

2009/10 Annual Monitoring Report and Key Regeneration Projects



Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Thursday 17th March 2011



Walsall Council

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Introduction

- Key achievements and issues identified in the 2009/10 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), on how the policies and proposals in the Walsall Local Development Framework (LDF) are being implemented and whether they are effective.
- The progress of key regeneration projects and links with the AMR.



Annual Monitoring Report: What is it for?

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: the Council has to submit an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to the Secretary of State setting out how it is implementing the policies in its Local Development Framework (LDF), and recent progress on bringing forward new plans.
- The sixth AMR for Walsall, covered 1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010. Submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands on 30th December 2010 and published on the Council's website:
http://www.walsall.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/local_development_framework/ldf_annual_monitoring_report.htm



Annual Monitoring Report: Local Development Scheme

- Progress the Council has made in producing documents in the Local Development Framework measured against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- LDS: a project plan establishing the programming, status and inter-connections between the various documents being prepared. Meant to provide the community, organisations and stakeholders with essential information on the Council's planning policies, both now and as intended to be prepared in the future.



Annual Monitoring Report: Progress of Local Development Scheme

- Submission of the Black Country Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination within the timeframe in the 2009 Local Development Scheme (LDS). Core Strategy subsequently found to be sound by the Inspectors in October 2010 and adopted on 3rd February 2011.

Annual Monitoring Report: Progress of Local Development Scheme

| Document | LDS Milestone | Target | Actual | Achievement | Comments |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|-------------|---|
| Black country Core Strategy | Submission to the Secretary of State for examination | February 2010 | February 2010 | G | Adoption on target for early 2011. |
| Central Willenhall: AAP | Start | January 2008 | - | G | Revised date Consultation February 2009. |
| | Publication | February 2010 | - | R | As a result of work on the BCCS, AAP was reviewed and work suspended in 2009. |

Annual Monitoring Report: Key Achievements

Housing

- 100% of housing development took place on brownfield land in 2009/10 exceeding the UDP target.
- At least 613 new dwellings were completed during the year. Despite the recession, this remains in line with the long term average.



Goscote, WHG – 2010



Alma St – Darlaston

Annual Monitoring Report: Issues

Housing

- A high proportion of completions were through public funding or on public sector land (e.g. 112 “Extra Care” apartments for the elderly). Development will be hard to sustain in view of the reduction in public spending in future.



Extra Care – Brownhills

- Nevertheless, an audit completed in April 2010 revealed over 1,000 additional dwellings completed since 2006 that have not been recorded previously. These are in addition to the 613 recorded by Building Control.
- The total recorded stock therefore increased by 1,700 dwellings during the year. Of these additional dwellings, nearly 1,000 were flats. There is a need for more houses and fewer flats.



Annual Monitoring Report: Key Achievements

Employment

- New Employment Sites allocated in UDP policy JP1 were successfully protected from loss to other, inappropriate, uses helping to ensure that land of the right quality is available to meet employment needs.
- Major redevelopment/ improvement schemes completed at two commercial waste management facilities (Empire Treatment Works in Aldridge and G&P Batteries in Darlaston), and a new asbestos waste transfer facility was developed in Brownhills.
- Walsall Council has continuously improved its household waste recycling performance since 2005, and in 2009/10 it achieved a household waste re-use, recycling and composting rate of 47.33% - higher than any other Metropolitan council.



Annual Monitoring Report: Issues

Employment

- 2009-10 was the worst year of take-up of industrial land since the 1980s with only 3.29ha being developed for employment uses.
- Walsall needs to have 46ha of readily available vacant land (i.e. land without major ground or access problems and on the market or has a willing seller) just to maintain previous take-up rates.
- At the moment it only has around 24ha. This is a serious problem for future regeneration in Walsall.

Annual Monitoring Report: Progress

Employment

- The Regeneration directorate continues to work towards delivering the councils strategic employment land targets.
- An example of this is the continuing work around the IMI site in Darlaston. Disposal is underway, a preferred user is lined up to reclaim the land and make available for employment use.
- Development Management has the support of the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel and Cabinet to recognise economic development in the borough of Walsall as a key priority for the Council.



IMI Site – Darlaston

Annual Monitoring Report:

Key Achievements

Town Centres

- A significantly higher amount of completed floorspace for all town centre uses (shops, services, leisure) was achieved in 2009/10 compared with 2008/9, largely due to the completion of Morrison's in Willenhall.
- Willenhall Morrisons: 75,000 sq ft food store, £30 million scheme, town centre car park with 541 spaces, approx 450 new jobs, contributions for public art and town centre regeneration.



Morrisons – Willenhall



Morrisons – Willenhall, Public Art 12



Annual Monitoring Report: Issues

Centres

- The proportion of development for town centre uses that took place in centres at 90.6% was just above the UDP target of 90%. But this figure masks underlying long term trends: new large supermarkets, the conversion of shops to other town centre uses (hot food take-aways predominantly) and a lack of investment in offices and leisure uses in centres.
- In June 2010 Walsall Town Centre was recorded as having the 24th highest vacancy rate in Great Britain and the 2nd highest vacancy rate in the region (behind Wolverhampton City Centre). The vacancy rate in the town centre also grew faster (up 3.24%) than the national average (up 1%) between the end of 2009 and June 2010.

Annual Monitoring Report:

Centres

- Economic Regeneration working to promote centres through initiatives such as District Centre Partnerships & the Shop Smarter scheme.
- Regeneration continues to:
 - o Work to use vacant premises for alternative uses
 - o Pursue enforcement on unsightly shops
 - o Encourage landlords to operate more flexible lease terms
 - o Match business enquires with vacant units



Annual Monitoring Report: Key Achievements

Transportation

- Red route/bus showcase schemes were 'on site' on the A34 North, Wolverhampton Road and Broadway North.



A34 – Red Route



Wolverhampton Rd – Red Route

- Schemes included elements of; resurfacing, re lining and signing, creation of dedicated loading, parking and disabled parking bays, improvements to bus stops and shelters, introduction or upgrading of pedestrian crossings.



Annual Monitoring Report: Issues

Transport – and Infrastructure generally

Clearly, we have made progress since 31 March 2010, notably re funding for Darlaston. However, there are challenges:

- The outlook for public funding
- Changes to planning & funding regimes

Annual Monitoring Report: Key Achievements

Environment

- 100% of the greenbelt was protected from inappropriate development.
- 100% protection of buildings of historic or architectural interest.



**Bridge St / Ablewell St
THI scheme** – Helping to
improve and protect
Walsall's historic
environment.

Central Hall before & after

Annual Monitoring Report: Key Achievements

Environment (2)

- No losses to Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Climate Change

- Carbon Management Plan – helping to reduce carbon emissions.
- Council saved 3,216 tonnes CO₂ in 2008-10, targets to reduce by a further 30% (2014).



**Council's – Carbon
Management Plan**



Annual Monitoring Report: Issues

Environment

Natural Environment

- One planning permission was granted which would result in the loss of Green Lane Cutting SLINC and is unlikely to be effectively mitigated in the medium term.

Climate Change

- Difficulties in monitoring renewable energy schemes. A very challenging commitment in the 2008 Climate Change Act, to achieve a national reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 80% (below 1990 levels) by 2050, and a new local renewable energy policy in the Core Strategy. Need to increase efforts to ensure major developments incorporate renewable energy.

Annual Monitoring Report: Issues

Environment - continued

- Open Space

The quantity and quality of Walsall's 'green spaces' is continuing to improve through the successful delivery of the Walsall Green Space Strategy 2006-2011. Green Flag Awards have been received and retained for three sites in the Borough, most recently at Merrions Wood, and further nominations are planned. While there has been positive progress, the Green Flag Awards do not quite meet the targets as originally intended in the Walsall Green Space Strategy 2006-2011.



**Palfrey Park – Green
Flag Award**

- Whilst green / open space provision is already being monitored, the arrangements should be refined to reflect the Council's emerging Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit and Assessment and changes to likely funding arrangements (including the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy). It will also be important to continue to prioritise improving the quality of existing green/ open spaces through a future review of the Green Space Strategy.

What Happens Next?

Implementation:

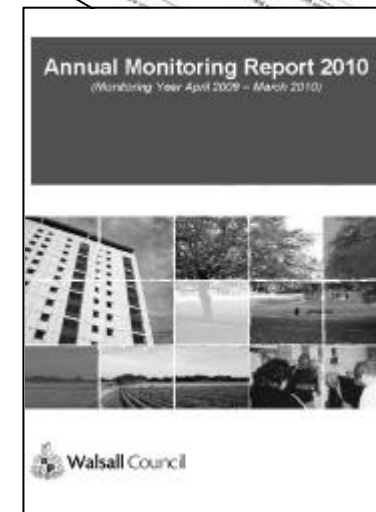
- Core Strategy and remaining UDP policies provide framework for Council planning decisions
- Local Validation Checklist to be updated to include Core Strategy requirements

Monitoring:

- Next AMR to provide framework for monitoring the Core Strategy

New/ Revised LDF Plans:

- What plans / SPDs do we need (or need to review) to address the issues, including;
 - maintain housing development
 - allocate and protect employment land
 - protect and encourage investment in town centres
 - support infrastructure funding?
- **Need to reflect changes to the Planning System (including through Localism Bill)**





Any Questions?



Walsall Council