

THE OPENNESS OF LOCAL
GOVERNMENT BODIES
REGULATIONS 2014/
THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES
(EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS)
(MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO
INFORMATION) (ENGLAND)
REGULATIONS 2012



RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION TAKEN

Decision Taker: Kate Little, Joint Head of Strategic Development and Planning Service

Subject: Northern Peninsula Housing Market Area Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update – Reviewing the Implications of the ONS 2012 Sub-National Population Projections

Record of Decision Taken: Appointment of Housing Vision as a consultant to deliver the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (in accordance with a Consultant's brief) on behalf of North Devon Council and its partner local planning authorities, without a formal tendering process.

Reason(s) for the Decision: This is a one-off commission with an overall value of under £5,000. In such situations, the Financial Procedure Rules for both North Devon Council and Torridge District Council allow for the purchase to be justified without formal tendering on the basis of being the best value for money, with the Service Manager applying professional judgement to demonstrate how this is achieved.

It is considered that commissioning Housing Vision, the authors of the original NP SHMA and subsequent Update Reports, to complete the additional Update Report will deliver best value for the Councils. This is considered to be the case on the basis that Housing Vision have prepared all previous work in relation to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for North Devon, Torridge and the wider grouping of partner authorities proposed to be subject to this commission. In doing so, they have in depth knowledge of the local area, the issues surrounding the topic in question and the content of the preceding reports to which this Update will relate. Housing Vision also have access to the raw modelling data upon which all previous reports have been based; something that will facilitate the updating to consider the recent Population Projections and support the realignment of housing requirements to the local planning authority geographies. As such, given the limited scope of the required works, a familiarity of existing work and knowledge of the area is likely to contribute to potential cost savings over alternative potential providers.

Furthermore, an additional demonstration of Best Value is likely to be achieved through collaboration with the wider grouping of local planning authorities which will result in an economy of scale with the commission delivering a single report to a common methodology for all involved, as well as helping to demonstrate the Localism Act's Duty to Cooperate. Tendering on the basis of individual local planning

authorities would be unlikely to result in the same efficient and cost effective procurement of the information that is sought. It would also delay the timetable for preparation of the required report.

Information: North Devon Council along with its partner local planning authorities across the sub-region (Torrige District Council, West Somerset District Council and Exmoor National Park Authority) are appointing a consultant to provide a supplemental Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report. The report is intended to sit alongside the original Northern Peninsula Strategic Housing Market Assessment (NP SHMA) and the series of subsequent Update Reports for each partner local planning authority that already complement it. The provision of this update is intended to ensure that the Council has robust and credible evidence on housing need to support the preparation of the joint North Devon and Torrige Local Plan.

The need for the update has arisen due to the recent publication of updated ONS sub-national population projections and the obligation on local planning authorities to ensure that the future housing provisions of a Local Plan are based upon up-to-date demographic information. Further to this, a need has been identified to realign the geographies of the future housing requirements set out in previous work, so as to fit with the local planning authority boundaries and allow a robust requirement to be established for each individual partner local planning authority.

As such, North Devon Council, in collaboration with the partner local planning authorities, have commissioned the consultants (Housing Vision) responsible for the provision of the original NP SHMA and all subsequent Update Reports to provide a focused additional Report to establish the potential implications of the updated projections and to realign the geographical outputs. The scope of the works sought is set out in the Consultants' Brief.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision: A range of consultants could deliver the work sought in relation to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update through a formal tendering process. It is however considered that commissioning Housing Vision, the authors of the original NP SHMA and all subsequent Update Reports, to complete the additional Update Report will deliver best value for the Councils.

Declaration of any Conflict of Interest made by any Councillor consulted by the officer or declared when granting the specific authorisation to take the decision (including details of any dispensations granted by the Ethics Committee):

- No conflicts of interest

List Of Background Papers that were relied on in making the decision or the decision is based (but not including published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in rule 10 of appendix 15 (Access to Information Procedural Rules) and the advice of a political advisor):

- Consultants ' Brief

Date that decision was taken: Friday 22 August 2014

Date of Publication of decision: 1st September 2014

Financial Implications: (NOTE: Please state if there are any financial implications. If so, state if there are sufficient funds within the agreed budget. If there are not sufficient funds, please state how the decision will be financed)

- There are sufficient funds within the budget for the Local Plan evidence base

Consultation undertaken:

The following have been consulted prior to the decision being taken:

Consultee	Consulted Yes/No/Not applicable	Date
Executive Member	Yes	July 2014
Ward Member(s)	Not applicable	
Chief Executive	No	
Head of Service (name)	Not applicable	
Legal	Yes	16 July 2014
Finance	No	

GUIDANCE NOTES TO OFFICERS:

Exempt/Confidential information: Please note that the contents of the decision or background papers must not disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in rule 10 of appendix 15 (Access to Information Procedural Rules) and the advice of a political advisor) as the record of decision is a public record.

Publication of record: Please forward the decision together with any background papers that have not already been published to Member Services for publication. The record and background papers must be kept by the decision taker for **6 years** from the date that the decision was taken.

NORTHERN PENINSULA HOUSING MARKET AREA STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT (SHMA) UPDATE – REVIEWING THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ONS 2012 SUB-NATIONAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS

CONSULTANTS' BRIEF

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this commission is to review the implications of the 2012-based Sub-national Population Projections for England¹ on the future housing requirements across the local planning authority areas of the 'Partner authorities', who are:

- North Devon Council;
- Torridge District Council;
- West Somerset District Council; and
- Exmoor National Park Authority.

1.2 The Partner authorities seek to appoint consultants to provide a supplemental Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report that is intended to sit alongside the original Northern Peninsula Strategic Housing Market Assessment (the 'original Assessment') and the series of subsequent update reports that already complement it.

1.3 The findings of this commission will be used to inform the preparation of local planning authority development plans for the Partner authorities covering the period 2011 to 2031. In particular the Update will assess the objectively assessed need for housing and be used to inform the scale and types of housing that should be planned for across the geographical areas of the Partner authorities.

1.4 This document forms part of the specification for the required works.

2. Background and Need for Update

2.1. All of the Partner authorities reside within the Northern Peninsula Housing Market Area. The original Assessment for the Northern Peninsula Housing Market Area was published in December 2008 and all of the Partner authorities were party to its preparation. Subsequent to the publication of the original Assessment, each Partner authority has completed a Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update to review the original Assessment, taking account of more recent demographic data and to assess housing needs over an extended period (up to 2031), allowing it to better fit the plan periods for their emerging Local Plans. All of the individual Strategic Housing Market Assessment Updates for the Partner authorities have been completed to a common approach and consistent methodology.

2.2 Whilst the series of Partner authority Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Reports provide comprehensive geographical coverage, the reports do not readily enable future housing requirements to be disaggregated neatly to each local planning authority. In particular, the Reports do not enable figures to be established for Exmoor National Park as a whole, or to disaggregate the requirements for the Exmoor National Park area, from those for the wider geographical area covered by North Devon Council. The Partner authorities seek to deliver

¹ 2012-based Subnational Population Projections for England, ONS, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/snpp/sub-national-population-projections/2012-based-projections/stb-2012-based-snpp.html>

updated evidence on this basis to enable more effective and robust planning across the Housing Market Area.

2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms the need for, and significance of, Strategic Housing Market Assessments². The preparation of a Local Plan needs to be supported by robust and credible evidence to demonstrate that the policies and proposals within it are 'sound'. To this end, the setting of any locally derived housing policies will need to be supported by up-to-date and proportionate evidence to demonstrate that any approach is sound.

2.4 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) indicates that projections published by the Department for Communities and Local Government should provide the starting point estimate of overall housing need, potentially adjusted to reflect factors affecting local demography and household formation rates³. As such, the publication of updated sub-national population projections raises the need to reflect on whether these are likely to have an impact on the scale of likely future housing need.

2.5 This additional Update Report will provide the Partner authorities with evidence to support more robust housing requirements that are compliant with national planning policy and guidance.

3. Requirements and Outputs

3.1 The commission will:

1. realign the modelling geographies used within preceding Partner authority Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Reports, to enable the disaggregation of future housing requirements for each local planning authority area;
2. carry out a comprehensive review and appraisal of the implications of the ONS 2012 Sub-national Population Projections on the future housing requirements across the Northern Peninsula Housing Market Area; and
3. have regard to any other sources of data (i.e. 2011 Census outputs, etc.) that might be pertinent to establishing future housing requirements across the Northern Peninsula Housing Market Area (and include a separate costed quotation for an optional analysis of trend based projections for net internal migration that can inform household numbers).

3.2 The commission will deliver a Report providing:

1. the outcomes of work to realign the future housing requirements to the geographies of each Partner local planning authority;
2. a review of how the methodology of the ONS 2012-based sub-national population projections has changed in relation to previous releases and of its associated strengths and weaknesses;

² Paragraph 159, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), CLG, March 2012

³ Paragraph 15 of Housing and economic development needs assessments, Methodology: assessing housing need (Reference ID: 2a-015-20140306), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), CLG, March 2014

(<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments/methodology-assessing-housing-need/>)

3. a comparison, by age band, of the outputs from the ONS 2008-based, 2010-based; Interim 2011-based and the 2012-based sub-national population projections;
4. a review of changes to the 'Components of Population Change' from the 2012-based sub-national population projections and an assessment of their accuracy against available data;
5. an assessment of the implications for household numbers over the next 20 years by applying household formation rates from the CLG 2008-based and 2011-based household projections; and
6. an assessment of the implications of items 2-5 above for housing need over the 20 year period (2011 to 2031), including the derivation of figures for future housing need based upon the ONS 2012-based sub-national population projections.

3.3 The Report will deliver the outputs specified within Items 2-6 of section 3.2 for:

- each Partner (local planning) authority (as listed in section 1.1);
- the dis-aggregated elements of the area of Exmoor National Park residing within each of the wider geographies of North Devon Council and West Somerset District Council; and
- the Northern Peninsula Housing Market Area, excluding the area covered by the former local planning authority of North Cornwall, as a whole.

3.4 With respect to future housing requirements for the geographical area of the Exmoor National Park Authority, the commission should set any outputs into the context of the Statutory Framework and national Guidance relating to National Parks.

4. Methodology

4.1 The commission is intended to supplement and update the original Assessment and the suite of Housing Market Assessment updates for the Partner authorities. It should be consistent with, have regard to and reflect the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

4.2. The Report should incorporate details of methods and assumptions, references for all data sources and commentary on any limitations or issues of reliability relating to the outputs.

4.3 The final Report should be delivered in both electronic and printed form. An electronic copy should be provided on CD/DVD in a format supported by standard Microsoft Office Software (i.e. Word) and additionally in print ready Adobe PDF.

5. Copyright and Ownership

5.1 All documents produced as part of the commission are to become the joint property of the Partner authorities. Copyright of the final Report and any associated work is to be passed to, and reside jointly with, the Partner authorities. The Partner authorities reserve the right to reproduce and publish any material prepared under this commission in whole or in part, and without further reference, fees or expenses.

6. Timetable / Programme of Work

6.1. The commissioned work is expected to be a desk-based exercise drawing upon secondary data. The commission will accord with the following delivery programme:

Formal Appointment	Friday 22 nd August 2014
Draft Report	Friday 12 th September 2014
Final Report	Friday 26 th September 2014

7. Management

7.1. The contract will be let and managed by Torridge District Council as the lead authority.

7.2. Upon award of the contract, payment for the work will be in arrears by submission of invoice. Invoices should be submitted to Torridge District Council. Payment will be available on satisfactory completion of the final Report.

8. Submission

8.1 Prior to appointment it will be necessary to provide a written statement setting out:

- confirmation of acceptance to undertake the work in line with the provisions of this Consultants' Brief;
- a breakdown of the full fixed-price cost of the commission;
- confirmation that there would be no conflict of interest with other work being carried out by your organisation;
- a clear indication that the work would be completed within the period set out in section 6 of this Brief;
- details of the organisation's financial standing;
- information pertaining to the organisation's insurance provisions - including Professional Indemnity Insurance (PI) and Employers Liability Insurance (EL); to include level of insurance, policy numbers and expiry dates. Note that for this contract the Council will require the Consultant to hold £2 million cover for PI and £10 million for EL; and
- any standard terms and conditions of engagement.

9. Conditions of Contract

9.1 The work is being tendered on the basis of a Fixed Price contract.

9.2 The Partner authorities reserve the right to modify the specification of work in consultation with, and subject to agreement of, the appointed consultant.

9.3 The appointment and commissioned work will be subject to Torridge District Council's Standard Terms and Conditions.

10. Contract Enquiries

10.1 The principal contact for the commission of this work is:

Ian Rowland, Senior Planning Policy Officer
ian.rowland@torridge.gov.uk (01237 428748)
Torridge District Council, Riverbank House, Bideford, EX39 2QG