



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of an **INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION** will be held in First Floor 14 - Civic Offices on **MONDAY 30 JULY 2018 AT 11.30 AM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manjeet Gill'.

Manjeet Gill
Interim Chief Executive
Published on 20 July 2018

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

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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

Stuart Munro, Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning

Officers Present

Clare Thurston, Growth and Delivery Specialist

Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

IMD NO.	WARD	SUBJECT
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Agenda Item IMD31

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD:

TITLE	Wokingham Borough Council response to the consultation on Surrey Heath Borough Council's Draft Local Plan Issues Options/Preferred Options
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning - Stuart Munro
DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME	30 July 2018 11:30 Room FF14
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Services - Graham Ebers, Director of Locality and Customer Services - Josie Wragg

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That development proposed through the Surrey Heath Borough Council Draft Local Plan Issues & Options/Preferred Options has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning agrees that Wokingham Borough Council:

- 1) Acknowledges the positive engagement and cooperation between Surrey Heath, Hart and Rushmoor Councils through the published Statement of Common Ground, which includes the agreement to meet the housing need of the Housing Market Area (HMA) within the HMA;
- 2) Expects that positive actions are taken to implement this agreement and ensure the identified unmet housing need within Surrey Heath is met within the wider Surrey Heath Borough, Hart District and Rushmoor Borough HMA.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Surrey Heath Borough Council has published their Draft Local Plan Issues Options/Preferred Options document. The Plan sets out the Council's preferred approach to addressing the development needs of the borough, covering housing, employment, retail, infrastructure, green belt, countryside, heritage and design and local area policies, along with possible alternative approaches.

This report outlines Wokingham Borough Council's response to the proposed housing requirement in the plan, including the issue of unmet need in Surrey Heath Borough, which sits within the same Housing Market area as Hart District and Rushmoor Borough.

Background

Surrey Heath Borough Council (hereafter referred to as Surrey Heath BC) has published for consultation their Draft Local Plan Issues Options/Preferred Options (hereafter referred to as the Plan) between 4 June and 30 July. This is a Regulation 18 consultation under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. A number of technical evidence documents have also been published in support of the Plan.

The Plan sets out Surrey Heath BC's preferred approach to addressing the development needs of the borough, covering housing, employment, retail, infrastructure, green belt, countryside, heritage and design and local area policies, along with possible alternative approaches. At this stage Surrey Heath BC has identified a preferred approach to each topic area, and provided alternative approaches where appropriate.

In 2016, Hart District, Rushmoor Borough and Surrey Heath Borough Councils published an assessment of housing need through the Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 – 2032 (2016). This identified an objectively assessed housing need for the HMA of 1,200 dwellings per annum (dpa). Surrey Heath's share of this was 382 dpa.

In September 2017, the Government published a consultation including proposals for a standard methodology for calculating local authorities' housing need. This methodology has since been carried forward into the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and draft Planning Practice Guidance. This identified a reduced housing need for the HMA of 938 dpa. The reduction equates to 30dpa for Surrey Heath (from 382dpa in the SHMA to 352dpa). The finalised revised NPPF is expected to be published in July 2018.

Analysis of Issues

The Plan states that the housing need attributed to Surrey Heath will not be met by that authority. However, the Plan demonstrates that Surrey Heath BC is actively working with the other authorities within the HMA, Rushmoor Borough and Hart District, and together they are planning to meet the housing needs arising in the HMA in full. Seeking positive opportunities to meet need is a central element of the NPPF.

Rushmoor and Hart are further progressed with their new local plans. Rushmoor BC submitted their plan to the Secretary of State in February 2018, with the examination taking place in May 2018. Hart DC submitted their plan to the Secretary of State in June 2018 and are awaiting examination dates. In line with the proposed transitional arrangements set out in the draft revised NPPF, Rushmoor BC continued to prepare a plan based on the housing need figure within the SHMA, whilst Hart DC have used the proposed standard methodology housing need figure as a basis. As the new NPPF, with the standardised methodology, is due for publication this summer (2018), the housing requirement set out within the Surrey Heath Plan has been prepared on the basis of the proposed standard methodology for calculating housing needs.

The Plan demonstrates that the amount of housing that could be delivered in Surrey Heath borough is 306dpa. This is a total of 4,901 new homes expected to be delivered over the plan period, with an unmet need of 731 homes to be delivered elsewhere within the HMA over the plan period. This unmet need figure is lower than previously indicated

and as the plan is in the early stages, it is acknowledged in the Plan that further sites may come forward at a later stage which could reduce this further.

There is a clear commitment between the three authorities of Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath to meet housing need within the HMA. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG), dated 24 January 2018, has been produced for the Rushmoor Borough Local Plan, between the three authorities. This supporting evidence states that these authorities will use their best endeavors to meet their individual housing needs, but more importantly it also states that should unmet need arise from Surrey Heath, “the three authorities will work together to ensure that the shortfall is addressed elsewhere within the HMA.”¹

The SoCG also outlines the employment land position in the Functional Economic Area (FEA), which consists of the three authorities as in the HMA: Surrey Heath, Hart and Rushmoor. A joint Employment Land Review (ELR) was undertaken in 2009 and 2015 and then updated in 2016. The identified floorspace requirement can be met by the FEA through existing allocations and extant permissions. Two sites have been promoted to Surrey Heath BC through the call for sites for employment use. The Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) demonstrates that following assessment these sites could deliver up to 38,500sqm of employment floorspace during the plan period.

Wokingham Borough Council requested and received confirmation from Hart District, Rushmoor Borough and Surrey Heath Borough Councils, that they are all signed up to the SoCG and therefore the principle of meeting both housing and employment need within the HMA/FEA.

Wokingham Borough Council acknowledges and supports the agreement for any unmet need within the Hart District, Rushmoor Borough and Surrey Heath Borough Housing Market Area (HMA) to be met within the HMA.

Surrey Heath BC should continue to look for further opportunities to meet the housing need throughout the plan process. At the next stage of preparing the Surrey Heath Plan (Regulation 19), Wokingham Borough Council will require evidence that actions have been taken to implement the commitment set out in the SoCG to accommodate the HMA’s housing need in full within the HMA.

¹ <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/LocalPlan/EvidenceBase/stmntcommongrnrushmoorhartsh2018.pdf> (p9)

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)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Nil	Nil

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None.

Cross-Council Implications
Decisions in Surrey Heath BC regarding unmet housing need within 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	
Director – Corporate Services	No comments received
Monitoring Officer	No comments
Leader of the Council	No comments received

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
Information published by Surrey Heath Borough Council relating to the Draft Local Plan Issues Options/Preferred Options – see https://consult.surreyheath.gov.uk/consult.ti/LPIO2018/consultationHome

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