



Strategic Planning Service Delivery Plan 2023 to 2024

Overview of the service

The service is responsible for two key elements: first, setting a planning strategy for the sustainable development of East Cambridgeshire – including bringing forward key development sites and infrastructure projects; second, for coordinating the Council's approach to tackling climate change issues and boosting the local natural environment.

The work includes assisting with the delivery of a number of the Council's Corporate Objectives, including improving transport, housing, and a 'cleaner, greener' East Cambridgeshire.

The key responsibilities of the team are set out below (strategic planning items first, followed by environment related items thereafter).

1. Responsible for the Local Plan and advising on its content. For 2023 to 2024, this specifically means finalising the small partial update of the 2015 Local Plan, which focusses on updating the overall housing requirement we should be planning for in the district.
2. Facilitating, as part of a 'one-team' Council service, the delivery of key growth projects identified by the Council. This involves working across other teams and in partnership with landowners, developers, infrastructure providers and the local community in the first stages of scheme development (prior to commencement of formal pre-application discussions and submission of planning applications).
3. Producing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for specific topics where necessary – in conjunction with landowners, developers, local communities and other public bodies. These SPDs support, and add more details to, policies in the Local Plan.

4. Monitoring the delivery of growth and key development sites, through the collection and analysis of demographic, housing, economic and environmental data. Monitoring work also involves regular assessment of key development trends, viability assessments, market trends, future requirements and potential changes to the Council's growth strategy. This is a statutory requirement.
5. To provide policy advice and direction to the Development Management team on preliminary enquiries, planning applications and appeals and to provide general policy advice and guidance to landowners/developers and the public.
6. To assist parish councils in the production and adoption of Neighbourhood Plans. This is a statutory requirement.
7. Under the Section 20 (5) (c) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to engage constructively with neighbouring Councils and other bodies to maximise the effectiveness of plan preparation. This may at times require joint working on plans or projects.
8. To respond to consultations at national and sub-regional level on proposed changes to national policy and guidance, and emerging strategy documents issued by other public bodies. This includes plans prepared by the Combined Authority and the government's planning reforms.
9. Prepare an annual 'Environment Plan' (June each year), which establishes the latest data on the Council's carbon footprint, as well as sets out a set of 'Top 20 Actions' for the forthcoming year that the Council is committed to do, to help the environment.
10. Oversee and coordinate activities across the Council and with the public, so that our commitments in the Environment Plan are known and delivered.
11. Manage specific projects set out in the Environment Plan.
12. Act as a key point of contact with the public, businesses and wider partners on the activities of the Council from an environment perspective, and actively assisting their work programmes where it aligns with our aims and objectives (for example, directly assisting Natural Cambridgeshire, the Local Nature Partnership body for the area).

Cost of service

Planning Policy £145,111.

Environment Plan £100,000.

Staffing Information

Strategic Planning Manager (full time), Senior Strategic Planning Officer (full time), Senior Natural Environment and Climate Officer (full time).

Forward planning for Councillors

Proposed item	Proposed date of decision	Committee
Updated 'Environment Plan' (including new set of 'top 20 actions') taken to committee for approval	June 2023	Operational Services
Update on progress with the partial review of the Local Plan, with the intention to seek authority from Full Council to adopt the update (or take another form of action)	July 2023 (subject to Inspector's Report being received)	Full Council
Updating the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	July 2023	Finance and Assets
The 'making' (adoption) of any Neighbourhood Plans, as prepared by parish councils	As necessary	Full Council
Half year report 2023 to 2024	November 2023	Finance and Assets
End of year report 2023 to 2024	March 2024	Finance and Assets
Service Delivery Plan 2024 to 2025	March 2024	Finance and Assets

Strategic Planning Service Delivery Plan 2023 to 2024

This Service Delivery Plan describes what Infrastructure and Strategic Planning will be doing to deliver continuous improvement (service objective). Each performance measure relates to the Council's strategic outcomes and Corporate Plan 2022 to 2023.

Council's Strategic Outcome: Customers are at the heart of everything we do.

Strategic Planning Service's Strategic Objective: Keep our planning policy and environment strategy framework up-to-date, clear and in line with corporate priorities.

Link to Corporate Plan: Improving transport. Housing. Social and community infrastructure. Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 to 2023	Owner and co-owners
Present to members in Summer 2023 the final proposals for a small partial update of the Local Plan 2015, with the intention to adopt the proposals subject to the findings of the independent Inspector	Summer 2023, annually	Examination of Local Plan update took place in 2022. Awaiting final decisions by Inspector. Timing out of the control of the Council.	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Strategic Planning Officer
Work with those communities wishing to undertake Neighbourhood Planning, ensure ECDC meets its statutory requirements (timing and demand uncertain, due to lead being parish councils)	As required, annually	High levels of Neighbourhood Plan activity, with 3 more plans adopted (Haddenham & Aldreth, Isleham and Swaffham Bulbeck).	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Strategic Planning Officer
Present to Operational Services Committee an updated 'Environment Plan', with a new set of Top 20 actions for 2023/24, in June 2023; undertake activities to deliver those actions	As identified, annually	Environment Plan 2022 to 2023 adopted June 2022. Actions progressing.	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Strategic Planning Officer Senior Natural Environment and Climate Officer

Council's Strategic Outcome: Customers are at the heart of everything we do.

Strategic Planning Service's Strategic Objective: Influence, for the benefit of East Cambs, sub-regional planning and environment policy framework.

Link to Corporate Plan: Improving transport. Housing. Social and community infrastructure. Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 to 2023	Owner and co-owners
Play an active role in sub-regional strategic planning work, including attendance at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Planning Policy Forum (every 6 weeks); contribute to Combined Authority strategic planning and environment activities; play an active part in the emerging Land Use Framework for Cambridgeshire	Ongoing, annually	The service has contributed to a number of sub regional activities, including emerging Land Use Framework for Cambridgeshire. Attends all PPF meetings. Ox-Cam Arc initiative presently subject to a transition to a partnership basis.	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Strategic Planning Officer

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 to 2023	Owner and co-owners
and the Local nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire			

Council's Strategic Outcome: Safe, vibrant and inclusive communities. Community sustainability.

Strategic Planning Service's Strategic Objective: Maintain a clear planning policy framework which will help facilitate the creation of safe, vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities.

Link to Corporate Plan: Improving transport. Housing. Social and community infrastructure. Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 to 2023	Owner and co-owners
Continually review all existing service web pages to ensure that only up to date, accurate and relevant information is live on the Council's website	Ongoing, annually	Website continually monitored for improvement and updating.	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Strategic Planning Officer Senior Natural Environment and Climate Officer
Publication of an Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) and Five Year Land Supply Report covering period to 31 March 2023, which reports on the performance of the previous year in terms of planning matters (statutory item)	By 31 December 2023, annually	AMR published December 2022.	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Strategic Planning Officer

Council's Strategic Outcome: Be an excellent employer.

Strategic Planning Service's Strategic Objective: Continue to develop highly trained staff to support service delivery and drive forward our corporate priorities.
Ensure that the Council's corporate risks are managed effectively and mitigations are put in place to reduce impact.

Link to Corporate Plan: Sound financial management.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 – 2023	Owner and co-owners
Attend appropriate training events when available to ensure staff are well informed and up to date with the procedures and required legislation	As identified, annually	New performance measure.	Strategic Planning Manager

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 – 2023	Owner and co-owners
Ensure that all staff appraisals are completed annually and within the time frame set by HR	100%, annually	100%	Strategic Planning Manager
Regularly review higher level corporate risks including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new legislation, impacting on work in progress new legislation, resulting in a resource pressure to implement status of policies within the Local Plan, resulting in resource implications, reputational risks, and unplanned for development adaptation to climate change 	Ongoing, annually	Large legislative programme, including Environment Act 2021 being enacted, and emerging 'Levelling Up' Bill, which has large volume of planning and environment related changes. The implications of these continued to be considered and managed. For example, Biodiversity Net Gain becoming mandatory late 2023, with Member briefing at the November 2022 Finance and Assets Committee.	Strategic Planning Manager

Council's Strategic Outcome: A clean, green and attractive place.

Strategic Planning Service's Strategic Objective: Undertake activities which help to mitigate/adapt to climate change.

Link to Corporate Plan: Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2022 – 2023	Owner and co-owners
Lead on the preparation of, and subsequently help implementation of, the Council's Climate and Environment Action Plan	As identified, annually	Environment Plan 2022 to 2023 adopted June 2022. Actions progressing. Council achieved national 'Investors in the Environment' bronze accreditation in December 2022 (first authority in Cambridgeshire to do so).	Strategic Planning Manager Senior Natural Environment and Climate Officer