

To: City Executive Board

Date: 8th December 2010

Item No: 12

Report of: Head of City Development

Title of Report: Annual Monitoring Report 2009/10

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To approve the Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Secretary of State

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillors Ed Turner and Colin Cook

Policy Framework: Production of the Annual Monitoring Report is currently a government requirement of all local planning authorities. The Annual Monitoring Report enables an assessment to be made of the effectiveness of the planning policies in the Local Development Framework. All the Corporate Plan Priorities are relevant.

Recommendation(s): That the City Executive Board is asked to:

1. Approve the Annual Monitoring Report 2009/10 for submission to the Secretary of State;
2. Authorise the Head of City Development to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document prior to publication.

Introduction

1. The City Executive Board is asked to consider the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) before it is submitted to the Secretary of State. This is the City Council's sixth monitoring report to assess the effectiveness of planning policies of the Local Development Framework. It covers the period 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010 and is, by and large, a factual document.
2. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 35) requires every local planning authority to submit an annual monitoring report to the Secretary of State containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the policies set out in the Local Development Framework are being implemented.

Future of Annual Monitoring Reports

3. Members will be aware that the coalition government has indicated that it intends to reform the planning system, as part of its wider localism agenda. In light of the government's general approach of removing centrally imposed targets and national indicators, it seems likely that the requirement to produce AMR's may well be removed in due course.
4. Nevertheless, the AMR is a useful document since it provides feedback to Members, stakeholders and residents on the performance of planning policies and whether the objectives of those policies have actually been achieved. In so doing, monitoring enables the City Council to respond more quickly to changing priorities and circumstances.
5. In addition, Development Plan Documents are assessed at independent examination on whether the policies are founded on a robust and credible evidence base, and whether there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.
6. Officers therefore consider that there is good reason to continue producing an AMR, even if the statutory requirement to do so is removed. However, it is important that the AMR provides information that is genuinely useful for policy development, rather than monitoring for its own sake. It is anticipated that next year's AMR will take a different form, with less emphasis on the current core output indicators and more emphasis on issues of particular concern in Oxford.

AMR Content

7. The AMR includes sections setting out *key facts about Oxford*, progress against the Local Development Scheme, monitoring of policies and implementation of the Statement of Community Involvement.
8. In relation to progress against the Local Development Scheme (LDS), it should be noted that the current version of the LDS (2008-2011) is now somewhat dated due to the lengthy nature of the Core Strategy examination and the knock-on effects this has had for the production of other Development Plan Documents. It is intended to review and update the LDS when the Core Strategy Inspector's Report has been received. The review will also take into account proposals for planning reforms in the forthcoming Decentralisation and Localism Bill.
9. In relation to policy monitoring, a traffic light approach has been applied to reflect performance against targets and objectives. Of the 26 indicators monitored, one (net additional pitches for gypsies and travellers) has not been given a score. This reflects the fact that there are no established gypsy or traveller caravan pitches in Oxford, there have been no planning applications for new sites in recent years and there is no longer a regional target against which to assess provision.
10. In relation to the remaining 25 indicators, the table below shows that only one (compliance of non-residential development with cycle parking standards) is not performing against target. The vast majority of indicators are either green or amber:

| | Green (on-target or progressing towards it) | Amber (new indicator or policy needs close attention next year) | Red (under performance against target) |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| National core indicator | 8 | 5 | 0 |
| Local/ contextual indicator | 6 | 5 | 1 |

11. The 09/10 monitoring year needs to be assessed in the context of the economic recession. Key findings are that:

- 257 net additional dwellings were completed in 2009/10, which is a significant reduction on the 08/09 figure of 665 dwellings. This reflects the national slowdown in housing delivery, but housing delivery over the last four years at 2,272 (06/07-09/10) still significantly exceeds the annual average required to meet the Core Strategy target of 400 dwellings per year);
- Despite the overall fall in housing supply, the number of affordable housing completions at 192 in 2009/10 exceeded the Corporate Plan target of 150 dwellings a year;
- The mix of dwellings completed during 2009/10 has shown an improvement on previous years. The proportion of 3-bed dwellings has increased and the proportion of dwellings completed that are 1 and 2 bed is lower than over the past four years;
- 4,926 m² was completed for employment uses, a significant reduction from previous years (15,500 m² in 08/09) which again reflects the wider economic situation. However, the amount of B1 floorspace granted planning permission in 2009/10 increased by 2,000m² to around 15,000m².
- Whilst the health and education sectors remain important to Oxford, there has been no development coming forward this year in health and less than 1 hectare in education.

Level of risk

12. A risk assessment has been undertaken and the risk register is attached (Appendix 2). All risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level.

Climate change/environmental impact

13. Section 4 of the AMR addresses environmental issues, including data on biodiversity, renewable energy generation and compliance with Natural Resources Impact Analysis (NRIA) requirements.

Equalities impact

14. Equality issues are taken into account in certain indicators, for example those on housing quality and parking standards.

Financial implications

15. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

16. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

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Comment [x1]: Name,
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List of background papers: None

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