

Subject:	DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2015/16
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 1 March 2017
Report of:	Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Nicholas Kenton, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Waste and Planning
Decision Type:	Key
Classification:	Unrestricted
Purpose of the report:	To seek approval for the Authority Monitoring Report 2015/16
Recommendation:	Cabinet approves the Authority Monitoring Report 2015/16 attached at Appendix 1 and it is made available on the District Council's website.

1. Summary

- 1.1 This is the twelfth Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) produced by Dover District Council and covers the period from the 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016.
- 1.2 The AMR serves a number of purposes, the main ones being:
- To assess how the Council's current planning policies set out in the Development Plan are working;
 - To monitor the delivery of the Council's Development Plan and assess whether the Council is meeting the social, economic and environmental objectives set out in the Plan.
 - To act as a record of the amount of development which has taken place in the District during the year;
 - To set out the Council's progress against its 'Local Development Scheme', a high level project plan for the production of new planning documents and policies.
- 1.3 The key findings from this year's AMR are set out below.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The National Planning Practice Guidance states that local planning authorities must publish information at least annually that shows progress with Local Plan preparation, reports any activity relating to the duty to cooperate and shows how the implementation of policies in the Local Plan is progressing. Local planning authorities can also use the AMR to provide up-to-date information on the implementation of any neighbourhood plans that have been made, and to determine whether there is a need to undertake a partial or full review of the Local Plan. The AMR should be made publicly available.
- 2.2 Last year's AMR highlighted the need to review key pieces of the evidence base that underpins the Strategy. The Council has commissioned a number of new studies

including: a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA); Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA); and the Dover Transportation Study.

3. Key Findings

- 3.1 The Dover District Core Strategy sets out a number of objectives covering social issues, the economy, the environment, and housing and infrastructure delivery. The key findings from the AMR for each of these issues is set out within chapter 1 of the AMR, which is attached in Appendix 1.

4. Social Issues

- 4.1 The total population of the District now stands at 113,100 (ONS 2014 SNPP) and already exceeds the 2026 Core Strategy (CS) target of 111,500. The working age population is still below the Core Strategy target of 72,100 however, at 67,700 (ONS 2014 SNPP). Dover has an older age profile and natural change in the District is negative with deaths outnumbering births. Any future population growth in the District is forecast to be from inward migration. The age profile of the population is also forecast to increase, meaning there will be the need to plan for an ageing population across the District.
- 4.2 Dover District is in England's most deprived half of local authorities with 4 Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) falling within the most deprived 10% of LSOAs nationally and 1 LSOA in the top 5% most deprived areas in the country. The District's position in the national ranking has worsened over the plan period and is now considered to be more deprived than in 2007.
- 4.3 The health profile of people in Dover is varied compared with the England average. Life expectancy for both men and women is slightly lower than the England average. However, life expectancy is 6.9 years lower for men in the most deprived areas of Dover than in the least deprived areas and this situation has declined since the start of the plan period.

5. The Economy

- 5.1 Dover District represents a reasonably small but productive economy in East Kent. Employment floorspace within the District is dominated by industrial uses (B2 and B8 uses) and Dover District has the second largest stock of industrial space and the second smallest stock of offices in East Kent.
- 5.2 Over the monitoring period a total of 16,434 sq m of B2 & B8 employment floorspace was built and 8,341 sq m of B1 employment floorspace was lost, either through demolitions or change of use. This echoes longer term trends in employment floorspace in the District, which has principally seen gains in B2, B8 and B1-B8 uses (industrial) and losses in B1 (offices).
- 5.3 The District has recorded a loss of 4,700 jobs during the first ten years of the Core Strategy period from 2006 – 2016 across most sectors, with only education, hospitality and recreation, finance and insurance, and information and communication showing any gains. The latest NOMIS data from 2014 shows that Dover District has 41,000 jobs which equates to a jobs density of 0.61 which is significantly below the average for Kent. As a result there is now a growing economic divide between the District and the County as a whole.

- 5.4 One of the most significant employment schemes to be granted permission over the monitoring period was for the re-development of Discovery Park Enterprise Zone. The site is now one of the UKs top performing Enterprise Zones and is home to 150 companies and 2,400 employees from established organisations to emerging start-ups in the fields of life science, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, science and technology.
- 5.5 Positively, the skill attainment levels in the District have improved. The percentage of working age residents without qualifications has gone down and is now lower than the Kent average. The percentage of working age residents with NVQ 4 qualification or higher has gone up and the gap between the District and the Kent average is decreasing.
- 5.6 With regards to development in the retail and leisure sector in the District work has started on the St James's development in Dover Town Centre during the monitoring period. Work has also commenced on the masterplan for Dover Waterfront and a Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre, which is envisaged to deliver new retail, leisure, housing and employment to re-invigorate Dover's sea front.
- 5.7 In the rest of the District however there has only been a limited amount of activity in the retail and leisure sector, with 298 sq m of retail floorspace and 259 sqm leisure floorspace built over the monitoring period.
- 5.8 Recent town centre surveys show that Dover has a vacancy rate of 14% in the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages, Deal 2% and Sandwich 7%. Survey data reveals that Dover has the highest vacancy rate in the District although this has improved slightly since 2012. Deal has the lowest vacancy rate and Sandwich in contrast to the other centres, has shown an increase in vacant units since 2012.

6. **The Environment**

- 6.1 Measures have been taken over the monitoring year to improve the environment in the District, with the Council completing three play area projects and a further four play area projects were subsequently completed in Autumn 2016.
- 6.2 The Council's adopted Parks and Amenity Open Spaces Strategy places a very high priority on raising standards and capacity at the District's most popular park; Kearsney Abbey. The project to restore Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens secured a £3million Heritage Lottery grant in July 2016; the project will run until June 2020.
- 6.3 The District has a rich and varied historical landscape and over the monitoring period there have been four new heritage designations in the District: 3 war memorials and a Scheduled Monument. There has also been an upgrade of a Grade II listed building to a II*.
- 6.4 In the monitoring period the Heritage team have also progressed with:
- (a) Two extensions to the existing boundary of the Kingsdown Conservation Character Area Appraisal were approved by the Council in February 2016 and an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights from single residential properties within the Conservation Area was approved in September 2016.

- (b) Nelson Street Deal Conservation Character Area Appraisal went out to public consultation in October 2016 with adoption planned for the start of 2017.

7. Housing and Infrastructure Delivery

- 7.1 It has been a particularly strong year for housing completions with 726 new homes being built in the District over the monitoring period. This is the highest completion figure since 1989.
- 7.2 There are very encouraging signs that a range of the Council's allocated housing sites across the District are starting to come forward for development. The LALP allocates sites to deliver approximately 10,387 homes across the District.
- 7.3 The majority of development over the monitoring period occurred in Deal (324 units), followed by Aylesham (173 units) and Dover (155 units). With the Strategic allocation at Whitfield (where the majority of the development is planned for Dover) being significantly behind target having only delivered 37 homes to date (out of 5,750 planned), although work is now well underway on the construction of a new roundabout on the A256.
- 7.4 During the monitoring period, 185 affordable homes were delivered in the District, equating to 25.48% of all housing completions, this is the highest number since the start of the plan period. The Council has collected £238,720 in S106 Contributions towards the delivery of affordable housing schemes.
- 7.5 Over the monitoring period the Council received £1,124,393.77 in Section 106 contributions from developments across the District. Dover District Council received £671,600.00 (or 59.70%) of this figure to provide the necessary infrastructure to support growth. This is the highest amount of S106 contributions that have been collected since 2010/2011.

8. 5-Year Housing Land Supply Calculation

- 8.1 The Council appointed Consultants to prepare a SHMA over the monitoring period. This identified an NPPF compliant objectively assessed need (OAN) for housing of 529 dpa. Using the OAN figure to calculate the five year housing land supply the Council can demonstrate a 6.02 year supply. This is primarily because eight years of housing backlog (based on historic under-delivery between 2006 and 2014 which is the base date of the projection) have been removed from the calculation.
- 8.2 In accordance with the Government's Planning Policy Guidance the OAN is the correct figure for the Council to use when calculating the 5 year housing land supply for the following reasons:
 - a. The CS housing target was adopted prior to the NPPF;
 - b. The CS housing target does not seek to meet the OAN as it is a 'policy-on' figure which did not seek to meet OAN; and
 - c. It does not adequately reflect the Council's needs identified in the SHMA.
- 8.3 As a result of this, the SHMA represents a NPPF compliant assessment of the Council's full OAN and is the proper starting point for the Council's calculation of its 5 year housing land supply irrespective of whether the Council decides to commence with a Local Plan Review.

9. **Progress with Plan Making**

9.1 The Council is currently in the process of producing a number of new planning documents (see Table 1 below); updating the evidence base that supports the Local Plan; and working with Parishes to bring forward Neighbourhood Plans in the District.

9.2 Table 1 sets out the timetable for the preparation of the documents in the Local Development Scheme and the Council's progress against meeting key milestones in their production.

Planning Document	Timetable	Progress Against Meeting Timetable
Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan	<p>Proposed Submission Consultation January – February 2017</p> <p>Submission – May 2017</p> <p>Examination – September 2017</p> <p>Adoption – December 2017</p>	<p>The Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan is currently on hold pending further guidance from Government, following the publication of the revised Planning Policy for Travellers Statement in August 2015. The requirement for a separate Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan will be considered as part of the Local Plan Review.</p>
Dover Waterfront SPD/LDD	<p>Consultation; November – December 2016</p>	<p>Consultants were appointed by the Council in October 2016 to produce a masterplan for Dover Waterfront and work has now commenced on this project. It is expected that the draft masterplan will be out for consultation in May/June 2017, with adoption then scheduled for Autumn 2017.</p>
Statement of Community Involvement	<p>Consultation: January – April 2016</p> <p>Adoption: July 2016</p>	<p>The draft Statement of Community Involvement was published for consultation on the 21st January 2016 for a period of 6 weeks.</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement was then amended to take on board comments raised, where applicable, and was agreed by the Council on the 9th May 2016. The SCI will need to be updated to take into account changes in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill</p>

		and how the Council intends to consult on the Local Plan Review.
Nelson Street LDD	<p>Consultation April – May 2016</p> <p>Adoption September 2016</p>	The Nelson Street LDD went out to public consultation in October 2016 for a period of 6 weeks. Adoption is planned for the start of 2017.

9.3 The Council continues to support Parishes in the District with Neighbourhood Planning and has met with a number of Parishes over the monitoring period to provide assistance on this issue.

9.4 The duty to co-operate was introduced in the Localism Act 2011 and places a legal duty on local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation relating to strategic cross boundary matters. The Council has continued to co-operate with Kent Authorities and key stakeholders in planning the District's future. This has involved a number of meetings over the monitoring period which is outlined in Chapter 4 of the AMR.

10. Identification of Options

10.1 To approve the AMR attached at appendix 1.

10.2 Not to approve the AMR attached at appendix 1.

11. Evaluation of Options

11.1 Under Government legislation the Council is required to produce an AMR. Given this, there is no option regarding whether or not to produce an AMR, as it's a legal requirement.

11.2 The AMR continues to monitor progress against the Local Development Scheme and the priorities identified in the Core Strategy, identifying successes and issues that require action.

11.3 The AMR recommends that a revised LDS is prepared to address the findings in the Authority Monitoring Report and as a result of the Local Plan Review – please see separate Cabinet Report. This will set out the sections priorities over the coming year and enable resources to be allocated to key projects.

12. Resource Implications

12.1 Once agreed by Cabinet, a copy of the AMR will be placed on the Council's website. There are no further resource implications.

13. Corporate Implications

- 13.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer: Finance has been consulted and has nothing further to add (SB)
- 13.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: “The Head of Legal Services has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make”
- 13.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: The report does not specifically highlight any equalities implications however, in discharging their responsibilities members are required to comply with public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>

14. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Authority Monitoring Report 2015/16

Contact Officer: Katherine Messenger, Assistant Planner, Regeneration Delivery Section