

Norfolk County Council's contribution to the joint working programme for Duty to Co-operate

January 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this note is to articulate the context, extent and detail of Norfolk County Council's contribution to the joint working to satisfy the legal Duty to co-operate across strategic cross boundary planning issues including the production of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF), as requested at the last Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum held in October 2019.

Introduction

Since the inception in 2015, the financial arrangement has always been cash contribution by each of the districts and Broads Authority, with the County contributing in kind, namely in funding datasets such as the East of England Forecasting Model and providing officer support in hosting and arranging meetings both at Member level and at officer level. Current breakdown of County's actual contribution detailed at the end of this document.

Please note it has been unanimously agreed by planning officers across all districts that they wish to continue with the current logistical arrangement and do not wish to seek alternative ways.

Context

The County Council's principal duty to the NSPF is to co-operate with other Norfolk LPAs as a service provider.

Norfolk County Council, as a Minerals and Waste Planning authority, has a duty to co-operate with other Minerals and Waste Planning Authorities. This duty will be discharged by a separate Duty to Co-operate arrangement, independent from the above mentioned NSPF for Local Plan making.

As Norfolk is a 2-tier authority area, there is a requirement for a duty to co-operate between the County Council and LPAs on strategic cross boundary matters. At the request of LPAs, the NSPF now includes a section on Minerals and Waste. This information was provided by NCC planning officers at no cost to the NSPF budget. The evidence studies funded by the NSPF budget are not related to NCC's statutory planning function as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority.

Breakdown of current NCC contribution

While there is limited justification for a financial contribution, NCC makes significant contribution in kind.

The current level of NCC's direct contribution consists of officer support as well as funding datasets and wider co-operation. NCC also contributes through other initiatives such as the Market Town Network Improvement Strategy and partnership working.

Details of current contribution:

Officer support (secretariat) for 16 meetings of 2 hours duration per year (12 officer meetings and 4 Member Forums) plus maintaining the official Duty to Co-operate website, hosted on County network.

Estimated total hours of staff time: 6 hours (including prep, meeting and post meeting work) x 16 = **96 hours**

Officer support (Chair of Officer Meeting) for 12 officer meetings of 2 hours duration per year

Estimated total hours of staff time: 3.5 hours (including prep, chairing, post meeting and member of the NSPF steering group) x 12 = **42 hours**

Total staff time (chair and secretariat) – 42 + 96 = **138 hours**

Total Staff time converted into charge out cost: **£7500.00** per year

Funding for East of England Forecasting Model - **£4,000** per year

Board membership fee for Water Resource East - **£7,500** per year

Total Contribution: circa **£19000.00**