



Executive Decision Report

**Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of
Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land
Needs (March 2021)**

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor
Decision to be taken on: 1 April 2021
Lead director: Andrew L Smith

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Ripple Gupta
- Author contact details: Ripple.Gupta@leicester.gov.uk (37)1746
- Report version number: 1

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval/sign off of the Statement of Common Ground which was reported to the Members' Advisory Group on 11th Feb (See Appendix A)

2. Recommendation

That the City Mayor considers the report and approves the attached appendices (Appendix A - Statement of Common Ground March 2021).

3. Supporting information

Background

The City Council carried out consultation on its Local Plan (Reg 18) last September for a period of 4 months. To support the consultation all authorities signed a joint statement supporting the progression of Statement of Common Ground which would agree the redistribution of any unmet need within Leicester and Leicestershire. However, since the completion of our consultation, the Government have made various changes to planning guidance which amongst other things has resulted in the housing need for Leicester increasing by 35%.

4. Detailed report

Local Housing Need

The Government has decided not to change the standard method for calculating housing need, except for the 20 largest cities and urban areas in England where the need has been increased by 35%.

For Leicester this means that our need has increased by 35% which amounts to 10,000 additional homes between 2020 and 2036 (600 homes per year). The need in the districts has remained largely the same.

At the time of consultation we were working with the districts on the potential unmet need of 7,742 homes. The new need per annum is now 2,341 homes which amounts to 37,456 homes over the plan period. With our current draft supply there will now be a

shortfall of approx.18,000 homes.

Although the supply of homes will evolve as we progress our Local Plan, it is unlikely that we will be able to meet all our need.

In view of this, the Members Advisory Group (MAG) agreed a new Statement of Common Ground which would support Charnwood's Local Plan coming forward in the next few months, but also sets out the commitment to continue to work together under Duty to Co-operate to apportion any unmet need.

Next steps

Continue to work together with the partners on a Statement of Common Ground for apportioning any unmet need.

Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

6.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation set out in this report.

Stuart McAvoy – Principal Accountant, Ext 374004

6.2 Legal implications

The City Mayor has authority to approve the Statement of Common Ground which is a strategic document but does not comprise planning policy. The internal legal advice is that in governance terms there are no legal Implications.

The statement of Common Ground forms key evidence to support the submission, examination and adoption of the Leicester City Council Local Plan. External legal advice is provided on the Local Plan, and planning officers confirm that the external legal advice is that the Council should continue to work together with strategic partners to address the apportionment of the unmet need. External legal advice will continue to be sought as the Local Plan process continues.

Jane Cotton, Solicitor Ext 370325)

6.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

There are no direct equalities implications arising from the report, however, the future and on-going approach to developments will have equalities implications. The Statement of Common Ground sets out the commitment to continue to work together under Duty to Co-operate to apportion any unmet need. It is important that new housing developments are well designed and can contribute to a good quality of life and meet the diverse needs of residents. Accessible and inclusive design relating to development schemes will support the general aims of the PSED.

Surinder Singh, Equalities officer, Ext 37 4148

6.4 Climate Emergency implications

Whilst it is not practical to assess the direct climate change implications of this report and the SCG it is important to consider the wider context, as housing is responsible for 33% of carbon emissions in Leicester. Following the city council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, and its aim to achieve carbon neutrality, delivering low carbon and carbon neutral new housing will be a vital to meeting these goals, and should be taken into consideration wherever possible.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

6.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

Although the supply of homes will evolve as we progress our Local Plan, it is unlikely that we will be able to meet all our need.

The new Statement of Common Ground will be informed by a number of joint studies. A Sustainability Appraisal will look at options and reasonable alternatives for the distribution of the unmet need within the Housing Market Area; the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment will look at the housing and economic needs; and the Strategic Growth Options study will consider strategic sites that could be delivered up to 2050.

7. Background information and other papers:

Please see appendix A.

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A - Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (March 2021)

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No.

10. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?

Yes. It affects Leicester and Leicestershire.