

## **Report to Economy, Environment, and Place Scrutiny Committee**

**4<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

### **Purpose of Report**

**To provide as requested by the Chair information on the Planning Service**

### **Background**

The Chair has asked the Committee to be provided for *Planning with a review of case load, % compliance with required completion of workload. Review of number of staff vacancies within the department and the action plan to fill this gap. Also evidence of staff turnover and feedback on reasons for turnover from those that have left. Action plan to mitigate moving forward*.

Subsequently the Chair has confirmed that by "Planning" he is referring to both Development Management (of which the planning application function is part) and to Planning Policy as well.

### **1. Principal elements of the Planning Service caseload**

#### ***Planning Policy***

Preparation of the Joint Local Plan, in conjunction with the City Council, involving the commissioning of a range of evidence including the Joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the Employment Land Review, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and a range of other studies. Target to get the new Local Plan through an Examination in Public by 2020. A number of further stages are required to get to that point

Supporting currently 6 Qualifying Bodies prepare their Neighbourhood Plans – each at a different stage

Annual Monitoring of housing, employment, retail and leisure development across the Borough

Annual Calculation of the 5 year housing land supply position within the Borough

Annual preparation of Council's Brownfield Sites Register

Fulfilling the ongoing duty to cooperate with other adjoining Local Planning Authorities

#### ***Development Management***

Providing a pre-application enquiry service – 392 enquiries in 2017/18 (596 in 2016/17)

Determining "planning applications" including applications for planning permission, outline planning permission, applications for the approval of

reserved matters, applications for listed building and advertisement consent, applications for the approval of details where such approval is required by conditions – see Appendix.1 for information on numbers

Defending the Council's decisions on appeal (13 valid appeals received in 17/18; 23 in 16/17)

Dealing with the enforcement of planning controls, including the investigation of reports of breaches of planning control - 264 received in 2017/18 (255 in 2016/17)

Conservation and Heritage – including the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (10 year rolling programme involving 22 Conservation Areas), the running of the Council's Historic Buildings Grants Scheme (, the biannual review of the Council's Local Register, the Biannual Civic Awards Scheme, working with owners of Listed Buildings including in particular those designated by 5 yearly surveys to be at risk

## **2. Compliance with required completion of caseload**

### ***Planning Policy***

Local Plan preparation – Government increasingly seeking to persuade / penalise authorities to bring forward their plans – most recent timetable set out in report to Cabinet January 2018

Neighbourhood Plans – legislation has introduced statutory periods which have to be complied with – statutory periods achieved in 17/18

Demands for annual monitoring

5 year housing land supply position – key component in development management decisions, position last calculated in August 2017 (of situation as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017)

Duty to Cooperate demands from adjoining authorities, Council part, with City Council, of Planning Advisory Service pilot project for new Statements of Common Ground

### ***Development Management***

% of pre-application enquiries responded to within agreed time periods – Local target for 2017/18 75% - actual 65.5% (2016/17 74.2%) – see Appendix 2 for further details

% applications for Major development determined “in time” - Local target 70% for 2017/18 – actual 78.4% (2016/17 81.5%) – see Appendix 2 for further details

% of applications for Minor development determined within 8 weeks – local target 70% for 2017/18 – actual 50.3% (2016/17 80.8%) – see Appendix 2

% of applications for “Other development” determined within 8 weeks – Local target for 2017/18 85%- actual 76.4% (2016/17 88%) – see Appendix 2 for further details

% of a applications for “Non-major” development determined “in time” – Local target for 2017/18 85% - actual 78.6% (2016/17 92.9%) – see Appendix 2 for further details

% of applications for approvals required by conditions determined within 2 months - Local target for 2017/18 75% - actual 51.4% (2016/17 66.8%) – see Appendix 2 for further details

% of complainants (about alleged breaches of planning control) informed within required timescale of any action to be taken – local target for 2017/18 75%- actual figures for first two quarters 81.7% - (2016/17 76.7%) – see Appendix 2 for further details

### **3. Planning Department – current staff vacancies and Action Plan to address these vacancies**

<b>Vacancy</b>	<b>Stage at</b>	<b>Intended next steps</b>
<b>Planning Policy</b>		
Planning Policy Business Manager – (BB70) – Grade 12, Full time – vacant since May	Advertised internally (2 separate weeks) & then externally (6 weeks). Current closing date 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Dates already set for shortlisting and interviews In event of lack of appropriate candidates to contact Recruitment Agencies to source candidates. Market Supplement review
Fixed term (1 year) Neighbourhood Planning Officer – DD339 - Grade 9, Part time 22.2 hours – vacant since April	Advertised externally (4 weeks) current closing date 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Dates already set for shortlisting and interviews. Follow normal recruitment and selection process
<b>Development Management</b>		
Senior Planning Officer (Enforcement) - Grade 9 (+4 scp Market Supplement until 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2019, review Spring 2019) Full time – New post	Updated JD and Person Spec prepared to enable Executive Management Team consideration	Advertise if approved, etc
Support Officer – Grade 7, full time – vacant since January	Advertised internally and externally with closing date 7 <sup>th</sup> June – no appropriate applications received	Job Specification being reconsidered with view to going back to market again within next month
<b>Planning Service</b>		
Planning Practice Manager- Grade 8, Temporary post (until	Revised Job Specification and Job Description required, followed by seeking	Advertise if approved, etc

March 2018) Full time – vacant since June 2017	of EMT approval and then if approved usual recruitment and selection process	
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#### 4. Staff turnover and feedback

##### Staff Currently in post

Job Role	Duration person in post in Planning	Nature of appointment
Head of Planning	16 years 4 months	Full time
<b>Planning Policy</b>		
Joint Local Plan Coordinator	18 months	Full time. Shared fixed 2 year appointment with SOTCC
Senior Planning Policy Officer	1 year 4 months	Full time
Senior Planning Policy Officer	1 year 4 months	Full time
Planning Policy Officer	1 year 7 months	Full time
<b>Development Management</b>		
Development Management Manager	17 years 10 months	Full time
Urban Design / Conservation Officer	11 years 7 months	Part time (0.8FTE)
Senior Planning Officer (DM)	13 years 5 months	Full time
Senior Planning Officer (DM)	10 years 9 months	Full time
Planning Officer (DM)	3 years 9 months	Full time
Planning Officer (DM)	13 years	Full time
Trainee Planning Officer	11 months	Full time
Planning Enforcement Officer	5 years	Full time
Support Officer	17 years 5 months	Full time
Support Officer	29 years 7 months	Part time (0.4 FTE)
Support Officer	38 years 8 months	Part time (0.4FTE)
Assistant Support Officer	13 years 4 months	Full time
Assistant Support Officer	13 years 4 months	Full time
Assistant Support Officer	6 months	Part time (0.8FTE)
Planning Consultant	4 weeks	Temporary employment

##### Leavers (in the last 5 years)

Planning Policy Job Role	Date of departure	Duration person in post in Planning
Planning Policy Officer/Senior Planning Policy Officer	January 2014	3 years 3 months
Senior Planning Policy Officer	March 2014	7 months
Planning Policy	January 2016	1 year 3 months

Officer		
Senior Planning Policy Officer	July 2016	2 years 2 months
Neighbourhood Planning Officer-Temporary post	March 2018	1 year 1 month
Planning Policy Manager	May 2018	13 years
<p>The Council invites leavers to complete exit interviews. Not all leavers complete such interviews. Reasons for leaving Planning Policy have varied but have included the obtaining of better remunerated posts at nearby authorities, of permanent posts by those in temporary posts, the obtaining of employment closer to staff members homes and concerns about the posts held, the constraints of the Job Evaluation scheme and resources available to Planning Policy</p>		
<b>Development Management Job Role</b>	<b>Date of departure</b>	<b>Duration of person in post in Planning</b>
Senior Planning Officer (Development Management)	May 2014	24 years 10 months
Senior Planning Officer (Development Management)	Oct 2013	5 years 1 month
Planning Officer	Jan 2016	10 years
Support Officer	Dec 2017	13 years 10 months
Planning Practice Manager	June 2017	2 months
<p>Reasons for leaving Development Management have varied but have included the taking of a post in the private sector, retirement, the setting up of a new business venue and returning to a post with a previous employer. In one case the staff member considered that they were not suited to the post that they held having had previously no local government or planning experience</p>		