

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **7th December 2022**

Report Subject: **Local Development Plan – Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Morgan – Cabinet Member Place and Regeneration**

Report Submitted by: **Ellie Fry, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
08/11/22	10/11/22	22.11.22				07/12/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with information on the Local Development Plan - Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2021 – 2022.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 Scope

- 2.1.1 This report sets out the findings of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the current Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (LDP). The Annual Monitoring Report assesses the effectiveness of the LDP objectives and strategic policies, and the Plan's sustainability credentials. It also identifies any significant contextual changes and draws conclusions and makes recommendations on under performance.

2.2 Background

- 2.2.1 The Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (LDP) was formally adopted by the Council on 22nd November 2012. Following the adoption of the LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation, under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to produce an AMR. An AMR must be submitted annually to the Welsh Government.
- 2.2.2 Even though a replacement Local Development Plan is being prepared we are still required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report for the current Plan. This is the eighth AMR and is based on the period **1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.**
- 2.2.3 The AMR has two primary roles; firstly to identify any policies that are not being implemented and secondly to consider whether the LDP Strategy remains valid. It is required to include:

- A review of changes to national and regional policy and guidance and their implications for the LDP;
- Local Development Plan Monitoring;
- Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring;
- Statutory indicators; and
- Recommendations on the course of action in respect to policies and the LDP as a whole.

2.3.4 The AMR provides an opportunity for the Council to assess the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County Borough.

2.3.5 The Executive Summary of the Annual Monitoring Report is attached as Appendix 1 and the Annual Monitoring Report is attached as Appendix 2. The AMR will be made available on the Council website once approved by the Cabinet.

2.3.6 The following is an overview of the content of the AMR report:

2.3.7 **Executive Summary** – provides a summary of the report highlighting key findings in terms of contextual changes, the Local Development Plan Monitoring Results, Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring and conclusions and recommendations.

2.3.8 **Chapter 1 – Introduction** outlines the requirement for, the purpose and structure of the AMR.

2.3.9 **Chapter 2 – Monitoring Framework** explains the process of monitoring the LDP and Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and provides an update on the Council's position in terms of revising the LDP.

2.3.10 **Chapter 3 – Contextual Change** reviews the economy at UK, Wales and the local level. It found that in Wales and the UK, economic growth is moderating and there is great uncertainty as a result of Brexit. Though improvements have been made in a number of key economic data sets in Blaenau Gwent figures remain below the Welsh average.

2.3.11 A review was undertaken of national, regional and local policy documents but none were considered to have resulted in any significant change to policy that needed to be addressed in the short-term.

2.3.12 **Chapter 4 – Local Development Plan Monitoring** analyses the results of the monitoring exercise and provides an interesting and varied picture of development in Blaenau Gwent. The results of the monitoring process for 2021-2022 are identified within the Performance Information and Data section of this report.

2.3.13 **Chapter 5 – Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring** analyses the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of

Blaenau Gwent. The results of the monitoring process are identified within the Performance Information and Data section of this report.

- 2.3.14 **Chapter 6 – Conclusions and Recommendations** identifies that the current economic situation, the lack of confidence in the housing market and viability issues has undoubtedly had an impact on the delivery of the Plan. Progress on delivering the Strategy of Growth and Regeneration continues to fall short of expectations.

As a result of the findings of the Annual Monitoring Report it recommends:

- 2.3.15
- The Council continues with its preparation of a Replacement Local Development Plan.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** Cabinet Members:

- Consider the detail contained with the annual monitoring report and agree the content before publication

3.2 **Option 2:** Cabinet Members:

- Consider the detail contained with the annual monitoring report and consider amendments prior to publication

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 **Corporate Plan**

The LDP supports the key priorities of the Corporate Plan. In particular it plays a key role in delivering a variety of homes, jobs, potential energy opportunities and ensuring the long term future of town centres. The AMR reports on progress of the Plan in these and other areas.

4.2 **Statutory Responsibilities**

The Council has a statutory obligation, under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

4.3 **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The Plan helps to create safe communities thus supporting the achievement of objective 2. It looks after and protects the natural environment thus supporting the achievement of objective 3. The Plan aims to improve prosperity thus supporting the achievement of objective 4. It also aims to enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices thus supporting the achievement of objective 5.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget***

5.1.1 There are no budget impacts as a result of this report as this relates to the publication of the Annual Monitoring Report. Preparation of the Replacement LDP will be met through existing budgets and reserves identified for the Development Plans team.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

5.3 ***Legal***

5.3.1 There is a statutory requirement to submit an Annual Monitoring Report to Welsh Government.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications as a result of this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.1 The Annual Monitoring Report contains detailed information on a whole range of economic, social and environmental data in line with the monitoring framework set out in the Local Development Plan and the Plan's Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Report. Below is a summary of the Plans performance:

6.1.2 The results of the monitoring process for the LDP's objectives and strategic policies indicate that the targets in respect of 4 out of 19 core monitoring aims are on-going, being met or exceeded whilst 8 are not currently being achieved but the situation can be overcome without immediate intervention or are sufficiently progressed so as not to require direct intervention. The remaining 7 are currently falling short of the required pattern of delivery (See Appendix 1: pages 3-4 or Appendix 2 pages 13-96 for further detail). The number of review triggers breached this year has decreased the previous year, although 6 triggers remain breached (See Appendix 1: page 4).

6.1.4 The results of the monitoring process on sustainability indicate that the Plan is having a positive impact in respect of 10 of the sustainability objectives; is not having a positive or is having a mixed impact on 11; and is having a negative impact on 2 objectives. There is no update for one indicator (See Appendix 1: pages 5-7 or Appendix 2 pages 70-97 for further detail).

6.1.5 Overall, the plan is having a mixed impact on aspects of sustainability when measured against the SA objectives.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

- 6.2.1 The AMR updates the public on how the LDP is progressing in terms of achieving the LDP's objectives and policies; and delivering the strategy and allocations.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

- 6.3.1 There has been insufficient time to consult the public prior to seeking Cabinet approval and submission to Welsh Government. However, the AMR will be made available on the Council website when agreed by the Cabinet.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

- 6.4.1 The Local Development Plan looks to address the long term land requirements of the Borough and the AMR reports on progress in meeting these needs.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

- 6.5.1 The AMR identifies where problems are occurring with the delivery of the Adopted Local Development Plan's objectives and policies and puts actions in place to address them where necessary. The AMR also monitors the impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Plan.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

- 6.6.1 The Development Plan section collaborates with other departments and organisations when gathering the data and in identifying actions to overcome underperformance.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

- 6.7.1 The AMR provides an update on the current position in terms of delivering the LDP objectives and policies and the impact the LDP is having on sustainability. The AMR cuts across housing, economic development, retail, education, community facilities, waste, transport and the environment.

6.8 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***

- 6.8.1 Integrated Impact Assessment Screening found that there were no impacts of significance that required further assessment.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report is monitored through directorate performance management arrangements. The Annual

Monitoring Report of the Adopted LDP is required by regulation to be produced and published annually.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

- Appendix 1: Executive Summary
- Appendix 2: Annual Monitoring Report 2021-2022