



Meeting note

Project name	A358 Taunton to Southfields
File reference	TR010061
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	23 November 2022
Meeting with	Somerset County Council
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Council Advice Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Outline of the current programme to become a Unitary Council in 2023

Somerset County Council (the Council) explained that Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council, South Somerset District Council will be abolished on the 01 April 2023 and a new Somerset Council created, with Somerset County Council being the 'continuing authority' for the purposes of the Structural Change Order.

Our proposed approach with pre-examination and examination engagement

The Council asked the Inspectorate if they are content with a joint Adequacy of Consultation Representation on behalf of Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council and Somerset and West Council. The Inspectorate advised that would confirm this in due course. If the Application is accepted, then the Councils proposed that they would issue one joint response to Relevant Representations (RR), and joint responses for the Local Impact Report and Statement of Common Ground (SoCG). The Inspectorate stated this would be acceptable provided the Councils have an agreed

stance, if there are disagreement separate responses should be submitted. A single agreed approach would help members of the public to understand the Councils' approach to the Examination of the Application.

Understanding The Planning Inspectorate's expectations and what they will find helpful

The Inspectorate explained they are expecting the application to be submitted in December. If accepted the Pre-Examination stage lasts around four to five months on most projects. The Inspectorate confirmed that the relevant representation period can begin shortly after Acceptance.

The Council asked if the A358 Taunton to Southfields project is under any consideration to being involved in Project Speed. The Inspectorate confirmed that this would not be the case. The Council enquired whether Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statements (PADSS) may be used on the project. The Inspectorate advised that they may be requested by the ExA.

The Inspectorate asked if the Council will be able to provide joint summary statements, in which the Council asked for more context about their use going forward. The Inspectorate explained they will identify example documents submitted for other applications, and that have been published, to aid the Council on this matter.

AOB

The Council queried information they were given by National Highways regarding SoCG guidance. The Council explained they couldn't find any new SoCG information on the National Infrastructure Planning website and asked the Inspectorate if they have had any discussions with the Applicant regarding different categories in the SoCG. The Inspectorate stated that they have not agreed any new format. Changes to this process would be captured in Advice Notes.

Post-meeting note:

The use of joint adequacy of consultation responses (AoCR) and other documents by local authorities is acceptable and has been used by other local authorities when submitting AoCR, SoCG and other documents for example:

- [Selby District Council and North Yorkshire District Council joint AoCR.](#)
- [A417 Statement of Common Ground with Joint Councils](#)
- [Joint Councils position statement](#)