



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 05 December 2022

Subject	Planning Policy and Delivery Update
Report of	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
Supporting Officer	Andrea McMillan Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery & Specialist Services) Andrea.McMillan@eastsoffolk.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 is 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 and recruitment has taken place over the past year to provide additional resources within the team.

External Consultees: None

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		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"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected?			
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.

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.

Recent progress and achievements include adoption of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (P01) and progress made with the review of the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (P03). The draft East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule is undergoing Examination, supporting the priority of supporting and delivering infrastructure (P05).

The ongoing support being provided for Neighbourhood Planning, the adoption 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 Specialist Services team, which has brought together the Design and Conservation, Ecology, and Landscape and Arboriculture (including Public Rights of Way) services, is continuing to provide 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 focus on projects and include the progress being made on the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plans, and the East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, as well as projects in the Design and Conservation team. 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 **Key milestones achieved over the past two months, since the last report to Strategic Planning Committee on 10th October, are set out below along with a broader account of Supplementary Planning Document preparation.**

2.2 **Neighbourhood Plans:**

- Bungay Neighbourhood Plan and Worlingham Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statements have been published. Referendums were held on 17th November and both plans received a positive result – the plans will therefore be taken to Full Council on 23rd November to be ‘made’.
- Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan - Examiner’s report was published in August 2022. A focused consultation is underway between 11th October and 23rd November in relation to one of the Examiner’s recommended modifications.
- Oulton Neighbourhood Plan - Examination has concluded and the Decision Statement was published in October.
- Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan - Examiner’s report published in November.
- Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan – Examination currently underway.
- Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough - Examination currently underway.
- Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 publication underway from 9th November until 21st December.

2.3 The **East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy** was adopted by Cabinet on 4th October, with a presentation being provided to Full Council on 23rd November. The strategy is also published in an interactive format. Communication promoting the adoption of the Strategy is being carried out.

2.4 The draft **East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule** is currently undergoing examination by an independent Examiner following submission in July 2022. A Public Hearing was held on 11th October, and subsequently the Council submitted some further information in response to a request by the Examiner. The Examiner consulted on the additional information with interested parties for three weeks, ending on 14th November.

2.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents:**

In addition to achievements over the past two months, the opportunity is taken in this report to provide a broader overview of the preparation of the suite of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which are supporting the implementation of the Council’s Local Plans. SPDs are promoted by Government as documents to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted plan. They are not part of the development plan but once adopted they are a material consideration when taking decisions on planning applications. SPDs provide valuable support to decision making by providing clear guidance to applicants, officers, communities and Members on how policies are expected to be implemented, thus supporting the delivery of the Local Plans.

2.6	<p>The Waveney Local Plan and the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan both make reference to SPDs for the provision of guidance on a number of topics, for example historic environment, sustainable construction and coastal change, or to support delivery of sites. Following the adoption of the plans the Council therefore embarked on a programme of updating former guidance or preparing new SPDs to support the implementation of the plans. For some areas of policy the need for supplementary guidance has become evident during the implementation of the plans and to reflect matters arising in decision making. A number of SPDs (and older supplementary planning guidance) were adopted over past years by the former Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council, and the preparation of new SPDs has also provided an opportunity to align guidance across East Suffolk.</p>
2.7	<p>The programme of SPDs adopted to date since the adoption of the Local Plans has comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide SPD (adopted July 2020); • Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy SPD (adopted May 2021); • Historic Environment SPD (adopted June 2021); • Residential Development Brief for Land North of Union Lane, Oulton (WLP2.14) (adopted September 2021); • Sustainable Construction (adopted April 2022); • Affordable Housing (adopted May 2022); • Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (adopted November 2022). <p>The SPDs are all available on the Council’s Supplementary Planning Documents webpage at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/supplementary-planning-documents/.</p> <p>Updates on progress over the past two months for SPDs currently under preparation is provided below.</p>
2.8	<p>The <u>Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</u> was adopted by Cabinet on 1st November 2022.</p>
2.9	<p>A consultation draft of the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared and is currently going through the relevant approval processes of the four authorities. The SPD is being produced in partnership with the Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and North Norfolk District Council.</p>
2.10	<p>Initial consultation on the preparation of the Healthy Environments SPD was held for six weeks between 26th September and 7th November 2022, inviting comments on the proposed scope and content of the SPD.</p>
2.11	<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 draft appraisals for a proposed new Conservation Area at Aldeburgh Park and three proposed extensions to the existing Aldeburgh Conservation Area are currently being finalised, in preparation for public consultation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft new Southwold Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is also currently being finalised in preparation for public consultation. The new Conservation Area will form an amalgamation and extension of the existing Southwold Conservation Area and Southwold Harbour and Walberswick Quay Conservation Area. • The review of the Halesworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is underway. • Consultant’s fieldwork in support of a pilot review of the existing Article 4 Directions in place in both Lowestoft Conservation Areas, taking account of changes in the 2021 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on their use, is now complete. <p>Progress on other Design and Conservation projects includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on the identification of five new locally listed parks and gardens has been finalised, following consultation in late 2021, in advance of a report being taken to Cabinet in December for their addition to the Council’s Local List. • Nominations for the 2022 Quality of Place awards closed on Friday 12th August. 18 entries were received. Shortlisting and site visits have taken place prior to holding the awards ceremony in December. • Following the completion of the review of the listings at Snape Maltings earlier this year, the potential for a Local Listed Building Consent Order is currently being investigated.
2.12	<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, 822 dwellings were delivered, 225 of which were for affordable housing. In the first and second quarters of 2022/23 (up to 30th September), 327 dwellings have been recorded as being completed of which 63 are affordable. A comparison of dwellings under construction shows that as at the end of quarter 2 this year 1,265 dwellings were under construction compared to 1,075 at the same point in the previous year.</p> <p>The Housing Action Plan has been reviewed and is anticipated to be published shortly. 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.</p> <p>The annual update to the Housing Land Supply Statement was published in November 2022. This sets out that the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area has a housing land supply of 6.47 years and the Waveney Local Plan area has a housing land supply of 5.78 years.</p>
2.13	<p>CIL Collection and Spend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So far during the 2022/23 financial year (up to 12th November), over £5m has been received, CIL Demand Notices have been issued to the value of over £6.9m and CIL Liability Notices issued to the value of over £8m. • The new RICS CIL Rate was published in October which increases the current CIL Rates with effect from 1 January 2023 – the new rates are published alongside on the current CIL Rates on the CIL webpages. • Neighbourhood CIL payments for the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 (over £750K in total) were passed to receiving Parish Councils before

	<p>the statutory deadline of 28th October 2022. Including the April 2022 Neighbourhood CIL payments (NCIL) parish councils have received over £1.3m NCIL this financial year compared with just over £1m NCIL in 2021/22.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District CIL funded projects continue to make progress, particularly the Early Years and Schools projects. • FAQs for CIL Collection and Spending have been developed, and are currently under review by the Communications Team prior to being published.
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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 Rushmere St Andrew, Halesworth and Oulton plans are anticipated to take place in early 2023. • The Examiners' reports into the Saxmundham and Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough Neighbourhood Plans will be received with referendums to subsequently take place. • Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan - Examination 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 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule Examination will have concluded. 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.
3.4	Consultation on the draft Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document will be undertaken in January and February 2023.
3.5	The comments received to the initial consultation on the Healthy Environments Supplementary Planning Document , informing the scope and content, will have been reviewed and a draft SPD prepared, with public consultation planned for Spring/Summer 2023.
3.6	<p>Design and Conservation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 6 week public consultation is anticipated to commence in early January on the proposed new Conservation Area at Aldeburgh Park and three proposed extensions to the existing Aldeburgh Conservation Area. • A 6 week public consultation is anticipated to commence in late January on the Southwold Conservation Area draft appraisal and boundary review. • Work on the Halesworth Conservation Area draft appraisal and boundary review will be received from the consultants. • The consultants' pilot review of the existing Article 4 Directions in the Lowestoft Conservation Areas will have been received. The next stage of work will involve drafting revised Directions. • The addition of five new locally listed parks and gardens to the local list is anticipated to have been approved by Cabinet in December following which a new webpage will be set up for the list. • The Quality of Place Awards presentation in person will be held in December.
3.7	<p>Housing Delivery:</p> <p>The outlook for housing delivery is optimistic and it is anticipated that delivery will continue to increase over the year. As stated in paragraph 2.12 above, there were</p>

	<p>1,265 dwellings under construction at the end of quarter 2 this year (end of September 2022), almost 200 more than at the same time in the previous year and an increase on the number reported as being under construction at the end of June 2022. Over the coming months, the planning service will continue to support future housing delivery, including through the determination of planning applications and through ongoing support for bringing forward strategic sites such as supporting master-planning.</p> <p>Work will be underway to take forward the actions contained in the Housing Action Plan.</p>
3.8	<p>CIL Collection/Spend and Exacom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Exacom data transparency project (relating to the management of CIL, Section 106 and RAMS payments) continues to make steady progress and Phase 2 project work continues in earnest. Reconciliation to financial systems is ongoing as this work progresses. • CIL Training sessions for Town and Parish Councils are being planned, although the timing of these may change to dovetail with the other changes occurring to ensure the training covers the Charging Schedule and CIL spending changes. Online sessions are looking to be scheduled for early 2023 (Jan/Feb). • The next Neighbourhood CIL payments are not due to be assessed and paid until April 2023.
3.9	<p>National 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 Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, first published in May 2022, 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, as published in May, can 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.</p>

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1 This report is for information only.

Appendices

Appendices:

None

Background reference papers:

None