Winchester City Council

Portsmouth City Council, Havant Borough Council and Gosport Borough Council

Your Ref:
Contact:
PlanningPolicy@Winchester.gov.uk
[redacted]

9 January 2026

Dear Lucy, David and Jayson,

Subject: Response to Joint Letter on Housing and Employment Need in South East Hampshire

Thank you for your joint letter dated 15 December 2025 regarding the housing and employment needs in South East Hampshire and the request for assistance under the Duty to co-operate.

Written Ministerial Statement

The Local Plan Inspector has undertaken an Inspector led public consultation on the Duty to co-operate/Written Ministerial Statement until the 9th January 2026. A copy of Winchester City Council's response to the Inspector led public consultation is available on the Local Plan examination website ED44. Our response makes it entirely clear that our position has not changed with regard to the Duty to co-operate and the latest Written Ministerial Statement in terms of the emerging Local Plan or the next Local Plan.

Winchester City Council's Local Plans

As we have previously advised our primary focus is to move the emerging Local Plan forward to adoption as soon as possible after the receipt of the Local Plan Inspector's Report. This means that work that is associated with the next Local Plan will resume after adoption of this local plan.

Government's new 30 month timeframe for preparing Local Plans

You will be aware that the Government has just issued further guidance on a new 30 month timeframe for preparing Local Plans.

We are meeting up towards the end of February with several Hampshire authorities that will be progressing under the Government's new 30 month Local Plan timeframe. The purpose of this meeting is to 'brainstorm' what will be required of us by Government in terms of preparing a Local Plan in 30 months.

We do acknowledge the importance of planning for unmet needs across Hampshire and remain committed to working collaboratively with all of the authorities across Hampshire (and beyond) and we look forward to continuing constructive dialogue and joint working with you and our neighbouring authorities.

We would be happy to meet again in due course to discuss the timetable, evidence base development, and opportunities for cooperation, including the preparation of updated Statement of Common Grounds and as noted above we will begin that work as soon our local plan is adopted.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Fox
Strategic Planning Manager
Winchester City Council