

Directorate: ECONOMIC GROWTH & REGENERATION

Proposal : DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

PROPOSAL DETAILS

The proposal is threefold within this Team.

- (i) To re-launch the Council's pre-application service, including revised chargeable services.
- (ii) To provide a more consistent planning enforcement service, commensurate with a remodelled structure (no additional staff).
- (iii) That a permanent, senior resource is recruited to the DM Team to resolve capacity issues regarding the provision of strategic pre-application advice and the determination of major, strategic planning applications that are likely to be submitted as a consequence of Local Plan adoption.

In respect of (i), a review of the pre-application offer of the Council is overdue, and will also allow for more efficient recovery of costs associated with providing this service. In respect of (ii), this remains the only area of the Team which fails to have a clear career-focused structure, and this hinders current decision-making due to the absence of any Team Leader role. With regard to (iii), the lack of resource has seriously affected pre-application responses in particular, leading to lower-than-anticipated levels of fee income and the current excellent performance in terms of determining planning applications is now consistently propped up by the 'extension of time' regime, which is dependent upon developers' goodwill.

REVENUE REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL FUND	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Additional Staff Capacity	44,900	48,700	52,500	57,100
Pre-application income fee target increase*	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
Total	19,900	23,700	27,500	32,100

COUNCIL PRIORITIES

A Sustainable District	Decision-taking (Development Management) activity is based upon the principles of sustainable development that are enshrined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This includes ensuring that policies and decisions ensure that future development can make effective use of land and prudent use of natural resources, help biodiversity, minimise waste and pollution, mitigate to climate change and move to a low carbon economy
An Inclusive and Prosperous Local Economy	One of the 3 overarching objective of sustainable development is the Economic Objective - identifying whether planning and development proposals will support growth, infrastructure provision, innovation and improved productivity (again, as defined by the NPPF).
Healthy & Happy Communities	Our decision-taking must, as stated in the NPPF, support strong, vibrant and healthy communities; to foster a well-designed and safe built environment; to deliver accessible services and open spaces that support local communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing.
A Co-operative Kind and Responsible Council	This Team acts responsibly by considering all of the above three overarching objectives contained within the NPPF during all stages of their work.

CROSS CUTTING THEMES	
Climate Emergency	National planning policy is clear that planning has a key role to play in minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, including coastal change, flood risk, drought, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. The decisions of the Development Management Team especially during the pre-application (Advice) stages, are critical to ensuring that the district can transition to a low-carbon future and mitigate against the impacts of climate change, including flood risk.
Community Wealth Building	Our Teams consider community wealth building as a material planning consideration. An example of this is the introduction of Employment and Skills Plans as a validation requirement for a number of major development proposals. This ensures developers have to provide opportunities for upskilling of the local workforce and provision of the right education, skills and inspiration to enable them to get jobs.
Community Engagement	This Team engages with its' citizens through the statutory planning process, which includes national consultation and publicity arrangements during decision-taking.

OUTCOMES		
Outcome	Performance Measure	Target
Determination of planning applications in accordance with national performance thresholds (speed of decision)	Rolling two-year assessment undertaken by Government – Majors to be determined within 13 weeks (16 weeks in relation to Environmental Impact Assessment development) and 8 weeks in all non-major cases	60% majors within time and 70% for non-majors
Determination of planning applications in accordance with national performance thresholds (quality of decision)	As above – although two-year period differs (April 2017-March 2019, compared to October 2017-Sept 2019 for speed of decision)	No more than 10% of total decisions made on major and non-major development shall be overturned at appeal.
Pre-application advice – speed of advice provided	No statutory measures, but will be useful to introduce local performance targets as part of remodelling of the pre-application offer	To be agreed