

Meeting of the Cabinet - 9th December 2009

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Annual Monitoring Report 2009

Purpose of Report

1. To inform and seek endorsement from Cabinet to forward the Annual Monitoring Report 2009 for Dudley Metropolitan Borough to the Secretary of State by the 31st December 2009 as required by Government.

Background

2. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 each Local Planning Authority is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the period 1st April to 31st March and to submit it to the Secretary of State by 31st December each year. This AMR covers the period from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009.
3. The aim of the AMR is to assess the progress made in the production of the Local Development Documents (LDDs) identified in the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS sets out the timetable for the LDDs and it is the purpose of the AMR to see whether the targets are being met and policies implemented.
4. The Annual Monitoring Report must also assess whether the objectives of the Council's policies as set out in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2005 are being successfully implemented.
5. There are a series of nationally defined core output indicators which the AMR has to respond to in order to measure whether the processes that have been put in place to deliver the Plan's policies are achieving the desired outcomes. These cover a series of topics including housing, the economy, transport, retail and waste. In addition a number of Local Output Indicators are also included in order to assess how the UDP policies are working. The Annual Monitoring Report 2009 has found that the Council's planning policies are being successfully implemented and shows how good planning guidance can encourage and enable good development. For example the AMR demonstrates that Dudley MBC is meeting its requirement with regard to the delivery of new homes in the Borough. The total number of new dwellings has increased to 687 which is higher than last years completion figure (542). Similarly 99.9% of these homes have been built on previously developed land. Policies are also working well in such diverse topics such as the historic environment, flood protection and safeguarding open space.

6. Although there are no major areas of concern there are some aspects of the monitoring framework that will require close attention in the future in order to highlight any emerging issues. The AMR does flag up that there has been some minor encroachment into protected Nature Conservation sites.
7. A number of the UDP policies will not be monitored in future AMRs as they have not been saved, these have been identified in the AMR. Others will be superseded by policies in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) when this document is formally adopted. The JCS will be out for consultation from 30th November 2009 to 15th January 2010 prior to submission to the Secretary of State in February 2010.
8. Whilst the AMR deals specifically with the Council's planning policies and functions it does not operate in isolation. There are close links between planning and other Council functions. The planning policies complement other Council strategies, in particular the Community Strategy, and, with this aim, the AMR provides contextual data on the characteristics and challenges facing the Borough.
9. A copy of the Annual Monitoring Report will be available in the Members Room. Once submitted to the Secretary of State, the Annual Monitoring Report will be made available to the public on the Council's website and at appropriate locations around the Borough.

Finance

10. Any financial implications arising out of the Annual Monitoring Report will need to be met from existing resources.

Law

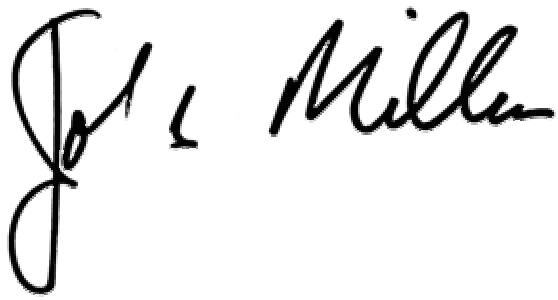
11. The production of the Annual Monitoring Report is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and is detailed in Planning Policy Statement 12. Planning Policy Statements set out the Government's national policies on different aspects of planning.

Equality Impact

12. The aim of the AMR is to report on the policies of the adopted UDP and on the progress being made on various planning documents by the Council. These documents will seek to ensure that sufficient homes, jobs, shops, social, educational and recreational facilities are provided in order to meet the needs of everyone within the community, including the needs of children and young people of the borough.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that:
 - Members note the contents of the Annual Monitoring Report..
 - Members endorse the report and agree to forward it to the Secretary of State before the deadline of 31st December 2009.



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