

Maidstone Borough Council

Local Development Document Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday 15 November 2011

Reference from Council

Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel has been appointed by the Regeneration & Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take on the advisory function to the Executive during the Local Development Document process as well as the role of Overview and Scrutiny within the policy framework process.
- 1.2 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) covers the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 and provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of development plan policies.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the AMR (attached as Appendix A to this report) be considered by the panel and recommends that, having regard to the views of the Panel, the Leader of the Council approves the Annual Monitoring Report (attached at Appendix A) for submission to the Secretary of State.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The production of an AMR is required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Report covers the policy monitoring period 1st April to 31st March and the calendar year of progress of the Local Development Scheme to date. The Council has a duty to submit the AMR to the Secretary of State by 31st December each year, and the Report supports the allocation of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant.
- 3.2 Whilst the Localism Bill proposes the removal of this requirement, the duty to submit the AMR to the Secretary of State remains until the Bill is enacted. However, government guidance on local plan monitoring has been withdrawn, so local authorities have the freedom to choose which targets and indicators to include in their AMR. Nonetheless, local authorities should demonstrate the progress they have made towards meeting their targets as part of best practice.
- 3.3 The AMR has proved to be an invaluable tool, used to monitor local development document policies but also to record historic indicators that assist the public in understanding the profile and achievements

of the borough. For example, gypsy and traveller pitch provision monitoring has informed the Council's decision to commission a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to re-assess the need for this type of accommodation in Maidstone.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 4.1 The AMR monitors the success of a range of policies that will have an impact on corporate priorities, including for Maidstone to have a growing economy and for Maidstone to be a decent place to live.
- 4.2 There are no risks involved in considering the AMR and making recommendations.