15.   **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR 2013/14-2014/15 (BJT)**

        Purpose of the report

1.   To agree the Annual Monitoring Report for the Local Development Plan covering the years 2013/14 and 2014/15.

        Key issues

        1. To observe the early application and delivery of the Core Strategy
        2. To observe emerging trends

        Recommendations

2.   **1.   Members agree the Annual Monitoring Report for 2013/14 – 2014/15 (Appendix 1)**

        How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

3.   The Local Development Plan is a portfolio of documents setting out the planning policies for an area and is a key component for achieving the aspirations of the National Park Management Plan and the Authority's Corporate Objectives. The ability of the Authority to monitor and review the policies and objectives of our strategic planning and business documents is therefore crucial to ensure we reflect our statutory purposes and the needs of communities.

4.   Section 113 of the Localism Act amends section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and retains an overall duty to monitor. This requires local planning authorities to make monitoring information available to the public at least yearly in the interests of transparency. The local planning authority is no longer required to send a report to the Secretary of State. Local Planning Authorities can now choose which targets and indicators to include in the report as long as they are in line with the relevant UK and EU legislation. Guidance from Planning Advisory Service (an advisory agency for the department of Communities and Local Government) confirms that in future the report's primary purpose will be to consider the performance and achievements of the planning service locally and with the local community.

        Background

5.   This is the second full report to have been completed since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2011.

6.   Other than in 2013/14 the Authority has produced a full monitoring report every year since 2005 and uses it to report on data flowing from our planning decisions. Planning policy indicators are used to tell us how many approvals are made for particular types of development, thus revealing whether the strategic plans are guiding and directing development as intended. They can also tell how much development has been completed as an indicator of what policy has actually achieved on the ground.

7.   Individual cases have unique circumstances and individual merits which are judged against policy. It is not correct to trigger a review of policy on the back of individual planning applications, but the AMR can be used to consider trends in decision making.

8.   In 2013/14 officers undertook a review of all indicators. This work identified many areas where the monitoring process would benefit from revised indicators in order to

improve the capture of data. However these improvements were reliant upon changes to the central planning database known as M3. Over the past year the Authority's database manager post has remained vacant while attempts have been made to recruit a new member of staff. As such the required changes have not been made and this has led to gap in data in some areas. The gaps are not considered so significant as to prevent a report being prepared.

Issues

9. The AMR offers an executive summary of key issues. These are set out below:

10. ➢ A higher than expected number of planning approvals have been observed in the Natural Zone. A small research project will be organised in order to check the nature of these developments;

➢ Continued fluctuations are observed in housing completions data with below average figures in 2013/14 and above average (28 net completions) in 2014/15;

➢ Both monitoring years highlight both losses and gains in community facilities, principally to residential use. Higher figures were observed in 2014/15 with 17 losses and 9 gains.

➢ A noticeable increase in barn conversion applications have been received testing the basis for policy and encouraging greater scrutiny of the core approach to heritage and landscape planning;

➢ A series of refusals for wind turbines in the White Peak in the context of positive activity generally regarding applications for low carbon and renewable energy technologies. 24 permissions for such technology over the previous 2 monitoring periods;

➢ Solar arrays, both on farm shed roofs and ground based are becoming more popular as discrete alternatives to the wind turbines, while a number of turbines have now been approved, particularly in the more varied topography of the South West Peak. Positive action regarding a rebranded Climate Change SPD, web-based case studies and a farm based renewables project are assisting take up. In mid-2015 the Authority has received its first application for an Anaerobic Digester, on a farm in the White Peak;

➢ The Authority has engaged closely with transport and utilities bodies in discussions regarding the undergrounding of high voltage electricity lines in the Longdendale Valley (Woodhead Pass), and re the scope for passing loops on the Hope Valley railway line;

➢ Ongoing success with cycling bids has led to the roll out of planned links to gateway towns during 2015/16;

➢ The need for high quality, distinctive building stone in support has been boosted during the period with approvals at Once a Week Quarry and Burntwood Quarry whilst raising the difficult balance that must be made

with biodiversity objectives. Furthermore on going quarrying applications at Stanton Moor have sought to balance the need for stone with the need to protect the special archaeological value and tranquility of the natural environment.;

➢ An open market house approved in open countryside near Meerbrook is approved on the basis that there is no other way to address a family's needs. This raises issues for the spatial strategy in the South West Peak which is challenged by the lack of distinct settlements across the area. A new project for the South West Peak aims to respond to the particular issues of this "landscape at a crossroads";

➢ Significant progress now being made with neighbourhood planning across the whole National Park and involving all 3 distinctive character areas;

➢ The Duty to Cooperate in plan making is active right across the National Park with constituent authorities. In Derbyshire a spatial statement is being drafted in support of the emerging Combined Authority (CA). The National Park Authority has observer status to the CA and is able to input key messages regarding the National Park;

➢ 2 new SPD's with a technical design focus have been adopted. These cover Alterations and Extensions, and Shopfronts.

➢ Some gaps in data remain owing to a lack of specialist resource able to make the necessary planned changes to the M3 planning database.

Conclusions

11. Progress on plan making has been good with the strong basis of an adopted strategy and a very constructive period of debate on development management policy with the local community.

12. Two new design documents have been produced and the Supplementary Planning Document for Climate Change and Sustainable Building has been redesigned and promoted.

13. Performance in planning decisions in years 2 and 3 reveal continued good progress with the implementation of the Core Strategy with a range of cases involving housing, renewables and economic uses raising interesting test cases which are both recorded in the AMR and which in some cases have triggered the need for closer debate to aid interpretation and consistent application.

14. On-going measures to improve data capture and data quality will continue in order to properly assess the direction of travel for the performance of planning policy and planning decisions over the coming years.

15. The moves towards a more integrated planning directorate and the close working relationship between officers and members during the review period have been very positive in terms of realising a mature and accountable planning office which is displaying a growing culture of self- awareness and performance improvement.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

16. **Financial**:
None

17. **Risk Management:**

There is a cross-functional characteristic to monitoring that needs careful management. Various teams have responsibility for data management and ensuring data quality, including data entry, maintaining and updating data dictionaries, and undertaking qualitative checks of the state of the park, to inform data. If this does not meet the desired standard, then the quality of the monitoring can be undermined. There is an onus on all Heads of Service to ensure that data capture is sound so that the whole cycle of Authority work can be achieved competently.

18. **Sustainability:**

The AMR is an important means of testing whether the LDF policies and objectives are achieving their stated aims for the sustainability of the area in the context of National Park purposes.

19. **Consultees:**

Research and Monitoring Team, Director of Planning

20. **Background papers** (not previously published)

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Annual Monitoring Report 2013/14-2014/15

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Brian Taylor, Policy Planning Manager, 30 July 2015