

To: City Executive Board

Date: 12 November 2015

Report of: Head of Planning and Regulatory Services

Title of Report: Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15

Summary and Recommendations

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

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Board Member Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services

Policy Framework: The Annual Monitoring Report is a statutory requirement providing information as to the implementation of the Council's Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the policies set out in the Council's Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents are being achieved. The scope of those policies is wide and encompasses all of the Council's corporate priorities.

Recommendation(s): That the City Executive Board resolves to:

1. Approve the Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15 for publication.
2. Authorise the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services to make any necessary additional minor corrections not materially affecting the document prior to publication.

Appendix 1: Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15

Appendix 2: Risk Assessment

Background

1. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2014-15 is the City Council's eleventh AMR. It assesses the effectiveness of planning policies contained within Oxford's Local Development Plan. The AMR covers the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 and is a factual document.

2. Section 113 of the Localism Act 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.
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.

Findings of the 2014/15 Annual Monitoring Report

4. The performance of planning policies is monitored using a traffic-light approach. Performance in 2014/15 is summarised in Table 1.

	GREEN Targets and objectives have been met, or data indicates good progress towards meeting them.	AMBER Limited progression towards meeting targets / insufficient information to make an assessment.	RED Data indicates under-performance against targets and objectives.
Vibrant Sustainable Economy	5 (55.5%)	3 (33.5%)	1 (11%)
Meeting Housing Needs	8 (61.5%)	4 (30.5%)	1 (8%)
Strong Active Communities	5 (62.5%)	3 (37.5%)	0 (0%)
Cleaner Greener Oxford	11 (92%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)

Table 1: Summary of performance against targets 2014/15

5. Overall performance in 2014/15 is positive, with the majority of indicators scoring green ratings for meeting or making considerable progress towards targets.
6. One economic indicator scored red in the 2014/15 monitoring year (Indicator 2). This was due to the permanent loss of a key protected employment site due to national changes to permitted development rights. However, on 28 March 2015 the City Council successfully brought into force an Article 4 Direction which removes the ability to convert these sites to residential uses without the need for planning permission. This should result in the target of no loss of key protected employment sites being met in future monitoring years.
7. In the 2014/15 monitoring year, 332 (net) dwellings were completed in Oxford. This represents a positive increase in comparison to recent years.

8. The dwelling completions from the start of the Core Strategy period (2006) to 2014/15 totalled 3,460. The expected figure was 3,600 dwellings. This is just 140 fewer completed dwellings than might have been expected. This shortfall is expected to be made up within the next few years when completion rates are forecast to increase.
9. 17 affordable dwellings were completed in the 2014/15 monitoring year. Whilst this is disappointing, the situation is expected to improve in future monitoring years as existing planning permissions are built out, particularly on some of the larger sites. Planning permission was granted for 493 (net) affordable dwellings in 2013/14. This includes 354 (net) affordable dwellings at Barton Park, where work has now commenced on site. It also includes 107 (gross) affordable dwellings being provided through the City Council's own building programme which had not been completed by April 2015 and so will be reported in the 2015/16 monitoring year. As more permissions begin to be completed in the next few years they will significantly boost the supply of affordable housing in Oxford.
10. The City Council also received £217,351.60 towards affordable housing provision through s106 agreements in 2014/15. This money will be used to provide affordable homes in the city in line with the City Council's Housing Strategy.
11. Changes to legislation and national policy and guidance mean that it is has been challenging to secure additional affordable homes and financial contributions towards affordable housing through planning permissions in 2014/15 (Indicators 14 and 15). Changes to permitted development rights alone have resulted in a loss of 32 affordable homes that would normally have been secured in 2014/15.
12. Core Strategy Policy CS25 requires each university to have no more than 3,000 full-time students living outside of university provided accommodation in Oxford. The policy is intended to reduce the pressures from students on the private rental market. To avoid worsening the situation, all increases in academic floorspace that would facilitate an increase in student numbers at the two Universities should be matched by an equivalent increase in student accommodation. Applications for new or redeveloped academic floorspace will be assessed on this basis. All of the new academic floorspace permitted in 2014/15 (Indicator 6) complied with this requirement.
13. In the 2014/15 monitoring year, Oxford University had 2,910 students living outside of university provided accommodation, within the Core Strategy Target. Oxford Brookes University had 3,451 students living outside of university provided accommodation in 2014/15. This was due to a temporary reduction in the number of university provided accommodation places available, as halls at Harcourt Hill were redeveloped and refurbished, and there was also a drop in the number of places available under the university owned and managed housing scheme. Oxford Brookes has taken steps to resolve these issues by

increasing the number of university provided accommodation places available in the current 2015/16 academic year.

14. Significant progress has been made on key projects in the West End during 2014/15. This includes the commencement of the Westgate development and improvement works at Frideswide Square. These developments will bring about significant positive change in this part of the city.
15. Whilst it is still too early to monitor progress against the Barton AAP monitoring framework, significant progress towards delivering this development has been made during the 2014/15 monitoring year. A reserved matters application for works needed to prepare the site for development was approved in February 2015 and work has now commenced on site. A number of conditions attached to the outline planning permission were also discharged during 2014/15. It is expected that further reserved matters applications will be submitted during the 2015/16 monitoring year.
16. Good progress was made on producing a range of planning policy documents during the 2014/15 monitoring year. The Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (AAP) was adopted on 20 July 2015. The Diamond Place Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and a revised Statement of Community Involvement were also adopted on 9 July 2015. Work also commenced on a Design SPD, with initial consultation taking place 27 February to 17 April 2015. Work on this document has continued into 2015/16.

Legal Issues

17. The preparation and publication of the AMR is a statutory requirement.

Financial Implications

18. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Environmental Impact

19. There are no environmental implications arising from this report, however the AMR does report on environmental issues such as biodiversity, heritage assets and compliance with the Natural Resources Impact Analysis (NRIA) requirements.

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.

Equalities Impact

21. There are no equalities impacts arising from this report.

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