

**SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK:  
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2009 / 10**

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Strategic Priority: SP5 - Attractive and Inclusive City**

**Corporate Priorities: CI01, CI03**

**1.0 Purpose of report**

1.1 This report informs committee of the Council's Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2009 / 10.

**2.0 Background and current position**

2.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the City Council is required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will replace the current Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 1998. As the statutory development plan for the city, the LDF will be the starting point in the consideration of planning applications for the development or use of land. Furthermore, it will be a fundamental document in delivering the key spatial objectives of the Sunderland Strategy and Economic Masterplan.

2.2 As part of the LDF, the City Council is required to prepare an AMR. The Planning Regulations require the AMR to contain the following information:

- Progress on the preparation of development plan documents against the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (the LDF project plan);
- Any local development orders adopted or revoked (which is not applicable to this Authority);
- Adopted policies that are to be rescinded and why (which is not applicable to this Authority); and
- The annual number of net housing completions.

2.3 Guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in July 2008 suggests (but does not require) that authorities should submit information on 22 Core Output Indicators. This AMR meets both the regulatory and suggested requirements for completion.

2.4 The Annual Monitoring Report forms part of the LDF and must be submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by 31 December each year. This is the sixth AMR to be prepared and covers the period from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

Where appropriate, more up to date information beyond 31 March 2010 has been included for completeness.

- 2.5 The AMR for 2009/10 was submitted to the Government Office for the North East on 23 December 2010. Copies of the AMR have been placed in the Members' Room. It is also available on the Council's Planning Policy web page.

### **3.0 Progress on Development Plan Documents (DPD's)**

- 3.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides a timetable for document preparation based upon the council's current LDS (approved in March 2009). The LDS addresses the preparation of three local development documents. Progress on these has been as follows :

3.1.1 **Core Strategy** – This document will set out the overarching strategic policies for growth across the city. Consultation on a range of Alternative Spatial Development Approaches was held between September and November 2009. The 150 responses received informed the preparation of a Revised "Preferred" Option Draft that was approved in March 2010. Both stages were in accord with the LDS.

3.1.2 Working with both the Government Office and CABE, the format of the Core Strategy was considerably revised to provide greater clarity for future growth to each of the five sub-areas (Washington, Coalfields, Sunderland North, Sunderland South and Central Sunderland).

3.1.3 Given the then impending elections, the formal consultation was deferred. With the range of changes to the planning system introduced by the new Government (particularly with the then revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy in July 2009), the decision was taken to continue developing the Core Strategy in the absence of a regional plan. Subsequently, the intervening period was used to develop amongst other things, new evidence to support the potential for setting the city's growth requirements for new housing and employment land needs and to continue finalising the city wide greenspace audit.

3.1.4 A revised draft of the Core Strategy will now be presented to Council in March 2011.

3.1.5 **Allocations Development Plan Document** – This document will identify sites for employment, retail, community facilities and open space, areas of nature conservation and transport routes. The programme to develop this document is to be aligned to that of the Core Strategy and has, as a consequence, slipped behind the timetable set out in the LDS. That said, to support site specific issues, substantial work has been undertaken to maintain an up to date evidence base including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Employment Land Review.

3.1.6 **Hetton Downs Area Action Plan** – Centring on the Hetton Downs/ Eppleton area, this plan will provide the development framework for the area's long-term sustainable improvement and regeneration. The formal "Publication" draft was provisionally timetabled for July 2010, but this date was not met as a consequence of detailed issues around the School Place Planning exercise and the impacts this may have had on

particular sites in the area. This exercise has now been resolved, though further consideration is now to be given as to how best progress the Area Action Plan.

**3.1.7 The Sustainability Appraisal** – This is required for each DPD in order to test the sustainability effects of the each plan. Previously a baseline Scoping Report was completed in October 2005. Given its age, it was deemed fit to formally revise this report with more up to date and robust evidence. In accordance with the LDS, this Scoping Report was consulted upon between May and July 2009 and adopted in September 2009. The Council's work in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal and its use in testing the Alternative Spatial Development Approaches has since been recognised nationally as best practise.

**3.1.8 Alteration No. 2 to the Unitary Development Plan** – In September 2007, this was formally adopted to provide an up to date planning framework for the regeneration of Central Sunderland. Under the planning legislation, these policies technically had a 3 year lifespan and would have expired in September 2010. In July 2010, the full suite of policies set out in Alteration No. 2 were formally "saved" in perpetuity (until formally rescinded or replaced by the LDF).

3.2 It should be noted that with the change in Government in 2010, there has been a series of early reforms to the plan making system. Most significantly was the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy in July 2010 with immediate effect. This meant that the all local authorities had to rely on existing saved plans (some significantly out of date) to act as the starting point in determining planning applications. It also meant that the each local authority was able to set its own growth requirements. However, this decision was subsequently overturned in the High Courts. In effect, the Regional Spatial Strategy is now legally re-established as part of the statutory development plan for the city.

3.3 Further fundamental reforms to the spatial planning system are proposed through the Localism Bill (published in December 2010). These reforms include :

- The creation of National Planning Framework to consolidate the existing suite of national policies and guidance into a single document
- The formal revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies
- Proposals to replace statutory Local Development Frameworks with Local Development Plans working to new procedures (which would provide a similar role to that of the Core Strategy)
- The option for communities and neighbourhoods to prepare Neighbourhood Plans that would deliver more (but not less) growth than is set out in the Local Development Plan

3.4 The Localism Bill does not provide sufficient detail as to how these reforms will work in practise. But subject to enactment (anticipated in late 2011), these changes will be significant and will require future reviews of the LDF work programme.

#### **4.0 Policy Monitoring**

4.1 In summary, performance against the nationally set Core Output Indicators in 2009 / 10 is as follows : -

- **Business Development and Town Centres** – Some 22,500m<sup>2</sup> of new employment floorspace was built, primarily for office and general industrial uses. However, there were significant demolitions and changes of use out of business floorspace totalling 60,500 m<sup>2</sup>. Principally, this resulted from the demolition of the former Dunlop Tyres Factory in Washington (28,650 m<sup>2</sup>) to make way for new business premises for BAE Systems (with a further planning application now pending on the adjacent site for Rolls Royce) and the demolition of the Cornings Works at Deptford (19,850 m<sup>2</sup>) which now has planning permission for a mix of residential and business uses.
- **Housing** – In gross terms, new house building delivered some 614 dwellings (a reduction from the previous two years where gross completions were in excess of 800 dwellings). However, by comparison there was a significant fall, compared to previous years, in the dwellings lost (either through demolition or conversions to other uses) totalling some 230. The effect produced a significant rise in the number of net new homes completed in 2009/10 totalling 384 (the third highest net gain since 1999/2000). 99.7 % of all new dwellings were on previously development (brownfield) land (the highest since 1995), which is in excess of both national and regional targets (of 60% and 80% respectively).
- **Waste** – 27% of the city's municipal waste was recycled or composted, which shows a steady rise year on year with 22% having been recycled in 2006/07, 24% in 2007/08 and 26% in 2008/09.
- **Renewable Energy** – In total, some 9.8MW of renewable energy capacity were installed in 2009/10, taking the total installed capacity in the city to 17.2MW. This will make a significant contribution to the 22 megawatt renewable energy target set in the Regional Spatial strategy for Tyne and Wear.

## 5.0 Relevant consultations/ considerations

- a) **Financial Implications** – Outside of the costs associated with document production and printing there are no direct costs arising from the Annual Monitoring Report. Costs will arise from developing the evidence base and from the Examinations of the various development plan documents which will be met from contingencies.
- b) **Legal Implications** – The AMR has been prepared in accordance with the appropriate Planning Regulations and Government guidance.
- c) **Policy Implications** - The AMR will provide an important measure of how the policies in the LDF are performing in terms of both their implementation and effectiveness.

## 6.0 Recommendation

6.1 Committee is recommended to note the contents of the Annual Monitoring Report.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Regional Spatial Strategy July 2008

PPS12: Spatial Planning DCLG June 2008  
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2009  
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2008  
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2007  
Sunderland City Council Local Development Scheme March 2007  
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2006  
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2005

**Contact Officer: Neil Cole (0191) 561 1574**

neil.cole@sunderland.gov.uk