

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) – 6 November 2018		
COUNCILLOR	PORTFOLIO	DATE
Daren Veidman	Cabinet Member Planning	October 2018

1. Local Planning

The Sefton Local Plan

- 1.1 Planning applications continue to be submitted on allocated sites.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other policy documents

- 1.2 Following the adoption of a number of new and updated SPDs in June, the Sustainable Drainage and Flood Risk Information Notes were adopted by Cabinet in July.
- 1.3 SPDs for the Crosby Coastal Park, Pavement cafes, and outdoor sales are being prepared and an A boards and Shop fronts, security and signage SPD is currently being worked on. Work has also commenced on updating and incorporating the Landscape Character SPG into a new Landscape SPD.

Liverpool City Region work

- 1.4 Work on the proposed Strategic Spatial Framework for the Liverpool City Region is now being led by the Combined Authority. Follow up work required relating to the need for a strategic B8 (warehousing) Study has been commissioned. This will initially identify the need for new logistics development associated with the growth of the Port of Liverpool. A subsequent piece of work will assess optimal locations where this need could be located.
- 1.5 We are also involved in the preparation of a 'Visitor Management Strategy' for the Greater Merseyside area. This will set out how each Local Planning Authority can address its legal obligations under the Habitat Regulations. It also relates to the impact residential allocations and tourism-related development will have on sensitive habitats on the Sefton coast, resulting from increased pressure from visitors. Consultants have been engaged by the Combined Authority and we are contributing to its preparation.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 1.6 Four Neighbourhood Plans, are being prepared by five Town and Parish Councils in Sefton. The Maghull and Lydiate Neighbourhood Plans were submitted for examination in April. The independent Examiners who examined

each Neighbourhood Plan have recommended that the submitted Neighbourhood Plans can go forward to a referendum (for each Plan) subject to a number of modifications.

- 1.7 Assuming the Plans are approved by the local community in the referendums, they will then become part of the Development Plan and have the same status as our Local Plan. If there are any conflicts in policy advice, the Neighbourhood Plans will take precedence, although this will only apply to the designated Neighbourhood Plan areas.
- 1.8 This will impose new challenges and an increased work load on the team as they organise examinations for each Neighbourhood Plan.

Other work

- 1.9 Members of the Local Plans team continue to provide policy advice on all relevant planning applications and pre-application inquiries. In addition, several members of the team contributing to the Development Management section of the service by processing their own caseload of applications.
- 1.10 As a result of the Local Plan being adopted, extensive policy advice has been provided to developers on sites allocated in the Local Plan as well as providing advice once the planning applications have been submitted. Discussions have resumed with the developers of the Land east of Maghull site and the other landowners / developers in relation to the preparation of a Master Plan to ensure this strategic site is developed in a comprehensive manner with all appropriate infrastructure being provided at the right time and in a coordinated way.
- 1.11 As a result of the Government's publication of a revised national planning policy framework, we are reviewing our Local Plan policy approach to the provision of affordable housing as a result of new threshold and definitions that have been introduced. Consequently we have asked our retained consultants to assess what the implications are for Sefton and whether we need to change our existing policy approach.
- 1.12 As part of the requirements set out in the NPPF we not only have to have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing, but we also need to ensure that we pass the 3 year Housing Delivery Test. If we do not, we have to set out an action plan setting out what steps we will undertake to address the deficit and boost the delivery of housing in Sefton. This could result in us having to review our Local Plan, which will require a major input of both financial and staff resources. One simple way that would assist is that Local Plan sites allocated for housing that are owned by the Council are brought forward for development. The appointment of the Head of Commercial Development will assist us bringing these sites forward.
- 1.13 As part of our statutory requirements, and to ensure we meet these requirements, we are updating our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to April 2018, and up-dating the Brownfield Register

which we are required to submit to the DHCLG by the end of each year. We have also commenced work on updating the Urban Capacity Study, so we know what sites are potentially available in the urban area and whether they are developable. This work is expected to take about 6 - 9 months. We are also aiming to produce our Authority Monitoring Report by the end of the year.

2. Heritage and Conservation

Heritage at Risk

- 2.1 We are continuing to work towards the removal of the 6 Heritage at Risk Areas from the National Register. This includes a number of different work areas including raising their profile, regeneration funding bids, working with the local community, Conservation Area Appraisals, taking enforcement and other legal action in relation to a number of derelict sites and listed buildings in these Areas
- 2.2 Recent success includes the continued restoration of Verandahs on Lord Street, Southport along with the improvements undertaken at previous derelict sites.
- 2.3 Works have started on a number of Heritage at Risk sites following planning permission being granted, this includes 2 Oxford Road, Birkdale, 8 Oxford Road. Birkdale and former Sunnymede School 4 Westcliffe Road Birkdale. A number of Planning Applications have been approved that include the improvement of Heritage at Risk sites including 30 Lulworth Road. A scheme on the major Heritage at Risk site of 40 Lancaster Road (former school for the partially hearing) has been approved subject to a Section 106 Agreement.

Regeneration

- 2.4 Following first round Heritage Lottery Fund approval of the Southport Townscape Heritage project, work has started on the second round development bid. The deadline is 11th June and, if successful, this will secure £1,625,000 with a combined funding pot of £2,358,211. A Townscape Heritage Officer has been appointed, initially on a 12-month contract, to help prepare the Stage 2 bid.
- 2.5 The project will focus on the properties between Lord Street and the Promenade and enhance the quality and strength of the linkages between the town centre and the Seafront so that the two become better integrated. This will include increasing the levels of economic activity within the target area to reduce the number of vacant and underused properties, through repair and reinstatement of historic features, along with complementary training and education initiatives.

Development Management

- 2.6 In terms of the general day to day responsibilities, allied to the increased development pressure which the wider Service is facing, the Conservation officers have formulated 69 detailed consultation responses from July – September on planning applications and pre-applications relating to a number

of Listed Buildings and developments within a number of our Conservation Areas. We have also continued involvement in various appeals, on site monitoring and enforcement cases.

3. Development Management

- 3.1 The pressure on this part of the Service continues at a high level as we are considering the submission of a number major applications relating to sites identified for development in the Local Plan.
- 3.2 Between July and September 2018 we have approved 327 units of residential accommodation (taking account of the numbers in full or 'reserved matters' applications only, and not 'outline').

The following 9 major developments were considered and approved by Planning Committee.

Reference	Address	Proposal
DC/2018/00910	Former Peerless Refinery Site Dunnings Bridge Road Netherton L30 6UU	Variation of condition application attached to planning application DC/2016/02454 approved 07/07/2017 to vary Conditions 2, 10, 22, and 25 and to remove Conditions 31 and 32
DC/2014/01312	Former Arriva Bus Depot 503-509 Hawthorne Road Bootle L20 6JJ	Outline Planning Application for redevelopment of former industrial land for mixed use development purposes comprising retail development & 119 family dwellings.
DC/2017/02359	Land East Of Waddicar Lane North Of Footpath Melling No 3, North Of Rainbow Park Waddicar Lane Melling	Erection of 149 dwellings, construction of new vehicular access, flood attenuation basin, landscaping and associated works
DC/2018/00537	2 Well Lane Bootle L20 3BR	Erection of 13 dwellings with associated access road from Well Lane after demolition of redundant buildings
DC/2018/00695	30 Lulworth Road Birkdale Southport PR8 2BQ	Erection of a two storey extension to the rear together with the conversion to 10 self-contained supported living apartments (Use Class C2)
DC/2018/00471	41 Leyland Road Southport PR9 9JG	Erection of apartment block of 12 self contained apartments after demolition of the existing vacant dwelling

Reference	Address	Proposal
DC/2017/01738	113A-117 Norwood Road Southport PR8 6EL	Erection of 14 two storey semi-detached dwellinghouses following the demolition of the existing commercial unit at 113a Norwood Road and 2 semi-detached residential properties at 115-117 Norwood Road.
DC/2018/00402	Former Shakespeare Hotel Public House And Adjacent Land And Premises 1 Scarisbrick New Road & 1A Virginia Street Southport PR8 6PU	Erection of 8 dwellings and 1 three storey block of 15 apartments together with associated access and car parking
DC/2018/00085	Phase 4 And 6 Town Lane Southport PR8 6PN	The erection of 91 dwellings within Phase 4 (including one 4 storey apartment and five 3 storey apartments), 119 dwellings within Phase 6 (including one 3 storey apartment) and all associated works (re-plan of original Plots H1-H58 & J1-J97 from Planning Approval ref: S/2012/0400 plus additional 21 units).

- 3.3 We have received a total of 443 applications in this time scale, including 45 pre-application enquiries.
- 3.4 The capacity of the Service is stretched by the increased pressure relating to the processing of these applications. It is a team effort across the Service to process, assess and determine applications expediently and in line with Government targets.
- 3.5 The 20% increase of planning fees (introduced in January 2018) and additional fee income through entering Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) has allowed us to recruit further staff. They are proving critical to maintaining a high level of performance as we are dealing with significantly more complex and contentious proposals following the adoption of the Local Plan.
- 3.6 Staff levels have improved following extended periods of sickness within the team, and a team leader has been recruited to strengthen the enforcement side of the service which has been under constant and increasing pressure in recent times.
- 3.7 We continue to look for opportunities to organise our staff and procedures to make sure that the maximum effort is directed towards those schemes which are the most sensitive, complex and contentious, and that we provide the best possible service within existing constraints. This will mean new ways of working and we will continue to explore these where we feel they lead to an improved service.

Enforcement update

3.8 Review of the quarter from 1 July 2018 to the 30th of September 2018

- New cases – 191
- Cases resolved – 202
- 24 retrospective applications totalling £8,320 fees.

4. Building Control

Performance targets

- 4.1 The Building Control Team continues to meet its key statutory targets in relation to plan checking and the carrying out of site inspections. It also meets the majority of the locally set performance targets it sets itself. Results for the 2nd quarter of financial year 2018/19 show that the Team's market share is 75% - which remains equal to or better than that of neighbouring authorities and is significantly above the average for English Councils, which stands at 67%. The Building Control Team also continues to meet all key statutory (and local) targets for plan assessment and the carrying out of site inspections.

Income and financial performance

- 4.2 Building Regulation income for the 2nd quarter of 2018/19 shows an increase of 4% when compared with the same stage in the previous financial year. Whilst costs have also increased, the fee earning element of the Team's work has produced a surplus, which will be used to partly subsidise the other various related statutory work elements of Building Control work - such as ensuring safety at sports grounds and dealing with reports of dangerous structures.

Safety at sports grounds

- 4.3 Southport Football Club has announced the appointment of a new Safety Officer and they are also looking to make further alterations to their newly refurbished Main Grandstand. As a result, Officers will be required to prepare amended draft Safety Certificates and to present them to the Licensing & Regulatory Committee.

Staffing issues

- 4.4 Team Leader, Phil Smith will be leaving the Authority early November 2018, in order to take up the vacant Building Control Manager post at Wigan MBC. The Council's Establishment Control Panel has agreed that Phil Smith's post can be filled and the necessary arrangements are currently being made in terms of advertising etc.

5. Technical Support

Performance

- 5.1 Performance against targets for the period of July to September is detailed below.
- The validation of planning applications for this period within the target of 5 days is 69% (with an overall average of 5 days). This level of performance represents a significant increase from the last quarter. This 3 month period included a number of significant applications that required extensive consultation, notification and validation.
 - The team registered and acknowledged 97% of enforcement cases within 5 working days.
 - Booking in of Building Control applications stands at 81% within 3 working days with the average number of days to book in being 3 days.
 - 98% of pre-application enquiries were registered within 3 days, the average is 1 day to book in these.
 - The team achieved 100% of land charge searches within 10 working days. This is in line with Government recommendations.

Service Development

- 5.2 Work continues on the transfer of the Local Land Charge Register to HM Land Registry. New software has been installed on our test system to ensure we are able to facilitate the transfer. Testing of the extract routines is continuing.
- 5.3 Our data cleaning project is continuing, to ensure our planning and land charge data is accurate and up to date in preparation for the migration of the local land charges register to HM Land Registry. A large part of this work involved checking of GIS polygon data for historic records back to 1974. This is now complete. There remains a large amount of textual data and spatial data that needs to be rationalised. It is anticipated that the Local Land Charges register and searches of it will be transferred by mid-2019. Further data cleansing will be required following the initial extract of data for Land Registry.
- 5.4 The service improvement group have commenced the review of standard letter templates, making our web pages more user friendly, preparing guidance notes for staff. Further opportunities for savings and income generation are being identified and processes put in place to ensure they can be delivered.
- 5.5 The Service has been the decanted to the 4th floor of Magdalen House and is now preparing to move back into the ground floor. Officers are currently being migrated to the new IT working environment. The introduction of improved information technology will allow us to change the working practices to maximise efficiency and ensure a smooth transition to agile working.