

CABINET

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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jane Chitty, Strategic Development and Economic Growth

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Summary

This report seeks authority to publish the Annual Monitoring Report.

This is the Council's eighth Annual Monitoring Report which analyses progress against a range of indicators associated with the adopted development plan and the emerging Local Development Framework.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 The Annual Monitoring Report complies with the Policy Framework, its distribution and web publishing is a matter for Cabinet. It has no budget implications.

2. Background

2.1 Since 2005, in accordance with Section 35 Planning and Compulsory Act 2004, all local planning authorities were required to submit to Government an Annual Monitoring Report which analyses progress with the adopted development plan and emerging local development framework.

2.2 Due to the Localism Act which came into effect from January 2012, there is no longer a need for reports to be submitted to the Secretary of State.

2.3 The Act does not remove the requirement for local authorities to produce a monitoring report for public consumption. The intention therefore is to continue to make the Annual Monitoring Report available on the Council website in the same way as before using the same deadline.

2.4 This report brings together a great deal of information about the area for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. It is a valuable reference source for many services, external organisations and potential investors.

- 2.5 Copies of Volume 1 of the Annual Monitoring Report have been sent to Cabinet members, Group Rooms and the Chatham Contact Point. Further copies are also available from the cabinet office and via <http://www.medway.gov.uk/cabinetdecisions.htm>. Please contact 01634 332509/332008 for further details.
- 2.6 In previous years the format of the Annual Monitoring Report remained broadly the same. With the guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government having been withdrawn in March 2011, there is now more room for Councils to focus on locally important issues and chose which priorities are important to be reported on in their local area.
- 2.7 This year's report is based around a larger collection of performance indicators, focusing on the progress of each Core Strategy policy rather than broad themes.
- 2.8 This collection of progress measures and supporting contextual evidence has been developed via the 'Monitoring and Implementation Framework' and will be expanded further in future years. The Monitoring and Implementation Framework is set out in table 11-1 of the Core Strategy and it identifies over what timescale a policy is to be implemented and by whom.

3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1 The main findings in this year's report are summarised below.
- Continuing progress with the regeneration programme, despite the continuing economic downturn. Construction commenced at Rochester Riverside and the pace of development increased on St. Mary's Island and at Gillingham Waterfront. The Chatham bus station was completed
 - Housing completions up on the previous year at 809, only marginally short of the ambitious South East Plan target and proportionately higher than elsewhere in Kent. Affordable housing completions again well above target at 37.5%
 - Two of the largest planning applications in Medway's history submitted - for the new settlement at Lodge Hill and for Chatham Waters
 - The overall town centre vacancy rate of 8.7% compared to a rate for the UK of 14.5%
 - A net gain in the amount of employment floorspace for the first time for three years (Medway having experienced considerable losses over a number of years as a result of clearance on major regeneration sites)
 - A higher rate of increase in average earnings than Kent, the South East or Great Britain
 - A further increase in the number of Green Flag sites to 5
 - A continuing decline in the tonnage of municipal waste produced

- Medway's carbon footprint remained substantially below the national average
- A record number of planning applications submitted for renewable energy installations
- A significant increase in community volunteering
- Increases in visitor numbers to the Guildhall Museum and other visitor attractions.

3.2 Appropriate indicators are still being investigated for certain policies and a time series will need to be built up to determine trends in some areas. However all the indications are that Medway is out performing many other areas on a number of measures and, as a consequence, is avoiding the worst effects of the continuing economic downturn.

4. Risk management

4.1 As the Annual Monitoring Report is a factual account of performance achieved there are no specific risks associated with its production.

5. Financial and legal implications

5.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council is required to prepare reports which must be in respect of a period which the Council considers appropriate for transparency (being not longer than 12 months from the most recent report) and which are made available to the public. Under the Localism Act 2011, the Secretary of State has the power to make further regulations on the timing, content and form, with a recommendation that the interval between reports should be no longer than 12 months. The Localism Act also replaces the name of Annual Monitoring Reports with 'Authorities Monitoring Reports' and further reports will be reported under this title.

5.2 There are no direct equalities impacts. Equalities are considered in the context of preparing local plan policies but are not relevant to the AMR, which monitors the performance of such policies.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That the 2012 Annual Monitoring Report be approved for publication.

7. Suggested reasons for decision

7.1 To enable continued monitoring of the development plan to be made available to the local community and others.

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Background papers

None.