

Agenda Item 8

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Wards affected	All	Key Decision	No
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Subject	Infrastructure Needs Assessment
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RECOMMENDATION

To agree the purpose and scope for an infrastructure needs assessment as set out in section 2.0 of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Growth in the population, changes in demographic profile, public service reorganisation and new development all give rise to additional demands on infrastructure. While work is underway at a regional and County level to identify strategic infrastructure needs, these will not capture small scale infrastructure requirements, or engage with local communities.

There is therefore an opportunity for a finer grained study focusing on infrastructure needs at a local level across Mole Valley, and which gives local communities a voice in saying what infrastructure needs are important to them.

The purpose of the infrastructure needs assessment will be:

- To identify the infrastructure needs that are important to local communities
- To help prioritise Community Infrastructure Levy funding

The scope of the assessment will include:

- Focus on local infrastructure needs
- A broad range of infrastructure requirements
- Give local communities a say in infrastructure planning
- Complement wider strategic infrastructure studies

A methodology and timescale for carrying out the assessment is set out in sections 2.0 and 4.0 of the report respectively.

CORPORATE PRIORITY

ENVIRONMENT: A highly attractive area with housing that meets local need

- To help guide decisions on the need for infrastructure to support existing and proposed development, in order to maintain the attractiveness of the area

PROSPERITY: A vibrant local economy with thriving towns and villages

- Work with Mole Valley communities and businesses to help them identify infrastructure needs
- Support business opportunities across the district by providing adequate infrastructure
- Look for innovative ways to minimise the cost to taxpayers of Mole Valley District Council by efficient use of infrastructure whilst protecting the standard of services.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING: Active communities and support for those who need it

- Infrastructure required to support a programme of inclusive sports and well-being activities which increases participation across all generations, targeting our communities which are most in need.
- Provide a local voice in future decisions on prioritising infrastructure

The Executive has the authority to determine the recommendation

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 There is growing concern about the provision and maintenance of infrastructure¹. Growth in the population, changes in demographic profile and new development all give rise to additional demands on existing infrastructure. Public service reorganisation and consolidation has also led to changes in the infrastructure needed. There is a perception that infrastructure is not keeping up with the changing demands upon it.

¹ Infrastructure is the essential systems and structures needed to support the built environment. It is defined in the CIL Regulations as including: roads and other transport facilities, flood defences, schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, and open spaces.

- 1.2 At regional and county level work is underway to determine strategic infrastructure needs. Surrey County Council is undertaking a Surrey wide infrastructure study. Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership is undertaking an infrastructure assessment of the whole of the LEP area. The East Surrey and West Sussex authorities are jointly undertaking a Gatwick centred infrastructure study, including a scenario looking at the effects of a second runway. This work is being undertaken to help these bodies compete more effectively in bidding for national infrastructure funding and to lobby central Government. Other regional bodies outside Surrey and Sussex are engaged in similar work.
- 1.3 While important at a strategic level, none of these studies address infrastructure requirements at a local level; nor do any of them provide a means for local communities to engage in the infrastructure planning process.
- 1.4 The most recent study into local infrastructure needs was carried out in support of the Community Infrastructure Levy. This study - the Infrastructure Delivery Plan - focuses on infrastructure providers' capital programmes and funding streams with the sole purpose of identifying whether there is an infrastructure funding gap.
- 1.5 There is therefore an opportunity for a finer grained study to assess infrastructure needs at a local level across the district. This would be a 'bottom up' approach using local knowledge to identify infrastructure schemes of importance to local communities.

2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 2.1 The purpose of the infrastructure needs assessment is:
- To identify the infrastructure needs that are important to local communities
 - To help prioritise Community Infrastructure Levy funding
- 2.2 The scope of a local infrastructure needs assessment would include the following:
- focus on local infrastructure needs
 - cover a range of infrastructure requirements
 - give local communities a say in infrastructure planning
 - complement wider strategic infrastructure studies
- 2.3 Categories of infrastructure that the assessment would cover would include (but not be limited to) the following:
- transport
 - education

- health
- community facilities
- leisure
- open space
- emergency services
- utilities
- flood prevention
- waste and recycling

2.4 It is likely that communities will have different interests and priorities depending on their circumstances. The assessment should be sufficiently flexible to enable the inclusion of infrastructure not listed in the categories above.

2.5 It is also important to be clear about what an infrastructure assessment cannot include, to avoid building unrealistic expectations. In particular, it will not cover the quality of service provision (such as waiting times for doctors' surgeries), or the maintenance of existing infrastructure assets (such as potholes). While both of these matters may generate considerable local opinion, they lie outside the scope of the assessment.

2.6 The majority of infrastructure is provided by organisations other than Mole Valley. An infrastructure assessment will let local communities voice their opinions about infrastructure needs, but it will be for those other infrastructure providers to decide to what degree that is desirable or achievable.

3.0 STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 With the assessment focusing on local infrastructure needs, local communities will be expected to play a key role in identifying deficits in current infrastructure. The principal stakeholder engagement will be through parish councils and equivalent community organisations in non-parished areas (larger residents' associations).

3.2 Some local communities engaged in neighbourhood planning have already identified infrastructure as an issue and are collating views and information on their particular local situations. Other communities will not have reached this stage and will need support in developing their thinking and their role in the assessment.

3.3 The means of engaging local community representatives will need to be tailored to their circumstances. This could range from summarising work already undertaken, to questionnaires or a workshop. The engagement strategy will need to be flexible to accommodate differences in the starting position of local community representatives.

- 3.4 Future infrastructure requirements will depend on a number of factors including planned new development, forecast changes in demand for services and public service changes as a result of financial constraints. This information is most appropriately provided by infrastructure providers. A summary of much of this information is already contained in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and may need to be expanded depending on the priorities of local communities.

4.0 **TIMESCALE**

- 4.1 A provisional timescale is set out below:

Task	Time	Reporting
Discussion paper	June 2015	
Approval of Infrastructure Needs Assessment methodology	July	Executive 21 Jul 2016
Draft engagement material	August	
Refresh infrastructure providers capital programme information	August - Sept	
Engagement with local community reps	Sept - Nov	
Engagement with infrastructure providers	Sept - Nov	
Draft list of local infrastructure needs	Dec	
Approval of Infrastructure Needs Assessment	Feb 2016	Executive 9 Feb 2016

- 4.2 This timetable requires engagement with local community organisations and infrastructure providers to be carried out in parallel. It would also deliver the assessment some months ahead of the planned introduction of CIL, which may give rise to information becoming out of date.

5.0 **OPTIONS**

- 5.1 To agree the methodology as set out in the report (recommended).
- 5.2 To agree to carry out an infrastructure needs assessment with modified methodology.
- 5.3 To decide not to carry out an assessment.

6.0 CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 6.1 Resources to produce the infrastructure needs assessment can be accommodated within existing departmental budgets.
- 6.2 Funding for infrastructure improvements lies outside the scope of the assessment. The report on the Community Infrastructure Levy, also on the agenda, sets out a mechanism by which funding for infrastructure can be raised from new development.

Legal Implications

- 6.3 None arising directly from this report.

Monitoring Officer commentary

- 6.4 The Monitoring Officer is satisfied that there are no legal implications.

S151 Officer commentary

- 6.5 The s151 Officer confirms that all relevant financial implications and risks have been taken into account.

Risk Implications

- 6.6 None.

Equalities Implications

- 6.7 None.

Communications

- 6.8 Press release to advertise intention to carry out assessment. More detailed information will be drafted as part of the project for engagement with community groups.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None