

Committee: Borough Plan Advisory Committee

Date: 22nd October 2009

Agenda item 5

Wards: All

Subject: Merton Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09

Lead officer: James McGinlay, Head of Regeneration and Leisure

Lead member: Cllr William Brierly, Cabinet Member for Planning and Traffic Management

Forward Plan reference number: n/a

Contact officer: Tara Butler, Interim Spatial Policy Manager
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Recommendations:

- A. That Members consider and comment on the first draft of Merton Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09.
 - B. Recommend to Cabinet that the Director for Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Traffic Management, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee be given delegated authority to make any amendments required and agree Merton's Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2009.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. In accordance with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated regulations, every Local Planning Authority has to submit an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to the Secretary of State by 31 December each year.
- 1.2. It is proposed that the Director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee be given delegated authority by Cabinet to review and approve the final draft of Merton's Annual Monitoring Report prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
- 1.3. A draft of Merton's Annual Monitoring Report will be sent to Members of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee by courier on Wednesday 13 October 2009, and will be available on Merton's website.

2 DETAILS

Contents of Merton's Annual Monitoring Report

- 2.1. The AMR evaluates performance of planning policies contained in Merton's Unitary Development Plan as well as the progress of the preparation of the LDF over the last financial year (in this case 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009).

Any information relating to a date later than 31 March 2009 will be contained in Merton's next AMR 2009/10.

- 2.2. Appendix 2: First Draft AMR 2008/09 has been sent by courier to all Members of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee. Hard copy also available in the Members resource room for Members only and will be available on Merton Council's website via the Borough Plan Advisory Committee meeting (22nd October 2009) at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/committee.htm>
- 2.3. Receipt of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) is directly linked to the publication of Merton's AMR. The data on housing matters that is used by central government to help calculate how much grant will be awarded to the authority must be published in Merton's AMR. In total, Merton Council received over £118k HPDG in 2008/09
- 2.4. Information in Merton's AMR is also used in defending appeals against planning refusals.
- 2.5. Feedback from the Government Office for London on Merton's AMR 2007/08 is included in Appendix 1 of this report. [The feedback was largely positive and refinements have been made to this AMR to reflect their comments.](#)
- 2.6. **Delegated Group to consider and agree Merton's Annual Monitoring Report**
- 2.7. Merton's AMR draws on a variety of sources for its information from the Council and its partners (e.g. Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust)
- 2.8. Some of the information, especially that provided by the council, is already available and has been included in the draft of the AMR as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 2.9. However, some information from other sources outside Merton Council is not yet available, though it is very relevant to Merton's AMR. (e.g. numbers of new homes built, available around November).
- 2.10. To improve the quality of Merton's AMR, it is important that this information is considered and included where necessary before Merton's AMR is submitted to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2009.
- 2.11. The Cabinet meeting held on 8th December 2008 resolved that "*a group comprising the Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Borough Plan Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Director of Environment and Regeneration be established and given delegated authority to make amendments to the Annual Monitoring Report*" (decision under Item 9(3), minutes of the Cabinet meeting 8th December 2008).
- 2.12. It is therefore proposed that a group comprising the Director for Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Traffic Management, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee be given delegated authority to consider and make amendments to the final draft of Merton's AMR prior to its submission to the Government Office for London by 31 December 2009.

- 2.13. This means that all relevant information from other sources that could be used to improve the quality of Merton's AMR can be included prior to submission to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2009.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. It is considered that there isn't a realistic alternative to the current proposal if Merton's AMR is to contain accurate information, especially on housing matters. Some data on housing matters will be not published until late November 2009.
- 3.2. If no changes were made to the first draft of the AMR before submission to the Secretary of State, the quality of Merton's AMR would be affected and the information it contains that is used to help calculate Housing and Planning Delivery Grant would not be accurate.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. In preparing Merton's AMR, many council departments were consulted, including Housing, Development Control, Transport, Environmental Health and Leisure Services. There is also frequent dialogue with outside bodies including the Government Office for London, the Greater London Authority, Primary Care Trust

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. Regulation 48 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations and section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act outlines the requirements for an Annual Monitoring Report, which must be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of the calendar year.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Receipt of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (c£118K for Merton in 2008-09) is directly linked to information on housing matters published in Merton's Annual Monitoring Report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Regulation 48 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations and section 35 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act outlines the requirements for an Annual Monitoring Report, which must be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of the calendar year.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None for the purposes of this report

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix 1: Feedback from the Government Office for London on Merton Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09.
- Appendix 2: Merton's Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09 first draft

Appendix 2: First Draft AMR 2008/09 has been sent by courier to all Members of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee (on Wednesday 14th October 2009). It will also be available on Merton Council's website via the Borough Plan Advisory Committee (22nd October 2009).

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDIX 1: MERTON'S ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

(Borough Plan Advisory Committee 22 October 2009)

Feedback from the Government Office for London on Merton Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2007/08

2007/08 AMR: London Borough of Merton



General Comments

The structure of this AMR is both logical and clear. An executive summary has been given which is beneficial considering that this is a lengthy document. It includes useful content including the borough's long-term visions and goals as relating to various topic areas e.g. housing, the environment, transport, etc. Importantly, this is written in a manner which would be understandable to the non-planner.

Similarly, explanatory information is provided in the introduction which is useful for those readers who are not familiar with AMRs. This includes background information relating to the requirement to monitor and the intended requirements and functions of an AMR.

A borough profile has been provided which is useful as it allows for the consideration of context when assessing policy. It is also clearly illustrated with graphs, maps and tables making it particularly informative.

Policy and Wider Links

Positives

- Both UDP aims and LDF Core Strategy objectives are highlighted at the start of each themed policy analysis section. This is important as AMRs should ultimately look to identify those areas which are preventing objectives from being met. The inclusion of LDF objectives is particularly helpful and suggests a future oriented approach to monitoring.
- Contextual indicators are integrated into those themed chapters assessing policy. This therefore allows for the consideration of wider context when carrying out policy analysis.
- The indicator being used is clearly flagged and is followed by all those related DPD policies.
- Targets are given against which the performance of policy can be assessed.

- Objectives, policies, indicators and targets are integrated into themed sections e.g. housing, environment, transport, etc. This is important in allowing for a holistic assessment of policy.
- Link between indicators and policy is clear and there is a level of policy analysis within section conclusions. Also there are examples of commitments to review policy in light of analysis. This is positive as there are a sizeable number of boroughs which have not discussed such connections.

Potential Areas for Improvement

- There is discussion of how objectives relate to LAAs and various other strategies; however there is nothing to suggest links in the monitoring which occurs within this document with the needs of other documents.
- Boroughs should make clear what type of indicator is being referred to and also give its reference code e.g. H3: Net and Converted Dwellings – on previously developed land.
- Not all targets appear to be in line with the SMART approach (targets should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound)

Housing Trajectory

Positive

- Correct years have been used for both completions and projections.
- Assessment has been made as to the borough's performance with regards to housing provision for the current year and the likely levels of provision for future years.
- Text has been included to explain housing trends
- Useful that the borough has illustrated housing provision against targets and also that future provisions have been discussed

Potential Areas for Improvement:

- No indication has been given as to what various lines within the trajectory show.
- Graph does not appear to include a manage line.
- It would be useful if more detail and greater discussion was included with regard to the likelihood of future targets being met.

5 Year Supply

Positive

- Detailed site specific information by year, down to single units
- Indication is given as to when housing is likely to come forward

Potential Areas for Improvement:

- Information is there for the years needed but five year supply period not clearly stated.
- No unit totals are given.
- No site areas (ha) are given.
- No annualised target plan has been given.

Appendix 2: First Draft of Merton's Annual Monitoring Report 2008/09

Appendix 2 is also available in the following places:

- In the Members Resource Room
- On Merton Council's website via the Borough Plan Advisory Committee (22nd October 2009) or Cabinet (7th December 2009) at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/committee.htm>
- On request by contacting the LDF team at:
 - Telephone: 020 8545 4854
 - Email: policyandinformationteam@merton.gov.uk