

# Appendix E – Strategic Planning Evidence Pack

Considered by the Member-led Working Group on  
24<sup>th</sup> May 2017

# Summary of the service

- Planning policy team
  - Develops and monitors Barnet's Local Plan and associated policy documents and planning briefs
  - Responds to changes in national and regional planning policy
  - Responds to neighbouring authority policy proposals
- Major applications team
  - Processes applications for strategic sites and major schemes with substantial political/reputational risk
- Infrastructure team
  - Collects development contributions and ensures they are spent appropriately
  - Ensures the borough plans and delivers the infrastructure it needs
- Design and heritage team (policy work)
  - Prepares conservation area and heritage-related policy/evidence

# Key people

- LBB Commissioning Leads:
  - Director of Commissioning, Growth and Development: Cath Shaw
  - Strategic Lead: Neil Taylor
  - Commissioning Lead: Adam Driscoll
  
- RE Service Leads:
  - Director of Place: Stephen McDonald
  - Operations Director: Alun Parfitt
  - Director of Planning and Building Control: Steve Ottewell
  - Head of Strategic Planning: Emma Watson

# Key figures 2015/16

- Share of the annual contract fee allocated to the core service (based on indicative cost at transfer): £1,313,000
- Share of the income guarantee attributed to the Strategic Planning service: £449,540 (includes income from pre-application advice and Planning Performance Agreements)
- Expenditure on additional work (Special Projects) that is not covered by the management fee: £16,000, Article 4 Direction on HMOs (funded through New Homes Bonus)
- Staff numbers:
  - On service commencement: 22
  - Now: 20 based in Barnet plus 3 vacancies

# Service Journey 1

## Fundamental structural reorganisation:

- Services transferred as:
  - Strategic Planning & Regeneration
- Reorganised structure since early 2016:
  - Strategic Planning moved to 'Planning' Tower (combined operations as single business entity with other Capita 'Local Government Planning Services')
  - Regeneration (all projects except for Brent Cross)
  - Brent Cross (separate business entity from other regeneration)
- Leadership of the service has changed a number of times since 2013, but is now stable

# Service Journey 2

## Service Development Improvement Plan (SDIP):

- Since 2013
  - KPI reporting mechanisms established
  - Re Customer Service Hub began channeling and improving communications with customers and members
  
- Since 2014
  - Stronger focus on Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) and providing Pre-application advice, including Planning Briefs
  - UNIFORM, new IT system for applications and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
  - Planning Consultancy (Libraries and Leisure Centres)
  - Design and Heritage FTEs reduced

# Service Journey 3

## Strategic Planning – further improvements to services:

- Since 2016
  - New urban design expertise brought in and value of further enhancement of this function established
  - Infrastructure Team separated from Planning Policy Team
  - Capital Investment Model finalised
- 2017
  - Progression towards delivery of heritage contractual outputs – update of Local List and programmed Conservation Areas review
  - Review of Infrastructure Planning/Audit of Development Contributions to improve governance arrangements

# Achievements

- Improved shaping of development on strategic sites through use of Planning Briefs and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to provide detailed design guidance
- Employment and Skills SPD has secured over 100 apprenticeship positions, affordable workspace, and further benefits
- Collected over £25 million in Barnet Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); over £14 million in Mayoral CIL; and over £34 million in S106 receipts
- Progressed key council projects to support delivery of positive planning outcomes (e.g. new leisure centres and regeneration schemes) taken from inception through to planning consent
- Consistently above KPI targets for processing major applications
- Brent Cross (BX) planning team set up to provide smooth, timely and complete handling of all BX planning matters

# Performance to date – summary of commitments

## 4 total commitments

1 delivered

1 partially delivered and revised completion date agreed

1 not yet delivered, but in progress

1 not due

## Performance to date – contractual commitments

Commitment	Status	Comments
<p><b>T3-100:</b> The Service Provider will invest £200,000 in establishing and developing the Barnet Fund</p>	<p>Partially delivered and revised delivery date agreed</p>	<p>Capital Investment Model complete and initial datasets populated. Review by range of Council staff required alongside ongoing data improvement</p>
<p><b>T3-110:</b> The Service Provider will undertake a comprehensive review of the Authority's local list of heritage assets to ensure that the list makes reference to the recent changes in planning policy (NPPF) and English Heritage's recent good practice guidance, and that the criteria are reconsidered to better encourage inclusion of what is important to the local community and local distinctiveness and significance. To achieve this, we will engage the local community on a pro-active basis.</p>	<p>Not yet delivered, in progress</p>	<p>Revised action plan agreed April 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Commissioned 'Urban Vision Enterprise' to deliver, contract signed</li> <li>ii) Update to information in Summer/Autumn 2017</li> <li>iii) Publish by Feb 2018.</li> </ul>

## Performance to date – contractual commitments

Commitment	Status	Comments
<p><b>T3-111:</b> The Service Provider will produce a report acknowledging the emerging national guidance accompanying the Localism Bill Neighbourhood Planning to undertake a horizon scanning exercise to understand the opportunities for a more proactive approach to neighbourhood planning, building knowledge and understanding of the scale of resources required to deliver different outcomes based on the existing community structures / current engagements with plan making and aspirations from within the communities.</p>	<p>Delivered</p>	<p>Report submitted and used to inform agreed approach to Neighbourhood Planning</p>
<p><b>T3-112:</b> The Service Provider will develop an accurate, accessible and easy to use new Proposals Map, incorporating all updated land allocations.</p>	<p>Not due</p>	<p>Will be delivered in Summer 2018 alongside the Draft Local Plan.</p>

# Performance to date – KPIs annual outturn

KPI/PI Title	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Target	Outturn	Target	Outturn	Target	Outturn
SP KPI 01 : Strategic Planning Documents completed and signed off	100%	100%	100%	22%	100%	44%
SPKPI02i : Percentage of Section 106 cases cleared annually (as per the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended) –payment of Section 106 obligations by developers to the Authority	Baseline period (no target)	67%	73.5%	88%	80%	80%
SPKPI02ii : Percentage of Section 106 cases cleared annually (as per the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended) –payment of Section 106 obligations by developers to the Authority- percentage of top 20 payments cleared	Baseline period (no target)	75%	82.5%	97%	90%	91%
SPKPI03i : Percentage of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) cases cleared annually - payment of overall CIL obligations by developers to the Authority	80%	96%	80%	100%	80%	101%*
SPKPI03ii : Percentage of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) cleared annually – percentage of Top 20 Payments cleared	90%	100%	90%	99%	90%	88%

\* The annual position is 103/102 = 101%

# Performance to date – remedies applied

- Although SPKPI 01 has fallen short of target, it has not been appropriate to apply remedies. Justifiable and agreed reasons for non-progression of outputs confirmed on each occasion
- Examples of these reasons include:
  - Cancellation of committee meetings or delay of item to a later meeting
  - Pausing of work on Site Allocations to enable integration with broader review of local plan
  - Affordable Housing SPD paused due to Planning and Housing Bill and the likely implications for policy

# Recent and planned developments

- New Strategic Planning Operations Board to enhance oversight of day-to-day work streams/outcomes
- Preparation for Local Plan review under way to balance policy work on borough policy matters alongside sites
- Review of infrastructure planning activities triggered and audit of development contribution functions in progress
- Capacity of design and heritage functions reinstated with forward programme of work being agreed
- Opportunities to improve services due to increased Planning Fees from July 2017 are being considered
- Recent recruitment to head the CIL/Infrastructure team and appointment of three Member Liaison Officers

# Overall assessment of performance

- There has been an effective focus on increasing income from strategic applications and delivering commitments
- The service has delivered a wide and complex range of strategic and major planning applications, improving pre-application and policy making support to enable successful outcomes
- Turnover of leadership has limited the dynamism and outward focus of the service, and slowed delivery of commitments. But the professionalism of staff has kept the day-to-day service running well
- Since late 2016 improved stability across the service, together with improved connections to Development Management, have enabled a wider programme of service improvement to begin
- There is a need for ongoing work to:
  - Improve Planning Committee processes and ensure consistency in the engagement of Members around strategic planning matters
  - Improve CIL/S106 Governance – processes and systems for authorising, recording and monitoring CIL/S106 spend
  - Provide effective leadership in data collection and explanation for the Council relating to all spatial matters

# Desired outcomes

- Build on existing service improvements to ensure a strong operational framework and delivery of staff capacity to secure all outcomes; driving dynamism into the service through stable leadership
- Establish mechanisms to improve support for Council commissioning priorities through greater data analysis, data management and overall planning leadership
- Continue improving consistency of communication with Members and effectively utilise the new Re Member Liaison officers
- Determine appropriate documentation to ensure existing services are further enhanced when Planning Fees are increased
- Delivery of heritage contractual outputs – update of Local List and review of priority Conservation Area Appraisals