



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 14 December 2020

AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is produced annually to provide information on the progress of producing and implementing the Council's Local Plans.
2. The Council monitors planning applications throughout the year to provide a basis on which to judge the implementation and effectiveness of policies contained within Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. Monitoring data collected by the Council is used alongside information collected from other sources such as Suffolk Observatory, Office of National Statistics and Natural England.
3. The AMR 2019/20 covers the monitoring period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.
4. This is the second report covering the East Suffolk area. Previous AMR's have been produced individually by Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council since 2005

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
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Wards Affected:	All
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Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council produces the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) each year to show progress on producing and implementing the Local Plans. This report covers East Suffolk, but provides specific information on the Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans which cover the former Suffolk Coastal area and the former Waveney area.
- 1.2 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require key pieces of information to be covered by an Authority Monitoring Report, such as:
- Progress on the Local Plan against the timetable in the Local Development Scheme,
 - Details of any Neighbourhood Plans or Neighbourhood Development Orders that have been adopted,
 - Any Community Infrastructure Levy receipts,
 - Any action taken under the duty to cooperate,
 - Details of any policies not being implemented,
 - Net amount of additional affordable housing, and
 - Total housing (and affordable housing) completed against annual requirements.
- 1.3 This AMR covers the monitoring period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 and provides monitoring information against indicators in the Local Plans, such as housing completions, town centre uses, tourism applications, environmental designations and the planning applications that the Council received.
- 1.4 The Local Plan covering the former Suffolk Coastal area was, for the 2019/20 year, made up of various documents (Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies, Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan). These were superseded upon adoption of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan on 23rd September 2020 (outside the 2019/20 monitoring period). Previous AMRs have recorded information and progress on the implementation of these existing policies which has informed the emerging policies.
- 1.5 The Local Plan covering the former Waveney area was adopted in March 2019. This is therefore the first monitoring report covering a full year since adoption.
- 1.6 The previous individual local authorities have a long and established history of producing the AMR. Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council both first published their AMR in December 2005 to cover the monitoring period 2004/05.

2 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT FOR EAST SUFFOLK

- 2.1 In accordance with the regulations and examples of best practice, the Authority Monitoring Report for East Suffolk includes several sections which focus on specific

aspects of the Local Plan process.

- 2.2 Chapter 1 introduces the document, with Chapter 2 outlining the content and structure of the report.
- 2.3 Chapter 3 provides information in relation to the progress of the Local Plan documents against the milestones outlined in the Local Development Schemes which guide the production of the Local Plan.
- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Local Development Scheme adopted in October 2015 and amended in June 2020 and milestones for the examination of document by the Planning Inspectorate were met within the monitoring period.
 - Waveney Local Plan – As the Local Plan was adopted in March 2019, there were no milestones for this monitoring period.
- 2.4 Chapter 4 provides details on Neighbourhood Plans which have been progressed by the local community and the Council within the monitoring period.
- Five Neighbourhood Plan areas were designated in the monitoring period at i) Carlton Colville, ii) Corton, iii) Mettingham, Barsham, Shipmeadow, Ringsfield and Weston, iv) Otley and v) Rushmere St Andrew
 - One Neighbourhood Plan was “made” in the monitoring period at Mutford
 - Many other Neighbourhood Plans progressed their production stages during 2019/20.
- 2.5 Chapter 5 relates to the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Council is now required to produce an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), which details infrastructure income and spending. The 2019/20 IFS was approved by Cabinet on 1 December 2020 <https://eastsuffolk.cmis.uk.com/eastsuffolk/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/156/Committee/5/Default.aspx> and contains full details, which no longer need to be reported in the AMR. However, the headline figures (included in the AMR) for 2019/20:
- CIL received in the monitoring period was £5,090,000, of which £832,000 was passed directly to the relevant Town/Parish Council
 - CIL Demand Notices (issued once commencement of development has begun) totalling £3,966,000 were issued
 - Total developer contributions received (S106 legal agreements) to East Suffolk Council was £385,000 (other contributions were made to Suffolk County Council)
 - The Council is also preparing a single CIL Charging Schedule for the whole of East Suffolk (to replace the current Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Charging Schedules) based on the policies and allocations in the new Local Plans.
- 2.6 Chapter 6 focuses on the Council’s actions under the Duty to Cooperate with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies as part of the Local Plan process and preparation.
- Under the Localism Act 2011, local planning authorities are required to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going bases in relation to strategic cross-boundary planning matters. East Suffolk Council regularly engages with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies to ensure cooperation on

various matters throughout the production and implementation of Local Plan documents.

2.7 Chapter 7 details how the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans have been implemented, performed and delivered over the monitoring period. The chapter is split into sub sections that are outlined below.

- Planning appeals – a big increase in appeals (total 119) but the dismissal rate remains high (about 75%), which shows that the Council is generally making correct decisions, with very few costs awards made by inspectors because of “unreasonable” behaviour by the Council in defending appeals.
- Employment – overall there has been a net gain of employment floorspace across East Suffolk. Within the former Suffolk Coastal area the largest increase is within B1 Offices; this includes the Riduna Park development (Melton). Although employment floorspace has been lost at the former Zephyr Cams factory (Lowestoft) the site has been re-developed for retail uses.
- Retail – the number of vacant units in the town centres has increased slightly overall – and the rates are likely to rise further in 2020/21 because of the effects of Covid-19.
- Housing – **819** new homes completed during the monitoring period (660 in Suffolk Coastal and 159 in Waveney); in terms of affordable homes, a total of **222** were completed (197 in Suffolk Coastal and 25 in Waveney). The Council has a housing land supply of **5.88** years in Suffolk Coastal and **6.04** years in Waveney. The Housing Delivery Test showed **127%** delivery in Suffolk Coastal and **89%** delivery in Waveney, against housing requirements/need over the period 2016/17 to 2018/19. An update to the Housing Action Plan was published in August 2020.
- Transport – applications received generally in conformity with the Suffolk County Council guidance on parking standards. Local Plan policies seek to further increase use of sustainable modes of transport.
- Community Facilities and Assets – Seven assets have been identified under the Community Right to Bid – pubs, meeting places and sports facilities. Planning permissions will create or enhance community facilities in Framlingham, Grundisburgh, Leiston, Oulton Broad, Saxmundham and Trimley St Mary. An application to re-develop Southwold Police Station (an Asset of Community Value) for residential use was refused.
- Climate Change – No planning applications have been approved in the monitoring period against Environment Agency advice on flood risk. A 220-dwelling scheme in Reydon was approved (subject to a S106 agreement) with seven “relocation” plots available for those who have lost/will lose properties in Easton Bavents due to coastal erosion.
- Natural Environment – no instances of nitrogen dioxide about the national objective level of 40µg/m³ but two Air Quality Management Areas remain (Woodbridge and Stratford St Andrew).
- Historic Environment – South Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone designated in September 2019 and five replacement Conservation Area appraisals approved.
- Health – communities in the former Suffolk Coastal area generally have better health and life expectancy than communities in the former Waveney area. Rates of physical activity are below the national average and obesity rates are higher

than the national average. Anxiety levels have increased; they are now above the national average in the former Waveney area.

- Site Allocations – this section provides a summary of site allocations with planning permission as at 31st March 2020. It also includes the site allocations identified in Neighbourhood Plans covering Framlingham, Kessingland, Leiston and Melton.

2.8 Chapter 8 relates to the Sustainability Appraisals that support the Local Plan documents. Tables provide a summary of potential significant effects (positive and negative) identified in the Council's Sustainability Appraisals. Monitoring of these enables the potential significant effects to be assessed and any remedial action to be taken if required.

2.9 The document also includes four appendices to provide further detail, justification and information in respect of the details included in the AMR.

2.10 The AMR for the monitoring period 2019/20 shows that the policies in the Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans across the district are generally performing as expected. The policies are all evidenced based, in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Planning Practice Guidance and examples of best practice. They provide consistency of decision making for those wishing to bring forward applications and certainty for the local communities in respect of the future development and infrastructure requirements across the District.

3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK STRATEGIC PLAN?

3.1 The AMR is a key document to report on the progress of the Local Plan. The Local Plans across the district are central to the East Suffolk Strategic Plan as they provide policies that enable communities to fulfil their potential, whilst promoting economic growth and maintain a special quality of life. Central to the Local Plans for the district is significantly improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area.

3.2 The East Suffolk Strategic Plan focuses on Enabling Communities, Economic Growth and Financial Self-Sufficiency. The AMR provides monitoring information of policies and actions that collectively contribute to this strategy, through the implementation of the Local Plans.

3.3 The AMR provides monitoring information in respect of the health and wellbeing of communities across East Suffolk. Fundamental to the Local Plans in East Suffolk is the delivery of healthy and thriving communities which provide significant benefits in respect of access to the countryside, areas of recreation, community facilities and employment opportunities.

3.4 Overall, therefore, the following themes and priorities of the Strategic Plan are relevant:

Growing our Economy – Support and deliver infrastructure

Enabling Communities – Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District

Delivering Digital Transformation – Digital by default and Effective use of data

Caring for our Environment – Protection, education and influence

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The AMR has been prepared by the Planning Policy and Delivery Team who continually monitor the progress of the Local Plan policies and planning applications that are

received and determined by the Council. The financial costs of this are already accounted for within existing staff budgets for the Planning and Coastal Management Service Area.

- 4.2 The AMR has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and will be published on the Council's website.

5 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 This report has been prepared having taken into account the results of an Equality Impact Analysis. No specific issues have been identified through the Equality Impact Analysis.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The preparation of the AMR does not require any public consultation before it is published on the Council's website.
- 6.2 The AMR has been prepared by officers in the Planning Policy and Delivery Team as they have responsibility for the monitoring of Local Plan policies and indicators. Other teams across the Council, such as Housing, Economic Development and Infrastructure have also been involved with the preparation and collation of information included in the AMR.
- 6.3 A draft of the AMR was presented to the Local Plan Working Group on Wednesday 18th November 2020 and one or two minor adjustments were made as a result.
- 6.4 As last year, a significant amount of monitoring data (updated to include 2019/20 information) will be available on the [East Suffolk Open Data webpage](#), enabling users to search for and obtain monitoring information on a range of different themes and elements.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The Council is also required to publish its AMR in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 7.2 The Council could choose to not monitor and publish the AMR, but this would be contrary to the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Not undertaking the AMR would result in the Local Plan policies not being subject to monitoring and therefore the Council not being able to judge the usefulness of them.

8 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 In order to publish the AMR for the monitoring period 2019/20, the Constitution outlines that Strategic Planning Committee is required to review and monitor the operational impact of the Council's planning policies and development management activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Council publish the East Suffolk Authority Monitoring Report covering the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.
2. That the Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management, in conjunction with the Head of Planning and Coastal Management Service, be given delegated authority to make minor typographical or presentational changes to the document following Strategic Planning Committee.

APPENDICES	
Appendix A	East Suffolk Authority Monitoring Report 2019/20

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Date	Type	Available From
November 2020	Equality Impact Analysis	Planning Policy and Delivery Team