

**ABERDEEN CITY & SHIRE
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Date: 26 March 2010

Title: Structure Plan Baseline Monitoring Report

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a Baseline Monitoring Report to the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) and seek comments upon it prior to its publication.

2. Background

2.1 Monitoring is a fundamental and statutory part of the plan-making process. The SDPA must ensure the structure plan is an effective document that delivers on the vision, aims and objectives set out within it, and remains up-to-date and relevant.

2.2 In order to do this it is necessary to determine where we are currently with specific indicators (the baseline) and measure these over time. In appropriate cases, this will enable a response if progress does not appear to be being made, or not as quickly as anticipated.

2.3 The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers on 14 August 2009 and includes a series of targets as well as topics that need to be monitored.

3 Baseline Monitoring Report

3.1 The monitoring report follows the same themes as the structure plan, concentrating on the targets agreed for the spatial strategy and the six objectives:

- economic growth
- sustainable development and climate change
- population growth
- quality of the environment
- sustainable mixed communities
- accessibility

3.2 For each of these sections there are between three and six targets explicitly identified, as well as a number of cases where additional commitments are made to monitoring in the text of the plan.

3.3 The amount of data to be collected is considerable and whilst some is readily available from sources within and outside the councils, numerous other sources have been identified.

- 3.4 In terms of publication, it is not intended to print copies of the Baseline Monitoring Report but to make it available via the SDPA website. The website will also be used to make important data updates available rather than wait for the next monitoring report to be published.
- 3.5 The establishment of a robust monitoring regime, alongside the action programme that was presented to a previous meeting of the SDPA, will not only ensure the structure plan remains action-orientated and achieving results, but will be a significant resource in the preparation of the strategic development plan.
- 3.6 The Baseline Monitoring Report is included as Appendix 1.

4 Monitoring against each structure plan theme

- 4.1 Targets in the spatial strategy section of the structure plan are primarily designed to monitor the distribution of development in strategic growth areas and the proportion of this taking place within Aberdeen City. These will be significantly influenced by allocations coming through the two local development plans (LDPs).
- 4.2 In economic growth, the quantity, quality and distribution of employment land is to be monitored, along with specific indicators on the adoption of high-speed telecommunications networks and ensuring Aberdeen attains a top-25 retail ranking.
- 4.3 The sustainable development and climate change section is concerned with a range of targets, such as carbon neutral new buildings, electricity from renewable sources, water abstraction from the River Dee, water saving technology, development on flood risk areas and percentage of municipal waste recycled and biodegradable waste landfilled.
- 4.4 In population growth, the focus is on increasing the overall size of the population and in particular those of working age. In addition, a phased increase in housebuilding is to be monitored. Progress with LDPs is also included in this section.
- 4.5 The sustainable mixed communities section sets targets for the amount of affordable housing, for LDPs to consider the density and scope for mixed use developments, for recognition of the quality and design of new development and a target for the amount of housing in Aberdeen on brownfield land. In terms of regeneration, a target is set to increase the range and quality of housing and the residential environment in regeneration priority areas in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.
- 4.6 In accessibility, the targets are closely linked and involve monitoring accessibility standards for all development, ensuring major employment and service developments are easy to access by walking, cycling and public transport and finally, to monitor the reduction in the percentage of journeys made by car.

- 4.7 The baseline data for the majority of these targets can be found in Appendix 1. Where available, historical trends have been presented in addition to the current situation and in a limited number of cases, forecasts or projections are also illustrated.
- 4.8 For several targets it is clear that new monitoring data needs to be gathered. This could entail presenting current sources in a different format (housing or employment land audits for example) or establishing new sources of data, including from outside bodies. As a consequence of this, some indicators do not have baseline data presented. However, sources have been identified and monitoring of these will commence throughout 2010.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the SDPA note the contents of the Baseline Monitoring Report and approve its publication.

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