



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of an **INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION** will be held in First Floor 11 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **FRIDAY 14 JULY 2017 AT 9.00 AM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Couldrick'.

Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive
Published on 6 July 2017

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

For consideration by

David Lee, Executive Member Strategic Planning and Highways

Officers Present

Clare Thurston, Specialist, Growth & Delivery

Arabella Yandle, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist

IMD NO.	WARD	SUBJECT
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1. IMD
2017/21

**WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
RESPONSE TO THE GUILDFORD BOROUGH
COUNCIL'S LOCAL PLAN 2034
(REGULATION 19)**

5 - 8

To provide a response to Guildford Borough Council on the consultation on the Local Plan 2034 Proposed Submission.

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Agenda Item IMD21

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD 2017/21

TITLE	Wokingham Borough Council response to the consultation on Guildford Borough Council's Proposed Submission Local Plan
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Highways, Councillor David Lee
ON	Friday 14 July 2017
TIME	09:00
WARD	Non-Specific
DIRECTOR	Interim Director for Environment, Josie Wragg

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That development proposed through the Guildford Borough Council Proposed Submission Local Plan document has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION

That Wokingham Borough Council submit an objection to the Guildford Borough Proposed Submission Local Plan: Strategy and Sites document on the basis of:

- 1) Failure under the duty to cooperate to achieve the necessary cooperation on the strategic cross boundary matter of meeting housing needs.
- 2) Failure of the plan to consider the likely unmet need arising from elsewhere in the Housing Market Area.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Wokingham Borough Council had previously responded to Guildford Borough Council's Proposed Submission consultation stage of their Local Plan: Strategy and Sites. At that stage, Guildford had finalised the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), had an identified housing need and had planned to meet this need within the borough.

Guildford are now running a further Proposed Submission consultation, following key changes to policies which were deemed to be significant, rather than merely minor modifications. Guildford are still planning to meet their housing need, however there are concerns regarding further unmet need within the West Surrey HMA and beyond.

The report outlines Wokingham Borough Council's concern regarding likely unmet housing need arising from Woking Borough and Surrey Heath Borough Councils, which is not appropriately dealt with in the plan.

Background

Guildford Borough Council previously consulted on their Proposed Submission Local Plan: Strategy and Sites from 6 June until 18 July 2016.

This Strategy and Sites document is the first document of two, which sets the vision, aims and strategy for the Borough up to 2033. Following adoption of this, a second document will be produced on development management policies.

In October 2015, the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published. This indicated that Guildford Borough lies within the West Surrey housing market area with the boroughs of Woking and Waverley. The SHMA recognised there is a strong relationship between West Surrey housing market area and that covering the Blackwater Valley (centred upon the authorities of Surrey Heath Borough, Rushmoor Borough and Hart District). Therefore, the Blackwater Valley housing market separates Wokingham Borough from the one, which includes Guildford Borough.

Guildford Borough Council has now published an update to the Proposed Submission document. Consultation runs between 9 June and 24 July 2017. This includes policy changes, which are deemed significant as well as minor modifications. There is also an updated evidence base, which includes an update to the West Surrey SHMA: the Guildford Addendum Report 2017. This SHMA update takes into account the latest population and household projections, mid-year population estimates and the economic projections, which have been updated in light of the decision for the UK to leave the European Union. This update identifies a lower Objectively Assessed housing Need for Guildford Borough.

With known issues of unmet housing need in Surrey Heath, it is important for Wokingham Borough Council to ascertain whether the West Surrey HMA is seeking to meet need within the HMA and how the Surrey authorities are engaging given the strong links between their areas.

Analysis of Issues

The update to the West Surrey SHMA: Guildford Addendum Report 2017 identifies a change in housing need in Guildford from 13,860 new homes 2013 to 2033, to 12,426 new homes 2015 to 2034. The Guildford Proposed Submission Local Plan demonstrates that Guildford Borough Council will meet its entire proposed housing requirement of the plan period. The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) identifies provision for delivery of 13,581 new homes, giving a 1,155 buffer to allow flexibility for delivery. Guildford state that this buffer cannot be used to meet unmet need in other areas.

Guildford Borough is within an HMA with Waverley and Woking Boroughs. Waverley Borough Council propose through their new local plan to meet their own housing need within the borough. Woking are currently unable to meet their housing need, with an existing shortfall of 3,150 homes 2013 to 2027. Woking are currently undertaking a Site Allocations DPD, however this has been delayed and creates uncertainty as to whether housing need will be met within the borough. Guildford Borough Council state

in their Duty to Cooperate Statement that they have not been formally asked by Woking to accommodate any unmet need.

Failure to accommodate unmet need in the West Surrey HMA means that neighbouring authorities may have to consider delivering further new homes. To the north is the HMA consisting of Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Borough Councils. It is known that Surrey Heath have indicated that they are unable to meet their housing need and Hart and Rushmoor Borough Councils are only proposing to meet their own housing needs.

It is evidence that unmet housing need may arise from the Western Surrey HMA, and the adjoining Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath HMA to which there are strong links. Seeking positive opportunities to meet needs in full is a central element of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Notwithstanding the Guildford Proposed Submission Local Plan seeking to meet the housing needs arising from their authority’s areas, the plan does not consider the likelihood of unmet needs from elsewhere in the HMA, specifically Woking. Further, it does not consider the unmet need arising from the adjoining HMA from Surrey Heath Borough Council. This is a major failing of the plan itself and in the outcome of engagement between the three authorities in the HMA.

Notwithstanding the above, Guildford Borough Council should also be mindful of the White Paper “Fixing our broken housing market” (February 2017) which proposes a standardised methodology for assessing housing needs. It will be necessary for Guildford Borough Council and the other authorities within the HMA to reconsider the level of housing need in the near future.

In summary, although Guildford Borough Council intend to meet the contribution to wider housing needs the needs of the wider HMA are not addressed. In light of this, it is not considered that the Duty to Cooperate has been complied with or that the plan is justified and effective, the result being that it is unsound. Guildford Borough Council should work with Waverley and Woking Boroughs to positively seek opportunities to meet development needs in full.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A
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Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
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None anticipated

Cross-Council Implications

Decisions in Guildford Borough Council regarding meeting housing needs, including unmet housing need across the HMA could lead to pressures to deliver housing elsewhere. This could affect the housing targets of other neighbouring local authorities, and potentially WBC.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES
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Director of Corporate Services	No response
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Monitoring Officer	No response
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Leader of the Council	No response
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List of Background Papers

Information published by Guildford Borough Council relating to the Draft Submission Local Plan– see http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/proposedsubmission

Contact Clare Thurston	Service Strategy & Commissioning (Place)
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Date 19 June 2017	Version No. 1
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