

## Issue 18: Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring

### Question 18.2

**Are the organisational mechanisms in place to ensure that joint working with other agencies (including adjoining local planning authorities) can be ensured where required?**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries (paras 178-181) particularly those that relate to strategic priorities such as housing, jobs, retail, leisure and commercial development, infrastructure and climate change and the natural and historic environment. The Council's Duty to Cooperate report (DtC) [CD 10] demonstrates how the Council has worked jointly and co-operate with neighbouring authorities, prescribed bodies and other bodies such as infrastructure providers to address cross boundary and relevant strategic priorities to date.

The DtC report [CD 10, paras 2.2 -2.3, page 4] outlines South Somerset's neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies. They are:

South Somerset's Neighbouring Authorities:

- Somerset County Council
- Mendip District Council
- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- Sedgemoor District Council
- West Somerset District Council
- North Dorset District Council
- West Dorset District Council
- Dorset County Council
- Wiltshire Council
- East Devon District Council

Prescribed Bodies of relevance to South Somerset:

- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- the Civil Aviation Authority
- the Homes and Communities Agency
- Primary Care Trusts
- the Office of Rail Regulation
- the Highways Authority (i.e. Somerset County Council); and
- the SOS as Highways Authority (i.e. the Highways Agency).

The Somerset authorities, comprising South Somerset District Council, Somerset County Council, West Somerset District Council, Mendip District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Sedgemoor District Council and Exmoor National Park Authority have agreed to proceed on Duty-to-Cooperate matters on a 6 monthly basis (or ad hoc should a matter

arise) with a key officer and portfolio holder to attend each meeting. The first meeting was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012 (see notes in CD 10, pages 31-35), and the next meeting is on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012. The group have considered extending the membership to include prescribed bodies such as the Environment Agency and this will be actively pursued at future meetings.

The District Council met with both North Dorset District Council and West Dorset District Council on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012. It was agreed at this meeting that [CD 10, pages 26-31] there was no need for a further specific duty to cooperate meeting. Since then, South Somerset District Council has continued to work with both authorities on strategic issues identified under the duty to cooperate, for example on planning applications in relation to Babylon Hill and Henstridge Airfield, both identified as cross boundary issues between authorities (see Appendix 18.2A for email correspondence). This approach to joint working and cooperation on planning applications is considered appropriate. Additionally West Dorset District Council will be formally involved in the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension Masterplan DPD.

The District Council met with Dorset County Council (DCC) on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 [see CD 10 pages 30-31]. It was agreed that further joint working would be through the Yeovil Transport Strategy Review and Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension Masterplan DPD, and that DCC would be invited to attend the working party on these issues.

The District Council has produced a Statement of Common Ground with Wiltshire Council where it is identified that through decision making, each authority will continue to cooperate on cross-boundary issues which might potentially impact on the landscape through the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Partnership.

South Somerset District Council and East Devon District Council share a Chief Executive (CE) and no potential cross boundary issues have been identified to date [CD 10 pages 19-20].

On-going cooperation with prescribed bodies will be undertaken formally as outlined in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement [CD 131] and through master planning as identified in the District's Duty to Cooperate report [CD 10, page 7].