeting, which occur every 3 weeks), and informally through the LPMWG where relevant.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 11.6 Cooperation has mainly been limited to engagement with partners during the preparation of the policies for inclusion in the draft Local Plan. This is considered proportionate.

### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 11.7 Whilst Historic England have not had the resources to comment on the draft policies to date, engagement with Surrey County Council has been positive and has helped the Council develop robust heritage policies. This is considered to be a positive outcome.

**Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 11.8 Yes, it is considered that engagement with partners to date has assisted the Council in ensuring that the policies it is developing in line with its preferred approach for heritage are robust.

**Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

- 11.9 None identified

**Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

- 11.10 It is considered that cooperation carried out to date has been focussed and thorough. Surrey County Council in particular has been engaged at appropriate stages in the Plan preparation process to ensure the Local Plan content on heritage is robust. Overall, the actions undertaken by the Council to date are considered to have progressed the heritage element of the Plan in a constructive and significant way.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

- 11.11 It is considered that the Council has been sufficiently active to date in trying to garner co-operation from the relevant partners. Whilst engagement has mainly been through email, this is considered proportionate for this topic.

**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

- 11.12 Engagement has been focussed at the key stages of plan preparation. This has mainly been limited to the development of heritage policies for the Local Plan which is considered proportionate for this topic area.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

- 11.13 It is considered that cooperation to date has been collaborative. Throughout the cooperation carried out to date, the Council has been clear about the objectives that it is seeking to achieve from cooperation (i.e. safeguarding of the Borough's heritage assets over the period of the Local Plan) and has engaged with the relevant partners.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

- 11.14 The fact that the Council has sought to engage with Surrey County Council and Heritage England in the drafting of the Local Plan policies relating to heritage rather than limiting engagement only to the formal consultation events which occur during the preparation of the Local Plan is considered to demonstrate the Council is genuinely committed to positive partnership working on this matter.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

- 11.15 It is considered that the Council continues to seek mutual benefit by pursuing an ambitious growth strategy to meet identified needs whilst also seeking to safeguard the Council's heritage assets.

## 12. Waste and Minerals

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 12.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on this cross boundary matter. Through this review, on reflection, it is considered that this framework says little about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 12.2 The topic of waste and minerals is only addressed briefly in the DtC Scoping Framework. However it is considered that the Council does have a clear grasp of the key issue which is to balance the need for development in the Borough over the period of the Local Plan and the protection of the general extent of the Green Belt with the needs sought to be met through the Minerals and Waste Plans of Surrey County Council.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 12.3 Yes. Whilst the topic of waste and minerals is only addressed briefly in the DtC Scoping Framework, it is considered that the Council does have a clear grasp of outcome which it is seeking to ensure that the Council's avoids the sterilisation of minerals assets in the Borough and does not compromise the operation of existing waste sites in the Borough through the development of policies and proposals in the Local Plan.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 12.4 Yes, Surrey County Council continues to be the key partner for engagement as stated in the 2015 DtC Framework

### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 12.5 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the workings of the process – formally by way of Planning Committee (updates on progress with the Local Plan are provided at each meeting, which occur every 3 weeks), and informally through the LPMWG where relevant.

### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 12.6 Yes, engagement in this area has been more limited as the Council is not producing any evidence relating to waste and minerals and in not envisaging the inclusion of any policies in the Local Plan relating to these two matters. Engagement has generally taken place:
- During the Council's strategic Green Belt Review work in 2014 when agreement was sought with SCC on how minerals and waste designations should be treated.

- Through the Council's site selection work when SCC has been asked to provide commentary on the suitability of a number of sites considered through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) for development when they are allocated or safeguarded for waste or minerals development.
- Informal engagement on the content of draft consultation document prior to the Council's IOPA consultation.
- Consultation with SCC when developers have submitted Minerals Assessments through the Local Plan process.

12.7 This level of engagement is considered to have been proportionate.

**Key outcomes achieved to date**

12.8 The engagement from Surrey County Council has fed into the Council's site selection work which has been an important part of the development of the Local Plan.

**Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

12.9 Yes, through the identification of the most appropriate sites for allocation in the Local Plan.

**Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

12.10 None identified

**Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

12.11 It is considered that cooperation carried out to date has been focussed and proportionate on this matter. Surrey County Council has been engaged at appropriate stages in the Plan preparation process to ensure that the site assessment and selection work which underpins the Local Plan has given adequate consideration to matters related to waste and minerals.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

12.12 It is considered that the Council has been sufficiently active to date in trying to garner co-operation from Surrey County Council. Whilst engagement has mainly been through email, this is considered proportionate for this topic.

**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

12.13 Engagement has been focussed at the key stages of plan preparation. This has mainly been limited to the Council's site assessment and selection work at the different stages of their evolution which is considered proportionate for this topic area.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**

12.14 It is considered that cooperation to date has been collaborative. Throughout the cooperation carried out to date, the Council has been clear about the objectives that it is seeking to achieve from cooperation (i.e. safeguarding the Borough's minerals and waste assets over the period of the Local Plan) and has engaged positively with Surrey County Council.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

12.15 The fact that the Council has sought to engage with Surrey County Council during the site assessment and selection work from the earliest stages of Plan preparation rather than limiting engagement only to the formal consultation events which occur during the preparation of the Local Plan is considered to demonstrate the Council is genuinely committed to positive partnership working on this matter

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

12.16 It is considered that the Council continues to seek mutual benefit by pursuing an ambitious growth strategy to meet identified needs whilst also seeking to safeguard the general extent of the Green Belt in the Borough and the Borough's waste and minerals assets.

## 13. Heathrow **NEW**

### **Has the Council established a robust framework or methodology within which cooperation can be progressed and monitored?**

- 13.1 The Council's 2015 Duty to Cooperate Framework established a framework for progressing cooperation on a variety of cross boundary matters. Through this review however, on reflection, it is considered that little is said about how cooperation will be monitored. This is an area where it is considered that the Council's approach could be strengthened. This current review, which is taking place after two rounds of Local Plan consultation, is considered a sensible time to review progress to date and refocus on the way forward. An overarching recommendation from this review is to introduce regular review periods into the DtC work moving forwards with Members.
- 13.2 In addition it is considered that a new section on Heathrow needs to be incorporated into the Council's DtC work moving forward as this is the subject of significant, ongoing engagement under the DtC which was not identified in the original 2015 scoping framework.

### **Do we have a clear grasp of the issues?**

- 13.3 The key issues associated with potential expansion at Heathrow Airport are considered to be as follows:
- Impact of expansion on surface access from the surrounding area and how this could impact on Runnymede.
  - The generation of additional noise from additional flights and changes to flight paths which could impact on Runnymede residents.
  - Impact of expansion proposals on air quality in the Borough.
  - Impact of expansion at Heathrow Airport on the needs for housing, employment floorspace and other supporting uses in the surrounding area including Runnymede.

### **Are the outcomes clear enough?**

- 13.4 The outcome being sought is to minimise the impacts from airport expansion on those who live, work and visit Runnymede.

### **Are all the partners still correct?**

- 13.5 The relevant partners are those who form the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG). Key partners listed in the December 2015 Terms of Reference as:

London Borough Hounslow • London Borough Hillingdon (invited to attend but currently not participating) • London Borough Ealing • Spelthorne Borough Council • Runnymede Borough Council • South Bucks District Council • Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead • Slough Borough Council • Heathrow Airport Limited • Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership • Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership • Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership • Surrey County Council (in respect of strategic transport and other relevant functions) • Bucks County Council (in respect of strategic transport and other relevant functions) •

Greater London Authority (Observer status only) • Transport for London (Observer status only) • Government (coordinating representative from CLG/BIS) (Observer status only).

#### **Have members been involved to maximum benefit?**

- 13.6 The Council's own members have been kept abreast of the progress of the HSPG – formally by way of Planning Committee (updates on progress with the Local Plan and DtC matters are provided at each meeting, which occur every 3 weeks), and informally through the LPMWG.
- 13.7 Furthermore, the Council has established a Heathrow Airport Expansion Members Working Group. This group has its own ToR which sets out the specific purpose and aims of this group<sup>1</sup>. There have also been two Heathrow Summit events to date which have been organised by the HSPG and which have aimed to update political leaders on the work of the HSPG and matters associated with expansion at Heathrow. A third summit event is scheduled for early 2018. Early discussions have also taken place through the HSPG about executing an Accord, which will provide oversight of the ongoing partnership work by elected Members in regular meetings and provides a structure where by deliverable outcomes to develop and share evidence base information can be achieved.
- 13.8 All of these mechanisms are considered to ensure that members are being involved to maximum benefit.

#### **Has the frequency of cooperation been about right?**

- 13.9 There are regular meetings of the HSPG main group and its various sub groups (which discuss technical matters related to environmental, spatial planning, economic and transport matters). The frequency of cooperation is considered to be about right.

#### **Key outcomes achieved to date**

- 13.10 In May 2017 the HSPG was able to agree a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide an interim arrangement for Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) to share information with the HSPG relating to the preparation of their Development Consent Order (DCO).
- 13.11 Under this MoU, HAL has started to issue HSPG members with work requests through a joint secretariat in order to create a collaborate, joint evidence base to lead both to a Joint Strategic Planning Framework (JSPF) and to inform HAL's own DCO.
- 13.12 Whilst arrangements to maximise member oversight of the work of the HSPG and to develop a JSPF for the area surrounding Heathrow are important work streams, work is still ongoing in both areas and final outcomes are yet to be achieved.

#### **Has the cooperation to date helped the Council move towards its desired outcomes/preferred approaches in the LP?**

- 13.13 Yes, cooperation through the HSPG has been positive and has allowed engagement with partners on matters related to Heathrow expansion. The group has allowed Runnymede to contribute technical expertise and its input has helped shape the work

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/media/16273/Heathrow-Airport-Expansion-Members-Working-Group-Terms-of-Reference/pdf/HEATHROW\\_AIRPORT\\_EXPANSION\\_GROUP\\_TOR.pdf](https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/media/16273/Heathrow-Airport-Expansion-Members-Working-Group-Terms-of-Reference/pdf/HEATHROW_AIRPORT_EXPANSION_GROUP_TOR.pdf)



being undertaken by HAL. The HSPG has also provided opportunities to identify other joint working opportunities such as in relation to planning for strategic rail infrastructure in the sub region.

**Are there areas where little has been achieved and the Council needs to change its approach? If so, does the Council need an action plan moving forwards? What are the recommended next steps?**

13.14 It has been identified that greater member oversight is required to ensure greater political leadership and governance. Work to address this identified issue commenced in Summer 2017 through the HSPG and an action plan has been put together to rectify this shortcoming.

**Overall, has cooperation been constructive to date?**

13.15 Officers are of the opinion that cooperation to date has been focussed and thorough. One of the key purposes of the HSPG is to address the issues around strategic priorities which are associated with airport expansion. The HSPG has progressed joint working in a number of key areas in a significant way. The HSPG has been significantly involved during the preparation of the Heathrow Airport Employment Land Study and more recently, a work request has been issued by HAL which will allow for HSPG members to be involved in the preparation of HAL's land use strategy. Early work which seeks to progress a JSPF in the area surrounding Heathrow has also been constructive.

**Overall, has cooperation been active to date?**

13.16 Since the establishment of the HSPG, Runnymede has been an active participant. The Council's regular attendance and contributions at the meetings of the HSPG and its sub groups as well as input through written correspondence between meetings is considered to demonstrate that engagement has been active.

**Overall, has engagement been ongoing?**

13.17 Since the establishment of the HSPG, Runnymede has been an active participant. The Council's regular attendance and contributions at the meetings of the HSPG and its sub groups as well as input through written correspondence between meetings is considered to demonstrate that engagement has been ongoing.

**Overall, has engagement been collaborative?**


13.18 Through the HSPG, Runnymede has worked collaboratively with a range of Local Authority partners, LEPs, Heathrow Airport Ltd and other DtC partners. It is considered that robust mechanisms have been put in place to engender cooperation. The ToR for the HSPG which Runnymede is a party to clearly sets out the objectives being sought through cooperation. Joint working through the production of a JSPF for the area surrounding Heathrow has been discussed and HSPG members are working forward positively to move forward with a JSPF which would help understand the impacts of airport expansion on the surrounding area and allow for a strategy to be produced to help plan for the knock on effects of growth. Overall, the above are considered to demonstrate that engagement has been collaborative.

**Overall, has engagement been diligent?**

13.19 Moving forward the JSPF will ensure that a diligent approach is taken to strategic planning in the area surrounding Heathrow Airport.

**Overall, has engagement been of mutual benefit?**

13.20 The HSPG is considered to be mutually beneficial to Heathrow Airport Ltd and the Local Authorities and other partners who engage through the Group. It allows partners to input into studies being produced by HAL to ensure that their interests are taken into account where possible. The production of a joint evidence base is considered to be beneficial to the development of Local Plans in the area surrounding Heathrow Airport and is also beneficial to HAL in the preparation of their DCO.



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