

Overview and Scrutiny

Date of Meeting: 10 December 2024

Title of Report: Authority Monitoring Report 2023/24

Report of: Executive Director - Place

Cabinet Portfolio: Planning Policy and Development Management

Confidentiality: Non-Exempt

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the draft Authority Monitoring Report for 2023/24 prior to its publication.

Recommendation

2. That the Overview & Scrutiny committee note and comment on the content of the draft Authority Monitoring Report 2023/24 at Appendix 1.

Background

3. Planning authorities must publish an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) each year.
4. AMRs provide information on key planning matters including the implementation of local plan policies, progress on preparing local plans and neighbourhood plans, and activity with adjoining authorities under the duty to cooperate. They provide transparency for the public, developers, and other stakeholders with regards to the Council's key planning-related activities.

Main Issues

5. The draft AMR at Appendix 1 covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, unless otherwise stated. Some points of note are:
 - 1) 434 net new homes were built in 2023/24 which is 11 more than the Local Plan annual average requirement of 423. By 31 March 2024 a total of 5,603 net new homes have been built in the Plan period, which is 1,373 more than required for that period.
 - 2) The Council is on track to meet the overall Local Plan housing requirement of 7,614 homes between 2014 and 2032. At 1 April 2024 there were 2,011 homes left to be completed in the remaining 8 years of the Plan period, which averages to 252 homes per annum.
 - 3) Surrey Heath Borough Council has agreed that Hart has already delivered their unmet housing need.
 - 4) The Council continues to meet the Government's Housing Delivery Test which assesses whether sufficient homes have been built over the previous three years.
 - 5) Policies to protect the countryside from housing development remain up to date. The Council does not currently need to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply because the plan is less than five years old.
 - 6) 217 affordable homes were completed in 2023/24 which was 50% of all homes built that year.

- 7) The Council is currently consulting on an [Affordable Homes in New Development Supplementary Planning Document](#) which will help to ensure that the majority of affordable homes delivered are at the 'social rented' level (in line with the Council's [Corporate Plan 2023-2027](#)).
 - 8) A [Viability Appraisals for New Development Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#) was adopted in November 2023 to clarify the approach taken when dealing with planning applications where viability is an issue. This should reduce debate with applicants about methods and assumptions used in viability appraisals.
 - 9) A [Cycle and Car Parking Standards in New Development Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#) was adopted in December 2023. This provides up to date guidance to secure sufficient and well-designed cycle and car parking provision in new developments.
 - 10) A new [Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan](#) was 'made' in 25 January 2024 and forms part of the current development plan for Hart district.
 - 11) An update to the [Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan](#) is currently at examination.
 - 12) Under the duty to cooperate the Council is liaising with several neighbouring authorities at different stages of plan-making, including Surrey Heath, Wokingham and Reading Borough Councils.
 - 13) 10% biodiversity net gain with new development became mandatory in 2024 for large and small sites (subject to exemptions) –introduced in the Environment Act 2021.
 - 14) Work continues on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire.
 - 15) The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act received royal assent on 26 October 2023. A number of reforms to planning system will be brought in through secondary legislation including a new, streamlined local plan-making system and national development management policies.
 - 16) The Government consulted on [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system](#) between 30 July 2024 and 24 September 2024. A response to the consultation and new NPPF is expected by the end of 2024.
6. Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered last year's AMR on 19 December 2023 (see [minutes](#) of that meeting).

Corporate Governance Considerations

Relevance to the Corporate Plan

7. The AMR reports on a number of the issues referred to in the Corporate Plan including neighbourhood planning, new homes, affordable homes, the natural environment and sustainable transport.

Service Plan

- Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan? Yes
- Is the proposal being funded from current budgets? Yes

- Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal?
Yes

Legal and Constitutional Issues – including Monitoring Officer comments

8. There are no legal or constitutional implications.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

9. The alternative is not to publish an AMR however it is a statutory requirement to publish one.

Financial and Resource Implications

10. There are no financial or resource implications.

Risk Management

11. There are no risk management implications.

Equalities

12. There are no equalities implications.

Climate Change Implications

13. There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

Action

14. Officers will finalise the AMR and publish before the 31 December 2024.

Contact Details:

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24