

Agenda Item IMD23

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD 2016 23

TITLE	Response of Wokingham Borough Council to the consultation on the Proposed Submission Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Mark Ashwell, Executive Member for Planning & Regeneration
DATE AND TIME	Friday 15 th July 2016, 2pm
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment
REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON	Thursday 7 July 2016
VENUE	FF4B

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

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

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive Member for Planning & Regeneration:

- 1) Approves the comments outlined in this report; and
- 2) That they be submitted as a formal response to the consultation from Guildford Borough on their Proposed Submission Local Plan: Strategy and Sites

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Wokingham Borough Council had previously responded to Guildford Borough Council's Draft Options consultation stage of their Local Plan: Strategy and Sites. At that stage, WBC queried whether they were planning to meet their housing need.

Guildford Borough Council has now consulted Wokingham Borough Council on their Proposed Submission Local Plan Strategy and Sites. This indicates that they will now be planning to meet their housing need.

Background

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

This is the first document with the purpose of setting 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.

Wokingham Borough Council responded to Guildford Borough at the Draft Options consultation stage in September 2014. At that stage, a draft Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was available indicating that Guildford Borough lies within the West Surrey housing market area. This only gave a draft indication of housing need (of between 650 and 780 dwellings per annum) for Guildford Borough. The main concern of Wokingham Borough Council previously has been whether Guildford Borough Council could release enough land (including potentially from the Green Belt) to meet its housing need.

Analysis of Issues

Since the Draft Options consultation stage, the final West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has been published (in October 2015). This indicates 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. However, it is still important for Wokingham Borough Council to ascertain whether the West Surrey HMA is seeking to meet need within the HMA, as it may have implications for the Wokingham Housing Market Area if they do not.

The final objectively assessed housing need (OAN) for Guildford Borough is 619 dwellings per annum between 2013 and 2033, which gives an overall need of 12,380 dwellings over the 20 year period. (This considerable change between the draft and final housing need figures is due to the Government's 2012 Household Projections being published during this time between.)

The plan seeks to allocate six strategic sites. This includes taking 1.6% of the Green Belt land in the Borough out of the Green Belt and allocating this for development. Overall the plan makes provision for 13,860 new homes, which will meet the housing need for the Borough.

Wokingham Borough Council is therefore satisfied that on the basis of available information that Guildford Borough Council are planning to meet the need for the Borough, but would welcome further understanding of discussions with Woking and Waverley Borough Councils regarding the meeting of the housing need as an HMA.

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 anticipated

Cross-Council Implications

Whether all allocations in Guildford Borough are agreed and found sound through the plan process could affect how the authority would then need to resolve impact of any unmet needs which Guildford Borough would be seeking nearby authorities to address. This could subsequently affect services such as transport, education, etc.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Director – Finance and Resources	No comments
Monitoring Officer	No comments
Leader of the Council	No comments

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

Documents regarding the proposed submission Local Plan published by Guildford Borough Council – see <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/>

Contact Clare Thurston	Service Development Policy & Planning
Telephone No 0118 974 6871	Email clare.thurston@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 7-Jul-16	Version No. 4

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