

Item

**CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL - AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT FOR  
GREATER CAMBRIDGE 2019-2020**

**To:**

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor, Planning Policy and Open Spaces  
Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee [12/01/2021]

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

All

Not a Key Decision

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. All Local Authorities are obliged to publish an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) each year. The AMR describes progress against the Local Development Scheme and monitors the impact of planning policies included in the development plan documents. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council produce a joint AMR to monitor their development plans and policies collectively. Authority Monitoring Reports were formerly known as Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 1.2. The AMR 2019-2020 demonstrates that the authorities are making good progress in implementing their Local Development Scheme

and that planning policies continue to have a positive impact on the sustainable development of Greater Cambridge and the quality of life of its residents. The AMR includes a wide-ranging commentary supported by a detailed set of data tables.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Executive Councillor is recommended to:
  - a) Agree the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 (included as Appendix 1) for publication on the Councils' websites.
  - b) Delegate any further minor editing changes to the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 to the Joint Director for Greater Cambridge Shared Planning.
- 2.2. In January 2019, the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport agreed that a joint AMR would be produced which covers both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and that these future AMRs for Greater Cambridge would be agreed for publication by the Executive Member for Planning Policy at Cambridge City Council together with the Cabinet Member for Planning at South Cambridgeshire District Council via a decision outside of a meeting. However, at the Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2020 a request was made for the next AMR for Greater Cambridge to be considered at a meeting rather than through a decision outside of a meeting.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. Local planning authorities are required to publish information monitoring progress of the implementation of their Local Development Scheme and planning policies included in their development plan documents at least on an annual basis. The AMR is also required to give details of what action the Council has taken relating to the duty to co-operate, details of any neighbourhood development orders or neighbourhood development plans made, and once the Council has an adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, information relating to the collection and spending of CIL monies.

- 3.2. The AMR for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 covers the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The AMR includes indicators to measure the performance of the Councils' adopted planning policies as set out in the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and the four adopted Area Action Plans for Northstowe, Cambridge East, Cambridge Southern Fringe, and North West Cambridge. It also includes indicators to measure change in the area against the objectives set out in the Sustainability Appraisals that accompany each of the adopted plans and to look at the wider effects of its planning policies on the district. The AMR also includes details on the action the Councils have taken relating to the Duty to Co-operate and of any neighbourhood plans made.
- 3.3. Authority Monitoring Reports were formerly known as Annual Monitoring Reports. They were renamed by government.

## **4. Considerations**

- 4.1. The AMR for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 accompanying this report has three chapters. Chapter 1 provides some background and context. Chapter 2 includes sections on the progress against the Local Development Scheme, what actions the Councils have taken relating to the duty to co-operate and the current status of Neighbourhood Plans. Chapter 3 sets out a topic by topic analysis of the Greater Cambridge area including the impact of various policies.
- 4.2. Key findings from the AMR for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 include:
- The Greater Cambridge Local Plan has made good progress including completion of the 'First Conversation' consultation which looked at issues and options in January and February 2020.
  - We have continued to meet our duty to co-operate requirements across governance (for example the Joint Local Plan Advisory Group), consultation (for example strategic cross-boundary matters) and evidence gathering (for example transport and environmental data) issues.
  - No new Neighbourhood Plans were formally made in 2019-2020. However, a number of plans – Cottenham, Histon & Impington, Foxton and Waterbeach – all progressed through various formal consultation stages. (It is worth noting that

progress post-March 2020 has been much more limited due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on consultation activity and referendums).

- There were 1,567 dwellings completed in Greater Cambridge in 2019-2020. This was lower than the annual delivery rate required (1,675) for the first time since 2015-2016.
- South Cambridgeshire achieved a similar level of completions (1,107) to last year (1,152). Cambridge achieved 460 completions which was significantly lower than last year (868). In Cambridge, the higher level of completions previously achieved was a result of high numbers of completions on the edge of Cambridge sites completing within Cambridge. The increase in housing completions in South Cambridgeshire and decrease in Cambridge therefore reflects the build out pattern of the edge of Cambridge sites and the move towards higher delivery from new settlements.
- Both Local Authorities achieved proportions of affordable housing above their plan period average. In South Cambridgeshire 37% of all housing completions were for affordable housing compared with an average of 27% over the period 2011-2020. In Cambridge 43% of all housing completions were for affordable housing compared with an average of 37% over the period 2011-2020.
- In 2019-2020 gross business completions totalled 19,943 sqm (4.01 ha) in Cambridge and 44,854 sqm (9.37 ha) in South Cambridgeshire.
- The 'Spaces and Movement Strategy' underwent significant consultation in September and October 2019 and is on track to be considered for approval by Cambridge City Council in early 2021.
- A total of 2.4169 megawatts of renewable energy was installed in Greater Cambridge in 2019-2020: 0.0126 megawatts in Cambridge and 2.4043 megawatts in South Cambridgeshire.
- No applications were permitted without suitable mitigation where the environment agency objected on flood or water quality grounds across Greater Cambridge.
- Levels of all measured pollutants are currently below their respective national air quality objectives levels across Greater Cambridge.
- There was no change in the area of designated SSSIs or in the condition of SSSIs in Greater Cambridge. The only change in area of sites of biodiversity importance in Greater Cambridge

was a minor adjustment to the Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC boundary which resulted in a light reduction of approx. 0.9ha.

- There were no completions in the Green Belt where the development would be considered inappropriate based on the definition in the National Planning Policy Framework without 'very special circumstances' having been demonstrated.
- All completions in Flood Zones 2 and 3 which were considered to carry a flood risk were accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and flood risk was considered as part of the determination of the planning application, with conditions being applied to the planning permissions where necessary.
- There was a net decrease of 963 sqm in retail floorspace in Cambridge in 2019-2020. A number of small units/schemes were converted to alternative uses. However, there remains 12,524 sqm of retail floorspace committed through allocations and planning permissions. Commitments are even higher in South Cambridgeshire (50,160 sqm) due to allocations at Northstowe, and to a lesser extent, Waterbeach New Town, Cambourne West and the Wing/Marleigh development.
- In contrast, the amount of hotel space in Cambridge increased significantly (a net increase of 10,965 sqm). This was due to the completion of a 133 room aparthotel as part of a mixed use development on the former Milton Road primary school. There were further permissions granted in 2019-2020.
- The number of Buildings of Local Interest (Cambridge) and listed buildings (South Cambridgeshire) remain largely unchanged from last year. The number of listed buildings and other heritage assets at risk in South Cambridgeshire has fallen slightly.
- Quality of life indicators continue to be generally favourable for the Greater Cambridge area. For example, life expectancy rates are above the national average and are improving for men.

4.3. The report is supplemented by two appendices. Appendix 1 lists all of the indicators across the plans and provides data where it is available. A traffic light system is used for target based indicators to quickly illustrate whether the target is being met. Appendix 2 provides the detailed data behind the indicators.

4.4. It is worth noting that the monitoring period was only affected by the very early impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic. Next year's report is likely to capture much larger impacts.

## **5. Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

5.1. There are no direct financial implications.

### **b) Staffing Implications**

5.2. There are no direct staffing implications.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

5.3. There are no direct equality and poverty implications. However, the AMR does provide some data on the impacts on equality and poverty of our adopted planning policies.

### **d) Environmental Implications**

5.1. There are no direct environmental implications. However, the AMR does provide some data on the impacts on the environment of our adopted planning policies.

### **e) Procurement Implications**

5.2. There are no direct procurement implications.

### **f) Community Safety Implications**

5.3. There are no direct community safety implications.

## **6. Consultation and communication considerations**

6.1. Council officers and external organisations have provided information and data for the indicators included in the AMR.

## **7. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

The adopted Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and the four adopted Area Action Plans for Northstowe, Cambridge East, Cambridge Southern Fringe, and North West Cambridge,

and their accompanying Sustainability Appraisals are published on the Councils websites:

- [www.cambridge.gov.uk/development-plan-for-cambridge](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/development-plan-for-cambridge)
- [www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/)

## **8. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Greater Cambridge Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2019-2020

## **9. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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