



Authority Monitoring Report for Planning, 2017/18

Cllr Ruffell, Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure

Report to	Economic Planning and Housing Committee
Ward(s):	All
Key Decision:	No
Appendix 1:	Map showing progress of neighbourhood plans at 1 December 2018.
Appendix 2:	Basingstoke and Deane Authority Monitoring Report 2017/18
Papers relied on:	National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

Foreword - Cllr Ruffell, Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure

The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) includes information about the performance of our Local Plan in 2017/18. When Economic, Planning and Housing Committee discussed last year's AMR, we asked officers to remind us of our comments in 12 months' time and to review whether what we had observed had become trends. Now, a year later, it is clear that the Local Plan is performing well, and that housing delivery is increasing as the allocated sites are coming on stream. There have been a range of other notable successes this year too, not least in neighbourhood planning. A number of new plans have been made, and the monitoring reports show that the earlier neighbourhood plans are performing well.

Recommendation to Economic, Planning and Housing Committee:

It is recommended that:

- The contents of this report are noted.
- Any views expressed by the Committee are reported to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure.

Background, corporate objectives and priorities

The considerations outlined in this report support the delivery of each of the Council Plan priorities - preparing for controlled and sustainable growth, improving residents' quality of life and supporting those who need it. More directly, it supports the following priorities:

- Create jobs and opportunities by supporting new and existing businesses.
- Support the provision of quality homes, affordable to all through growth and regeneration;

- Create a vehicle for delivering long-term growth;
- Invest in our infrastructure;
- Maintain and enhance our built and natural environment; and
- Promote strong communities.

When EPH Committee discussed the 2016/17 AMR in February 2018, members of the committee made the following key observations:

- Pleased to see the progression with neighbourhood planning;
- Concerns about the increasing number of extant permissions, and the non-implementation of consents.
- Concerns about potential housing land supply in the latter part of the Plan period, and how this could impact upon affordable housing delivery;
- Concerns about how the water quality information had been presented, and the Environment Agency’s shift to triennial monitoring;
- Concerns about the subjectivity of the traffic light performance indicators, in particular how it had been applied to the jobs figure.

The report provides updates, where relevant, whilst the AMR’s methodology has been adjusted to change how the performance indicators have been applied.

Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
AMR	Authority Monitoring Report
ALP	Adopted Local Plan
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance

Main considerations

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) was published in December 2018 and provides monitoring information and statistical data for the borough for the period from 1 April 2017 to the 31 March 2018. The purpose of the AMR is to monitor progress with the production of planning policy documents and consider the effectiveness of the council’s planning policies against relevant performance indicators. The document is published annually in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This is the second report to be published since the adoption of the Local Plan in May 2016.

1.2 The AMR demonstrates that the Local Plan is generally performing well, providing a clear policy framework which enables the council to make consistent decisions and deliver sustainable development. Notable progress has also been made on a range of planning related documents including Supplementary Planning Documents to support the delivery of Local Plan policies and Neighbourhood Plans, which help ensure that development reflects local priorities and needs.

2 The Proposal

2.1 The AMR measures the effectiveness of the policies in the Local Plan using the same indicators as last year's AMR. These are primarily based on the targets set out within the Local Plan itself. Some additional data has been included where it is required by new national policy (for example, the new Planning Practice Guidance requires councils to monitor planning permissions on windfall sites), and where new data has become available (for example, commercial vacancy rates).

2.2 National guidance recommends that policies in neighbourhood plans should also be regularly monitored. Given the age of a number of the borough's neighbourhood plans it is now considered to be a suitable time to include relevant monitoring information for these plans. Therefore, appendix 6 of the AMR reviews the performance of the three neighbourhood plans that were adopted prior to this monitoring year (Oakley and Deane, Overton and Bramley). These neighbourhood plan monitoring reports have been produced in conjunction with the relevant parish councils and reflect agreed positions with them. Future AMRs will review other neighbourhood plans once they have been in force for more than a year, and there has been sufficient opportunity for their policies to have been tested.

2.3 The AMR includes:

- A detailed executive summary that provides an overview of the key findings of the document. This includes 'traffic light' ratings to highlight the Local Plan's performance against a range of targets drawn from the Local Plan, with a comparison of how the performance has changed in relation to the previous year. The traffic light rating shows where targets/indicators have been met (green) or not met (red). In response to member comments last year, traffic light ratings have now been more strictly applied to the targets and no amber ratings have been used. Where there is not a clear correlation between targets and outcomes, relevant fields have been greyed.
- An overview of progress with planning policy documents (Section 3);
- An explanation of how the council has satisfied its on-going duty to cooperate (Section 4);
- The detailed assessment of Local Plan policies (Sections 5-8), structured around the thematic chapters of the Local Plan. This examines issues relating to the delivery of new homes (including affordable housing, gypsies and traveller accommodation and design quality), the natural environment

(such as green infrastructure and water quality), economic development, and infrastructure delivery; and

- Appendices, including the neighbourhood plan monitoring reports.

3 Key issues for consideration

3.1 The AMR shows that the Local Plan is generally performing well. The Plan is having a wide range of positive impacts on the built and natural environment, contributing to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. This includes protecting areas from inappropriate development, retaining local facilities, strengthening the borough's economy and meeting local needs. In particular the Plan's policies are:

- Supporting the delivery of new homes. A number of the Local Plan's site allocations are now being built out;
- Ensuring a mix of new homes of appropriate size, type and tenure to meet local needs. The policies have been effective in securing affordable housing on qualifying sites;
- Providing flexibility to allow new homes in the countryside, where appropriate;
- Protecting the natural environment and preventing development that would erode the green infrastructure network;
- Supporting economic development, including redevelopment at Basing View; and
- Supporting the development of, and preventing the loss of community facilities.

Progress with Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.2 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Neighbourhood Planning) provides a supportive framework for neighbourhood planning. It establishes housing requirements for 13 of the borough's larger settlements that should be met through allocations in neighbourhood plans or windfall development. Neighbourhood plans may also come forward in other parts of the borough although there is no requirement for them to allocate development sites.
- 3.3 Prior to the monitoring year, three neighbourhood plans had been made (adopted) in the borough in Oakley and Deane, Overton and Bramley. As shown in AMR appendix 6, it is clear that these neighbourhood plans are performing well and providing a strong framework to help local people influence development in their areas.
- 3.4 During the monitoring year, further neighbourhood plans were made (adopted) in Sherborne St John, Sherfield on Loddon, St Mary Bourne, and Whitchurch. Since April, two further neighbourhood plans have been made in Old Basing and Lychpit and Kingsclere. This takes the total number of made neighbourhood plans to nine.
- 3.5 Over the monitoring year, new neighbourhood plan areas were designated in the parishes of Ashford Hill with Headley, Pamber and Burghclere. Since then, further neighbourhood planning areas have been designated in Cliddesden and

Highclere. In total 17 areas are now designated across the borough. A map showing the full coverage of plans, and their stages of production, is attached in **Appendix 1**. Of those parishes listed in Policy SS5 that still have an outstanding housing requirement, only Dummer and Preston Candover have not designated neighbourhood planning areas, and started the process. The LPA wrote to these parish councils in September 2018, reiterating the policy requirement, and offering the council's support.

- 3.6 In July 2018, the new National Planning Policy Framework was published, and this provided strengthened support for neighbourhood planning. This formalised additional protection from speculative development to areas with neighbourhood plans that are less than two years old which allocate sites¹.
- 3.7 In such cases, the Development Plan is still considered to be 'up to date', if the LPA can demonstrate a three year supply of deliverable housing sites and that they had delivered 45% of their housing requirement over the previous three years (the Housing Delivery Test). As explained in Section 5.4 of the AMR, Sherborne St John will benefit from this additional protection until 5 May 2019, and Whitchurch will benefit until 15 September 2019.
- 3.8 The LPA continues to proactively support neighbourhood planning groups, and provide advice to other parish councils considering starting on a neighbourhood plan. This included holding an annual Neighbourhood Planning Meeting in the summer which was attended by 11 groups and received positive feedback.

Key issues identified in the AMR

- 3.9 As identified in the AMR's executive summary, a small number of Local Plan targets were not met in 2017/18. These are considered below.

Housing Delivery

- 3.10 During the monitoring year, 828 net new homes were built. This is the highest level of completions since 2009/10 and continues a positive trend which has seen an increase in completions year on year since 2014. The level of completions is just 3% short of the Local Plan target of 850 units per annum. The number reflects high delivery rates on Local Plan greenfield site allocations at Kennel Farm (Policy SS3.2), Land North of Marnel Park (Policy SS3.4), and Razors Farm (Policy SS3.3). New homes have also been delivered on the Local Plan allocations at Overton Hill (Policy SS3.5), and land South of Blosswood Lane (Policy SS3.6). There continues to be a high level of delivery from windfall sites, including 115 new homes on brownfield land at Chapel Hill.
- 3.11 The housing trajectory in the AMR outlines a predicted increase in housing growth rates in future years with the shortfall in delivery over the plan period to date being met by 2022/23 onwards. The council can continue to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (5.3 years) and therefore, the council's housing planning policies are considered to be up to date. Local Plan

¹ This had previously been set out in a written ministerial statement, but is now included in the NPPF (2018), para 14.

Policy SS4, which includes a requirement to review the Local Plan if a five year supply of deliverable sites cannot be demonstrated, is not triggered.

- 3.12 When EPH Committee discussed the AMR 2016/17 in February 2018, it raised concerns about the high number of extant consents and unimplemented permissions, and how the council could encourage them to be built out. The number of extant consents remains high and continues to rise, now standing at 5,680 units. This reflects, in part, the pro-active approach taken by the council. Central government continues to look into this issue, although the Letwin Review, published in October 2018 found no evidence of developer land banking on a national level. The council is continuing to take a proactive approach to turning permissions into completions, including reviewing development management processes whilst also working closely with developers and other stakeholders to overcome site specific barriers to delivery. The council needs to continue to take a proactive approach to all aspects of housing delivery to ensure that the predictions set out in the housing trajectory are achieved and a five year supply is maintained. Key actions will be set out in a housing action plan which will be published in 2019, and will build upon ongoing engagement with the development industry, which has included a Developers Forum in September where relevant stakeholders discussed issues around the delivery of the quality homes that the borough needs.
- 3.13 In terms of affordable housing, the council was successful in securing policy-compliant affordable housing on all six market housing sites where it was required. 243 affordable homes were delivered, and whilst this is less than the target of 300pa, this is a significant increase on recent years, including 2016/17 when there were 136 completions. The delivery reflects a number of market and development factors including the overall number of housing completions over the year. The number of affordable housing completions is predicted to rise to around 400-450 homes next year, based on current Register Provider projections, alongside the expected increase in general housing completions. Further information about affordable housing is set out on pages 44-47 of the AMR.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

- 3.14 The council is currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites to meet needs, with three additional pitches being required by 2022. This is despite two pitches being retrospectively allowed on appeal at Pelican Road, Pamber Heath and two new pitches being permitted on the strategic housing site of Hounsome Fields. Therefore, relevant applications will continue to be considered against Policy CN5 of the Local Plan which enables pitches to be provided on unallocated sites where there is a proven need, subject to a range of criteria being met.
- 3.15 The council is working towards establishing a demonstrable supply of sites to meet needs over the next five years. It is expected that suitable provision will be made on the borough's housing allocations, including a number of pitches on Manydown. Further information about the borough's pitch requirements and supply is set out on pages 50-51 of the AMR.

Employment

- 3.16 Local Plan Policy EP1 sets a target of creating between 450-700 new jobs per annum. The AMR therefore includes data on the number of people employed in the borough from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). BRES is a sample survey estimating the number of employees and employment and as such, the results are indicative of trends rather than actual numbers. The data suggests that job numbers have remained relatively stable for the last decade, however it should be recognised that unemployment is still very low, with a claimant count of 1.2% (October 2018).
- 3.17 For the first time, the AMR reports on commercial vacancy rates. A vacancy rate of 8% is considered to reflect a healthy economy as it provides for a degree of choice and churn in the local market. The industrial, storage and distribution vacancy rate fell from 6% (February 2017) to 5% (August 2018), indicating a shortage of supply that is tightening, whilst the office vacancy rate rose from 14% to 16%. This shows that there remains an oversupply of office floorspace in the local market. Although there were some losses in vacant floorspace due to office to commercial Permitted Development conversions, the increase can be specifically attributed to space becoming vacant in two large buildings.

Design

- 3.18 All of the qualifying developments completed over the last year have been rated by officers as 'average', using a nationally supported criteria based assessment tool called 'Building for Life'. Although there were no schemes rated as 'poor', the council did not reach the Local Plan objective of delivering at least half 'good' or 'very good schemes'. There is a variety of site-specific reasons for this, generally relating to how the developments reflected local character. It is also worthy of note that each of the assessed schemes received planning permission prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in 2016 and therefore its impact on design quality is not reflected in the AMR.
- 3.19 There is a general trend over the past ten years of more housing completions achieving a 'good' or 'very good' score, but over the last eighteen months the council has implemented a number of measures to help improve the quality of development in the borough further. This builds upon the Design Quality Initiative work that had previously been undertaken and includes the adoption of a new Design and Sustainability SPD in July 2018, which provides more detailed guidance on how high quality sustainable development can be achieved.

4 Options analysis

- 4.1 The council has a legal requirement to publish an AMR. Whilst much of the content of the AMR responds to requirements set out in national guidance, members may consider that there is other information that could suitably be included in future documents or that conclusions could be presented in a different way.

Corporate implications

5 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications from the recommendations in this report.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Are there new financial implications arising from this report?

Yes	No
	X

6.2 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

7 Risk management

7.1 A risk assessment has been completed in accordance with the council's risk management process and has identified no significant (Red or Amber) residual risks that cannot be fully minimised by existing or planned controls or additional procedures.

8 Equalities implications

8.1 When taking into account the Public Sector Equality Duty and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the trends identified by the AMR are generally positive for all protected characteristics groups. As noted in the AMR, there is a need to continue to work towards establishing a demonstrable supply of sites to meet needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the borough over the next five years.

9 Consultation and communication

9.1 In accordance with the Regulations, the AMR was published on the council's website in December 2018. The council has also informed people on the planning policy consultation database who have asked to be kept up to date about the publication of the AMR.

10 HR implications

10.1 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

Conclusion

11 Summary and reason for the decision

11.1 The council has a statutory duty to publish an AMR annually. The AMR provides an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the borough's planning policy framework.

11.2 The AMR demonstrates that the Local Plan and the first set of made neighbourhood plans are performing well. The plans are continuing to have a wide range of positive impacts on the built and natural environment, contributing to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area.

11.3 It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and that any views expressed by the Committee are reported to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, such that these can either be taken forward through specific actions or be taken into account in future AMRs.

12 The options considered and rejected

12.1 None

<p>Date: January 2019</p> <p>Decision taken by: Economic, Planning and Housing Committee</p>
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Confidentiality	It is considered that information contained within this report (and appendices) do not contain exempt information under the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and therefore can be made public.

Appendix 1: Status of neighbourhood plans at 12 November 2018.

