

CABINET

21 DECEMBER 2010

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

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

Report from: Robin Cooper, Regeneration, Community and Culture

Author: Brian McCutcheon, Local & Regional Planning Manager

Summary

This report seeks authority to submit the Annual Monitoring Report to Government by the deadline of 31 December 2010.

This is the Council's sixth Annual Monitoring Report and it 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 and its submission to Government is a matter for the Cabinet. It has no budget implications.

2. Background

2.1 In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 all local planning authorities are required to submit to government an Annual Monitoring Report by the end of December each year. This must include key monitoring information related to the development plan and is intended to demonstrate what progress has been made and what policies may require review.

2.2 Although a formal requirement, the report brings together a great deal of important information about the area and is a valuable reference source for many services, external organisations and potential investors.

2.3 **Copies 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.**

- 2.4 The format of the Annual Monitoring Report is broadly similar to previous years and centres on a number of indicators laid out in guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government. The period covered by the report is 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

3. Options

- 3.1 The preparation of the report is a statutory requirement and it is an accepted standard reference for various bodies interested in the Council's performance. A failure to submit by the due date would be a breach of the Council's legal duty.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 The main findings in this year's report are summarised below.
- 4.2 No less than 972 new homes were completed over the 12 month monitoring period. This was higher than any year since the 1980's and it contrasts with the virtual collapse in housebuilding elsewhere. It is considered to result directly from the Council's regeneration efforts and the Housing strategy team's exceptional performance in securing funding from the HCA and matching housing associations with private housebuilders. Without a general economic recovery however a significant drop off in completions is forecast for the current and next few years.
- 4.3 Of the 972 new homes 32% were classified as 'affordable'. This again indicates an exceptional level of performance, which is very much to the credit of the Housing Strategy service.
- 4.4 The stock of employment land available for development also reached record levels at some 460 hectares. This reflects the relatively recent planning permissions at Kingsnorth and the Isle of Grain but other sites are also available within the main urban area and in association with the planned new settlement at Lodge Hill.
- 4.5 64% of housebuilding and 99% of employment development took place on previously developed land and the proportion of housebuilding will continue to increase as local plan greenfield allocated sites are built out.
- 4.6 The number of renewable energy proposals was the highest to date but at only five points to the need to further encourage developments of this type.
- 4.7 Average earnings in Medway improved to just above the national average but still lag well below the regional average. The trend in life expectancy is positive but still below the national average. Skills performance at NVQ levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 continued to show improvement.

- 4.8 Given the continuing exceptionally difficult economic conditions there is therefore much positive news in the report. In particular a basket of indicators suggest that Medway is currently out performing many other areas.

5. Risk Management

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

6. Financial and legal implications

- 6.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from the report. However the Annual Monitoring Report is being prepared to meet the requirements of S.35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 48 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That the 2010 Annual Monitoring Report be approved and submitted to Government by 31 December 2010.

8. Suggested reasons for decision

- 8.1 To satisfy the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated guidance.

Lead officer contact

Brian McCutcheon, Local and Regional Planning Manager, Gun Wharf.
Telephone: 10634 331149. Email: brian.mccutcheon@medway.gov.uk

Background papers

None