

**Runnymede & Spelthorne Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**

**Joint Member Liaison (Steering) Group**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Background**

1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to ensure that their Local Plans meet the full objectively assessed needs for housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with policies in the Framework.
2. In order to identify the objectively assessed housing needs across the housing market area, Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Council's commissioned GL Hearn to carry out a Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment for the two authorities. A Part 1 draft has now been completed which determines the extent of the Housing Market Area. The consultants are currently working on the Part 2 of the assessment which will determine the OAN for the HMA as well as the affordable housing needs. The assessment is due to be completed in draft form in December 2014 with publication envisaged in February 2015, *subject to stakeholder involvement.*

**Purpose of the Joint Member Liaison Group**

3. To provide a joint forum under the duty to co-operate for exploring how the objectively assessed need for housing in Runnymede-Spelthorne Housing Market Area (HMA) could be delivered.

**The nature of the group**

4. The liaison group is not a decision-making body. Any agreement by the Group will be subject to the democratic and local plan processes within each local authority.

**Specific objectives**

- i. To reach an informal agreement between the two authorities on what the objectively assessed housing need is across the HMA, and within each authority area, over relevant time periods<sup>1</sup>;
- ii. To informally agree whether each authority is doing all it reasonably can, consistent with policies in the NPPF and other material considerations, to meet the objectively assessed housing needs for its area;
- iii. That in the event of any shortfalls arising in one authority area, to explore how cross boundary working between Spelthorne & Runnymede can help address those shortfalls as far as possible, consistent with the NPPF, within Spelthorne or Runnymede in the first instance or a wider area of other districts and boroughs.
- iv. That if informal agreement to Specific Objective ii is reached and shortfalls arise across the HMA as a whole, to engage with neighbouring HMAs with respect to whether unmet need can be met outside of the HMA

<sup>1</sup> Runnymede & Spelthorne are currently working to different local plan periods, so it may be necessary to agree figures for housing need that cover different time periods.

- v. To recommend that any informal agreement reached over Specific Objectives i-iv is formally agreed by each authority by their relevant committee through a Memorandum of Understanding.

### **Outcome**

5. The outcome being sought is one where both authorities are satisfied that each one is doing all it reasonably can to meet its own needs, and that any shortfalls in one area are addressed as far as possible through joint working, so that across the HMA as a whole, needs are met as far as possible, consistent with policies in the NPPF. In the event that the objectively assessed housing need within the HMA is adjudged as being impossible to meet, the Group will establish how to approach adjacent HMAs. The final outcome will be a formal agreement between the authorities engaged in Specific Objectives iii-iv through a Memorandum of Understanding.

### **Membership**

6. The SHMA Joint Member Liaison Group will:
  - Comprise two Elected Members from each authority; specifically the portfolio holder/chairperson for Housing and/or for Planning. Substitutes may attend if appropriate.
  - Comprise of two senior officers/heads of department from each authority. Substitutes may attend if appropriate.
  - A minute taker from each Local Authority.
  - Meet at intervals to be agreed at the first meeting.