

15 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2004-2005**Report By: Forward Planning Manager****Wards**

Countywide

Purpose

1. To consider the first Annual Monitoring Report 2004-2005.

Financial Implications

2. None, although the submission of a satisfactory Annual Monitoring Report will be a consideration in the allocation of Planning Delivery Grant.

Introduction

3. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced new provisions and requirements for development planning. The regular review and monitoring of development plans through mandatory Annual Monitoring Reports (AMR's) is a fundamental feature of the new planning system. AMR's are to be based on a period running from 1st April to 31st March and submitted to the Secretary of State no later than the following 31st December.
4. Annual Monitoring Reports are required to assess:
 - (a) the implementation of the Local Development Scheme; and
 - (b) the extent to which policies in the Local Development Documents are being achieved.The Council's first AMR prepared to meet the requirements of the new planning system is attached. This first AMR will assess the extent to which the objectives of UDP policies are being achieved.
5. In previous years annual monitoring studies have been undertaken for housing and employment with their results published in separate reports. Future AMR's will be used to cover, in a single document, all annual monitoring study findings. This will enable a holistic approach to be formulated, which will allow for a more coherent and consistent approach to be taken in the assessment of the extent to which policies within Local Development Documents are being achieved.

Structure and Content of the AMR 2004-2005

6. In establishing the content of this first AMR, the aim has been to produce a methodology consistent with the guidance provided in the ODPM publication 'Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide', which outlines an *objectives-policies-targets-indicators* approach to the monitoring of development plan documents.
7. To set the scene for subsequent information detailed in the report, a contextual section has been included, which provides the background of regional planning

guidance (the Regional Spatial Strategy), against which UDP policies and proposals have been formulated. It also provides statistical information that establishes a profile for Herefordshire with quantified descriptions of the wider socio-economic, environmental and demographic characteristics of the County.

8. 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.
9. There are a number of instances where it has not been 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.
10. Core and local 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.
11. Throughout the report there are sections of analysis where appropriate, which interpret the monitoring results and provide additional comments on areas where data is currently lacking or where future monitoring could be enhanced to improve measurements of policy implementation.

AMR Findings

12. The key findings of the AMR in respect of the topic areas are provided in an executive summary, which is attached in Appendix 1 to this report. Copies of the full report are enclosed separately for Members of the Planning Committee. Although the monitoring results provide useful data for an annual assessment to be made, in many instances it has not been possible to produce information on trends over time, since this is the first reporting year in which data has been gathered.
13. In many topic areas the extent to which UDP policies are being implemented is difficult to gauge, particularly since the UDP has not yet been adopted. It is anticipated that subsequent AMR's will enable more accurate assessments to be made, which will be used to develop future planning policies. However, in respect of housing and employment detailed monitoring has been undertaken over many years and clear trends in both topic areas are apparent. In housing, for example, the rate of completions continues to be lower than anticipated in the UDP, largely due to the fact that many of the UDP allocations have been subject to objection and considered at the UDP Inquiry. Once the Plan is adopted it is expected that the rate of housing completions will increase. The percentage of housing completions on previously developed land (brownfield) has continued to increase and for 2004-2005 exceeds both regional and national targets. In terms of affordable housing, monitoring indicates that the UDP target will not be met at current average rates; provision should increase when the UDP is adopted

although this remains an issue of concern. The amount of land developed for employment uses over the monitoring period was 6.53 hectares, distributed across 18 different sites. This is above the annual County average of 5.19 ha per annum which has been recorded since the mid 1980's.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee endorse the Annual Monitoring Report 2004-2005 and recommend its approval to Cabinet by the Cabinet Member (Environment).