

Hertsmere Local Plan (2003) Monitoring and Review - Sustainability Indicators

Introduction

- 1.1 It is important that the Plan is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis so that it can be kept up to date and be responsive to change and new issues. Policy R1 of the Local Plan confirms the Council's commitment in this respect.
- 1.2 Policy K1 of the Local Plan requires all activities and development in Hertsmere to be carried out consistently with the principles of sustainable development and the general aims set out in Policy I of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011. Paragraph 5.2, Strategy Chapter, of the Local Plan sets out some of the Council's overall aims for sustainable development and these provide a framework against which the policies and proposals in the Plan can be assessed.
- 1.3 However, it is recognised that many aims will go beyond the scope of what a Local Planning Authority alone can achieve and that progress will require working in partnership with others. In addition, there may be certain development needs that will conflict with some of the general principles of sustainable development. It is therefore considered equally important to monitor progress as it is to monitor in what circumstances and for which reasons progress may have been hindered. Hertsmere has therefore developed a set of sustainability indicators, which will enable such monitoring to be undertaken.
- 1.4 The Hertsmere Local Plan defines Sustainable Development as meeting the Borough's present needs without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. The decisions we make now should allow our children and grandchildren the same range of choices, if not more, than we enjoy now.

Criteria for Choosing Indicators

- 2.1 The indicators that the Council is adopting for use have been chosen with the need to satisfy the following characteristics in mind, since only these are suitable for monitoring purposes:
 - a. **Important:**
Indicators should measure something significant to the achievement of the sustainable development aims of the Plan. These are translated into the main policy areas of the Plan and must fit within the main policy framework. Indicators should assist in the identification of the need to review a strategy, policy or proposal.
 - b. **Supported by readily available information:**
The data necessary to support the use of the indicator must be available. This may be of a technical nature.
 - c. **Capable of showing trends over time:**
Data over a reasonable time scale is required (e.g. 5 - 10 years) to enable trends to be identified. Data must be available during the Local Plan period.
 - d. **Easy to understand and communicate:**
Any indicator should be readily understood by non-specialists so that the wider community can understand its relevance to sustainable development and the Local Plan.

Themes for Indicators

- 3.1 The indicators are diverse in order to reflect the broad range of factors, which influence whether or not development will be sustainable and whether or not people will have the ability to meet their basic needs and promote quality of life. The suggested themes are set out in the left-hand column of Table 1, followed by a set of suggested indicators in the second column. Both Tables 1 and 2 describe the themes and details of each indicator for ease of use. In addition to the identification of a broad set of sustainability indicators the Council is establishing a smaller sub set of 'headline indicators' which deal with key aims and policies of the Plan, such as development, housing, transport and employment.

3.2 The overall list of indicators is set out below:

Theme	Suggested Indicator
Resource Use	1A. (BVPI 106) The percentage of new homes built on previously developed land: Headline Indicator
	1B. Number of development proposals which reuse contaminated land
	1C. (HEF) Land used for 'urban activities' (defined as urban land developed for any purpose, including housing, industry / commerce, etc.)
Biological Diversity	2A. (HEF) Overall number of Wildlife Sites
	2B. (PUSP) Number of Wildlife Sites with positive management in place
Transport	3A. (HEF) Volume of motor traffic (million vehicle kilometres per day): Headline Indicator
	3B (i). (HEF) 'Modal split' (the choice of transport form used) – General Users 3B (ii) (HCC) Modal Split for Travel to School
	3C. (WCCF, 3) Creation or re-opening of good quality, non car routes (cycle routes, 'Greenways', etc.)
Tree Cover	4A. (WCCF, 1) Creation of well-designed woodland in the Forest area
	4B. (PUSP) Number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) revised or reserved annually
Air Quality	5A. (HEF) Nitrogen Dioxide levels: Headline Indicator
Critical Environmental Capital	6A. Number of Listed Buildings (of each grade) de-listed or on 'At Risk' register: Headline Indicator
	6B. Number of statutory nature conservation sites (SSSI's, LNR's etc.): Headline Indicator
Constant Assets	7A. (PUSP) Number of new or revised Conservation Areas designated annually
Waste	8A. (BVPI 82a) Total tonnage of household waste arisings: percentage recycled: Headline Indicator

Theme	Suggested Indicator
Housing	9A. Number of households in housing need: Headline Indicator
	9B. Percentage of affordable housing units completed each year (delivered through the planning process) as a percentage of all completions
	9C. Number of overall annual housing completions
Employment	10A. Number of people (registered as) unemployed: Headline Indicator
	10B. Number of businesses in Hertsmere
Recreation	11A. Number of open spaces / play areas provided or improved through the planning process
Awareness of / Involvement in Local Plan process	12A. Number of people registered with an interest on the Local Plan database 12B. Number of people registered on the SPG consultation list
Town Centres	13A. Bi-annual 'health check' of the Borough's town centres (using basic measures)
	13B. Number of vacant shop units in each town centre
Community Safety	14A. Total recorded crimes per 1,000 population and percentage detected
	14B. Number of annual consultations carried out on planning applications with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer
	14C. Comparison of crime rates between developments endorsed through the 'Secured by Design' process and those without it

N.B.

1. (BVPI) denotes a Best Value Performance Plan Indicator, followed by its reference number in the BVPP.
2. (HEF) is an abbreviation for Hertfordshire Environmental Forum. Where 'HEF' precedes an indicator it denotes that this indicator was devised by HEF and is monitored by this body.
3. (HCC) denotes an indicator devised by Hertfordshire County Council
4. (WCCF) denotes an indicator established by the Watling Chase Community Forest partnership.
5. (PUSP) denotes an indicator listed in the Planning Unit Service Plan.

Detailed Guide to using the Supporting Tables

Table 1: Sets out each indicator suggested for each theme. Each theme must have at least one indicator to translate it but ideally no more than about three to keep the overall length manageable. Each indicator is then assessed against the four criteria it should meet, with either a tick, question mark or cross used to mark the outcome.

Table 2: Attempts to explain the environmental significance of each indicator, that is the role it plays in achieving a sustainable environment.

Table 3: Identifies the main Local Plan Policies, which relate to each indicator. The indicators are intended to help in monitoring the success of these policies in their practical application. The table also relates the availability of baseline information so that the current circumstances for each indicator are made clear. The use of targets for the indicators provides a position to aim for wherever possible. In several cases these targets will be prescribed by other organisations, notably central Government. It is considered that where such targets are prescribed by other organisations it will be appropriate to use these in the interests of consistency, to allow comparison with other local authorities' performance and because the information will have to be gathered for these in any case. However, Best Value guidance also recommends the setting of local targets in some cases. Finally, the question of how frequently it is appropriate to issue information on the indicator is addressed and this will vary from indicator to indicator (largely depending on how often the information can be published).

Note: On the 27th June 2001 The Council's Environment Committee resolved, subject to some minor modifications, to adopt this guidance with immediate effect . The Council's Statement of Consultation and the Schedule of Responses to Public Consultation can be obtained separately from the Council.