



CABINET: 13 September 2016

Report of: Director of Development and Regeneration

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Hodson

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SUBJECT: LIVERPOOL CITY REGION STATEMENT OF CO-OPERATION

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet's endorsement of the Liverpool City Region Statement of Co-operation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 2.1 That the Liverpool City Region Statement of Co-operation provided at Appendix 1 be adopted.
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3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the Duty to Co-operate ("the Duty") on local planning authorities which requires each authority to co-operate with neighbouring authorities and a number of statutory bodies in preparing their Local Plan (and to co-operate with their neighbouring authorities as they prepare their Local Plans). This Duty must be evidenced as part of the Local Plan submission for Examination. If the Examining Inspector considers that an Authority has not fulfilled the Duty he/she can find that the Local Plan preparation has not complied with the necessary legal requirements and fail the Local Plan, thus requiring the authority to start preparation all over again.
- 3.2 Even if the Inspector does not fail the Local Plan on legal compliance, the Duty can still be considered when the Inspector assesses whether the Local Plan is

“sound”, as if the authority is considered not to have co-operated, or not arrived at reasonable decisions based on that co-operation, with neighbouring authorities or the prescribed statutory bodies, the Inspector may find the Local Plan unsound. Therefore, fulfilling the Duty is a key requirement of any authority preparing a Local Plan.

- 3.3 Therefore, to help demonstrate the fulfilment of the Duty, officers from the Liverpool City Region authorities (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral) and West Lancashire agreed to prepare the Statement of Co-operation (Appendix 1). The Duty requires co-operation at officer level, but also at elected Member level and so, while the Chief Executives from each authority have agreed upon this Statement and endorsed it, it also needs to be endorsed by elected members.
- 3.4 To this end, the Statement of Co-operation was adopted by the Combined Authority Board on 15th July, with a recommendation that it “should be presented to each Constituent Council (plus West Lancashire) for adoption”. This report seeks Cabinet adoption of the Statement of Co-operation as part of the process of meeting the Duty to Co-operate.
- 3.5 With regard the Statement of Co-operation itself (Appendix 1 to this report), it covers a number of strategic, cross-boundary, planning-related issues and sets out the current position in the City Region (including West Lancs) regarding those issues and identifies future approaches to working together on those issues, including a summary of actions.
- 3.6 It is intended that the Statement will be updated regularly, so that the latest evidence of co-operation between authorities can be documented and used to demonstrate the fulfilment of the Duty at Examination.
- 3.7 As well as co-operating with Liverpool City Region Authorities, the Council also has a duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities in Lancashire and Greater Manchester and continues to do so. In particular, the Council is engaging with the proposed Lancashire Combined Authority and engaging with the planning-related topic areas that the proposed Combined Authority is working on.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 4.1 This report has little or no implications for sustainability or the community strategy.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial and resource implications of the Statement of Co-operation other than a minimal amount of Council officer time providing input to its preparation.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There are no risks associated with the recommendations above, although there are risks associated with not contributing to / being a part of such a Statement of Co-operation, as the Council's evidence of fulfilling the Duty to Co-operate would be weaker.
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Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

1. Liverpool City Region Statement of Co-operation