



Planning Services Service Delivery Plan 2026 to 2027

Overview of the service

Activities of the Planning service generally stem from legislative requirements, however close working with other internal departments is essential to providing a comprehensive service to our customers. We also work closely with a number of external clients such as the Local Highways Authority, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as well as town and parish councils.

It is important that the Planning service maintains a strong customer focus to the varied range and number of customers that the service has to manage. The range of customers accessing our service includes: applicants, architects/agents, developers, neighbours and community groups as well as internal and external colleagues and consultees.

The service leads on delivering the council's statutory functions relating to plan-making and the determination of planning applications. Planning applications should be determined in accordance with adopted planning policies contained in the Local Plan and adopted neighbourhood plans, taking into account material considerations including national planning policies. The Planning service operates in the public interest and its main purpose is to facilitate sustainable development throughout the District. Place making is an important objective for the team, alongside the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment. Close working with internal and external bodies forms an important part of the planning process to ensure the service functions in an efficient and transparent manner.

Cost of service

The Planning service generates an income for the Council with planning application fees being set by national government and pre-application fees being set by the local planning authority.

The budgeted income for 2026 to 2027 from planning applications and pre-application advice is £1,133,348 and £75,192 respectively.

Appendix 1(k)

The level of income received to date from 1 April 2025 to 31 January 2026 for planning applications is £1.16m and pre-application advice is £128k.

In the year of 2025 to 2026 (01 April 2025 to 31 January 2026) the Planning service dealt with a total of 1430 valid applications, the breakdown of which is:

- majors - 25
- minors - 201
- others (includes householders, listed buildings, adverts, conditions, amendments, certificate of lawfulness, prior notifications) – 854
- trees - 350

Staffing Information

The Planning service includes a number of functions. The team consists of a total of 34.8 full time equivalent (FTE) staff members. The team is broken into several different sections that all fall under the remit of the Strategic Planning & Development Manager. The Planning team consists of Planning Team Leaders, Senior Planning Officers, Planning Officers and a Planning Assistant.

The team also incorporates other staff and statutory functions, including Conservation Officer, Tree Officer, Enforcement Officers, Strategic Planning and the Planning Support Team. The structure of the team is outlined below with a summary of each function and staffing levels.

FTE	Role title
1.0	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
2.0	Planning Team Leaders
3.0	Major Projects Planning Officer
1.0	Development Management & Technical Support Team Leader
1.0	Enforcement Team Leader
1.0	Strategic Planning Team Leader
1.0	Tree Officer
1.0	Conservation Officer
10.0	Career Grade Planning Officers (Senior/Planning Officer/Assistant)
1.6	Enforcement Officers
1.0	Senior Planning Support Officer
7.2	Planning Support Officers
2.0	Senior Strategic Planning Officer
1.0	Performance & Monitoring Officer
1.0	Section 106 Officer

Forward planning for Councillors

Proposed item	Proposed date of decision	Committee
Planning Committee	First Wednesday of every month	Planning
Member training	In house by Planning Manager, as required	Planning
Half year report 2026 to 2027	November 2026	Operational Services
End of year report 2026 to 2027	March 2027	Operational Services
Service Delivery Plan 2026 to 2027	March 2027	Operational Services
Neighbourhood Plan Fund Monitoring Report	November 2026	Finance and Assets Committee

Planning Services Service Delivery Plan 2026 to 2027

This Service Delivery Plan describes what the Planning service will be doing to deliver continuous improvement (service objectives). Each performance measure relates to the Council's strategic outcomes and Corporate Plan 2026 to 2027.

Council's strategic outcome: Customers at the heart of everything we do, maintain sound finances, improve systems and practices, be an excellent employer

Planning services' strategic objective: Deliver statutory functions within specified timescales and within budget.

Link to Corporate Plan: Sound financial management.

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2025 to 2026	Owner and co-owners
Major applications to be determined within agreed timescales	90%, annually	77%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Planning Officers (including Seniors and Planning Assistant)
Minor applications to be determined within agreed timescales	80%, annually	87%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Planning Officers (including Seniors and Planning Assistant)
Householder applications to be determined within agreed timescales	90%, annually	94%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
All other applications to be determined within agreed timescales	90%, annually	94%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
Tree Preservation Order, Trees in Conservation Areas or compliance with tree condition applications to be determined within agreed timescales	95%, annually	99%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
Discharge of condition applications determined within agreed timescales	75%, annually	72%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
All applications determined within 26 weeks unless otherwise agreed extension	100%, annually	91%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
Applications validated within 5 working days	85%, annually	90%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
To actively facilitate and engage with the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme and be operationally ready to transition into the new authority model without service disruption.	As identified, ongoing	New performance measure	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Planning Officers (including Seniors and Planning Assistant)
Play an active role in sub-regional Strategic and national planning work, including participation in	Ongoing, annually	New performance measure	Strategic Planning Team Leader Senior Strategic Planning Officer

<p>national planning consultations (including Land Use Framework work), attendance at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Planning Policy Forum (6 weekly); contribute to Combined Authority Strategic Planning Activities.</p>			
<p>To enable high quality decision making by DM services and be able to undertake statutory data returns, monitor and report on past development and projected pipeline. Includes, publication of an Authority’s Monitoring Report (AMR) and Five Year Land Supply Report covering period to 31 March 2027, which reports on the performance of the previous year in terms of planning matters (statutory item)</p>	<p>Annually, and ad hoc when trigger points reached</p>	<p>New performance measure</p>	<p>Strategic Planning Team Leader Senior Strategic Planning Officer</p>
<p>To ensure customers are provided with high-quality service, regular customer service feedback will be obtained and actions tracked through the Planning Review Forum</p>	<p>Establish baseline for 2026</p>	<p>New performance measure</p>	<p>Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Team Leader Positions</p>

Council’s strategic outcome: A clean, green and attractive place. Improve the public realm, enhance the natural environment

Planning services’ strategic objective: Take a proactive approach to enhancing and improving the places in which people live: balancing economic, environmental and social needs.

Link to Corporate Plan: Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2025 to 2026	Owner and co-owners
<p>Continue work on the Cambridgeshire Local Heritage Project (CLHP), within the next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete data for candidate list entries continue vetting process via county assessment panel commence rolling consultation programme with owners and parishes for adoption of new entries on a parish-by-parish basis 	As identified, annually	34 out of 35	Conservation Officer Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
<p>Project manage major applications as a team (approx. 50+ dwellings and commercially important schemes) through action tracker management and other project management tools</p> <p>Build collective understanding of major projects and business focus for customers</p> <p>Manage expectations of stakeholders and build in resilience across the team for complex project management</p> <p>Seek consistency across outcomes</p>	As identified, annually	25 Major Applications, 6 Pre-Apps and 2 Appeals	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Planning Officers as needed
<p>Achieve consistency across S106 agreements and timing of Committee decisions</p> <p>Aim to require agreed and completed S106 agreement before reporting planning applications to Committee.</p> <p>Monitor throughput of S106 agreements through action tracker and other project management tools</p>	As identified, annually	In situ since 1 st October 2025	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Planning Officers as needed
<p>Work with those communities wishing to undertake Neighbourhood Planning, ensure ECDC meets its statutory requirements</p>	As required, in response to applications Annually, report to Finance and Assets Committee	New performance Measure	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Strategic Planning Team Leader
<p>Undertake/advise/take action on statutory plan-making duties as applicable in light of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> legislative requirements 	Ongoing	New performance measure	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Strategic Planning Team Leader

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing planning reform; and • status of policies within the Local Plan plus associated guidance and their fit for purpose with respect to service's statutory duty to determine planning applications 			
Monitor 20% of approved tree works	20%, annually	19%	Trees Officer Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
80% of enforcement complaints to have preliminary investigation completed within 10 working days of receipt	80%, annually	100%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Enforcement Team Leader All Planning Enforcement Officers
To reduce the amount of paper used by the Department in relation to its day-to-day work	10%, annually	22%	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Planning Team Leaders All Planning Officers (including Seniors and Planning Assistant)
Contribute to the implementation of the Council's Climate and Environment Action Plan	As identified, annually	Responds to queries as required	Cross-Council activity Planning Team Leader

Council’s strategic outcome: Safe, vibrant and inclusive communities. Community sustainability.

Planning services’ strategic objective: Improve staff motivation, participation and involvement in service provision and encourage staff development.

Link to Corporate Plan: Sustainable Communities

Performance measure	Target and reporting timescale	Baseline/output from 2025 to 2026	Owner and co-owners
20hrs average of CPD per person to be identified and to be provided annually (pro-rata for part time positions); following attendance of courses/seminars staff to feedback and discuss with the team and the next team meeting.	As identified, annually	Average 24 hours per person	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers
<p>Regularly review high level corporate risks :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new legislation, impacting on work in progress • new legislation, resulting in a resource pressure to implement • status of policies within the Local Plan • adaptation to climate change exposure to potential judicial review – the decision making process has not been carried out lawfully, which could lead to a financial risk on the Authority and judicial review by aggrieved party 	As required, annually	All new legislation shared in Monthly Planning Service Meeting	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager
Implementation of further electronic working processes and procedures within 1 year – measuring the cost for printing for next year	As identified, annually	<p>Improvement across all categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Digital & Design Skills – Level 1 to Level 3 •Tech & Products – Level 2 to Level 3 •Procurement – Level 1 to Level 4 •Leadership & Governance – Level 2 to Level 4 •Culture & Ways of Working – Level 2 to Level 3 •Citizen engagement, working with others – Level 2 to Level 3 	Planning Manager Office Team Leader Senior Support Officer
<p>Undertake/advise/take action on statutory plan-making duties as applicable in light of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legislative requirements • ongoing planning reform; and • status of policies within the Local Plan plus associated guidance and their fit for purpose with respect to service’s statutory duty to determine planning applications 	Ongoing	New performance measure	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager Strategic Planning Team Leader
Continually review all existing service web pages to ensure that only up to date, accurate and relevant information is live on the Council’s website	Ongoing, as required	New performance measure	Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager All Officers

