

South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report (September 2017)

Executive Portfolio Holder: Angie Singleton, Strategic Planning (Place Making)
Director: Martin Woods, Director, Service Delivery
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Purpose of the Report

1. To consider and sign-off the Authority Monitoring Report (2017).

Forward Plan

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of October 2017.

Public Interest

3. To assess the implementation of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028), the Council has a duty to prepare an annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).
4. The AMR looks at whether or not the policies in the Local Plan are being implemented. It also helps to inform any future revisions to policies in the Local Plan. The Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation is the subject of a separate report.
5. The AMR includes reference to the Council's five-year housing land supply position; this is the subject of a separate paper, which was published on the Council's website in September 2017: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/evidence-base/>

Recommendations

6. That the District Executive
 - a. endorses the Authority Monitoring Report (2017).
 - b. delegates responsibility to the Director for Service Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning to make any final minor text amendments which may be necessary to enable the Authority Monitoring Report to be published.

Background

7. The AMR is the monitoring report that is prepared by the Council on an annual basis. The relevant Regulations state that the AMR must contain the Authority's Local Development Scheme, identify any policies that are not being implemented, the net number of additional dwellings over the year; and information relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy. Additionally, the AMR includes a 'snapshot' of the District, some highlights over the past 12 months; and information about how the Development Management service is performing.

The Authority Monitoring Report

8. The AMR is split into five parts:
 - Part One - A snapshot of South Somerset
 - Part Two - An update on the Authority's planning policy programme
 - Part Three - Some highlights over the past year
 - Part Four – The effectiveness of the Council's planning policies.
 - Part Five – Performance of the Development Management service
9. The key points within the AMR are summarised in the following paragraphs.
10. The District's population and household formation continue to grow, with an increasing proportion of older residents. There is continuing pressure on new housing provision, particularly as affordability gets more acute.
11. Business growth has been stable, with strong representation in manufacturing, although over-reliance on this sector could make the local economy vulnerable. Much of the commercial building stock is also ageing.
12. There is little appetite for office building or for large-plate industrial buildings; although vacancy rates are low and there is continuing demand for smaller units. The strategic employment sites have not been brought forward and much of the economic development has taken place away from established centres.
13. The District has fewer highly skilled workers than the regional and national average; and qualification levels are not as high as across the South West or Great Britain. Unemployment levels are, however, lower than elsewhere.
14. Housing delivery in the 'Market Towns' and 'Rural Settlements' in South Somerset remains strong; is ahead of target and is greater than envisaged at this point in time in the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028).
15. New housing in many of the District's larger towns has not been delivered at the rate anticipated by the Local Plan.
16. Overall housing completions recorded from 2006 to 2017 show that the Council is behind its five-year housing land target and has a shortfall of 1107 dwellings. This has implications on how much weight can be attached to the housing land supply policies in the Local Plan in the determination of planning applications.
17. Yeovil remains a strongly performing town centre, although vacancy rates are still quite high.
18. Nearly all the current Local Plan policies are used, but in many instances they require revision or clarification; and a few may no longer be necessary.
19. Many of the monitoring indicators in the current Local Plan are not readily available, quantifiable, or appropriate and this is an issue that the Review of the Local Plan will seek to address.
20. The AMR is appended and will be published on the Council's website.

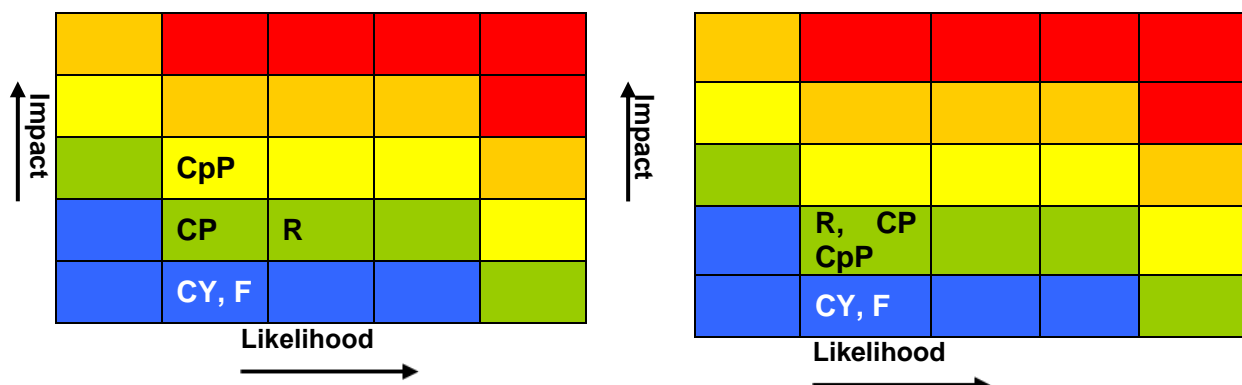
Financial Implications

21. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report or the recommendations.

Risk Matrix

Risk Profile before officer recommendations

Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

22. The Council has a statutory duty to produce an AMR and include specified matters within it. Not doing so would have a negative effect on the Council's Corporate Priorities, and have a detrimental impact on reputation.
23. The Local Plan is a key land use policy document for generating economic development, protecting the quality of the environment, enabling new housing; and providing a framework for the preparation of neighbourhood plans and the plans for regenerating Central Yeovil and Chard.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

13. The Local Plan includes policies to limit the impact of development on Climate Change, with development being directed away from high-risk flood areas and encouragement given to sustainable drainage systems. Policies also relate to low carbon travel, sustainable transport solutions and pollution control.

Equality and Diversity Implications

14. No significant changes to a Service, Policy or Strategy are proposed directly and it is therefore not necessary that an Equality Assessment is undertaken.

Privacy Impact Assessment

15. No personal data handling is involved.

Background Papers

Appendix A – South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report (September 2017)