

**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 15 October 2014  
**Report of:** Head of City Development  
**Title of Report:** Annual Monitoring Report 2013/14

## Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report:** To approve the Annual Monitoring Report for publication

**Key decision?** No

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Bob Price

**Policy Framework:** The Annual Monitoring Report enables an assessment to be made of the effectiveness of the planning policies in Oxford's Local Development Plan.

**Recommendations:** The City Executive Board is asked to:

1. Approve the Annual Monitoring Report 2013/14 for publication.
2. Authorise the Head of City Development to insert the housing trajectory data required under Indicator 10 when the URS Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is completed.
3. Authorise the Head of City Development to make any necessary additional corrections to the document prior to publication.

Appendix 1: Annual Monitoring Report 2013/14

Appendix 2: Risk Assessment

## **Introduction**

1. The City Executive Board is asked to consider the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) before it is published. This is the City Council's tenth AMR to assess the effectiveness of planning policies contained within Oxford's Local Development Plan. It covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and is a factual document.

2. The former requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act for every local planning authority to submit an AMR to the Secretary of State has been removed by the Localism Act 2011. However section 113 of the Localism Act still requires Local Planning Authorities to publish monitoring reports at least yearly in the interests of transparency. Regulations require this monitoring information to be made available online and in council offices as soon as possible once the information becomes available. The monitoring data is currently only collected annually, but it may be possible in future to publish some data during the year if it becomes available more frequently.
3. The AMR provides feedback to Members, stakeholders and residents on the performance of planning policies and whether the objectives of those policies are being achieved. In doing so, monitoring enables the City Council to respond more quickly to changing priorities and circumstances. In addition, statutory plans are assessed at independent examination on whether the policies are founded on robust and credible evidence, and whether there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.
4. As the AMR is a factual and reporting document, there is sometimes data which comes in late or requires correction prior to publication. This year we are awaiting the figures for Oxford's housing trajectory, which will come from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which is expected to be completed in early October. The City Executive Board is asked to authorise the Head of City Development to insert the housing trajectory data when the SHLAA has been completed.

### **Monitoring Indicators**

5. The Localism Act retains the requirement for monitoring reports to set out information relating to the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the policies set out in Local Development Documents are being achieved. It is also the place to report on how the Duty to Co-operate is undertaken, and on any Neighbourhood Plans that are coming forward.
6. There is no longer any formal national guidance, nor any national core output indicators. Local Planning Authorities can decide what to include in accordance with relevant UK and EU legislation.
7. Most of the indicators and targets selected in the AMR are required because the City Council made a commitment to monitor such data in adopted documents such as the Core Strategy. In addition, many of the former national indicators have been retained because they continue to provide useful information, for instance in relation to the Housing Trajectory and land developed for employment uses.

8. This is the first year that the AMR has included Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring, Sites and Housing Plan Monitoring, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Monitoring and appeal decision monitoring. More information has also been added to the snapshot of Oxford and the Statement of Community Involvement monitoring sections.

### Findings of the 2013/14 Annual Monitoring Report

9. During the 2013/14 monitoring year, good progress was made on the production of a range of planning policy documents. The Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations, Oxpens Masterplan and Jericho Canalside Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) were all adopted during the monitoring year, as was the CIL Charging Schedule. Significant progress was also made on the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan and Diamond Place SPD.
10. In relation to policy monitoring, a traffic-light approach has been applied to reflect performance against targets and objectives. The vast majority of indicators scored either green or amber ratings.

	<b>GREEN</b> Targets and objectives have been met, or data indicates good progress towards meeting them.	<b>AMBER</b> Limited progression towards meeting targets / insufficient information to make an assessment.	<b>RED</b> Data indicates under-performance against targets and objectives.
Vibrant Sustainable Economy	5 (56%)	3 (33%)	1 (11%)
Meeting Housing Needs	1 (17%)	4 (66%)	1 (17%)
Strong Active Communities	5 (100%)	-	-
Cleaner Greener Oxford	12 (92%)	1 (8%)	-
<b>Overall Performance 2013/14</b>	<b>23 (70%)</b>	<b>8 (24%)</b>	<b>2 (6%)</b>

11. Overall performance against indicators is positive, with the majority scoring green ratings for meeting or making considerable progress towards targets in 2013/14. Indicator performance was particularly strong for environmental and social indicators, with 100% of Strong Active Communities targets and 92% of Cleaner Greener Oxford

targets scoring green ratings. This reflects the significant progress that has been made towards delivering major regeneration and development projects in the city, as well as the Council's commitment to protecting and enhancing Oxford's historic buildings and open spaces.

12. Performance against economic and housing indicators was more mixed, as economic conditions have continued to be challenging during the monitoring year. Two indicators scored red ratings indicating under performance against their targets: employment development on allocated sites and affordable housing completions.
13. Although this is disappointing, activity in the construction industry is increasing and performance is expected to improve in subsequent monitoring years. For example, although there were no affordable housing completions during the monitoring year, this was anticipated as there were no permissions granted for affordable housing in the previous monitoring year and the Corporate Plan target for 2013/14 was low, at only 4 units.
14. Affordable housing delivery is expected to rise in subsequent years as planning permission was granted for 599 (gross) affordable homes during the monitoring year, representing a potential net gain of 493 affordable dwellings if all schemes are implemented. 220 of these homes (114 net) are proposed on Oxford City Council sites. A further 354 affordable homes have been granted outline permission at the Barton Strategic site, a joint venture between the City Council and a private developer. The 2014-18 Corporate Plan sets a higher target of 180 affordable homes to be delivered in 2014/15, reflecting expectations that affordable housing delivery is set to increase in future monitoring years.
15. Members may also wish to note that to date 230 residential units have been permitted under the prior approval scheme introduced in May 2013 for changes of use from B1a office to C3 residential. 167 of these units were granted prior approval during the 2013/14 monitoring year. These applications are not required to make any contribution towards affordable housing, nor in most cases CIL. They can result in a poor standard of residential accommodation, as well as a loss of office space across the city. The City Council are currently in the process of introducing an Article 4 Direction to remove these permitted development rights on key employment sites. The Direction is due to come into force on 28 March 2015 unless the Secretary of State were to intervene in the meantime.
16. Similarly, although no employment developments were completed on allocated sites in 2013/14, it is anticipated that the situation will improve in subsequent monitoring years as a number of planning applications have been approved and more are under consideration.

17. The Annual Monitoring Report includes an annual update on the progress made by each of the two universities against the Core Strategy policy target that no more than 3,000 full-time students live in the community (not in accommodation provided by the relevant university).
18. This year both universities are above the 3,000 threshold, albeit both only marginally. The University of Oxford had 3,020 students living outside of university provided accommodation. As of 1 December 2013, when the data was collected, Oxford University had another 209 units under construction, of which it is understood that 192 are now occupied. The University therefore expects to be below the threshold in the 2014/15 year.
19. Oxford Brookes University had 3,072 students without a place provided in university accommodation. The university has explained that this was a result of volatile market conditions, following changes to national government policy, which made it very difficult to predict student behaviour and market responses. In the event, Brookes recruited above target resulting in a figure just above the 3,000 threshold. The university adds that the increase in students living outside of university provided accommodation is significantly less than the increase in student numbers, demonstrating the effectiveness of actions taken to provide and encourage use of university accommodation. Oxford Brookes halls of residence occupancy rates have risen from 87% in 2012/13 to 96% in 2013/14. There were also an additional 95 student places in halls of residence and 51 places in nominated halls in 2013/14 when compared to the previous monitoring year. Oxford Brookes has taken compensatory action in the 2014 recruitment round by recruiting to lower targets. It is therefore anticipated that the university will come back below the 3,000 threshold in the 2014/15 year.

### **Level of Risk**

20. 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**

21. The Cleaner Greener Oxford section of the AMR provides information on a range of environmental indicators including data on biodiversity, heritage issues, and compliance with the Natural Resources Impact Analysis (NRIA) requirements. The majority of indicators in this section (92%) are recorded as green, and it is clear that the City Council's adopted planning framework is not only helping to maintain the

outstanding quality of Oxford's environment, but is also making a useful contribution to the wide range of measures which the City Council and its partners are using to tackle the challenges of climate change.

### **Equalities Impact**

22. There are no direct equalities impacts arising from this report.

### **Financial Implications**

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

### **Legal Implications**

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

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