

# **Planning Services**

## **Service Delivery Plan 2018-2019**

### **Overview of the service**

Activities of the Planning Service generally stem from legislative requirements, however close working with other internal departments is essential to providing a comprehensive service to our customers. We also work closely with a number of external clients such as the Local Highways Authority, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as well as town and parish councils.

It is important that the Planning Service maintains a strong customer focus to the varied range and number of customers that the service has to manage. The range of customers accessing our service includes; applicants, architects/agents, developers, neighbours and community groups as well as internal and external colleagues and consultees.

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with adopted local and national planning policies. The Planning Service operates in the public interest and its main purpose is to facilitate sustainable development throughout the District. Place making is an important objective for the team, alongside the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment. Close working with internal and external bodies forms an important part of the planning process to ensure the service functions in an efficient and transparent manner.

### **Cost of service**

The Planning Service is one that generates an income for the Council with planning applications fees being set by National Government and pre-application fees being set by the local planning authority. The budgeted income for 2018/19 from planning applications and pre-application advice is £895,166 and £49,783 respectively. The level of income received to date from April 2017 – January 2018 for planning applications and pre-application advice is £1,012,433. The net expenditure for the planning service is -£175,864.

In the year 2017-18 (01/04/2017-31/01/2018) the Planning Service dealt with a total of 1536 applications, the breakdown of which is given below:

<b>Majors</b>	<b>Minors</b>	<b>Others</b> (includes householders, listed buildings, adverts, conditions, amendments, certificate of lawfulness, prior notifications)	<b>Trees</b>
55	492	638	351

## **Staffing information**

The Planning Service includes a number of functions. The team consists of a total of 22.95 full time equivalent (FTE) staff members. The team is broken into a number of different sections that all fall under the remit of the Planning Manager. The Planning Team consists of Senior Planning Officers and Planning Officers.

The team also incorporates other staff and statutory functions; including Conservation, Tree Officers, Enforcement and the Planning Support Team. The structure of the team is outlined below with a summary of each function and staffing levels.

### **Support Team**

The Support Team consists of 8.4 FTE staff members and they are the point of receipt for planning, tree and other applications. They check whether all the information submitted is correct through the validation process. They provide support to officers throughout the planning process as well as conservation, trees and enforcement and being the front face of the Council's general enquiries service.

### **Planning Officers**

There are 3 FT Senior Planning Officers responsible for 6.5 FTE Planning Officers (5.5)/Planning Assistant (1). They are responsible for managing planning applications. Their role involves giving pre-application advice, carrying out site visits, considering planning applications, determining applications, presenting to committee and providing specialist advice to customers. A Planning Officer post is currently vacant and this post is being recruited to.

### **Conservation Officer**

The Council employs 1 FT Conservation Officer who is responsible for providing specialist advice on the historic built environment. It is their responsibility to secure the preservation and enhancement of East Cambridgeshire's rich and diverse heritage. They manage a case load of applications affecting this historic environment, comment on planning applications, provide pre-application advice and guidance to owners, applicants and agents as well as contributing to the production of local guidance and policy. The Conservation Officer left at the end of February and this post is currently being recruited to.

### **Trees Officers**

There are 2 FT Trees Officers that are responsible for providing specialist advice on tree related enquiries. They manage a case load of tree works applications, comment on planning applications, serve Tree Preservation Orders, investigate unauthorised works and provide advice and guidance to owners. They also manage the Council's tree stock and planting programme as well as the Council's Voluntary Tree Warden Scheme.

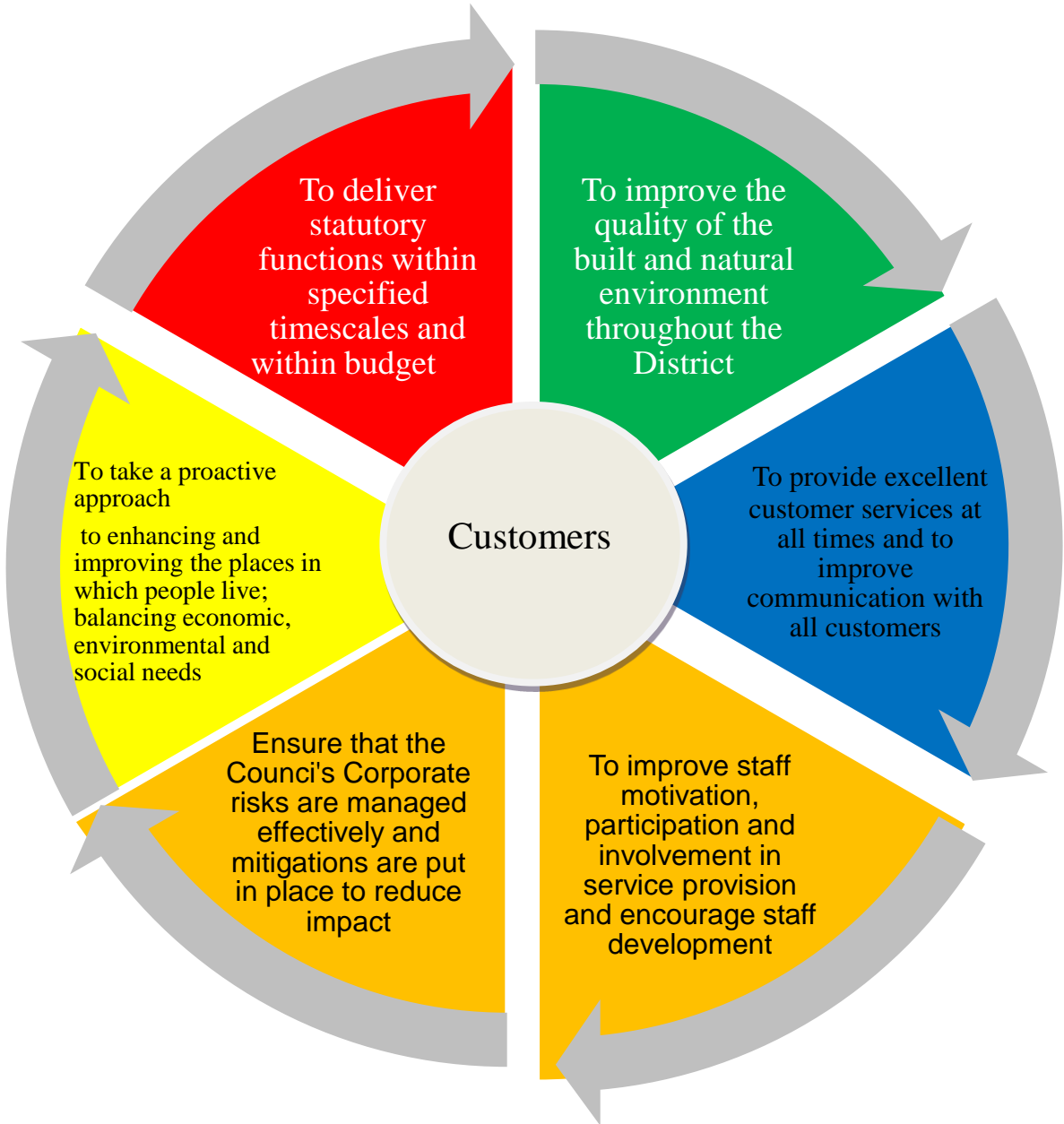
## **Enforcement Team**

The Enforcement Team consists; 2.05 FTE officers who are responsible for investigating complaints about unauthorised development and taking action where required. The provision of an enforcement service is a statutory function of the Local Planning Authority; however the taking of enforcement action is at the discretion of the local authority. The team are also responsible for monitoring development to ensure that it complies with what has been approved as well as dealing with high hedges complaints. They also offer advice to officers on enforcement proceedings as required, working in accordance with the Corporate Enforcement Policy and Local Enforcement Plan.

## **Forward planning for Councillors**

<b>Proposed date of decision</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Service Delivery Champion</b>	<b>Committee</b>
<b>First Wednesday of every month</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b>	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Cllr Lis Every</b>	<b>Planning</b>
<b>TBC</b>	<b>Member Training</b>	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Cllr Lis Every</b>	

Strategy map- 2018/2019



# Commitments towards our Vision

## Planning Services- Service Delivery Plan 18/19



East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

Performance Measure	Link to Corporate Plan Priority	Target and reporting timescale (i.e. 6 monthly or annually)	Baseline from previous year/output from previous year	Owner and co-owners
To deliver statutory functions within specified timescales and within budget constraints	Delivering a financially sound and well managed Council	90% of major applications determined within 13 weeks (or within an agreed timescale) N.B this is a 10% increase from last year	96%	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer
		80% of minor applications to be determined within 8 weeks (or within an agreed timescale)	92%	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer
		90% of householder applications determined within 8 weeks (or within an agreed timescale)	97%	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer
		90% of all other applications to be determined within statutory timescales (or within an agreed timescale)	93%	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer
		100% of Tree Preservation Order applications and Conservation Area Notices (trees) to be determined within statutory timescales.	100%	Cathy White- Senior Trees Officer Neil Horsewell- Trees Officer Rebecca Saunt - Planning Services Manager
		100% of planning applications determined within 26 weeks of validation unless a planning performance agreement or extension of time has been agreed.	99.8%	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer
		90% of planning applications validated within 5 working days.	75%	Lucy Flintham- Office Supervisor Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Sarah Parisi- Senior Support Officer All Support Team Members
		80% of discharge of condition applications determined within 8 weeks unless an extension of time has been agreed. N.B this is a decrease of 10% from last year's target	59%	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer

Performance Measure	Link to Corporate Plan Priority	Target and reporting timescale (i.e. 6 monthly or annually)	Baseline from previous year/output from previous year	Owner and co-owners
		10% increase in planning and pre-application fees from current budget  This year we have budgeted to bring in:  £895,166 from planning fees- 10% increase would be £89,516.60  £49,783 from pre-app fees- 10% increase would be £4,978.30	Planning 27% Pre-app 1.8%  Equating to; Planning £949,367 Pre-app £50,173 Missed by £4,056)	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer All Planning Officers and Conservation Officer
		To re-invest the statutory 20% planning fee increase to deliver efficiencies for the Planning Department – The budget for 18/19 is expected to be £179,033	New Target	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Lucy Flintham- Office Supervisor
		Implementation of further electronic working processes and procedures within 1 year – to include reduction of paper documents held on a planning file, emailing decision notices and correspondence	New Target	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Lucy Flintham- Office Supervisor Sarah Parisi – Senior Support Officer
To take a proactive approach to enhancing and improving the places in which people live: balancing economic, environmental and social needs	A fantastic place to live, work and visit	Develop a toolkit based upon the CABA building for life criteria as part of Design Guide review within 12 months.	In progress (50%) – to be completed by 04/05/2018	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer
		Carry out a scoping exercise for establishing Design Review panel to assess development schemes within 1 year.	Attended meeting with Cambridge City Design Panel to take Design Panel forward.	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Manager Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips- Senior Planning Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer Barbara Greengrass- Senior Planning Officer
		To help facilitate the successful delivery of North Ely through the planning process	Redrow Homes and Hopkins reserved matters taken to Committee. Care Home to go to Committee in April. Discharge of condition applications are expected to be progressed as far as possible by end of Feb 2018.	Rebecca Saunt- Planning Services Officer Julie Barrow- Senior Planning Officer
		To work proactively with any Enterprise Zone within the district to bring forward appropriate development in order to provide a range of jobs to the district in a timely manner.	New Target	Rebecca Saunt Andrew Phillips Barbara Greengrass

Performance Measure	Link to Corporate Plan Priority	Target and reporting timescale (i.e. 6 monthly or annually)	Baseline from previous year/output from previous year	Owner and co-owners
		Quarterly meetings between the Enterprise Zone and a Senior Planning Officer (as well as other relevant professionals) in order to mitigate problems and find solutions to significant problems at the earliest opportunity. Biannual meetings with Planning Manager and Enterprise Zone to cover any strategic problems or concerns		Julie Barrow
		To meet with the Police, Fire Brigade, Lead Local Flood Authority and other key stakeholders on a quarterly basis to increase the level of service we are able to provide to our customers.	Carried out on a monthly basis	Rebecca Saunt Barbara Greengrass Julie Barrow Andrew Phillips
To improve the quality of the built & natural environment throughout the district	A fantastic place to live, work and visit	Undertake review & update Design Guide SPD for adoption within 6 months	In progress (50%) – to be completed by 04/05/2018	Rebecca Saunt Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips Barbara Greengrass Julie Barrow Cathy White All Planning Officers and Tree Officers
		Monitor 20% of approved tree works	20% 35 inspections	Cathy White Rebecca Saunt
		80% of enforcement complaints to have preliminary investigation completed within 10 working days of receipt and the complainant contacted within 15 working days to advise of findings	100% 100%	Rebecca Saunt Julie Barrow All Enforcement Officers
		Undertake visits during works to listed buildings for 25% of approved consents	24% 10 out of 41 applications	Conservation Officer Rebecca Saunt
		Develop a Tree Strategy within 6 months to link with the new Local Plan	Ongoing – on track with preparation	Cathy White Neil Horseywell Rebecca Saunt Catherine Looper Zoe Boyce-Upcraft
		Proactively identify unauthorised adverts and satellite dishes in Soham within 6 months	Enforcement officers currently making contact with premises displaying unauthorised advertisements/satellite dishes. Proactive work very much in progress.	Julie Barrow Rebecca Saunt All Enforcement Officer
		Proactively identify unauthorised adverts and satellite dishes in Ely within 12 months.	Meeting held with Ely Councillors and town centre manager in	Julie Barrow Rebecca Saunt All Enforcement Officer

Performance Measure	Link to Corporate Plan Priority	Target and reporting timescale (i.e. 6 monthly or annually)	Baseline from previous year/output from previous year	Owner and co-owners
			November 2017. Traders are working with the East Cambridgeshire Access Group on voluntary code of contact. Enforcement team due to receive an update from Ely Councillors in February 2018. Decision will be taken thereafter as to nature of proactive work to be carried out.	
To Improve staff motivation, participation and involvement in service provision and encourage staff development	Delivering a financially sound and well managed Council	20 hrs of CPD to be identified and to be provided annually (pro-rata for part time positions)	35.6 hrs/person 855 hours completed	Rebecca Saunt All Officers
		Hold quarterly working party meetings to look at IT processes and systems for planning and enforcement	1 meeting held to date. IT currently going through another Review process.	Rebecca Saunt Andrew Phillips Barbara Greengrass Julie Barrow Lucy Flintham Cathy White Conservation Officer Oli Haydon
		Meet quarterly with the Planning Service Delivery Champion Introduce information videos on our website for a minimum of 3 topics	100% Outstanding	Rebecca Saunt Andrew Phillips Barbara Greengrass Julie Barrow Oli Haydon
Ensure that the Council's corporate risks are managed effectively and mitigations are put in place to reduce impact		To regularly review higher level corporate risks, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judicial review- the decision making process has not been carried out lawfully, which could lead to a financial risk on the Authority and judicial review by aggrieved party</li> </ul>		Rebecca Saunt



Performance Measure	Link to Corporate Plan Priority	Target and reporting timescale (i.e. 6 monthly or annually)	Baseline from previous year/output from previous year	Owner and co-owners
To provide excellent customer services at all times and to improve communication with all customers	Delivering a financially sound and well managed Council	Proactively engage with Parish Councils and Agents through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish meetings (to attend at least one meeting per Parish request, per year) and e-newsletters (x 4 a year)</li> <li>• Agent Forums/Newsletters</li> <li>• At least one evening/breakfast agents meeting a year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish meetings attended</li> <li>• Letters produced</li> <li>• Letters produced</li> <li>• Breakfast meeting</li> </ul>	Rebecca Saunt Lucy Flintham Sarah Parisi Julie Barrow Andrew Phillips Barbara Greengrass Conservation Officer All Planning Officers
		Produce new guidance/general information leaflets and review current leaflets and publish a minimum of 2 on website every 6 months	2 leaflets produced: Satellite Dishes and Boundary treatment and available on website	Rebecca Saunt Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips Barbara Greengrass Julie Barrow Cathy White
		Use feedback from customer surveys to inform improvements in the planning service and feedback to Agents Forum and Planning Committee	Comments being summarised to highlight areas of improvement	Rebecca Saunt Lucy Flintham Sarah Parisi
		Expand further the use of social media (Facebook and Twitter) into the planning service to support the planning process and keep customers and the general public up to date with news and information.	Twitter now reports all validated and decided applications. Regular updates from RS and OH about planning news and advice sessions on Tues/Thurs. Facebook picking up slowly.	Rebecca Saunt Oli Haydon