

Agenda Item IMD11

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: 2022/11

TITLE	District Licence update to Local Validation List
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris
DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME	30 September 2022 SF2 at 2pm
WARD	None specific;
DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore

PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)

To seek formal agreement for minor modifications of the existing Local Validation List so that it includes additional details in respect of the District Licensing Scheme now available to applicants for planning applications where the application site falls within protected species (Great Crested Newts) zones.

The scheme is offered as an alternative to provision of species protection mitigation reports & the associated licensing currently required – the applicants will be offered the choice to use the new licencing scheme as an alternative.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan approve the minor modifications to existing Local Validation List as outlined above.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

See purpose of the report above.

Background

The Planning Regulations require certain plans and documents to be submitted in order to make an application valid. The Regulations allow Local Authorities to require further supporting information provided it is set out on a “Local Validation List”. Wokingham Borough Council’s Local Validation List was last updated in 2021.

Great crested newts and their habitats are legally protected in the UK and must be considered as part of the planning application process. Unless it can be definitively demonstrated that there is no risk to great crested newts or their habitats, applicants need a licence to carry out development work where the species and or its protected habitats are present.

Wokingham Borough currently offers two licensing options, these are:

- applying directly to Natural England for a licence after you have received planning permission; or
- by working with a registered ecologist under the low impact class licence

The Council can now offer a third option for applicants whose sites are located within protected species zones;

- joining the District Licence Scheme authorised by the Council as part of the planning application process

Business Case (including Analysis of Issues)

No business case required – this report seeks to make minor modifications to the Council’s existing Local Validation List, there are no associated financial implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications
There are no wider impacts – the modifications increase choice for our internal and external customers.

Public Sector Equality Duty
There are no impacts on equality as result of the proposed modifications and therefore no equalities impact assessment is required.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Director – Resources and Assets	To be updated at the meeting.
Monitoring Officer	To be updated at the meeting.
Leader of the Council	To be updated at the meeting.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
Draft amended Local Validation List

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