

Planning Services

Service Delivery Plan 2019-2020

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 2019/20 from planning applications and pre-application advice is £904,118 and £50,281 respectively. The level of income received to date from April 2018 – February 2019 for planning applications £1,024,577.50 and pre-application advice is £49,284.58. The net expenditure for the planning service is -£88,388.

In the year 2018-19 (01/04/2018-28/02/2019) the Planning Service dealt with a total of 1771 applications, the breakdown of which is given below:

Majors	Minors	Others (includes householders, listed buildings, adverts, conditions, amendments, certificate of lawfulness, prior notifications)	Trees
58	464	909	341

Staffing information

The Planning Service includes a number of functions. The team consists of a total of 24.25 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 Planning Team Leaders, Senior Planning Officers, Planning Officers and a Planning Assistant.

The team also incorporates other staff and statutory functions; including Conservation Officer, Tree Officers, Enforcement Officers 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 8.6 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 is 3 FT Planning Team Leaders responsible for 1 FT Senior Planning Officer and 5.6 FTE Planning Officers (4.6)/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.

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.

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.

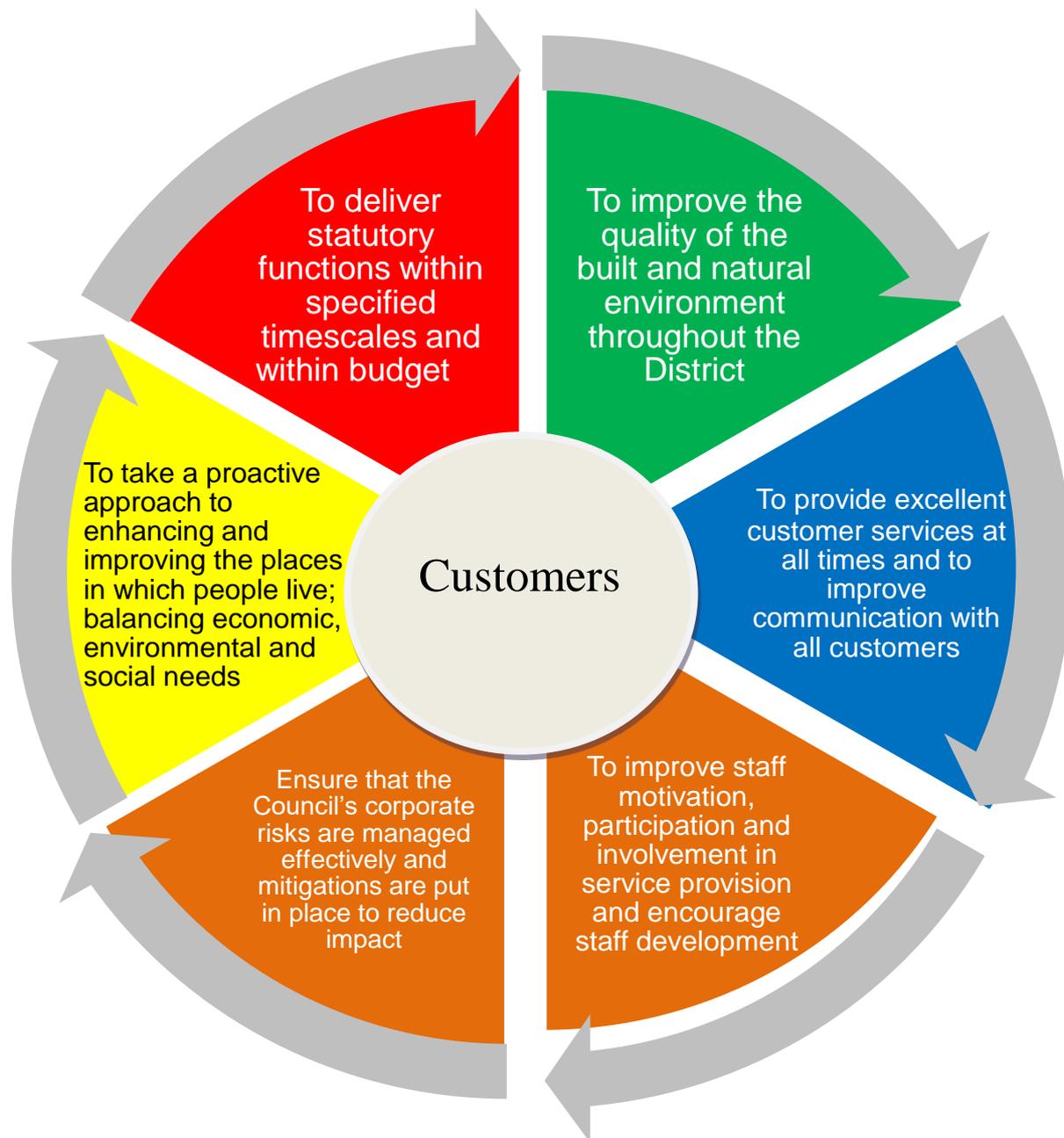
Enforcement Team

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

Proposed date of decision	Item	Service Area	Committee
First Wednesday of every month	Planning Committee	Planning	Planning
TBC	Member Training	Planning	

Strategy map- 2019/2020



Commitments towards our Vision

Service Delivery Plan-Planning Services



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	A customer driven efficient Council with a "can do" attitude and pro business approach and commercially focused to ensure financial self-sufficiency for the tax payer.	90% of major applications determined within 13 weeks (or within an agreed timescale)	97% 35 out of 36 applications on time	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant)
		80% of minor applications to be determined within 8 weeks (or within an agreed timescale)	95% 380 out of 402 applications on time	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant)
		90% of householder applications determined within 8 weeks (or within an agreed timescale)	99% 385 out of 390 applications on time	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Services Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant)
		90% of all other applications to be determined within statutory timescales (or within an agreed timescale)	96% 110 out of 114 applications on time	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant)
		100% of Tree Preservation Order applications and Conservation Area Notices (trees) to be determined within statutory timescales.	100% 381 applications on time	Cathy White - Senior Trees Officer Kevin Drane - Trees Officer Rebecca Saunt - Planning 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% (1007 out of 1009 decisions)	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant)
		75% of planning applications validated within 5 working days. N.B This is a decrease of 15% from last year's target.	66% (1275 out of 1919 applications)	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Lucy Flintham- Office Team Leader Sarah Parisi- Senior Support Officer All Support Team Members

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
		75% of discharge of condition applications determined within 8 weeks unless an extension of time has been agreed. N.B This is a decrease of 5% from last year's target.	65% (185 out of 283 discharge applications on time)	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant) and Conservation Officer
		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	Starting Decision Notice review following legislation update on pre-commencement conditions. Big reports not being printed for planning portal applications. Officers reading documents on screen.	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Lucy Flintham – Office Team Leader 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	Making East Cambridgeshire an even better place to live	Carry out a scoping exercise for establishing Design Review panel to assess development schemes within 1 year.	No further progress due to workloads and no permanent Conservation Officer in post until January	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips- Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass- Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader
		Review the 'Buildings of Local Interest Register' adopted in February 2017 within 1 year.	New Target	Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager
		To help facilitate the successful delivery of North Ely through the planning process	Care Home taken to Planning Committee and approved. Ongoing work with Redrow, Hopkins and Care Home on discharge of conditions. Work on Design Codes progressing and pre-application discussions continuing.	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader
		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. Quarterly meetings between the Enterprise Zone and a Planning Team Leader (as well as other relevant	Lancaster Way only Enterprise Zone. Planning Team Leader met with the Lancaster Way	Rebecca Saunt - Planning Manager Andrew Phillips - Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass - Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader

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
		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	Project Group Meeting every 3 months. Planning Team Leader and the Planning Manager have worked with the Infrastructure and Strategy Manager and Director (Commercial) with the developer to try and overcome a highway capacity problem on the site and met on a regular basis to discuss applications. Applications received are dealt with as a priority.	
		To meet with the Police, Fire Brigade, Lead Local Flood Authority, Highways, Anglian Water 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 - Planning Manager Andrew Phillips - Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass - Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader
To improve the quality of the built & natural environment throughout the district	Making East Cambridgeshire an even better place to live	Undertake review & update Design Guide SPD for adoption within 1 year	First draft completed and to be circulated to officers for comment once a full complement of staff – Working with Strategic Planning To update SPD's	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips- Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass- Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Cathy White – Senior Trees Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant) and Tree Officers
		Monitor 20% of approved tree works	20% 88 inspections	Cathy White – Senior Trees Officer Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager
		Annual update to Tree Strategy	New Target	Cathy White – Senior Trees Officer Kevin Drane – Trees Officer Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager
		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 – Planning Manager Juleen roman – Enforcement Team Leader All Enforcement Officers
		80% of approved applications monitored for inconsistency and pre-commencement conditions within 2 months of commencement	New Target	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Juleen Roman – Enforcement Team Leader Sarah Parisi – Senior Planning Support 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
				Lucy Flintham – Office Team Leader
		Undertake visits during works to listed buildings for 25% of approved consents	Not achieved due to no permanent full time Conservation Officer in post until January	Christopher Partrick - Conservation Officer Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager
		Proactively identify unauthorised adverts across the District and work with businesses to regularise	New Target	Juleen Roman – Enforcement Team Leader Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager All Enforcement Officers
		Investigation and implementation of a programme of biodiversity net gain for development sites in light of the Governments focus (NPPF and the publication of “a Green Future”) on enhancing the natural environment within 1 year	New Target	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips- Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass- Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Cathy White – Senior Trees Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant) and Tree Officers
To Improve staff motivation, participation and involvement in service provision and encourage staff development	A customer driven efficient Council with a “can do” attitude and pro business approach and commercially focused to ensure financial self-sufficiency for the tax payer	20 hrs of CPD to be identified and to be provided annually (pro-rata for part time positions)	970 hours completed by 25 members of staff resulting in 38.8 hrs/person	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager All Officers
		To investigate going into local schools to discuss and promote the planning profession within 6 months	New Target	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Christopher Partrick - Conservation Officer
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: 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	2 Judicial Reviews – Council consented to the 2 permissions being quashed and re-issued, addressing matters raised. Implications discussed with officers at team meeting.	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager
To provide excellent customer services at all times and to improve communication with all customers	A customer driven efficient Council with a “can do” attitude and pro-business approach and commercially focused to ensure financial self-sufficiency for the tax payer.	Proactively engage with Parish Councils and Agents through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish meetings (to attend at least one meeting per Parish request, per year)and e-newsletters (x 4 a year) Agent Forums/Newsletters (x4 a year) At least one evening/breakfast agents meeting a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish meetings attended and letters produced Letters produced Breakfast meeting postponed due to lack of attendees 	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Lucy Flintham – Office Team Leader Cathy White – Senior Trees Officer Christopher Partrick - Conservation Officer All Planning Officers (including Senior and Assistant)
		Produce new guidance/general information leaflets and review current leaflets and publish a minimum of 2 on website every 6 months	Reviewed, amended and published leaflet on the Planning Committee Process	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Christopher Partrick - Conservation Officer Andrew Phillips – Planning Team Leader Barbara Greengrass – Planning Team Leader

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
			and Tree leaflet in final stages	Angela Briggs – Planning Team Leader Cathy White – Senior Trees Officer
		Use feedback from customer surveys to inform improvements in the planning service and feedback to Agents Forum and Planning Committee twice a year	Comments being summarised to highlight areas of improvement	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Lucy Flintham – Office Team Leader Sarah Parisi – Senior Planning Support Officer
		Expand further the use of 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 continues to report all validated and decided applications.	Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager Catherine Looper – Planning Officer Molly Hood – Planning Officer