

Planning & Transportation Oct 2016

Priorities of the Portfolio

- Protecting the local character of the place
- Living within our means
- Working with others to achieve more

Performance

Progress on Local Plan preparation achieved in line with the timetable set in the Local Development Scheme with public consultation on a draft plan taking place between July and September 2016.

The development control function of dealing with planning applications and giving people advice on development matters has continued to achieve its main timescale and financial targets, the percentage of appeals allowed is low and income targets are currently being exceeded. There was a marginal increase in applications up from 592 in the first eight months of 2015 to 623 for the same period this year.

The Transportation team continues to meet its targets for delivering small scale traffic management schemes, making various types of traffic order and deploying traffic speed warning devices.

Car parking income has continued to rise. The procurement of 73 new pay and display has taken place and it is anticipated that all machines will be installed by end of Dec 2016. The intention is that solar powered machines will be installed wherever possible reducing the use of mains electricity and the machines will be remotely monitored to provide better maintenance, better data for ticket sales and the management of cash collections. Initially thirteen of the seventy three machines will be able to accept card payments either through chip and pin or contactless.

Challenges

In 2016 the Council's overall budget spending will have reduced by 15.8% since 2010 due to central government austerity measures. Over the next four years the government has indicated a level of central funding that will require a further 11.7% reduction in the budget from that in 2016. Any future plan must address this major challenge.

The delivery plan has identified a number of service reviews that each portfolio holder will be reviewing in key areas of budget spend and activity with the emphasis on reducing budget expenditure. The focus will remain on ensuring key frontline services to the community are prioritised (living within our means and working with others to achieve more).

National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) and its requirement for 'objectively assessed needs' to be addressed will require a significant increase in house building in the District. Meeting these housing needs in an area with significant environmental constraints and Green Belt is particularly challenging.

Continuing changes to national planning policy and to the planning system introduced by the government,

many of which have resource implications for Local Planning Authorities, make it difficult to plan resource needs effectively.

There will be a need to respond in the future to increasing demands to support the Neighbourhood Development Plan process. There are currently five designated Neighbourhood Plan Areas in the District.

In general the workload of the planning service will increase significantly in connection with the need to deliver much higher levels of growth within the area and in particular major growth areas. The Planning Service is currently resourced to deal with much smaller levels of development and there will be additional demand for pre-application work, applications and appeals.

The ability to recruit and retain a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to carry out a range of complex functions remains a serious concern.

There is a significant challenge to the viability of the Traffic Management Agency provided on behalf of Hampshire County Council. HCC have decided to significantly reduce future funding and the scope of the service to be provided through the Agency from 2017 onwards.

Corporate Requirements

- Undertake reviews and key activities as identified in the corporate plan (delivery plan) to improve services for our customers and meet the budget shortfall, including an increased focus on collaborative working.

Key Activities

- Submission of the Local Plan (Part 1- Planning Strategy) for public examination by end 2017
- Review of whether NFDC wish to continue to provide a Traffic Management Agency on behalf of HCC with its significantly reduced funding levels.
- Service delivery review of the Building Control service to consider the sustainability of the existing arrangements and assess alternatives such as multi-authority joint service provision or a joint (arm's length) local authority trading company
- Review development control operations and implement actions identified to streamline processes
- Continue to achieve development control timescale and financial targets.
- Responding to changes in provision of land charges and the associated transfer of land charges data to land registry
- Installation of replacement parking machines.

Supporting Information

In support of this plan the following documents are available:

- 1) The Portfolio's Performance Scorecard
- 2) Summary of Net Portfolio Spend