



#### Committee and Date

Council

20<sup>th</sup> September 2018

## **Annual Portfolio Holder Report: Planning and Housing Development**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor R Macey  
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### **1. Summary**

This report provides information on the key outcomes and achievements of the past year including some performance statistics, and sets a number of strategic priorities for the forthcoming year.

Planning Services, Strategic Planning and Housing Enabling and Development are all part of the Economic Growth Service and are key services in the Council's role as agents for delivery of economic growth to ensure sustainable housing and employment opportunities are realised and the ambition of the Economic Growth strategy met.

These teams work within a regulatory context and a broad range of stakeholder interests to deliver positive outcomes in accordance with the relevant legislation, national and local policy.

A new area of responsibility within the portfolio is Housing Development. The council continues to work on the positive role it can play directly or enable through others in housing development. This area has the potential to help the council achieve a number of its key objectives including ensuring sustainable housing opportunities, generating income to deliver a sustainable council to meet the needs of our county.

### **2. Recommendations**

That Council approves the Portfolio Holder's report

## REPORT

### 3. Key Service Outcomes

There are four key areas within this portfolio that work to deliver Planning and Housing across the County these are Planning Policy and Strategy, Housing Enabling, Planning Services and the new area of Housing Development.

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING

- **Local Plan:** The partial review of the Local Plan will provide an up to date Plan which will help to support growth and maintain local control over planning decisions during the period to 2036. The review started in January 2017 and has continued with a consultation on the 'Preferred Options' in October 2017 which sought feedback on the preferred level and distribution of new development to 2036. The timetable for the Local Plan Review was updated in June 2018 to reflect the scale of the work required to assemble an appropriate evidence base for the Plan, together with the unanticipated impact of significant development proposals which have been promoted in response to the review process and recently announced changes to national planning policy.
- **Housing Completions:** Due to the focus on the Local Plan Review, it has not yet been possible to update all information on housing completions. The existing Five Year Housing Land Supply statement therefore remains unchanged at 6.04 years. Work is on-going to analyse housing completions for 2017-18 and an updated Five Year Housing Land Supply statement will be published later in 2018. Shropshire's performance is rewarded by Government via the New Homes Bonus (NHB) and in 2017/18 Shropshire's settlement was again in the top 28 of all English Councils (over 300 in total).
- **Community Infrastructure Levy:** During the last 12 months, revenue from the Community Infrastructure Levy has increased to £8.1 million, reflecting higher levels of house building, with a total of £19.6 million CIL paid to date and a further £11 million due. The Performance Management Scrutiny Committee considered the CIL policy specifically how it is collected and allocated. The Committee made a number of recommendations that have been noted by Cabinet for consideration in any future changes to process or policy.

#### HOUSING ENABLING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Affordable Housing Contributions:** The Council's policy requirement to secure affordable housing contributions (AHC) has accumulated a capital pot of £7.544m and a further potential of £5.5m. These funds are used to help develop additional local affordable housing projects. A change in national policy ratified through revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July this year means that Councils should no longer seek affordable housing contributions from developments of 10 or more houses (5 or less in some rural protected areas). This affects over 90% of planning applications in Shropshire and

therefore significantly restricts our ability to deliver affordable housing. The Local Plan Review and revisions to supplementary guidance provide an opportunity to reassess that position which is what officers are exploring.

- **Housing Delivery:** The Council continues to fund the development of additional affordable housing. During 2017/18, the Council spent £0.5m and allocated £1.3m on 194 new dwellings. The total construction value of these schemes amounts to more than £22.5m of much needed investment into the local economy. Shropshire Council was successful in attracting a grant of £0.588m to help deliver additional capacity in rural communities for new local affordable housing and are helping to initiate and develop several community led schemes. The emerging focus on the Council's role in delivering other types of housing in Shropshire is a significant opportunity to help fulfil housing needs, generate income into the Council for our financial sustainability and support delivery of services, promote innovation and development in housing practices and technology and support economic growth and employment.
- **Right Home Right Place initiative** – in order to help to capture real evidence about the housing need in Shropshire, we have launched the 'Right Home Right Place' initiative. By providing digital means of capturing this information via a dedicated website and through social media with a short effective survey, the team are able to gauge more information about the actual needs in Shropshire and reveal some of the hidden demand for housing. By understanding as fully as possible the need for housing in the county, the Council can work to ensure the right sorts of homes are delivered.
- **Self Build** - as one of the previous 12 Local Authorities nationally to be chosen as Custom and Self Build "Vanguard" authorities by DCLG to pilot self-build housing, work is progressing to bring forward a Council owned site to develop 48 self-build plots in Shrewsbury. There have been a number of barriers to bringing this forward but these are now being overcome with a small project team in place. One of the key considerations is that the council has a duty to provide a sufficient number of custom and self-build plots to meet the numbers for those on the self-build register each year. Therefore granting sufficient planning permissions and considering use of the council's own land for this purpose are activities that the council can undertake.

## PLANNING SERVICES

Working with colleagues across the Economic Growth service, and other partners and stakeholders, internally and externally, the Planning Service delivers time sensitive processes to a large number of customer groups who sometimes have different interests and objectives.

The service provides an integrated approach to planning and development-related services, bringing together Regulatory Planning & Enforcement, Historic & Natural Environment Teams, Obligations Monitoring, Building Control and Systems Support, including Land Charges, Street Naming and Numbering and the Corporate Land and Property Gazetteer. Many of these teams generate

income through statutory and discretionary fees providing 75% of the service delivery cost overall, the income target for 2018/19 is £3,851,780.

We have sought to commercialise activities where this is practical and meaningful and the service as a whole is responsible for significant levels of paid for customer transactions through planning, building control, land charges, street naming & numbering as well as internal recharges to other teams to provide specialist technical services such as tree safety inspections.

Planning functions and outcomes are evidenced based and performance is measured against this. A summary of some key statistics for 2017/18 are illustrated below;

- 99.1% of Building Regulations Full Plans submissions checked within 21 days, 86.00% of Initial Notices dealt with within 3 days
- Over 93% of planning applications were approved
- 96% of planning applications are delegated to officers for consideration
- Over 92% of applications (overall) are approved in timeframe agreed with applicant
- Strong community alignment - 88% of planning decisions align with view of parish or town council
- Robust and effective decision taking by Shropshire Council as 87% of planning appeal decisions against are dismissed.
- Typically 400 planning enforcement cases under investigation at any time, around 50 cases received and closed every month
- £4.8 million S106 funds received in 2017/18
- £796,114 S106 expenditure/funds spent
- £16.5 million contributions spending split: Affordable Housing: £6 million, all other contributions: £10.5 million)
- Extensive Rich and Diverse Historic & Natural Environment - 441 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 6904 Listed Buildings, 127 Conservation Areas, 34 Registered Parks, 1 Registered Battlefield, 2 World Heritage Sites, 35,000 non-designated heritage assets, 972 confirmed tree preservation orders
- Over 5,500 land charges searches dispatched annually on average
- On average 60 streets, 200 residential properties and 500 commercial properties added to the gazetteer annually

### **Key priorities for forthcoming year**

- Provide a focus on key development projects and priorities in line with the Local Plan, Corporate & Service Plan, Economic Growth Strategy & Commercial Strategy including strategic sites, for example Ironbridge Power Station and the M54 strategic growth corridor;
- Focus on infrastructure delivery and compliance given the significant development taking place on the ground;
- Ensure that the future distribution of growth reflects the outcome of a Green Belt review, the Council's Economic Growth Strategy and other updated evidence as part of the Local Plan Review;

- Delivery of affordable and intermediate homes in areas of the County where need has been identified through ‘Right Home Right Place’ and through collaborative work with communities, employers and Registered Providers.
- Continue to financially support through the use of affordable housing contributions, registered providers and the private sector to deliver additional local needs affordable housing.
- Establish agreed approach to Council’s direct involvement in delivery of other types of housing in Shropshire based on evidence.
- Develop further integration within the service teams to enhance efficiency and customer outcomes;
- Consult on preferred site allocations for market towns and growth guidelines for ‘Community Hub’ settlements in October. A further consultation on strategic sites will follow in early 2019;
- Work with members of the Housing Member Advisory Group to help identify and provide more opportunities to incentivise positive qualitative outcomes for housing development working with key stakeholders through Design and Heritage awards, accreditation and compliance activities;
- Ensure all departments within Planning Services deal with applications in a timely and effective way, this includes resource planning and development.
- Work with developers and project promoters through pre application stages, particularly for the major planning applications.

#### **4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

Article 8 gives the right to respect for private and family life and First Protocol Article 1 allows for the peaceful enjoyment of possessions. These have to be balanced against the rights and freedoms of others and the orderly development of the County in the interests of the Community. First Protocol Article 1 requires that the desires of landowners must be balanced against the impact on residents.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

Income received by the Council for Planning Services functions is directly linked to activity in the development sector and subject to market and seasonal fluctuation.

Planning and other regulatory fees are paid directly by customers for services to be delivered by the Council and offset the cost to the Council of delivering these services.

The timing and quantum of developer contributions to support infrastructure delivery is critical to facilitate and sustain economic growth.

Full financial considerations and detailed appraisals for Council direct involvement in housing delivery will be undertaken in due course as appropriate.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Corporate and Service Plans, Shropshire Local Plan and associated Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, Economic Growth Strategy 2017-21, and Commercial Strategy.

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Robert Macey, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing Development

**Local Member :** All Shropshire Council Members

**Appendices:** None