Strategic Planning Service – 2019-20

Overview of the service

The Service is responsible for setting a strategy for the sustainable development of East Cambridgeshire and planning for the delivery of residential and employment growth – including bringing forward key development sites and infrastructure projects.

The work includes assisting with the delivery of a number of the Council's Corporate Objectives, including delivering affordable housing/CLT schemes, improving infrastructure and improving local transport.

The key responsibilities of the team are set out below:

1. Responsible for the Local Plan and advising on its content. For 2019/20 this means setting out options for Member consideration in respect of whether or not to commence a review of its Local Plan, to replace the current 2015 adopted Local Plan. If Members agree to commence such a review, then the team will progress the early stages accordingly.

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 for specific topics where necessary – in conjunction with landowners, developers, local communities and other public bodies. These 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.

Looking back to the Service Plan for 2018/19, the Service Area has been principally engaged in the preparation of the then emerging Local Plan. However, that Plan was withdrawn by Full Council in February 2019.

Cost of service

No directly employed staff are currently in post within the Service Area (see 'Staffing Information' below). However, an SLA is in place to 'share' Peterborough City Council's (PCC) planning policy staff resource, as agreed by Corporate Governance and Finance Committee in 2015, and updated in January 2018. A further update is presently being prepared, to reflect the withdrawal of the Local Plan, and to be consistent with this service plan.

For 19/20, that SLA, for strategic planning, is likely to be around £90,000 plus has the ability to secure additional support from PCC as needed. This is less than previous years, but is based on the assumption that work on a Local Plan review will not be substantial during the year.

Additional costs of the 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.

Some costs of the service are off-set by one-off or limited time grants received from Government, such as Neighbourhood Planning Grants and Brownfield Register Grants.

Staffing information

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

3FTE Manager and Officer support via the PCC SLA arrangement, plus additional 'call-off' support as and when required and agreed by the Director – Commercial.

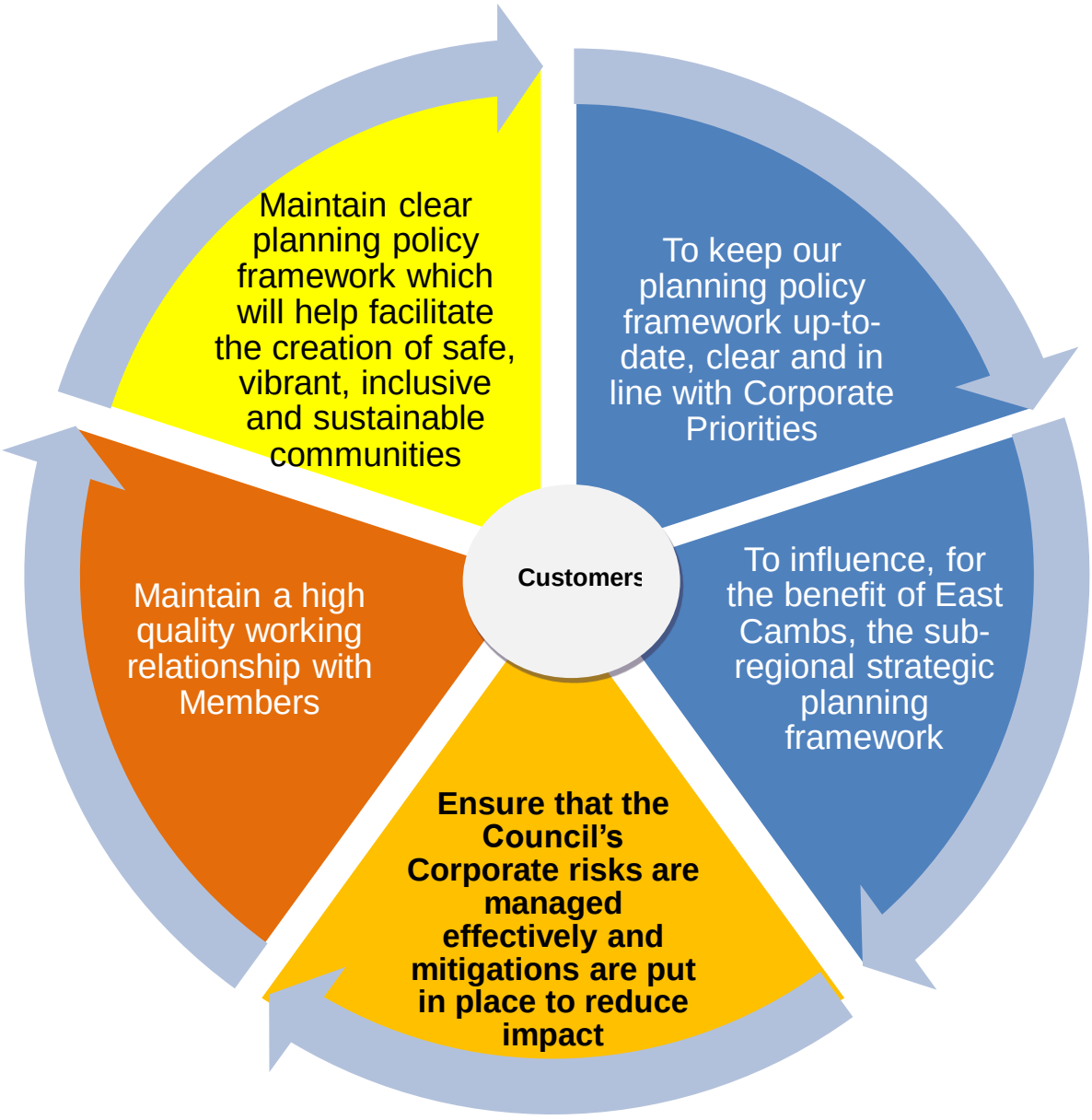
There are no ECDC directly employed staff in the Service Area.

However, for 19/20, it is scheduled to drop to around 1.5FTE (and the cost likewise dropping, as noted above).

Forward planning for Councillors

Proposed date of decision	Item/Event/ Project Stage	Service Area	Committee
July 2019	Full Council to consider options in relation to commencing (or not) a Local Plan review.	Strategic Planning	Full Council
Between July 2019-March 2020	Full Council to receive draft Supplementary Planning Documents to approve for the purpose of public consultation, in support of the Local Plan 2015. Details to be confirmed.	Strategic Planning	Full Council
Between July 2019-March 2020	Subject to above and due consultation having taken place, Full Council to receive Supplementary Planning Documents to approve for adoption. Details to be confirmed.	Strategic Planning	Full Council

Strategy map- 2019/20120



Commitments towards our Vision

Strategic Planning Service Delivery Plan 19/20

East Cambridgeshire District Council

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	(2)A Fantastic Place to Live, Work and Visit (3)Genuinely affordable housing (4) New Jobs and Funding (5)Improved Infrastructure. (6)Improving Local Transport.	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 2017/18, and again in February 2019	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay-Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer
		Publication of an Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) covering period to 31 March 2019, which reports on the performance of the previous year in terms of planning matters (statutory item). By 31 December 2019, but aim for September 2019.	AMR last published in Dec 2018	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay-Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer
To keep our planning policy framework up-to-date, clear and in line with corporate priorities	(2)A Fantastic Place to Live, Work and Visit (3)Genuinely affordable housing (4) New Jobs and Funding (5)Improved Infrastructure. (6)Improving Local Transport.	Present to Members options in terms of commencing a Local Plan Review. July 2019	Local Plan adopted 2015 A subsequent emerging Local Plan was withdrawn in February 2019.	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay-Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer
		Review Supplementary Planning Documents and put any updated / new ones to Full Council for approving for the purpose of public consultation. Details to be confirmed.	N/A	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay-Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-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. Ongoing.	Advice regularly given to communities, and especially parish councils. Eight Parish Councils are designated as Neighbourhood Areas, one of which, Fordham, has a 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan.	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay-Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer
To influence, for the benefit of East Cambs, the sub-regional strategic planning framework	(2)A Fantastic Place to Live, Work and Visit (3)Genuinely affordable housing (4) New Jobs and Funding (5)Improved Infrastructure.	Play an active role in sub-regional strategic planning work, including attendance at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Planning Policy Forum (every 6 weeks) and contributing to Combined Authority strategic planning activities. Ongoing.	Mostly Ongoing, though the Combined Authority is a new area with the potential for considerable new Strategic Planning activities	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
	(6)Improving Local Transport.			
Maintain high quality working relationship with Members	(1) Delivering a Financially Sound and Well Managed Council	To provide regular updates to Members on the work of the Strategic Planning 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
Ensure that the Council's Corporate risks are managed effectively and mitigations are put in place to reduce impact	(1) Delivering a Financially Sound and Well Managed Council	To regularly review higher level corporate risks including: • 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.	Ongoing	Strategic Planning-Richard Kay-Strategic Planning Manager Edward Dade-Strategic Planning Officer Harj Kumar-Strategic Planning Officer