

## **Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

**Date: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

Agenda item: 5

Wards: All

**Subject: Housing Supply Task Group - Scoping Report**

Lead officer: Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Cllr Russell Makin, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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**Recommendations:**

That Members consider and approve the proposed Terms of Reference, timescales, sources of evidence, and witnesses for the task group review of housing supply.

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members for their task group review of housing supply, and to seek agreement on the proposed Terms of Reference, timescales, sources of evidence and witnesses for the review.

**2. DETAILS**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014, Members considered and agreed their Work Programme for the 2014/2015 municipal year. Members proposed that housing supply be the focus of a Task Group review.
- 2.2 The following Members were nominated to sit on the Task Group: Cllr Ross Garrod (Chair), Cllr Abigail Jones, Cllr Janice Howard, Cllr Imran Uddin and Cllr Michael Bull.

**3. AIM OF REVIEW**

- 3.1 The aim of the task group review is: To have a positive impact on the supply of affordable housing in Merton.

**4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW:**

- 4.1 The terms of reference of the task group review, as discussed and agreed at the Task Group meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014, are as follows:
- To understand housing market characteristics and the level of housing need in Merton. This would include:

- National and local policy context surrounding the provision of affordable housing;
  - Data on housing need in Merton;
  - The role of the local authority and partners (i.e. Registered Providers, private landlords and private developers) in ensuring good quality housing;
  - An overview of what affordable housing is being built in Merton
- To review the councils existing housing strategy with a view to strengthening/developing this policy in light of the reviews findings;
  - To determine how the council might support and encourage the production of new affordable homes in Merton and what land is available for development;
  - To determine what good practice exists elsewhere that might be utilised in responding to the demand for affordable housing

## **5. POTENTIAL SOURCES OF EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES FOR THE REVIEW**

5.1 Members can request a range of evidence and comparative information throughout the course of the review. Members can also invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of evidence-based recommendations to the Executive, and where appropriate, to partner organisations.

5.2 Members may wish to consider the following in this review: -

- Detailed officer reports supplemented by verbal evidence;
- Best practice from neighbouring Local Authorities;
- Government legislation and guidance (national, regional and local policy);
- Site visits;
- Evidence from partner organisations and stakeholders;
- Research reports/briefing papers; and
- Consultation activities

5.3 It is proposed that the Task Group consult the following stakeholders in this review:

- Housing Associations in Merton (Wandle, L&Q, Amicus, Notting Hill, Riverside, CHMP)
- Other local authorities
- Shelter and other local housing charities
- Merton CIL
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Representative from Homes and Communities Agency
- Tenant's Groups

- Residents Associations
- Developers – YCube/Pocket
- Housing Associations across London
- Mitcham Heritage

## 6. OFFICER SUPPORT

6.1 Members of the Housing Supply Task Group will be supported by:

**Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer**

Rebecca.redman@merton.gov.uk, 020 8545 4035

**Steve Langley, Head of Housing Needs and Strategy**

[Steve.langley@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.langley@merton.gov.uk), 020 8545 3712

**James McGinlay, Head of Sustainable Communities**

[James.mcginlay@merton.gov.uk](mailto:James.mcginlay@merton.gov.uk), 020 8545 4154

## 7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 The Panel may choose to agree a different scope and terms of reference to those proposed in this scoping report.

## 8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

8.1 Members are asked to give consideration to if, and how, they would like to engage witnesses in this review.

## 9. TIMETABLE

9.1 It is envisaged that the Task Group will undertake and complete its review within 6 months. The final report and recommendations from the review will be presented to the Sustainable Communities O&S Panel for endorsement at its meeting in June 2015.

9.2 The following reporting timescale should be borne in mind when conducting the review to ensure completion by June 2015: -

Agree scope – Sustainable Communities Panel 8 January 2015
Evidence gathering and analysis – December 2014 to March 2015
Agree Draft Final Report and Recommendations – March 2015
Draft Final Report to be endorsed by Sustainable Communities Panel – June 2015
Final Report to be considered by Cabinet – TBD
Executive Response and Action Plan to Sustainable Communities Panel – TBD

## 10. CO-OPTION

10.1 Members are asked to give consideration to co-opting representatives onto the Task Group for part, or the duration, of the review to assist the Task Group. In accordance with the Constitution any representative co-opted onto the Panel or Task Group will be a non-voting member of the Task Group and will be required to adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

## **11. PUBLICITY**

11.1 Members can publicise the review to encourage and facilitate resident and partner engagement and to promote the outcomes of the review upon completion. The following mechanisms for promotion/publication may be utilised throughout the review: -

- Press release in local press;
- My Merton;
- Community Forums;
- Merton council website;
- Ward councillors;
- Posters/materials in libraries and Merton Link;
- Staff bulletin board and plasma screens in civic centre; and
- Residents' panel and Centre for Public Scrutiny (outcomes)

## **12. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none specific to this report. Any financial, resource and property implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

## **13. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any legal and statutory implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

## **14. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 None specific to this report. Any human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

## **15. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 None specific to this report. Any crime and disorder implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

## **16. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

16.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any risk management and health and safety implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

## **17. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

17.1 None

## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

18.1 None

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