

COMMITTEE  <i>Cabinet</i>	DATE  <b>2 December 2009</b>	CLASSIFICATION  Unrestricted	REPORT NO.  (CAB 082/090)	AGENDA ITEM
<b>REPORT OF:</b> Aman Dalvi Corporate Director Development & Renewal  <b>ORIGINATING OFFICER(S):</b> Clare Wall Team Leader Spatial Research (Interim)		<b>TITLE: Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2008-2009</b>  <b>WARD(S) AFFECTED: All</b>		

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 Each year the Council submits an Annual Monitoring Report to the government covering the previous year's progress relating to spatial planning and the Local Development Framework. This fifth Annual Monitoring Report is based on the monitoring period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. Any changes to indicators or new information since March 2009 will be reported on in the next Annual Monitoring Report.
- 1.2 The Annual Monitoring Report covers progress made on preparing local planning documents, and the extent to which the policies in our planning documents are being achieved.
- 1.3 In Tower Hamlets the Annual Monitoring Report monitors the policies of both the adopted Unitary Development Plan and the Interim Planning Guidance offering an annual review of planning progress and outcomes by monitoring change and policy effectiveness. The information and findings will be used to inform planning policy and specifically the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy.
- 1.4 The Annual Monitoring Report must be submitted by officers to the Secretary of State before 31 December 2009.
- 1.5 This fifth report builds on ongoing good practice, and reports on a range of indicators within the monitoring framework that is flexible to respond to the emerging Local Development Framework and Core Strategy.
- 1.6 Section 4 of this report sets out some of the main messages highlighted by the Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09 and section 5 considers measures to address underperformance where necessary.

## 2. Recommendations

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 note the contents of this report and the Annual Monitoring Report for the period April 2008-March 2009 attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 note that the Annual Monitoring Report for the period April 2008-March 2009 will be submitted to the Secretary of State before 31 December 2009.
- 2.3 authorise the Corporate Director of Development and Renewal to make minor amendments prior to submission to the Secretary of State relating to factual matters.

### **3. Background: The Annual Monitoring Report**

- 3.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Statement 12, an Annual Monitoring Report should:
- Report progress on the timetable and milestones for the preparation of documents set out in the local development scheme including reasons where they are not being met.
  - Report progress on the policies and related targets in local development documents. This should also include progress against any relevant national and regional targets and highlight any unintended significant effects of the implementation of the policies on social, environmental and economic objectives. Where policies and targets are not being met or on track or are having unintended effects reasons should be provided along with any appropriate actions to redress the matter. Policies may also need to change to reflect changes in national or regional policy.
  - Include progress against the core output indicators including information on net additional dwellings (required under Regulation 48(7)) and an update of the housing trajectory to demonstrate how policies will deliver housing provision in their area.
  - Indicate how infrastructure providers have performed against the programmes for infrastructure set out in support of the core strategy. Annual Monitoring Reports should be used to reprioritise any previous assumptions made regarding infrastructure delivery.
- 3.2 There are strong links between Annual Monitoring Reports and Community Plan monitoring programmes. In addition, there is a cross-over of Local Area Agreement indicators, particularly relating to housing delivery and waste management.

### **4. Annual Monitoring Report Findings**

- 4.1 This section sets out Tower Hamlets performance against the Local Development Scheme and policies in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and the Interim Planning Guidance. A summary of the findings for 2008/09 is arranged subject below:

#### **Planning in Tower Hamlets**

- 4.2 There were a total of 2,507 planning applications received by the Council during the monitoring period, an increase on previous years, but a drop in the number of major applications.
- 4.3 42 appeal decisions were made in relation to LBTH planning decisions. Of these 36 were dismissed in the Council's favour, with 6 being allowed.

#### **Refocusing on our Town Centres**

- There are low levels of town centre vacancies, with the exception of Roman Road East, which has a vacancy rate of 19%, up from 14% last year. Work continues to regenerate this town centre with key local partners and stakeholders.

### **Strengthening Neighbourhood Well-Being**

- 2,839 net additional homes were completed
- 1,555 gross affordable homes were completed, 57% when calculated by habitable rooms
- 961 intermediate homes (57%), and 594 (43%) social rented homes were completed
- 208 social rented family homes were completed, 35% of all social rented
- 447 student bedrooms were completed
- Housing density has increased from an average of 528 (2007/08) habitable rooms per hectare to 579 (2008/09)
- Eight new and/or refurbished health facilities opened during the monitoring period
- Planning obligations secured £1,659 per residential unit for health purposes
- There has been no increase in the level of public open space. The current level of 1.12 ha per 1,000 population is less than 1.14 last year
- Six parks in the Borough were awarded the Green Flag Award, including Island Gardens, King Edward Memorial Park, Mile End Park, Millwall Park, Trinity Square Gardens and Weavers Fields, representing a third of the Borough's open space
- Recycling levels have increased from 13.6% to 14.6% in the past year, however the amount of waste sent to landfill continues to increase with a growing population.

### **Enabling Prosperous Communities**

- 13,142 sq m (net) of B1(a) office floorspace was completed, with almost 7,000 sq m of in the City Fringe at Spital Square
- There has been a reduction of 20 hectares in total industrial land, with land being transferred to other uses, mainly residential, in accordance with local, regional and national planning policy priorities
- 168 new hotel bedrooms were completed, adding to a total of around 3,500 hotel bedrooms in the borough
- Planning obligations secured £1,590 per residential unit for educational purposes.

### **Designing and High Quality City**

- Recently completed residential developments have been assessed against the Building for Life criteria, with improved results and particularly good scores at City Quarter and Tarling Estate
- 44 car-free agreements were signed during the monitoring period between the Council and developers
- Air quality improving, marking a change in trend from previous years, with actions in the Air Quality Action Plan being implemented across the Council
- There has been a drop in the number of domestic burglaries recorded per 1,000 households from 15.98 in 2007/08 to 10.9 this year
- The number of noise-related complaints has increased again, with a concentration around the Shoreditch area.

## **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**

- 4.4 During 2008/09 Tower Hamlets complied with the revised local development scheme by progressing with the preparation and production work on the Core Strategy. Work on the Site and Place-making, and Development Management Development Plan Documents has been delayed due to the prioritised work on the Core Strategy.

## **Data collection**

- 4.5 Difficulties remain in collecting some indicators, including those relating to renewable energy and sustainable urban drainage systems. Improved data collection methods should help to collect better information in these areas.

## **5. Analysis**

This years Annual Monitoring Report reflected the following significant issues:

### **Non-Residential Development**

- 5.1 The borough has seen a significant loss in the amount of employment land available. This is a trend showing a year on year decrease of around 20 ha. This is in line with current policy requiring a managed release of employment land in Tower Hamlets. It is important to note that this space is not being lost in areas that have been designated for employment use. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that where applications for employment use have been approved they are not being implemented. This continued consolidation of employment land presents a challenge to providing a range of opportunities for access to employment for local people.
- 5.2 Tower Hamlets has been at the forefront of regeneration over a number of years increasing both regeneration and business tourism. In response to this and the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, is an increasing demand for hotel development. This has resulted in high levels of hotel development over the past four years, exceeding the annual policy target of 100 hotel rooms. The number of approvals for hotels and their location will continue to be monitored carefully.

### **Housing Delivery**

- 5.3 Despite an overall increase in the delivery of affordable housing, the dwelling mix and type raises some concerns. This year, the number of intermediate homes completed exceeds the number of social rented homes. The resulting 57% of affordable homes in the intermediate sector does not meet the Council's policy target of 20% set out in the Interim Planning Guidance. It should be noted that of the 961 intermediate homes completed, around a third were part of the Harford Street development. This is in addition to the high levels of intermediate housing delivered across the borough in the 2008/09 financial year, with 10 sites contributing high levels of intermediate housing. To ensure new housing contributes to building sustainable communities, the Council is working with the Homes and Communities Agency on a number of sites around the borough to deliver new affordable homes that meet the housing needs in Tower Hamlets.

- 5.4 Understanding the demand for student accommodation and the potential impacts and benefits remains a priority for the Council. Further work in this area is required as demand for purpose built student accommodation across London continues to grow.

### **Impacts of an Increasing Population**

- 5.5 High levels of population growth, evident from the continuing high levels of housing development, place additional pressure of community infrastructure.
- 5.6 The level of publicly accessible open space per 1,000 people has decreased for the fourth year in a row. The Council is working with key partners through the Healthy Tower Hamlets programme to deliver a Green Grid for Tower Hamlets. This will work to identify opportunities for new open spaces and improve the links between open space, while promoting walking and healthy lifestyles.
- 5.7 The total amount of municipal waste generated has increased significantly, again linked with continuing population growth. While a higher percentage of all waste is being recycled; in real terms, the amount of waste going to landfill has increased in the past year. While the recycling results are promising, this presents a challenge in terms of waste management, both for the Council and for local people.
- 5.8 The increase in noise complaints over the last year and the clear concentration in the Shoreditch area, indicates that noise may be related to an increase in activity and hours of operation in this area. Interventions in this area should be explored to address this negative symptom of increasing levels of activity in this location.

### **The Recession in Tower Hamlets**

- 5.9 Tower Hamlets has a high concentration of financial service firms which have faced challenging economic conditions. A struggling financial sector inevitably influences the prospects of other sectors and households in the borough. Difficulties in borrowing money and rising inflation have particularly affected people on lower incomes.
- 5.10 This, combined with more difficult access to finance for property developers, is expected to lead to a significant slowdown in property developments. At the same time, consumers' disposable incomes have been squeezed by rising energy and food prices, which have led to a reduction in consumer spending.
- 5.11 Despite these challenging circumstances, development pressure in Tower Hamlets remains, with businesses and people wanting to locate here. With support from central government, and targeted investment housing delivery should continue to meet targets, bringing associated investment in community infrastructure.

### **Additional actions proposed**

- 5.12 Further actions proposed include:
- Further work on coordinating the Annual Monitoring Report programme with Local Area Agreement monitoring;

- Improving data collection on renewable energy;
- Improving data collection on sustainable urban drainage systems;
- Continuing monitoring of student accommodation and the associated impacts;
- Revising the Local Development Scheme by December 2009;
- Revising the Statement of Community Involvement by December 2009;
- Begin work on the Site and Place-making and Development Management DPDs in late 2009;
- Embed new policy monitoring targets in the emerging Local Development Framework.

## **6. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer**

- 6.1 The submission of an Annual Monitoring Report is a requirement of the plan-making system, and assesses progress in meeting the targets set out in the Local Development Framework.
- 6.2 This is the fifth Annual Monitoring Report completed by the Authority. The costs of collecting and collating the data are met from within existing Directorate resources.
- 6.3 Although there are no specific financial implications arising from the report itself, the performance indicators themselves do inform the Local Development Framework process, as well as reflecting the effects of the current economic climate. The performance in certain areas will potentially affect future resources that are available to the Council but these must often be seen in the context of overall nationwide statistics. A specific example of this is the number of actual housing unit completions compared to target. This is a significant constituent of the current Housing and Planning Delivery Grant regime, but the allocation also reflects the Council's good performance compared to that of other authorities.

## **7. Comments of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)**

- 7.1 The preparation and submission of the Annual Monitoring Report ("AMR") to the Secretary of State is a statutory requirement pursuant to Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 7.2 The AMR must comply with Regulation 48 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The report at Annex A fulfils these statutory requirements.

## **8. Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed for the Interim Planning Guidance which informed the drafting of all initial Development Plan Documents. The Annual Monitoring Report does not specifically monitor the impact of policies on groups or specific communities.

## **9. Anti-Poverty Implications**

- 9.1 Tackling poverty and social exclusion is a key objective of the Local Development Framework and is central to the Borough's approach to promoting sustainable communities. Significant effects indicators in the Annual Monitoring Report include indicators relating to poverty.

**10. Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment**

10.1 A detailed Sustainability Appraisal was completed for the Interim Planning Guidance. The Sustainability Appraisal process informs the drafting of the Development Plan Documents at every stage to ensure they are robust and will work to achieve sustainable development. The Annual Monitoring Report includes a range of indicators on the environment.

**11. Risk Management Implications**

11.1 The Annual Monitoring Report has identified areas of risk relating to the mix of housing being delivered, student accommodation, provision of open space, waste management, and noise. Mechanisms have been identified to address these issues, working with key partners.

**12. APPENDICES**

A. Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report: April 2008 - March 2009

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 SECTION 100D (AS AMENDED)  
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT**

**Brief description of background papers**

**Name and telephone  
number of holder and  
address where open to  
inspection**

NIL

## **Appendix A**

### **Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report: April 2008 - March 2009**