

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2007-2008**Report By: Forward Planning Manager****Wards**

Countywide

Purpose

1. To consider the Annual Monitoring Report 2007-2008.

Financial Implications

2. None.

Introduction

3. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced provisions and requirements including the regular review and monitoring of development plans through mandatory Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs).
4. Annual Monitoring Reports are required to assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme; and the extent to which policies in the Local Development Documents are being achieved. The Council's AMR prepared to meet the requirements of the planning system is attached to this report. The AMR assesses the extent to which the objectives of UDP policies are being achieved and contains a comparator with last years AMR. AMRs are based on a period running from 1 April to 31 March and submitted to the Secretary of State no later than the following 31 December.
5. The AMR covers all annual monitoring study findings and will enable a coherent and consistent approach to be taken in the assessment of the extent to which policies within the UDP and subsequent Local Development Documents are being achieved.

Structure and Content of the AMR 2006-2007

6. In establishing the content of this AMR, the aim has been to continue with the structure of previous years to maintain consistency with the guidance provided in the ODPM publication 'Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide'.
7. The AMR largely follows the thematic division of the chapters in the UDP. It is divided into core subjects such as housing, employment, retail etc, for which there is available monitoring data. Objectives for each topic areas are identified and appropriate policies linked to these are set out. Where the UDP expresses a specific requirement to be met, this is identified as a target against which progress can be measured.

8. There are a number of instances where it is not possible to identify specific targets against which to measure how policies of the UDP are being implemented. This is because certain objectives do not lend themselves to target setting in the context of the UDP alone. In many cases the Plan is one means of helping to achieve wider social or environmental aims and the application of a specific target is neither appropriate nor informative.
9. Indicators are used to measure the performance of policy aims against a target, or where there is no identified target; performance is measured against an objective. Each indicator is cross-referenced with those relevant policies of the UDP that are the key tools used to achieve the objectives and targets.
10. Throughout the report there are sections of analysis that interpret the monitoring results and compares the results of this AMR with those of previous years. It also identifies where data is currently lacking, an update on monitoring achievements to date and identifies where future monitoring could be enhanced to improve measurements of policy implementation.
11. A contextual section providing the background of regional planning guidance (the Regional Spatial Strategy) is contained within Appendix 2 of the document. It also provides statistical information that establishes a profile for Herefordshire.

AMR Findings

12. The overall assessment on whether the UDP objectives are being met in respect of the topic areas are provided in an executive summary. The monitoring results provide useful data for an annual assessment to be made, in many areas monitoring has been undertaken since 2004 been monitored and trends are only now emerging. However, in respect of housing and employment detailed monitoring has been undertaken over many years and clear trends apparent.

Key Findings

13. Housing – between 01-02 and 04-05 completions were below the rate anticipated. Recent releases of UDP sites has resulted in an increase in the rate of housing completions in the County with 829 dwellings being completed in 2007-8 (gross). The levels of housing supply in the County would suggest that the UDP housing target is likely to be achieved by 2011, however, the downturn in the housing market may well impact upon the rates of completions in the next few years. The percentage of housing completions on previously developed or brownfield land at 73% (606) has again exceeded both regional and national targets. In terms of affordable housing, 141 units were completed in 07/08 an increase over the previous year (120 units). Moreover, the number of planning permissions for affordable housing and such housing likely to be delivered on allocated UDP sites suggests that the rate of completions over the remaining UDP period will increase. In addition, the preparation of the Local Development Framework provides an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the UDP affordable housing policies.
14. Employment - The amount of land developed for employment uses over the monitoring period was 8.66ha ha, significantly less than the almost 25ha developed during 2006-7 but still above the average recorded since the 1980's. Around 59% of the completions in the year were located on previously developed (brownfield) land.

15. In the remaining areas of transport, town centres and retail, recreational and leisure, minerals, waste, development requirements, natural historic heritage and renewable energy, findings generally show that targets are being met or there has been progress towards meeting targets or monitoring requirements during the 07-08 monitoring period.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee endorse the Annual Monitoring Report 2007-8 and recommend its approval to Cabinet by the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing).