

14 December 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Bethany Jones
Title	Authority Monitoring Report		☎ 282541
Wards affected	All wards affected		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Authority Monitoring Report provides an annual summary of key statistics that allow the Council to monitor the effectiveness of its Local Plan.

1.2 Key statistics for the monitoring period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 include:

- 1,594 planning applications received (major, minor and other)
- 1,124 homes completed
- 202 new build affordable units delivered
- The North Station Road and Environs Conservation Area was designated in April 2019
- 13,211m² additional areas of open spaces were adopted by the Council
- Three Neighbourhood Plans were made (adopted), including Wivenhoe (May 2019), West Bergholt (October 2019) and Eight Ash Green (December 2019). There are now 5 made Neighbourhood Plans across the Borough, which are apart of the Development Framework. Progress has continued for a number of other neighbourhood plans during the monitoring period
- Since the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, 4,486 trees have been planted and 10,000 trees given to the public as part of the Colchester Woodland Project. The Council have also received funding to purchase 25 electric cargo (eCargo) bikes and 5 electric trailers to be used for Council fleet operations and local businesses

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 To approve the 2019-20 Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for publication on the Council's website.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 Until the Localism Act came into effect in April 2012, Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act required that every Local Planning Authority (LPA) should prepare and publicise and Annual Monitoring Report containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which the

policies set out in Local Development Documents (LDDs) and Local Plans are being achieved.

- 3.2 The Localism Act removed the requirement for local authorities to submit their Annual Monitoring Report to Government but retains a duty for local authorities to monitor policies. The Council accordingly still needs to demonstrate the effects of its policies in what is, as of 2015, termed an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) providing the opportunity for updates as and when data is available.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternatives as the Council needs to provide a monitoring source of information on the delivery of its planning functions.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The AMR provides key information that helps the Borough Council and its partners to evaluate planning policies in the context of current trends and delivery levels. The full report covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 is attached as Appendix 1 and will be available to view on the Council's website, and upon request to the Planning Policy team.
- 5.2 As part of the Localism Act, authorities can now choose which targets and indicators to include in their monitoring reports as long as they are in line with the relevant UK and EU legislation. Their primary purpose is to share the performance and achievements of the Council's planning service with the local community. The format of this AMR accordingly is designed to clearly demonstrate how the Council is meeting targets and indicators arising from the adopted policies in the Local Plan and provides information that can be used in reviewing the Plan. The AMR also includes information on how the Council is working with partners to meet the duty to co-operate on cross-boundary strategic matters.
- 5.3 The AMR is divided into a number of key themes covering progress in meeting Local Plan policy aspirations across a variety of areas.
- 5.4 The Housing section documents historic delivery rates and provides a detailed list of housing units delivered last financial year. The requirement for the Council to demonstrate how it intends to meet the five year housing land supply requirement has been addressed by the publication of a separate Housing Land Position Statement which was last published in May 2020 and demonstrated that the Council has a five year land supply.
- 5.5 Other key findings include:
- The total number of applications (major, minor and others i.e. change of use and listed building consent) received between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 of 1,594 shows a slight decrease on last year's total of 1,659. This figure however does not include all applications i.e. discharge of condition and preliminary inquiries. When these are added the total for the year is 2,475.
 - A net of 1,124 dwellings were built between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. This is slightly lower than the previous year's total of 1,165 but remains above the Objectively Assessed Need target of 920 dwellings a year for Colchester.

- During the monitoring period 202 new build affordable housing units were delivered consisting of 159 affordable rent, and 43 Shared Ownership. No new build social rent properties were delivered in this monitoring period. The total of 202 units represents 18% of all new homes delivered. The comparable figures for the previous three years were 110 (9.4%) in 18/19, 132 (12.5%) in 17/18 and 100 (10.96%) in 16/17. This demonstrates the highest number of new build affordable housing units delivered in the last four years.
- Of these 202 new build affordable housing units, 9 were delivered in rural areas.
- Three Neighbourhood Plans have been made during this monitoring period, including Wivenhoe (May 2019), West Bergholt (October 2019) and Eight Ash Green (December 2019). Both Marks Tey and Tiptree Neighbourhood Plans have held their first formal consultation (Regulation 14) and the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to the Council in March 2020. Other neighbourhood plans have continued to progress during the monitoring period.
- The Colchester Travel Plan Club has continued to work with existing members during the monitoring period, and the Elmstead Road student accommodation has joined. The Colchester Travel Plan Club are working with the Elmstead Road student accommodation and the University of Essex to create a joined-up approach to travel change behaviour at the University.
- The AMR shows that there was no loss/damage to Scheduled Monuments, Designated Sites (including SSSI, SAC, SPA, SINC and RAMSAR) or key community facilities in 2019/20.
- The Council adopted 13,211m² additional areas of open space during the monitoring year 2019/20.
- The North Station Road and Environs Conservation Area was adopted in April 2019.
- 68 nominations were received in October 2019 for inclusion with the Colchester Borough Local List. At Local Plan Committee August 2020, 64 additions were made to the list.
- The Council were awarded funding (£249,100) from DEFRA in April 2019 to deliver an air quality behaviour change project aimed at reducing air pollution in Colchester's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Following the appointment of two engagement officers to deliver the project, a period of community engagement was undertaken between October 2019 and January 2020, including a Clean Air Survey, focus groups and meeting local residential associations, community groups and businesses. A no idling campaign has now been launched following the engagement programme.
- The Council have also been awarded further funding (£59,785) from DEFRA to undertake a feasibility study into driver facing traffic signal countdown timers and signage to encourage drivers to switch off their engines when stationary at traffic lights and rail crossings.
- The Council published its Climate Emergency Action Plan in January 2020 which sets out a strategy for how to be carbon neutral in all its operations by 2030.

- Since the Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019, 4,486 trees have been planted and 10,000 trees given to the public as part of the Colchester Woodland Project. Sites for tree planting in 2020/21 have been identified with 11,200 trees set to be planted. The Council have also received funding to purchase 25 electric cargo (eCargo) bikes and 5 electric trailers to be used for Council fleet operations and local businesses.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan, and is available to view by clicking on this link:

<https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20June%202017.pdf>

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The Strategic Plan is relevant in particular contributing to priorities under the themes:
- Delivering homes for people who need them; and
 - Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The AMR considers the effectiveness of Local Plan policies which have been through a comprehensive consultation programme as set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The AMR provides a wealth of statistical information on the Borough which may warrant press attention.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications. The AMR however, provides evidence to evaluate the effect of wider economic influences on Council planning policies and highlights the potential for the Council to benefit from Government funding linked to housing delivery.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no health, wellbeing or community safety implications for the Council.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no health and safety implications for the Council.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 Monitoring policies to ensure their effectiveness is intended to reduce the risk of inappropriate development. It will provide consistent advice to landowners, developers, officers, Councillors and members of the public.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 14.2 The AMR includes a chapter titled 'Climate Change' which highlights the Council's latest initiatives in relation to reducing the impacts of climate change across the Borough.

Appendices

Appendix A – Authority Monitoring Report 2020