

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

9 February 2022

COUNCILLOR J TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

For the period November and December 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General overview.

I can report a significant milestone has been reached with the delivery of our local plan to its final stage of public consultation, I should like to place my thanks to the team on record.

We continue to deliver improved speed and decision of decision making on planning applications and maintain an above average market share of Building Control business in North Norfolk with timely outcomes.

Development Management & Major Projects Performance

Latest figures for speed of decision sustain the performance improvements previously reported. Detailed reports are provided to Development Committee on these matters, please refer to these reports for any detailed consideration on matters of speed and quality of decision to the Development Committee.

I have tasked our Director and Assistant Director to specifically look towards improved communication from all parts of the service. I will expect good liaison from the service with our Customer Service team to enable effective answering of queries and comments from our customers. I will explore performance and customer service improvements as part of ongoing improvements under the Team Planning Process.

Planning Policy & neighbourhood planning

The Regulation 19 Consultation process for our emerging local plan commenced on 17 January and will run until 28 February. Full details of the consultation and how to take part are at:

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/local-plan-consultation/>

I would encourage members to review the plan and measures proposed that will affect the future of the whole district and their wards. Our officers will be reviewing consultation responses and moving forward to final plan submission in the Summer this year. This should ensure we maintain the schedule for adoption of the plan in late 2022 / early 2023.

Building Control

Our team are making final changes to deliver mobile working with a “paperless” service from Mid-February 2022, this will reduce the use of paper printing and need for travelling to pick up files and documents to facilitate inspections. Those changes will help to deliver efficiency savings and environmental benefits.

NNDC market share (compared to approved inspectors) remains high at 86% market share. National average market share is around 65% Local Authority, our service has a strong reputation for good service and quality advice.

Our Service Manager is reporting to CLT on training and investment needs as we complete the review of new requirements for compliance with the Building Safety Bill. I am briefed that the team continue to perform well and have every expectation to meet the demands of the Building Safety Bill successfully.

I can confirm that all decision notices for building inspections are issued on time and that all inspections are also completed within the statute period.

Enforcement

The team have 305 current live cases; external consultancy support is available to boost capacity in the team.

The web based complaint reporting process went live in 8 November, and has been supported by case inputting from our Planning Processing Unit. I will be supporting officers in a roll out to members and Parishes to promote this new service.

I can report successful recruitment to the Enforcement Officer Vacancy and a month of change as our Interim Enforcement Team Leader Bob Wade moves on and Kevin Peacock takes over as Team Leader. I welcome and support Kevin in his new role.

Staffing

I have been pleased to report success in recruitment since last speaking generally about the issues facing local government in this sector when we last met. I can report recruitment to the team Leader role in Major Developments and also Team Leader Combined Enforcement, a Planning Officer in Development Management, an Enforcement Officer, and a Landscape Officer in our Conservation, Design and Landscape Service.

However, I must also report the following 3 vacancies.

Development Management - 1 Senior Officer Major Projects (under recruitment - interview end January)

Local Plans –1 Senior Officer & 1 Planning Officer – (recruitment campaign January).

Planning & Building Control Support manager – Unsuccessful recruitment campaign – review and restart campaign in January / February.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Planning Policy & Build Heritage Working Party – 21 February

Development Committee – 17 February.

3 Meetings attended

Planning Policy & Build Heritage Working Party – 6 December

Development Committee – 16 December & 20 January.

Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum. 25 January

Broads and Norfolk Rivers IDB 24 and 27 January

North Norfolk Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan 19 January

Overview & Scrutiny – 8 December and 12 January

Transport East Strategy consultation – 30 November

Town and Parish Forum – 29 November