

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>South East Plan – Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley Strategy</b>	<b>Item10</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Executive	
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX0885	

**Corporate Plan Priority: All Corporate Priorities.**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Corporate Plan priorities by:  
As it relates to the strategic planning context for the south east region.

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To note the recommendations of the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley members and make comment.</b>
<b>Recommended Action:</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Reason for decision to be taken:</b>	The Council, as local planning authority, will be required to take forward approaches to spatial planning issues that are contained within the South East Plan.
<b>List of other options considered:</b>	Not applicable at this stage
<b>Key background documentation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</li> <li>• Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley Strategy</li> </ul>

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## Implications

<b>Policy:</b>	The South East Plan will provide the statutory context which more local spatial planning policies will be developed through the Council's Local Development Framework. As part of the development plan, it will be a prime consideration in both local planning, policy development and in determining planning applications.
<b>Financial:</b>	No direct implications as a result of this report.
<b>Personnel:</b>	None
<b>Legal:</b>	None

**Environmental:** Environmental impacts are set out in Appendix 10  
**Equalities:** None at this stage  
**Partnering:** None

## Supporting Information

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### Background

- 1.1 Under the new Planning Policy Framework introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) has the responsibility for producing a Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East. SEERA have started working on the development of this document, which is known as the South East Plan. Part of the South East Plan will be identifying the levels of housing to be provided up until 2026. The purpose of this report is to make members aware of work that has been undertaken in respect to the development of the South East Plan.
- 1.2 As part of the development of the plan SEERA identified a number of sub-regions within the South East of England which they considered had more specific issues that may need to be addressed through the development of sub-regional strategies. One of the sub-regions identified as an area known as the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region. A large portion of West Berkshire is identified as lying within this sub-region. Part of the brief set by SEERA was to consider how housing may be accommodated within the sub-region including exploring potential options for distribution and the capacity of accommodating housing levels above the current Regional Planning Guidance figures set in 2001. Members and officers of the local authorities within the sub-region have produced a report setting out issues relating to the sub-region, the impacts that would arise from different levels of growth together with a preferred approach to distribution. The report that has been submitted to SEERA together with the preferred option for distribution is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Having carefully considered all the issues raised by the growth options, the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley Members' Steering Group resolved as follows:  
  
**'Housing levels continuing at RPG9 are preferable subject to the necessary infrastructure improvements; housing provision at RPG9 +10% is the most that could be accommodated but only if there is significant investment in infrastructure to support such a level of growth. Any housing provision above RPG9 +10% is unacceptable.'**
- 1.4 There has been no opportunity as part of this process to formally consult on the work that has been undertaken so far. SEERA will be considering this submission as part of the work it is undertaking to develop the South East Plan. A formal consultation will take place in January 2005 to consider the overall approach and it is understood that this will provide the level of housing that SEERA consider should be accommodated within the sub-region. It is understood that there will be a further round of consultation in summer 2005 which will be looking at the level of housing distribution at a district level.

### Appendices

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Appendix 10 - Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley Strategy (A number of further appendices are referred to in this document. If copies of these are required then please contact the officer identified at the start of this report).

### Consultation Responses

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**Local Stakeholders:** None required  
**Officers Consulted:** N/A

**Trade Union:** Not applicable