



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 10 October 2022

Subject	Planning Policy and Delivery Update
Report by	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
Supporting Officer	Andrea McMillan Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery & Specialist Services) Andrea.McMillan@eastsuffolk.gov.uk 01394 444567

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

This report provides an update on key elements of the current work programme, including the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plans and strategies on specific topics such as cycling and walking, and on housing delivery. Updates, as appropriate, are also included for specialist services (Design and Conservation, Arboriculture and Landscape (including Rights of Way) and Ecology) that form part of the Planning Policy and Delivery Team. An update is also provided on the delivery of infrastructure to support growth through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Options:

This report is for information only.

Recommendation/s:

That the content of the report be noted.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

The Local Plan Working Group oversee the preparation of many of the documents referred to in this report.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

A range of Local Plan policies for East Suffolk.

Environmental:

No impact.

Equalities and Diversity:

This report is for information only, so no equality impact assessment is required. However, undertaking an assessment is an integral element for most of the projects in the work programme.

Financial:

The work of the Team is undertaken within existing budgets, with grant income generated through support provided on Neighbourhood Planning.

Human Resources:

No impact.

ICT:

No impact.

Legal:

No impact.

Risk:

The work programme of the team is significant and crucial to the delivery of many aspects of the East Suffolk Strategic Plan. Staff capacity in specialist services has previously been highlighted as a risk. Recruitment has taken place over recent months to provide additional resources within the team, with the new Design Champion and Specialist Services Manager most recently in place, providing a strong in-house team of landscape, heritage, design and ecology experts.

External Consultees:	None
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</p> <p>The Planning Policy and Delivery work programme makes a significant contribution to the delivery of the Strategic Plan, cutting across all 5 themes. The primary priority and 11 secondary priorities identified above reflect the wide range of projects in the work programme.</p> <p>The primary priority of building the right environment for East Suffolk (P01) is underpinned by having up to date Local Plan coverage for the whole District, with the secondary priorities reflecting the delivery of the Local Plans through the current work programme.</p> <p>Recent progress and achievements include the preparation of and consultation on the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (P01) and progress made with the review of the</p>			

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (P03). The draft East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule has been submitted for Examination, supporting the priority of supporting and delivering infrastructure (P05).

The ongoing support being provided for Neighbourhood Planning, the preparation of the Cycling and Walking Strategy and the preparation of the Healthy Environments Supplementary Planning Document provide an important contribution to the Enabling Communities theme, in particular priorities P07, P08 and P09.

The work programme also provides a significant contribution to the Caring for our Environment theme. The work of the Specialist Services team ensures the appropriate protection and enhancement of East Suffolk's important environmental assets (P23). The preparation of the Cycling and Walking Strategy also plays an important role in protecting our natural environment through enhancing opportunities for non-car travel (P23).

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	This report provides an update on the current Planning Policy and Delivery work programme. The Council's two Local Plans (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, September 2020 and Waveney Local Plan, 2019) provide up to date Local Plan coverage for the district, and the work of the Planning Policy and Delivery Team continues to focus on the delivery of these Plans.
1.2	The current Planning Policy and Delivery work programme contains a number of projects to support the delivery of the Local Plans and the East Suffolk Strategic Plan. These include providing guidance to support the implementation of planning policies through the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), the preparation of strategies on specific topics such as cycling and walking and the preparation of the East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. The Design and Conservation service has a programme of projects including Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan reviews. The team also support the work of the development management service as well as a wide range of corporate and external projects across the District that are not reported to this committee. This includes much of the work of the recently created Specialist Services team, which has brought together the Design and Conservation, Ecology, and Landscape and Arboriculture (including Public Rights of Way) services, and is providing ongoing expert input across the planning service including in respect of development management, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and planning policy, as well as on wider Council projects.
1.3	The updates in this report include the progress being made on the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plans and Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan reviews and the preparation of the East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. An update is also provided on housing delivery. An update on the work of the Infrastructure Team relating to the collection and spend of the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 monies is also provided in this report.

2	Current position
2.1	Since the last report to the Strategic Planning Committee on 6th June 2022 the following key milestones have been met:
2.2	<p>With respect to Neighbourhood Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lound with Ashby, Herringfleet and Somerleyton neighbourhood plan - 'made' on 27th July 2022. • Bungay, Worlingham and Rushmere St Andrew neighbourhood plans – Examiners' reports have been received • Oulton neighbourhood plan - Regulation 16 publication began on 13th May and ended on 24th June. The examination took place over July and August. • Halesworth neighbourhood plan - Regulation 16 publication held from 22nd June until 3rd August. Examination began on 7th September. • Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 consultation held from 8th July to 2nd September • Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough - Regulation 16 consultation held from 13th July to 7th September
2.3	<p>Good progress has been made on preparing the Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will provide guidance to support the implementation of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside and Waveney Local Plan policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside. Public consultation took place on the Draft SPD for seven weeks between 17th June and 5th August 2022, and the comments received have been considered in finalising the SPD.</p>
2.4	<p>Good progress has been made, with other coastal planning authorities, on the preparation of the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document.</p>
2.5	<p>Early progress has been made on the preparation of the Healthy Environments SPD with an Initial Consultation commencing Monday 26th September, for six weeks, inviting comments on the proposed scope and content of the SPD.</p>
2.6	<p>Following consultation on the draft Cycling and Walking Strategy, which took place between November 2021 and January 2022, all comments have been considered and a final draft of the Strategy produced. The final Strategy is anticipated to be adopted by Cabinet on 4th October.</p>
2.7	<p>Following the consideration of representations received on the draft East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, which was consulted on in November and December 2021, modifications were proposed and the modified draft Charging Schedule, along with evidence and the representations received was Submitted for Examination on 8th July 2022. Requests to be heard by the Examiner in relation to the proposed modifications were invited for four weeks between 8th July and 5th August 2022. The Examination is currently underway with a Hearing scheduled for 11th October.</p>
2.8	<p>Design and Conservation:</p> <p>Recent progress in relation to the review of Conservation Areas and their Appraisals and Management Plans is set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised Thorpeness Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted by Cabinet on 7th June 2022. • The draft appraisals for a proposed new Conservation Area at Aldeburgh Park and three proposed extensions to the existing Aldeburgh Conservation Area are nearing completion, in preparation for public consultation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft Southwold and Southwold Harbour and Walberswick Quay Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been received from consultants and work is underway to finalise the documents and prepare for public consultation. The review of the Halesworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is underway. Consultants are undertaking fieldwork in support of a pilot review of the existing Article 4 Directions in place in both Lowestoft Conservation Areas, to take account of changes in the 2021 National Planning Policy Framework guidance (NPPF) on their use. <p>Progress on other Design and Conservation projects includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominations for the 2022 Quality of Place awards closed on Friday 12th August. 18 entries were received. Shortlisting followed by site visits will be underway shortly. A review of the listings at Snape Maltings, undertaken for the Council by Historic England, is now complete. This provides updated listings for individual buildings, an assessment of their significance and proper acknowledgement of the international cultural importance of the site. The potential for a Local Listed Building Consent Order is currently being investigated.
2.9	<p>Housing Delivery:</p> <p>The housing growth planned for in the Local Plans continues to come forward, with many sites either under construction, consented, subject to planning applications or subject to early discussion with the planning service. The annual housing requirement figure for East Suffolk is 916 dwellings, based on the figures in the two adopted Local Plans for the District. For the year 2021/22, 814 dwellings were delivered, 225 of which were for affordable housing. In the first quarter of 2022/23 (up to 30th June), 138 dwellings have been recorded as being completed of which 15 are affordable. A comparison of dwellings under construction shows that as at the end of quarter 1 this year 1,194 dwellings were under construction compared to 998 at the same point in the previous year, providing a positive outlook.</p> <p>Good progress is being made on reviewing and updating the Housing Action Plan. As East Suffolk ‘passed’ the most recent Housing Delivery Test (results published January 2022), there is no requirement to prepare or update the Plan however it is considered good practice to review and update the Plan annually. The preparation of this year’s Housing Land Supply Statement is also well underway.</p>
2.10	<p>CIL Collection and Spend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2021/22 was agreed by Cabinet on 6th September 2022 and has now been published. CIL receipts for the financial year 2021-22 were just under £6.25m. CIL spending related to 4 CIL bids were also approved at Cabinet, totalling just over £1.9m. These are for Lowestoft Waste Transfer Station and Recycling Centre Improvements; Leiston FC and Sports Association – 3G Pitch with Lighting; Holton St Peter Primary School – new Early Years provision; and Dennington – New bespoke Early Years Playschool Setting. The funding period for Jetty Lane, Woodbridge (community centre) was also approved to be extended to 2025 subject to a planning application being received by 1.4.2023. Cabinet also approved changes to the CIL Spending Strategy to allow for 3% of the annual District CIL value to be allocated to a Local Projects Fund and for a forward funding process for Neighbourhood CIL to be applied for, starting in April 2023.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So far during the 2022/23 financial year (up to 9th September), over £4.1m has been received, CIL Demand Notices have been issued to the value of over £6.1m and CIL Liability Notices issued to the value of over £7m.
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3 How to address current situation	
3.1	During the next 3 to 4 months, some of the key project milestones will include:
3.2	<p>With respect to Neighbourhood Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referendums for the Bungay, Worlingham and Rushmere St Andrew plans to take place. • The Examiners' reports into the Oulton and Halesworth neighbourhood plans will be received with referendums to subsequently take place. • The Examinations of the Saxmundham and the Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough neighbourhood plans will take place in the autumn. • Wickham Market neighbourhood plan - Regulation 16 consultation expected to take place. • Guidance for neighbourhood plan groups on delivering new housing through their plans will be progressed and will be published in 2023.
3.3	The Housing in Clusters and Small scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document is anticipated to be adopted by Cabinet in November.
3.4	The drafting of the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document will be complete with consultation expected to take place early in the winter.
3.5	The initial consultation for the Healthy Environments Supplementary Planning Document , informing the scope and content, will have taken place and work will be underway on the preparation of the draft SPD, with public consultation planned for spring/summer 2023.
3.6	The final version of the Cycling and Walking Strategy is anticipated to be adopted by Cabinet in October 2022.
3.7	The Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule Examination will have taken place. Hearings will have been held on 11 th October and it is anticipated that the Examiner's report will be received before the end of the year and that adoption will take place by Full Council during the early part of 2023, prior to its subsequent implementation.
3.8	<p>Design and Conservation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation will commence on the proposed new Conservation Area at Aldeburgh Park and three proposed extensions to the existing Aldeburgh Conservation Area. • Preparation will be underway for the consultation in the new year on the Southwold and Southwold Harbour/Walberswick Quay Conservation Area draft appraisal and boundary review . • Work by consultants on the Halesworth Conservation Area draft appraisal and boundary review will be further progressed. Consultation is anticipated for later in 2023. • The consultants' pilot review of the existing Article 4 Directions in the Lowestoft Conservation Areas will have been received • The Quality of Place Awards presentation in person will be held before the end of the year.
3.9	<p>Housing Delivery:</p> <p>The outlook for housing delivery is optimistic and it is anticipated that delivery will increase over the year. As stated in paragraph 2.9 above, there were 1,194</p>

	<p>dwellings under construction at the end of quarter 1 this year (end of June 2022), almost 200 more than at the same time in the previous year. Over the coming months, the planning service will continue to support future housing delivery, including through the determination of planning applications. The Major Sites team will continue to support progress on strategic sites across the district, including supporting master-planning work, including North of Lowestoft Garden Village, Beccles and Worlingham Garden Neighbourhood, South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood and North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood.</p> <p>The Housing Action Plan and the Housing Land Supply Statement will have been reviewed and published by the end of October.</p>
3.10	<p>CIL Collection/Spend and Exacom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood CIL payments for the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 will be assessed and the relevant payments will be issued to receiving Parish Councils by 28th October 2022. • The Exacom data transparency project (relating to the management of CIL, Section 106 and RAMS payments) continues to make steady progress with almost all S106 agreements now loaded into the system. Phase 2 project work has started to record S106 financial receipts, allocations and expenditure projects in the steps towards reconciling the S106 financial position with the Finance System. • CIL Training sessions for Town and Parish Councils are being set up for towards the end of the calendar year and FAQs for CIL Collection and Spending will be developed, published and promoted towards the end of the calendar year.
3.11	<p>Planning White Paper update – As referenced in previous reports to the Strategic Planning Committee, the Planning White Paper, that set out some potential fundamental changes to the planning system, was published for consultation in August 2020. The Levelling Up white Paper was subsequently published earlier in 2022. The report to the last Strategic Planning Committee (6th June 2022) reported on the publication of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill on the 11th May 2022. The Bill takes forward some of the ambitions from both the Levelling Up White Paper and the Planning White Paper. A summary of the proposed provisions of the Bill, insofar as these relate to the planning system, was provided to Members in the report for the June Strategic Planning Committee. These, as published in May, can also be viewed in the Government's 'Policy paper – Levelling Up and Regeneration: further information'. The paper anticipated that changes will begin to take place from 2024. A number of future consultations were also proposed as part of the changes such as a review of the National Planning Policy Framework and on proposals such as the Infrastructure Levy and Environmental Outcomes Reports.</p> <p>The Bill is currently progressing through Parliament, although it is as yet unclear how or whether recent changes in the Government may affect the proposals.</p>

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	This report is for information only.
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Appendices

Appendices:

None.

Background reference papers:

None.
