

## Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee

02 December 2025

### Part 1 - Public

#### Matters for Information



Cabinet Member	Cllr Mike Taylor, Cabinet Member for Planning
Responsible Officer	Eleanor Hoyle, Director of Planning, Housing & Environmental Health;
Report Author	Eleanor Hoyle, Director of Planning, Housing & Environmental Health

#### Cabinet Member for Planning - Service Delivery Report

##### 1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide information to support the presentation of the Cabinet Member for Planning, detailing service delivery in his portfolio area.

##### 2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 Ensuring that our Planning service is efficient ensures good customer service and that the Council meets its legislative requirements.
- 2.3 Improving housing options for local people whilst protecting our outdoor areas of importance
- 2.4 The work of both the Policy and Development Management functions is to see delivery of development in a strategically guided and managed way.

##### 3 Key performance indicators

- 3.1 The Development Management service has seen a sustained improvement in performance over the past year. Attached at annexe A is the latest performance information and trend data (October 2025).

##### 4 Local Plan

- 4.1 The Regulation 18 Local Plan for the borough is currently out to public consultation. This is a significant milestone in meeting the challenging programme in the Council's Local Development Scheme, which is aiming to ensure that a Local Plan can be submitted to PINS prior to the transitional deadline of 12

December 2026. Delivery against the LDS milestones in this municipal year are a priority in the 2025/26 Annual Service Delivery Plan (ASDP).

- 4.2 The development of the Plan is a significantly costly exercise for the Council to undertake and Members were presented with detailed financial information and options at meeting of this committee in February 2025.
- 4.3 An agreed programme of informal and confidential Member engagement was undertaken earlier in the year to inform policy development. These sessions were hugely valuable to the Planning Policy team and good feedback was received from Members regarding their ability to input and focus on different topic areas.
- 4.4 The delivery of an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is also a priority action in the 25/26 ASDP. A detailed set of engagement activity has been undertaken by the Planning Policy team with statutory infrastructure providers and these have informed the draft IDP that is being consulted on as part of the Local Plan consultation exercise. Members have articulated their concerns about the delivery of sufficient infrastructure to support proposed housing growth. Cabinet agreed an additional recommendation when endorsing the Local Plan consultation that will result in a letter being written to all infrastructure providers, both statutory and non-statutory, encouraging them to respond to the Regulation 18 consultation and continue to actively engage with the Council regarding delivery.

## **5 PAS review**

- 5.1 The external review by the Planning Advisory Service has been an invaluable tool in our corporate aim of maintaining efficient and effective services. The PAS report and a proposed action plan is on this meeting agenda for Member consideration. It was identified as a priority action in the 25/26 ASDP.

## **6 Development Management**

- 6.1 As part of ongoing discussions between officers and the Cabinet Member, a revised protocol for pre-application engagement with Members.
- 6.2 To date, this optional engagement has been utilised on two cases with the Area 1 Planning Committee. This has been reported as being valuable by both Members and applicants and is a significant step in improving early discussions with Members whilst respecting the importance of proper decision making.
- 6.3 The amendment policy has been reviewed and updated to make it more fit for purpose and to give some discretion in allowing amendments.
- 6.4 An approach to delivering a programme of work on Conservation Statements has also been agreed following Member scrutiny.

- 6.5 As part of the PAS review action plan, it is being recommended that a developer and agent forum is put in place from April 2026 and this would be an ideal opportunity to promote this service.

## **7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 7.1 Another key action identified in the 25/26 ASDP was to implement a revised fee structure for Development Management, based on Government proposals to allow local fee setting to better aid cost recovery for Planning services. However, the Government has not yet consulted on proposals for fees and therefore this action is on hold.
- 7.2 Also on this meeting agenda is the proposed fee structure for 2026/27.

## **8 Cross Cutting Issues**

### **8.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity**

- 8.1.1 Some impact on reducing emissions in support of carbon neutral by 2030 or enhancing the natural environment.
- 8.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

### **8.2 Equalities and Diversity**

- 8.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### **8.3 Other If Relevant**

- None

Background Papers	None
Annexes	None