

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 September 2021

COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE- CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT

For the period July to September 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General overview.

A welcome to Martyn Fulcher the new director of place and climate change. I look forward to working with you as we face the challenges of carbon reduction, bio diversity and climate change. Planning and development will have a significant role to play in delivering on a sustainable future for our district and beyond.

All areas of the planning portfolio remain under pressure with a higher than usual amount of applications, new Bills and Regulations, a new plan to deliver and compliance with the regulations. My thanks to officers for their continued, dedicated, hard work. I am committed to doing all I can to ensuring that we find ways to enable officers to reduce the backlog of applications and get workloads back to an acceptable level.

Development Management Performance

Whilst performance of development management has continued to be above the required government levels for both Major and Non Major it is acknowledged that performance when looked at on a quarterly basis was showing some concerns. This and the reasons for performance levels was reported at development committee in August. An Action plan is being developed with much already in place with input from the newly arrived Director for Place and Climate change.

Progress on performance will now be reported monthly at development committee.

Planning Policy

The new local plan is in the last stages before regulation 19 consultation.

The team have worked hard in drafting the revised local plan with the planning policy and built heritage working party recently discussing Cromer Allocations.

Before plan submission for examination some of the evidence documents will need to be refreshed to ensure they are up to date and these have been commissioned.

An annual dwelling completion check has been completed. Between April 2020 and March 2021 480 new homes were built in the district. These additional houses exceeded targets and expectations.

Major Projects, Conservation and Design, Landscape

Major Projects performance was reported as outlined above to Development Committee and will also be reported monthly

S106 Tracking. Officers are having a demonstration of the Exacom software at the end of September and this is a priority task to get the software installed and populated.

There is an ongoing review of processes procedures and website. This will ensure that they remain fit for purpose or developed and upgraded where necessary.

The new Planning Bill and Environment Bill are both being closely watched and monitored so that we are able to understand and deliver any necessary changes. Some of the requirements for example bio diversity net gain will need to be resourced.

Building Control

Building control continues to deliver through the higher workloads which are around 20% above normal levels. Inspectors carry out on average 5/6 inspections per day per inspector. The introduction of the Building Safety Bill post Grenfell has required updating for officers.

Planning Enforcement

A training session was run to help members understand the complexities of planning enforcement. I hope that those that attended found it beneficial. The session was recorded and links should be available through Democratic Services for those that were unable to attend.

New web pages for the reporting of Enforcement complaints should be live

soon. When these pages are live members, parishes and customers will be made aware of the changes.

From Last Full Council

2 questions were raised.

1. Date for Publication of the North Walsham West consultation responses. - A verbal update was given at the planning policy meeting on Monday 19th July. Currently the team are working on the new local plan but hope to have detailed responses in the near future
2. Request for confirmation of the amount of S106 monies held by the council, what is the longest period that S106 monies have been held. - I sent the following to Cllr Stenton who I must apologise to as I missed that the system corrected her name to Johanna.

The total amount of S106 monies currently stands at £2,228,703. £1,626,661 is currently held for housing. The remainder for other projects.

The longest outstanding is currently £10,423.47 from 2006 the balance from Bacton Road, North Walsham. This is due to be issued shortly for payment to North Walsham Skate Park. The next unspent is from 2011 for £1,100.00 the next significant amount is for £300,000.00 from 2014 and this is part of the housing money.

As I am sure you will know we are bringing projects forward that will use the housing element of which approximately £500,000 is already earmarked. S106 money is controlled by legal agreements and must be spent on appropriate projects within the designated area of the agreement.

I have been progressing moves to enable people to understand where money may be available for projects to be brought forward. The next step in this process is the introduction of additional software to make the information more widely available. Bids are being progressed to enable this to happen.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Continued development to maximise the potential of the IDOX/Uniform system. We need to ensure that we use this software to its capacity to deliver the gains it should.

Review systems of work and drive down application processing times.

Monitor and introduce new regulations brought about by government bills.

3 Meetings attended

This has been a quiet period with holidays and some meetings cancelled.

There has been the usual Parish Councils, Cabinet, Business Planning, Development committee, Planning Policy and Portfolio meetings.

