

## ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2005-2006

### Forward Planning Manager

#### Wards

Countywide

#### Purpose

1. To consider the second Annual Monitoring Report 2005-2006.

#### 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 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March and submitted to the Secretary of State no later than the following 31<sup>st</sup> 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 second AMR prepared to meet the requirements of the new planning system and the full AMR is attached in Appendix 1 to this report. This second AMR will assess the extent to which the objectives of UDP policies are being achieved and contains a comparator with last years AMR.

5. The development of 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 2005-2006

6. In establishing the content of this second AMR, the aim has been to continue with the methodology set out last year to maintain consistency 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. Improvements have been made in line with requests from government and examples of best practice have been implemented where appropriate.

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). 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, where appropriate, there are sections of analysis that interpret the monitoring results and compares the results of the AMR 04-05 with these latest findings. Over time it is anticipated that the trends data will give a more accurate, meaningful overall assessment as to how the UDP policies are performing. It also provides additional comments on areas 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.

## **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 in Appendix 1. Although the monitoring results provide useful data for an annual assessment to be made, in many instances it has only been possible to produce information on trends over since 2004. This is not a large enough sample to draw conclusive findings on with enough certainty, 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.

## **Key Findings**

13. Housing – between 01-02 and 04-05 completions had been below that anticipated due to a delay in releasing a number of large housing allocations included within the UDP and subject to objection. However recent releases of

some of these sites has resulted in a slight increase beyond that anticipated. Once the Plan is adopted it is expected that the rate of housing completions will increase further. The *percentage* of housing completions on previously developed land (brownfield) has remained consistent, however the *number* of brownfield completions has increased on 04-05 figures, exceeding both regional and national targets. In terms of affordable housing, although 05-06 has seen a considerable increase in gains since 00-01 there has still been a net loss of 168 affordable homes over the 6 years since government re-organisation in 1998, mainly due to the national "Right to Buy" policy.

14. Employment - The amount of land developed for employment uses over the monitoring period was 8.58 ha, 2.05 ha more than last year. This is above the annual County average of 5.36 ha per annum that has been recorded since the mid 1980's. However, in achieving this target, approximately 8ha of the employment land completions has taken place on greenfield land, an increase of almost 50% on the previous year and the most recorded since 1999-2000. However, the majority of this "greenfield" development involved the change of use of agricultural buildings that is in accordance with the policies contained within the UDP.
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 05-06 monitoring period.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the Committee endorse the Annual Monitoring Report 2005-2006 and recommend its approval to Cabinet by the Cabinet Member (Environment).**