

Committee: Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel

Date: 2 September 2015

Agenda item: 10

Wards: All Wards

Subject: Final Report of the Housing Supply Task Group

Lead officer: Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Abigail Jones, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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Recommendations:

- A. That the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel considers and endorses the report arising from the scrutiny review of the supply of affordable housing in Merton, attached at Appendix 1, to submit to Cabinet for consideration at their meeting on 14th September 2015.
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present the final report and recommendations resulting from the scrutiny review of housing supply, with a focus on affordable housing, for Cabinet consideration.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 At the first meeting of the municipal year 2014/15, the Panel agreed to undertake a task group review looking at the provision of affordable housing.

3. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 3.1 In carrying out its review, the task group engaged a range of stakeholders, council officers and cabinet members to ensure that evidence based recommendations could be made that would support the achievement of the aims of this review, as outlined below:

- 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

3.2 Appendix 1 of the Task Group Report lists those who contributed to the review.

4. TIMETABLE

4.1 Cabinet will receive the Final Report and recommendations of the Housing Supply Task Group at their meeting on 14th September 2015.

4.2 The Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel should receive an Executive Response and Action Plan from Cabinet at their November 2015 meeting.

5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None for the purposes of this covering report.

7. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None for the purposes of this covering report.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community. An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the review process and is available on request from the Scrutiny Team.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None for the purposes of this covering report.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None for the purposes of this covering report.

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

11.1 Appendix 1 – task group review final report - Housing Supply (with a focus on affordable housing)

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 Appendix 1 – Final Report of the Housing Supply Task Group