

TITLE	Future Housing Consultation
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 June 2019
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD MEMBER	Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider proposals for a public consultation on future housing numbers in Wokingham Borough.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee consider the Executive's proposals for a public consultation on future housing numbers and discuss any matters arising with the Leader and Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 29 May 2019, the Committee considered its work programme for 2019/20.

The Committee agreed that it wished to invite John Halsall (Leader of the Council) and Wayne Smith (Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement) to its next meeting, on 19 June 2019, in order to discuss the Council's proposals to carry out a public consultation exercise on future levels of housing in the Borough.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to prepare Local Plans informed by a local housing needs assessment, calculated using a standard method. The housing need figure for Wokingham Borough has varied from 752 dwellings per annum to 876 dwellings per annum, and some planning inspectors have suggested higher figures are appropriate. Local housing need currently calculates as 804 dwellings per annum.

At its meeting on 30 May 2019, the Executive considered a report which recommended a public consultation exercise aimed at gauging residents' opinions on the Government imposed housing numbers. A copy of the Executive report is attached at Annex A for information.

The matter was also considered on 30 May by the Special Council Executive Committee. A copy of the Special Council Executive Committee's Minutes (Annex B) are also attached for information.

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)	£0	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	NA	NA

Other Financial Information

None

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Consultation will be undertaken in summer 2019, with exact dates to be confirmed. A postcard or letter will be sent to each household in the borough setting out the background to the consultation, including a website address where the survey can be completed.

Resourcing and Timeline for Next Steps

It is proposed that the consultation be undertaken in summer 2019, with the exact dates to be confirmed. There is anticipated to be sufficient resource to prepare the consultation.

Timeline for Review and Evaluation

Once the consultation has closed responses will be reviewed in order to inform the future approach with Government.

List of Background Papers

None