

Strategic Planning Service Delivery Plan 2022-2023

Overview of the service

The Service is responsible for two key elements: first, setting a 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 2022/23, this specifically means progressing 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 proposed 'Ox-Cam Arc spatial strategy', which is a high level plan for the geographical area between Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire.
9. Prepare an annual 'Environment Plan' (June each year), which established 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 wise 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

No directly employed staff are currently in post within the Service Area (see 'Staffing Information' below). However, two SLAs are presently in place, the first to 'share' Peterborough City Council's (PCC) planning policy staff resource, and second to 'share' a member of staff from Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT).

The SLAs are periodically reviewed, but for 21/22, the two SLAs had a combined value of c£120,000 per annum.

Additional costs of the strategic planning service are on an 'as needed' basis, covering, for example, essential external costs associated with printing consultation documents or assisting parish councils with any neighbourhood plan work.

To help deliver the environment plan ambitions, and specifically the 'top 20 actions' within it, a £100k annual revenue fund is in place (c£30k of which go towards the SLA costs).

Some costs of the service are off-set by one-off or limited time grants received from Government, such as Neighbourhood Planning Grants (though there is no guarantee these will continue to be available).

Staffing information

The Strategic Planning Service Area at the time of preparing this service plan consists of:

1.5FTE Manager and Officer support via the PCC SLA arrangement (this support is split on a part time basis across three staff), plus additional 'call-off' support as and when required and agreed by the Director – Commercial.

0.5FTE officer support via the PECT SLA arrangement.

There are no ECDC directly employed staff in the Service Area.

Forward planning for Councillors

Proposed date of decision	Item/Event/ Project Stage	Service Area	Committee
Spring 2022	Update on progress with the partial review of the Local Plan, with the intention to seek authority from Full Council to 'submit' the proposals to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.	Strategic Planning	Full Council

June 2022	Updated 'Environment Plan' (including new set of 'top 20 actions') taken to Committee for approval	Environment Strategy	Operational Services Committee
Late 2022/23	Subject to successful examination, Full Council may be in a position by the end of the financial year to adopt the partial update to the Local Plan. However, there is a chance this may slip into early 2023/24	Strategic Planning	Full Council
As necessary	The 'making' (adoption) of any Neighbourhood Plans, as prepared by Parish Councils. There are several Parish Councils well advanced with Neighbourhood Plans, and it is likely one or more will reach the final adoption stage during 2022/23 (though this is largely beyond the control of ECDC, and is dependent on parish/town council progress)	Strategic Planning	Full Council



Commitments towards our Vision

Strategic Planning - Service Delivery Plan 2022-2023



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
Maintain a clear planning policy framework which will help facilitate the creation of safe, vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities	Improving Transport Housing Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire Social & Community Infrastructure	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.	Thorough update took place in February 2019. Ongoing review since.	Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer
		Publication of an Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) and Five Year Land Supply Report covering period to 31 March 2022, which reports on the performance of the previous year in terms of planning matters (statutory item). By 31 December 2022.	AMR last published in December 2021	Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer (5 Year Land Supply) Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer (AMR)
To keep our planning policy and environment strategy framework up-to-date, clear and in line with corporate priorities	Improving Transport Housing Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire Social & Community Infrastructure	Present to Members in Spring 2022 the final proposals for a small partial update of the Local Plan 2015.	Local Plan adopted 2015	Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager
		Undertake examination of the proposals – by end 2022.	Draft stages on the partial update were undertaken during 2021/22	Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer
		Adopt the changes – by end of 2022/23	Advice regularly given to communities, and especially parish councils.	Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager
To influence, for the benefit of East Cambs, sub-regional planning and environment policy framework	Improving Transport Housing Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire Social & Community Infrastructure	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. Ongoing.	Eleven Parish Councils are already designated as Neighbourhood Areas, three of which have a 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan, and many others are well on the way to preparing a Plan.	Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer
		Present to Operational Services Committee an updated 'Environment Plan', with a new set of Top 20 actions for 2022/23, in June 2023. Undertake activities to deliver those actions.	Annual Environment Plans previously published in June 2020 and 2021.	Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Emma-Jane Danielsson – Environment Officer
To influence, for the benefit of East Cambs, sub-regional planning and environment policy framework	Improving Transport Housing Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire Social & Community Infrastructure	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 activities; oversee the Council's response to emerging Ox-Cam Arc spatial policy. Ongoing.	Mostly Ongoing	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning 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
Maintain high quality working relationship with Members	Improving Transport Housing Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire Social & Community Infrastructure	To provide regular updates to Members on the work of the Strategic Planning and Environment Strategy Service and to provide an opportunity to work in partnership on key issues/areas of work.	Briefings as required.	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer Emma-Jane Danielsson – Environment Officer
Ensure the Council's Corporate risks are managed effectively and mitigations are put in place to reduce impact	Improving Transport Housing Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire Social & Community Infrastructure	To 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	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer Emma-Jane Danielsson – Environment Officer
Undertake activities which help to mitigate / adapt to climate change	Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire	To lead on the preparation of, and subsequently help implementation of, the Council's Climate and Environment Action Plan.	Annual Environment Plans previously published in June 2020 and 2021.	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay- Strategic Planning Manager Emma-Jane Danielsson – Environment Officer