

**PLANNING
DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT
SERVICE PLAN**

SERVICE PLAN 2024/25

1. SERVICE OVERVIEW

INSERT BRIEF OVERVIEW OF TEAM

Planning Development Management (PDM) plays a major role within the Council. The PDM team is responsible for processing all planning applications, dealing with all planning appeals and investigating planning enforcement cases. As part of the application process, PDM provides high quality advice to the general public, businesses, applicants (or their professional advisers) on whether permission is likely to be granted. Sound planning advice on development proposals is also provided on council assets. Planning applications are assessed and determined within government prescribed timescales and Section 106 agreements are negotiated and concluded where required. This also includes determining tree applications and giving advice on suitable works and giving advice on and determining applications in Conservation areas and listed buildings. The service is also responsible for leading on the River Thames scheme. Recently PDM has taken on the appraisal of the Borough's Conservation Areas and, for a temporary period, the making of Tree Preservation Orders.

PDM deals effectively with appeals submitted against the Council's refusal of planning permission, planning conditions, enforcement notices, non-determinations and other decisions. The team is also responsible for investigating complaints about buildings, structures or uses which have not taken place in accordance with a planning permission or which need permission but do not have it including court appearances and serving injunctions.

The PDM team plays a key role in giving training and general advice on all Development Management issues (members of the Planning Committee are required to have training). The officers are responsible for leading on and presenting planning applications to the Planning Committee for determination. In addition, the team engages positively with a range of internal and external key stakeholders and the wider community on planning issues.

WHO WE ARE

The team has a total of 24 staff (including one vacant Planning enforcement officer post); 21.56 full time equivalents (including the Group Head) with 14 posts being full time and 8 posts part time.

There are four teams;

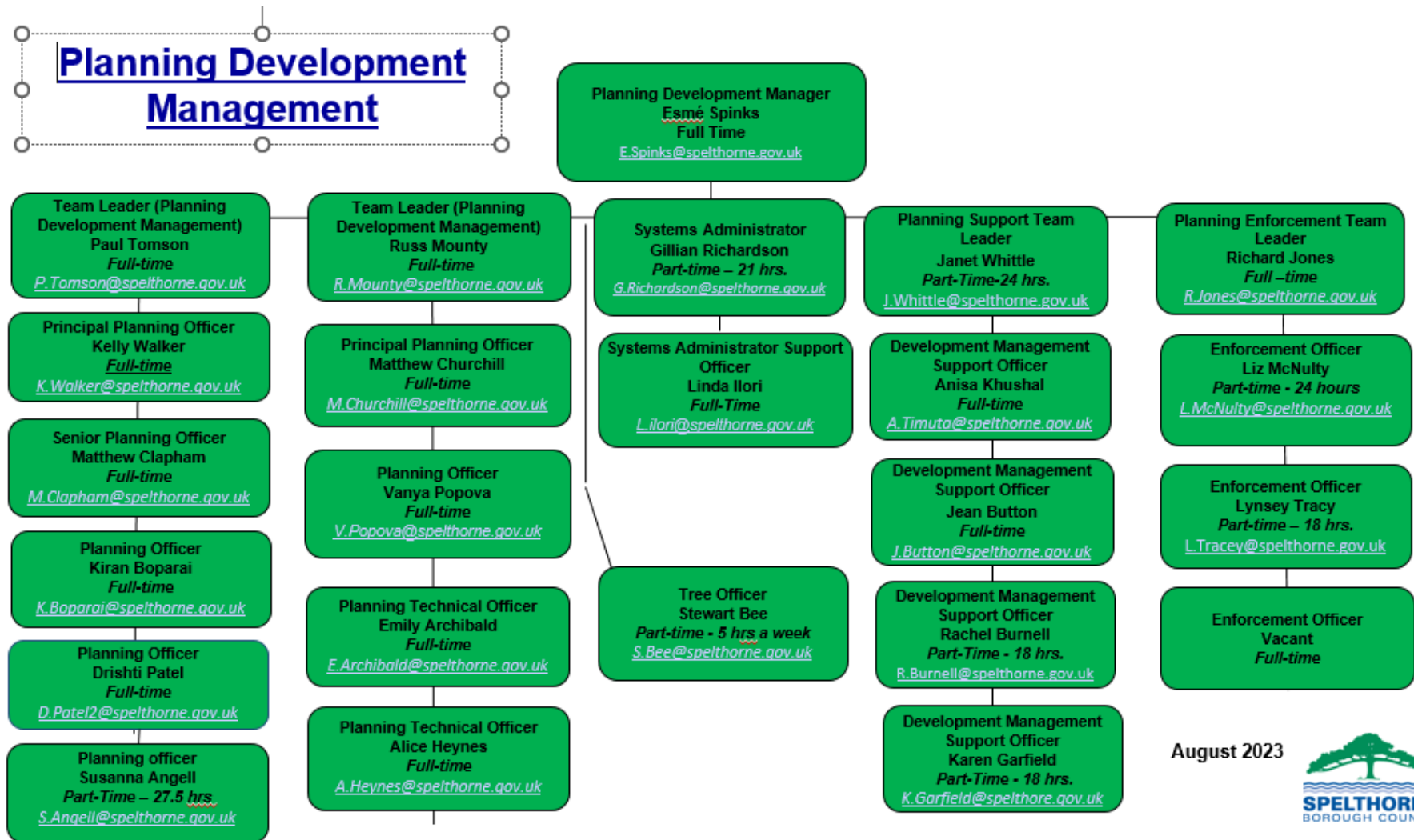
- Two planning officer teams each headed by a Team Leader (Planning Development Management)
- Planning enforcement team headed by a Planning Enforcement Team Leader

- Technical Support team headed by a Development Management Support Team Leader
- Systems Administrator and Support Officer.
- There is also a part time tree officer (0.2).

There is 1 Planning Development Manager, 8.6 f.t.e Planning Officers, 2 Planning Technical Officers, 3.16 f.t.e Planning Enforcement Officers, 3.6 f.t.e Technical Support Officers, 0.6 Systems Administrator, 1 Assistant Systems Administrator (temporary 23 months from 09/22) and 0.2 Tree Officer.

The Planning Development team is managed by a full time Planning Development Manager.

A family tree of the service is below.



WHAT WE DO: Service Purpose and Core Business Functions

Planning Development Management (PDM) plays a major role within the Council. The PDM team is responsible for processing all planning applications, dealing with all planning appeals and investigating planning enforcement cases. As part of the application process, PDM provides high quality advice to the general public, businesses, applicants (or their professional advisers) on whether permission is likely to be granted. Sound planning advice on development proposals is also provided on council assets. Planning applications are assessed and determined within government prescribed timescales and Section 106 agreements are negotiated and concluded where required. This also includes determining tree applications and giving advice on suitable works and giving advice on and determining applications in Conservation areas and listed buildings. PDM receives a statutory planning fee for most types of planning applications. These fees will be increased by Government on 01/04/24 by 35% on major applications and 25% on other applications. From thereon in, application fees will rise annually on 1 April every year, in line with inflation, with a 10% cap and a three-yearly review. The Government states that it expects that local planning authorities protect at least the income from the planning fee increase to directly support increased resourcing for planning.

PDM deals effectively with appeals submitted against the Council's refusal of planning permission, planning conditions, enforcement notices, non-determinations and other decisions. The team is also responsible for investigating complaints about buildings, structures or uses which have not taken place in accordance with a planning permission or which need permission but do not have it including court appearances and serving injunctions.

The PDM team plays a key role in giving training and general advice on all Development Management issues. The officers undertake a regular and comprehensive planning training programme for all councillors. The officers are responsible for leading on and presenting planning applications to the Planning Committee for determination.

In addition, the team engages positively with a range of internal and external key stakeholders and the wider community on planning issues.

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN <i>And other key statutory and service elements</i>						
What is our corporate priority (CARES)? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	Provide clear outline of what the service wants to achieve including projects and outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	Is a business case required? and when do you hope to action the achieve this by? Or is this just a growth bid?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign off?	Other service resources e.g., procurement and budget required mention if also potential growth bids
Community Affordable Housing Environment Service Delivery Statutory	Processing large scale planning applications expeditiously and with high quality outcomes.	Statutory targets – Speed and Quality	On-going (statutory target) Growth bids to enable: 1) an existing Systems Administrator Support Officer on a temporary contract to be made permanent, 2) Biodiversity Net Gain consultant's advice, 3) Heritage and Design expertise, external	Planning Development Manager	Planning and Officer Delegation	Legal Services Environmental Health Climate change Neighbourhood Services Community Growth bid 1) 39,947 2) 25,000 3) 25,000

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN <i>And other key statutory and service elements</i>						
What is our corporate priority (CARES)? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	Provide clear outline of what the service wants to achieve including projects and outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	Is a business case required? and when do you hope to action the achieve this by? Or is this just a growth bid?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign off?	Other service resources e.g., procurement and budget required mention if also potential growth bids
			critical friend.			
Community Affordable Housing Environment Service Delivery Statutory	Processing all non-major applications expeditiously and with high quality outcomes	Statutory targets – Speed and Quality	Statutory targets – Speed and Quality Growth bids as above	Planning Development Manager	Planning and Officer Delegation	Legal Services Environmental Health Climate change Neighbourhood Services Community
Community Affordable Housing Environment Service Delivery Statutory	Defending planning appeals rigorously to ensure the LPA is nor 'Designated' (particular for major applications and to ensure a high level of performance and to	Statutory targets - Quality	On-going (statutory target) Growth bid to assist in defending complex planning appeals	Planning Development Manager	Planning Committee	Legal Services Environmental Health Commissioning & Transformation Neighbourhood Services Community Growth bid £50,000 consultants, £80,000 legal

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN <i>And other key statutory and service elements</i>						
What is our corporate priority (CARES)? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	Provide clear outline of what the service wants to achieve including projects and outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	Is a business case required? and when do you hope to action the achieve this by? Or is this just a growth bid?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign off?	Other service resources e.g., procurement and <i>budget</i> required mention if also potential growth bids
Community Environment Service Delivery Non Statutory	Continue to deliver a strong, effective and fair Planning Enforcement Service	Quality of the environment Number of complaints resolved	On-going Growth bid for 12 extra hours for existing planning enforcement officers to reflect the increasing workload.	Planning Development Manager	Neighbourhood Services and Enforcement	Legal Services Environmental Health £15,292 growth bid
Community Environment Service Delivery Statutory	Protection Regulations (GDPR) compliant, compliance with Document retention policy	Outcome of any referrals to the ICO	On-going Not a growth bid	Planning Development Manager	Corporate Policy and Resources	Data Protection Officer
Community Affordable Housing	Respond to pre-application requests in a positive, efficient and expeditious manner to enable	Provision of high quality development.	On-going Not a growth	Planning Development Manager	N/A	Environmental Health Commissioning

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN <i>And other key statutory and service elements</i>						
What is our corporate priority (CARES)? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	Provide clear outline of what the service wants to achieve including projects and outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	Is a business case required? and when do you hope to action the achieve this by? Or is this just a growth bid?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign off?	Other service resources e.g., procurement and <i>budget</i> required mention if also potential growth bids
Environment Service Delivery Non Statutory	a more efficient service delivery and improved outcome. To enter into planning performance agreements, where appropriate, with applicants. These enquiries can save an applicant time in preparing the application and the time taken by the Council to make a decision on it. In cases of proposals with little prospect of approval, early advice can avoid further abortive work. It can also quickly identify solutions to problems and therefore save costs.	Improved performance in terms of speed and quality. Improved Community engagement at an early stage.	bid			& Transformation
Community Environment Service Delivery Statutory	The making of Tree Preservation Orders. This is a function which was transferred from Strategic Planning for a temporary period pending the recruitment of officers in that Service. It currently remains with Planning	Protection of trees in the interest of visual amenity and biodiversity benefits	On-going Growth bid to fund the increasing tree preservation	Planning Development Manager	Planning and Officer Delegations	Environmental Health, Strategic Planning, Commissioning & Transformation Neighbourhood

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN And other key statutory and service elements						
What is our corporate priority (CARES)? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	Provide clear outline of what the service wants to achieve including projects and outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	Is a business case required? and when do you hope to action the achieve this by? Or is this just a growth bid?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign off?	Other service resources e.g., procurement and <i>budget</i> required mention if also potential growth bids
	Development Management.		work			Services £5,000 bid
Community Environment Service Delivery Statutory	River Thames Scheme (RTS) Lead Service on the RTS for Spelthorne BC. Consents for a major flood relief scheme by the Environment Agency, which will pass west to east throughout the whole borough. In conjunction with neighbouring authorities. Entered into a planning performance agreement to include funding from the Environment Agency/SCC for technical expertise. Discussions on-going 2023/24, DCO expected early 2024.	Improved flood risk for Spelthorne Borough– mid/long term. Environmental Enhancements	On-going	Planning Development Manager	Planning Environment and Sustainability	Environmental Health, Strategic Planning, Commissioning & Transformation Neighbourhood Services
Community Affordable Housing	On-going training for Councillors, on all planning matters.	Decision making by the Planning Committee on	On-going Not a growth bid	Planning Development Manager	Planning Environment	Legal Services

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN And other key statutory and service elements						
What is our corporate priority (CARES)? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	Provide clear outline of what the service wants to achieve including projects and outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	Is a business case required? and when do you hope to action the achieve this by? Or is this just a growth bid?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign off?	Other service resources e.g., procurement and <i>budget</i> required mention if also potential growth bids
Environment Service Delivery Non statutory		planning applications. Statutory Speed and Quality assessment on applications			and Sustainability	
Community Environment Service Delivery Statutory	To secure funding under PPAs to assist with the speedy discharge of Environmental Health conditions.	Speed of discharge	On-going	Planning Development Manager	Planning Environment and Sustainability	Environmental Health

2. RESOURCES 2023/24 IDENTIFY FOR EACH SERVICE AREA – THIS SHOULD BE YOUR APPROVED FIGURES FOR 2023/24 (ASK YOUR SERVICE ACCOUNTANT FOR ASSISTANCE AS REQUIRED).

Service Area	Revenue Expenditure Budget £	Capital Budget £	Projected Income £	Staff (Full time equivalents)	<i>Key risks for budget</i>
	1,382,500	N/A	603,000		Public Inquiries on large applications. Potential award of costs if reasons for refusal are not defensible. High Court costs for challenges.
Total	1,382,500	N/A	603,000	21.5 (inc GH)	

Details of bid	Reason for Bid and confirm which priority in the new corporate plan this relates to CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment & Service Delivery) include consideration of future years items.	Cost Centre code details	Start Date MM/YY	Gross Funding rec'd Separate line. If none enter n/a (£000)	Gross (Revenue or Saving) or Cost £000	Total bid Req'd	End Date MM/YY	PID Req'd Y or N If no, why not?	Procurement involved. Y or N If no, why not?	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
	permanent. Corporate Priority: Service Delivery								the post permanent.				
Biodiversity Net Gain	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) expert consultant's advice. BNG will be statutory from November 2023 for major applications and from April 2024 for non-major applications. Corporate Priorities: Community, Environment & Service Delivery	211024401	01/04/24	N/A		25	31/04/28	N/A	No. Specialist expertise	25	25	25	25
Complex Planning appeals	Use of consultants for complex planning appeals: Corporate Priorities:	211024401	01/04/24	50 Planning fee income		50	31/03/25		Y	50	50		

Details of bid	Reason for Bid and confirm which priority in the new corporate plan this relates to CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment & Service Delivery) include consideration of future years items.	Cost Centre code details	Start Date MM/YY	Gross Funding rec'd Separate line. If none enter n/a (£000)	Gross (Revenue or Saving) or Cost £000	Total bid Req'd .	End Date MM/YY	PID Req'd Y or N If no, why not?	Procurement involved. Y or N If no, why not?	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
	Community, Affordable Housing, Environment & Service Delivery			increase.									
Heritage/ Design	Heritage Design consultants/Design SE review Panel for complex proposals (Staines in particular) Corporate Priorities: Community, Environment & Service Delivery	211024401	01/04/24	N/A		25,	31/03/25		Design South East for critical friend for design	25			
Legal advice	Legal costs for enforcement prosecutions, planning appeal inquiries/hearings Corporate Priorities: Community, Affordable Housing, Environment & Service Delivery	211024406	01/04/24	N/A		80	31/03/26	N/A	Cornerstones on legal framework	80	80		

Details of bid	Reason for Bid and confirm which priority in the new corporate plan this relates to CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment & Service Delivery) include consideration of future years items.	Cost Centre code details	Start Date MM/YY	Gross Funding rec'd Separate line. If none enter n/a (£000)	Gross (Revenue or Saving) or Cost £000	Total bid Req'd .	End Date MM/YY	PID Req'd Y or N If no, why not?	Procurement involved. Y or N If no, why not?	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Savings - Revenue				N/A									
Total Savings - Revenue													

Revenue, Staff and Savings Bids 24/25, 25/26 and 26/27. Given the medium term financial strategy is extremely tight please consider likely impact of each items beyond 24/25 where feasible or where savings may emerge, it is essential that you enter figures for 25/26, 26/27 and 27/28, if you don't believe there will be any figures for a year enter n/a (not applicable).

Use a separate line for each item.

Provisional 2024/25 revenue cost/income budget requested.

Service Area	Revenue Expenditure Budget	Projected Income	Staff (Full time equivalents)	Savings	Total budget
Total 2024/25	0	689,000 + 70,000 + 413,000= 1,172,000	21.5 (incl. GH)	0	
Expenditure Costs	1,382,500+ 254,905 = 1,637,405		0	0	1,382,500+ 254,905 = 1,637,405
Project Income/Lost Income	0	689,000 + 70,000 + 413,000= 1,172,000	0	0	689,000 + 70,000 + 413,000= (1,172,000)
Staff	0	0	1,214,800	0	0
Savings	(0)	(0)	(0)	N/A	N/A
Total 2024/25 Provisional Revenue Budget 2024/25	1,637,405	1,172,000	21.5	0	465,405

Significant/Material anticipated revenue budget impacts:

Please highlight any estimate financial impacts (positive or adverse) anticipated over the next four years. For example, this could arise from new anticipated statutory requirements, contractual inflation/new contracts; impact of population growth etc

Service Cost Centre	Issues Description	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	2026/27 £000s	2027/28 £000s
211027331	Planning fee increase – 25 -35% form 01/04/24, thereafter an annual minimum increase of at	530,000 +30% = 159,000+530,000 = 689,000	689,000+10% = 757,900	757,900+ 10% = 833,690	833,690 +10% = 917,059

	least 10%				
211027331	Pre-application advice	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Total £000s		759	827.9	833.69	917.059

PDM receives a statutory planning fee for most types of planning applications. These fees will be increased by Government on 01/04/24 by 35% on major applications and 25% on other applications. A new provision is added to the 2012 Fees Regulations so that, from 1st April 2025, all fees under those Regulations can be increased annually (new regulation 18A). The amount of any increase will be in line with inflation, or if lower, 10%. The Government states that it expects that local planning authorities protect at least the income from the planning fee increase to directly support increased resourcing for planning. A 30% increase to the current fees has been used to calculate the fee increases above.

The increase in planning fee income as projected in the table above is an estimation only, based on the 2023/24 budget. It assumes the economic situation does not deteriorate in the way it occurred under the previous banking collapse and Covid 19.

Capital Bids 24/25, 25/26 and 26/27. It is important that before you submit bid, particularly for a project, you must have gone through the PID process and discussed the project with procurement, if you have not done either, you bid will be rejected, as our medium term financial strategy indicates that cash flow will be extremely tight. Therefore, please consider likely impact of each items beyond 24/25 where feasible or where savings may emerge, it is essential that you enter figures for 25/26, 26/27 and 27/28, if you don't believe there will be any figures for a year enter n/a (not applicable).

Use a separate line for each item.

No Capital Bids

Details of bid	Reason for Bid and confirm which priority in the new corporate plan this relates to CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment & Service	Cost Centre code details	Start Date MM/YY	Gross Funding rec'd Separate line. If none enter	Gross Capital Cost £000	Total bid Req'd . £000's	End Date MM/YY	PID Req'd Y or N Mandat	Procurement involved. Y or N Mandat	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000

(1)	Delivery) include consideration of future years items (2)	(3)	(4)	n/a (£000) (5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	ory (9)	ory (10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Capital													
Total Capital													

3. CARBON FOOTPRINT – working in conjunction with our Climate Change Officer please highlight in the table below how you intend to reduce the Carbon Footprint (by tons) within your department over the next four years and beyond, if there is an invest to save element in your plans, please ensure that the cost element is highlighted in the relevant section above for revenue and or capital bids

Cost Centre	Initiative	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
	Carbon footprint reduction in the assessment of planning applications				
Total carbon reduction by ton					

4. PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS – please list below all contracts under £40,000 that will lapse and or will need to be renewed over the next four years

Cost Centre	Supplier	Contract details	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	2026/27 £000s	2027/28 £000s
211024401	Andrew Hill	Heritage Advice	9	9		
Total £000s			9	9	X	x

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS -

Code	Key indicator description	Time period	Target
PDM 1	Determine planning applications within statutory timescales	Annually (measured over a 2 year period)	Speed of Major Development (60%) Oct 23 – Sept 25
PDM 2	Determine planning applications within statutory timescales	Annually (measured over a 2 year period)	Speed of Non-Major Development (70%) Oct 23 – Sept 25
PDM 3	Quality of Major development	Annually (measured over a 2 year period)	10% or less (the lower the better) Apr 23 – Mar 25
PDM 4	Quality of Non-Major Development	Annually (measured over a 2 year period)	10% or less (the lower the better) Apr 23 – Mar 25
PDM 5	Speed of determining planning applications (majors)	Annually (Apr 23-Mar 24)	60% in 13 weeks
PDM 6	Speed of determining planning applications (minors)	Annually (Apr 23-Mar 24)	65% in 8 weeks

PDM 7	Speed of determining planning applications (others)	Annually (Apr 23-Mar 24)	80% in 8 weeks
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7. KEY ISSUES/RISKS FOR 2024/25 –

WORKFORCE PLANNING ISSUES/TRAINING REQUIREMENTS
<p>The number of complex large applications is likely to increase next year as the emerging local plan progresses. This will put an increased pressure on planning officers and support staff. The applications will be accompanied by a planning application fee, which can be large providing it is a ‘full’ rather than ‘outline’ application. It is unknown at this stage if the impact on workforce will be significant.</p> <p>In addition, the planned national fee increase will come into effect next year, there will be scope to fund additional resourcing.</p> <p>The emerging local plan and national issues require DM staff to receive guidance from experts and new Planning SPDs on matters relating to climate change, infrastructure, affordable housing and green/biodiversity issues. There will also be a requirement for expert Building Control advice on new builds in relation to emerging planning policies.</p> <p>There will also be additional workload in 2024/25 with the Development Consent Order for the River Thames Scheme which Planning DM is leading on for Spelthorne Council.</p> <p>The fast moving legislative changes in planning, requires officers to be continually in step with the details and resulting change in processes.</p> <p>There are a number of free online training sessions on legislation and others with minimal cost. Some Surrey wide training is undertaken for planning and enforcement officers, the cost of which has been relatively low. There is a need for on-going ICT training with Idox to further develop and improve the system to ensure the smooth and constant update of the planning software which is essential for the continued successful paperless way of working.</p>
COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION
<p>Continuous consultation on planning proposals, including with councillors on sensitive matters.. Encouragement in the application of the</p>

agreed consultations process for larger major proposals
LEGAL ISSUES (likely to require additional legal support)
The main impact on legal will be from possible planning appeals, on-going enforcement work and unplanned court work.
GDPR
Due to the high volume of external correspondence received and uploaded to the internet, a large amount of officer time is spent redacting personal and sensitive information
PROCUREMENT OR CONTRACTS (upcoming procurements or contracts required)
Counsel is selected from the legal framework of barristers. An exemption of contract standing orders for procurement may be necessary for certain specialist technical advice as has been the case in 2023/24.
ICT (e.g. provide information on systems to be purchased or support needed)
Constant on-going for Idox Uniform and Enterprise
Climate Change
Climate change is becoming increasingly important with the consideration of planning applications. DM officers require guidance to assist and have been communicating with the climate change officer on the process. It is anticipated that the draft SPD will be adopted by (or before) 2024.
SERVICE RISKS (consider likelihood and impact) – relate where appropriate to corporate risk
There is a risk that the 'Major Quality' target is not met. Members have been advised of the consequential 'Designation' process if the figure rises towards 10% and beyond. Possible decrease in planning application submissions and as a consequence, less than expected planning fee increase. Possible loss of staff due to a very competitive job market.
NON-LEGAL ISSUES
Possible resourcing/workforce issues are dealt with above.
EQUALITY and DIVERSITY
All planning application reports assess the proposal under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty and the Human Rights Act 1998

8. LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD: OTHER KEY ISSUES/RISKS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS – issues e.g. legislation that we need to plan for in the medium term, financial changes, climate change,

SERVICE AREA
<p>New planning legislation is expected, date currently unknown.</p> <p>Increased Public Inquiries with the likely refusal of large scale schemes.</p> <p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will come into effect in in November 2023 (Majors) and April 2024 (Non-Majors).</p> <p>Additional areas of expertise required to assist DM planners, (e.g. climate change, biodiversity (BNG), building control, water).</p>

9. KEY CONTACTS

Esmé Spinks	Planning Development Manager
29/08/23	

10.0 MANAGEMENT AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER

10.1 Group Head’s comment/signoff

Signature/ date	Comments

10.2 Comments/sign off from the Deputy Chief Executive/Chief Executive *(delete as appropriate)*

Signature/date	Comments

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Originator:	
Reviewer:	
Plan Status:	Final

19-4-23

STRATEGIC PLANNING

SERVICE PLAN

SERVICE PLAN 2024/25

1. SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Strategic Planning team is responsible for forward planning and policy development, most notably the production and review of Spelthorne's Local Plan. This sets out where new housing, employment and other development will take place over a 15-year period and includes policies that will be used to determine planning applications and enforcement action. We are also responsible for overseeing and inputting on significant infrastructure proposals that affect our borough, such as Heathrow Expansion, and respond to consultations from Central Government and statutory undertakers. We manage the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regime, including collection and infrastructure delivery, and monitor legal agreements relating to planning applications. We work with teams throughout the Council and provide planning policy advice internally and externally on the many areas our service overlaps with. In early 2023, it was agreed that the Strategic Planning Manager would take over management of the Economic Development team, initially through a pilot arrangement while the establishment review was ongoing but this was confirmed in July 2023. The Strategic Planning Manager was retitled Service Lead for Strategic Planning and Enterprise to reflect this additional responsibility and it is planned to merge the teams fully, although developments in the Local Plan have resulted in a delay in taking this forward. This service plan only covers Strategic Planning for expediency reasons but a joint plan is intended for 2025/26.

WHO WE ARE

Service Lead for Strategic Planning and Enterprise (FT)
Local Plans Manager (PT)
Principal Planning Officer (FT)
Senior Planning Officer (FT)
Senior Planning Officer (FT)
Planning Officer (FT) [Vacant]
Planning Policy Technician (FT)
Infrastructure Delivery Coordinator (FT)
CIL Administrator (PT)

WHAT WE DO:

<p align="center">SERVICE AREA – provide “Golden Thread as to how service links to corporate plan priorities CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment, Service Delivery)</p>	<p align="center">Specify link (CARES)</p>
<p>Produce and review Spelthorne’s Local Plan</p>	<p>Community Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment, Service Delivery</p>
<p>Input into major infrastructure proposals affecting the Borough</p>	<p>Community, Environment</p>
<p>Respond to key consultations relating to planning, housing, the environment, infrastructure etc. Recently, these have included the SCC Minerals and Waste Plan, Surrey Place Ambition, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, Local Transport Scheme 4, River Thames Scheme and central government consultations on planning, infrastructure and related matters.</p>	<p>Community, Environment</p>
<p>Administer the Community Infrastructure Levy regime and spending of monies on infrastructure projects, including liaising with other teams and services in the Council to ensure a coordinated approach</p>	<p>Community, Environment, Service Delivery</p>
<p>Provide policy advice on development proposals and liaison both internally and externally on planning policy matters</p>	<p>Community, Affordable Housing, Environment, Service Delivery</p>

2. RESOURCES 2023/24

Service Area	Is this a new service or are you stopping a service	Projected Expenditure £000s	Capital Budget £000s	Projected Income £000s	Staff (FTE)	Key risks for budget
Policy		621,200	0	(85,600) Funding CIL posts	8.13	Additional costs of progressing Local Plan to adoption (discussed below)
Total						

Growth Bids 24/25 Capital and Revenue

DRAFT

Details of bid	Reason for Bid and confirm which priority in the new corporate plan this relates to CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment & Service Delivery) include consideration of future years items.	Cost Centre code details	Start Date MM/YY	Gross Funding rec'd Separate line. If none enter n/a (£000)	Gross (Revenue or Saving) or Cost £000	Total bid Req'd.	End Date MM/YY	PID Req'd Y or N If no, why not?	Procurement involved Y or N If no, why not?	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Cost - Revenue	Resumption of examination hearings The initial three weeks of Local Plan examination hearings were paused after the first week so further hearings will be required to complete the examination process once it resumes. Costs are for the Planning Inspector (£1k per day), Programme Officer and legal fees plus any attendance by specialist consultants who have produced evidence for the Local Plan. Relates to all CARES priorities	21101/4401	04/24	n/a	50,000	50,000	12/24	N Not a project	N Existing contracts for consultants	50,000	0	0	0
	Completion of design code work Initial work will commence on design codes in 2023/24 as the	21101/4401	04/24	n/a	100,000	100,000	03/25	N Not a project	Y Procurement will be	100,000	0	0	0

	<p>Council considers this work to be vital to shape the future character of the Borough and Staines in particular, seeking to accelerate the programme that was originally planned for after adoption of the Local Plan. These initial costs will need to be met in-year as there is no budget for this work. A decision on a bid for the Planning Skills Delivery Fund is awaited and if successful this would cover some of the initial training and community engagement work. The growth bid for 2024/25 is for remaining costs to complete the design codes. Relates to all CARES priorities as design codes support the Local Plan.</p>								involved in appointing consultants to work with officers on producing design codes				
Total Cost - Revenue					150,000	150,000							
Income - Revenue													

Total Income - Revenue													
Staff - Revenue	<p>Increase in part-time hours for Local Plan Manager post</p> <p>The post-holder has been working these increased hours (from 22.5 hours per week to 27.5 hours) on a temporary basis for around a year, with the cost offset by the vacant Planning Officer post. Now that it is intended to fill that post, a growth bid is sought to continue with the increased hours on a permanent basis. These additional hours are required to deliver the Local Plan through to adoption and for other related work programmed concurrently and beyond adoption, e.g. design codes and other supplementary guidance. Note that it is the personal circumstances of the post-holder that means the position is part-time rather than the post not requiring a full-time officer.</p>	21101/ 1001	04/24	n/a	11,642	11,642		No PID - not a project	No procure ment – staff recruit ment	11,642	11,875	12,113,355	12,355

	Relates to all CARES priorities (Local Plan delivery)												
	<p>Increase to fixed term Policy Officer post</p> <p>The Planning Officer post is currently vacant but as set out in this service plan it is the intention to fill the vacancy to allow for the team to grow to full strength. The post is fixed for two years, however we wish to offer an apprenticeship with this post to allow the successful candidate to complete their training. This used to be offered as a Master course paid for out of my budget but the apprenticeship levy means we could offer full training and qualifications at no additional cost beyond the salary. The apprenticeship lasts 3 years so the fixed term needs to be extended to cover this period and beyond so that we can reap the benefits of the qualified officer. This additional salary cost to increase the fixed term does not kick in until 2025/26.</p>	21101/1001	04/25	n/a	93,548.32	93,548.32	N Not a project	N	0	45,857.02	47,691.30	0	

Total Staff - Revenue					105,190.32	105,190.32				11,642	57,732.02	59,804.30	12,355
Savings - Revenue													
Total Savings - Revenue													

* Note that this is a low estimate and will depend on factors not yet known or outside the Council’s control, such as how many further hearing days will be required. It also does not include any further work or evidence required as a result of suggested modifications to the Local Plan that Members may agree after publication of the revised NPPF.

Revenue, Staff and Savings Bids 24/25, 25/26 and 26/27. Given the medium term financial strategy is extremely tight please consider likely impact of each items beyond 24/25 where feasible or where savings may emerge, it is essential that you enter figures for 25/26, 26/27 and 27/28, if you don’t believe there will be any figures for a year enter n/a (not applicable).

Use a separate line for each item.

Provisional 2024/25 revenue cost/income budget requested.

Service Area	Revenue Expenditure Budget	Projected Income	Staff (Full time equivalents)	Savings	Total budget
Total 2024/25		0	8.13	0	X
Expenditure Costs	151,500	0	0	0	151,500

Project Income/Lost Income	0	(85,600)		0	(85,600)
Staff	0	0	469,700 11,642 <hr/> 481,342	0	481,342
Savings	(0)	(0)	(0)	(X)	(X)
Total 2024/25 Provisional Revenue Budget 2024/25	X	X	X	X	547,242

Significant/Material anticipated revenue budget impacts:

Please highlight any estimate financial impacts (positive or adverse) anticipated over the next four years. For example this could arise from new anticipated statutory requirements, contractual inflation/new contracts; impact of population growth etc

Service Cost Centre	Issues Description	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	2026/27 £000s	2027/28 £000s
Total £000s		X	X	X	x

Capital Bids 24/25, 25/26 and 26/27. It is important that before you submit bid, particularly for a project, you must have gone through the PID process and discussed the project with procurement, if you have not done either, you bid will be rejected, as our medium term financial strategy indicates that cash flow will be extremely tight. Therefore, please consider likely impact of each items beyond 24/25 where feasible or where savings may emerge, it is essential that you enter figures for 25/26, 26/27 and 27/28, if you don't believe there will be any figures for a year enter n/a (not applicable).

Use a separate line for each item.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Details of bid	Reason for Bid and confirm which priority in the new corporate plan this relates to CARES (Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment & Service Delivery) include consideration of future years items	Cost Centre code details	Start Date MM/YY	Gross Funding rec'd Separate line. If none enter n/a (£000)	Gross Capital Cost £000	Total bid Req'd. £000's	End Date MM/YY	PID Req'd Y or N Mandatory	Procurement involved Y or N Mandatory	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000

Capital													
Total Capital													

3. CARBON FOOTPRINT – working in conjunction with our Climate Change Officer please highlight in the table below how you intend to reduce the Carbon Footprint (by tons) within your department over the next four years and beyond, if there is an invest to save element in your plans, please ensure that the cost element is highlighted in the relevant section above for revenue and or capital bids

Cost Centre	Initiative	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
	None identified				
Total carbon reduction by ton					

4. PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS – please list below all contracts under £40,000 that will lapse and or will need to be renewed over the next four years

Cost Centre	Supplier	Contract details	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	2026/27 £000s	2027/28 £000s
Total £000s			X	X	X	x

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Code	Key indicator description	Time period	Target
	None (Planning KPIs all relate to Development Management)		

6. KEY ACTIVITIES FOR 2024/25 –

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN And other key statutory and service elements						
What is our corporate priority? Is the function statutory or non-statutory	What do we want to achieve? Provide clear outcomes/deliverables	How will we measure the difference made?	When will the business case be produced and when will we achieve this by?	Who is the lead officer?	Which Committee sign-off?	Other service resources and budget required
Statutory requirement – Corporate Priorities are Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment and Service Delivery	Progress the new Local Plan, including the Staines Development Framework, from the examination stage (currently paused) and adoption	Complete remaining stages of Local Plan examination, receipt of Inspector letter to advise if the Plan is sound and if not what modifications are required. Further consultation on modifications then adoption by the Council	31 December 2024 (dependent on length of pause and PINS timetable for remainder of examination)	Service Lead for Strategic Planning and Enterprise	Environment & Sustainability (Council for decision to adopt)	No existing budget as funds were spent on the examination costs to date (noting that costs relating to

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN And other key statutory and service elements						
						examination are dependent on the number of further hearings required and are unknown at present)
Statutory requirement – Corporate Priorities are Community, Affordable Housing, Recovery, Environment and Service Delivery	Commence production of further Supplementary Planning Documents and guidance. The Climate Change SPD is currently out to consultation and will be adopted early 2024. Further policy documents on design codes, flood risk and Green/Blue Infrastructure	Progress according to new LDS timetable once new work programme agreed following Local Plan examination pause	31 March 2025	Local Plans Manager	Environment & Sustainability	Some work requires growth bids (see service plan)
Any DCO or planning application consultation is a statutory requirement and it is expected LPAs will participate. Other engagement is discretionary – Corporate Priorities are Community, Recovery, Environment	Continue to engage with Heathrow Airport Ltd and the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group on expansion of the airport following the judicial review that upheld the Airports National Policy Statement. Whilst the proposals can now progress, the pandemic has paused expansion plans but are expected to resume in 2024/25 with a longer timeframe for expansion via the planning application	Extent to which our views are taken into account during any expansion proposals announced over the coming year and participation in ongoing HSPG activities	31 March 2025	Service Lead for Strategic Planning and Enterprise	Environment & Sustainability and Economic Development	Within existing budget

KEY ACTIVITIES DELIVERING THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN And other key statutory and service elements						
	route rather than DCO					
Any DCO consultation is a statutory requirement and it is expected LPAs will participate. Other engagement is discretionary – Corporate Priorities are Community, Recovery, Environment	Engagement with the project group on the River Thames Scheme DCO, which is currently at the pre-application stage. Inputting jointly with Development Management and other internal teams at the Council plus the members of the RTS group (Spelthorne, Runnymede, Elmbridge and Surrey)	Building on the extensive engagement we have had on the project since before it was announced as a DCO project (previously to be dealt with via multiple planning applications) to ensure our interests are reflected in the final submission scheme	31 March 2025	Service Lead for Strategic Planning and Enterprise	Environment & Sustainability and Economic Development	Within existing budget
Non statutory. Corporate Priorities – Community, Environment	Continue spending CIL monies and prioritise infrastructure needs, including continued liaison with other services across the Council to ensure effective co-ordination of spend on CIL/grant funding opportunities	Ensuring CIL money is spent on locally important infrastructure and specific schemes for expenditure have been identified, taking account of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	31 March 2025	Infrastructure Delivery Coordinator	Environment & Sustainability	Within existing budget

7. KEY ISSUES/RISKS FOR 2022/23 – this section highlights key issues/risks which may affect other services that work with us or support our work

FINANCIAL (short term and cover any issues we need to plan for in the medium term)
1. At the time of writing this service plan, the Local Plan remains at examination but has been paused by the Inspector at the Council's request, following the ECM on 14 September 2023. This has significant financial implications and many of the additional costs can only be estimated at

this stage. Once the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework have been agreed (expected by end of 2023), Members will need to consider and agree proposed modifications to the Local Plan and request the Inspector includes them for his consideration. As the Government has intervened to prevent Members withdrawing the Plan, it is reasonable to assume the examination hearings will recommence at some point. For the purposes of this service plan, the assumption is that this will not be until the 2024/25 financial year. Simply resuming the hearings will result in costs of at least £30-50k, comprising examination fees to the Planning Inspectorate (£1k per day for the Inspector), Programme Officer costs, legal representation and appearance at the hearings by technical consultants. This will depend on the number of 'sitting' days for the hearings and there could be further evidence required. The longer the pause, the higher the costs as the first week of hearings may need to be revisited as evidence becomes out of date. Further work is expected to be required to advance Design Codes, which are likely to be the subject of an in-year growth bid for 2023/24 as there is no budget for this work, which is estimated at £120k-160k. There will also be costs to set up Citizens Panels at appx £30k initially but could be rolled out further. A funding bid has been made to the Planning Skills Delivery Fund but even if successful this will not cover the full cost of this work, only the training and community engagement elements. As such, this service plan will require updating when the costs and delivery timescales of this work are better understood. Further policy guidance and documents can be produced within existing budgets as they can largely be prepared in-house.

2. Since the previous Service Plan, when CIL monies were accruing, many projects have now had expenditure committed and the resulting pot is now low (whilst maintaining the reserve sum). This will lead to increased competition from infrastructure providers bidding for contributions and consideration will need to be given to prioritise projects in line with the needs set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
3. A growth bid is proposed to fund the permanent increase in hours for the Local Plans Manager post due to the high level of workload anticipated over the coming years to deliver the Local Plan up to and post adoption. The Planning Officer post has been held vacant until there was more certainty on the Local Plan and this will now be filled. An apprenticeship will be offered with that post, funded by the Government's apprenticeship levy at no additional cost beyond the salary for this post. However, that post is fixed term for 2 years and this will need to be extended via a growth bid in the 2025/26 service plan to allow for completion of the apprenticeship (3 years) and a suitable period after that for the Council to benefit from the fully qualified post-holder.

WORKFORCE PLANNING ISSUES/TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. All posts in the team currently filled, with the exception of a fixed term Planning Officer post, which has been held vacant since the post-holder left in May 2022. This was due to the need for flexibility in resources, for example the underspend resulted in the ability to take on a casual officer over the Summer 2022 to support the consultation events and more recently to fund additional hours for the part-time Local Plan Manager. With a degree of certainty over the future work programme, the Planning Officer post will be advertised in the coming months so that we have a full team for the work ahead. A point to note is that the post is only fixed-term for two years and we would offer an apprenticeship, which HR advises will require the term to extend the full term of the apprenticeship plus a further period to reap the benefit of

<p>the cost of having trained the post-holder. For previous planning officers, we have sought growth bids for the Masters course, whereas the apprenticeship would be funded by the Government’s apprenticeship levy so this would be the preferred route to growing new talent within the team.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Permanent increase in hours for one part-time officer in the team to reflect the additional work to take the Local Plan through to adoption and the concurrent or future work to support the new Local Plan (growth bid). 3. The Principal Planning Officer is due to commence maternity leave at the end of October 2023. This post will be covered by a temporary officer from an agency for the full period of absence at a Senior level, with one of the existing Senior Planners acting up to Principal. This will give that officer a greater level of experience and responsibility to support their progression at Spelthorne.
<p>COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION</p>
<p>The team will continue to work closely with the Communications team to keep our community informed of the progress of the examination and other important news updates. The Strategic Planning team set up a ‘microsite’ to host the examination library as required by PINS so we don’t require assistance from the Comms team on this but we try to ensure the Council’s own news pages are consistent, such as publishing letters from the Inspector or the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. Consultation will be integral to the production of future planned Supplementary Planning Documents and Design Codes. The team is currently looking to set up Citizens Panels to ensure positive community engagement in future, including reflecting the demographics of the Borough (growth bid).</p>
<p>LEGAL ISSUES (likely to require additional legal support)</p>
<p>We have had regular engagement with Counsel during this year to discuss our approach to the Local Plan preparation, submission and examination, and particular issues that arose in this period. Legal Services have been involved in these interactions. Our advisory Counsel is engaged him represent Spelthorne at the Examination of the Local Plan as he now benefits from a wealth of background and knowledge of our preparation to date, which we expect to continue once the hearings resume.</p>
<p>GDPR</p>
<p>Regular meetings with GDPR officers to monitor and update the asset register</p>
<p>PROCUREMENT OR CONTRACTS (upcoming procurements or contracts required in next four financial years from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027)</p>
<p>A number of key pieces of work were produced by specialist consultants, including the Staines Development Framework, viability assessment and additional work on our housing market needs to support the new Local Plan. When the examination hearings resume, these consultants will be required to appear in order to provide technical responses and may be needed to produce additional evidence, depending on whether Members seek changes to the Local Plan. Procurement officers understand the reasons to maintaining existing contractual arrangements with the same consultants to avoid repeating work already carried out. Further work to support the production of Design Codes will be requires, so this will involve a procurement exercise.</p>

ICT (e.g. provide information on systems to be purchased or support needed)
The Inovem software purchased to assist in consultation and publishing of the Local Plan remains an ongoing contract to support future consultations, not just from Strategic Planning but other teams at the Council. We have been in discussion with Communications to explore an alternative consultation platform and will seek to migrate to that system, particularly for further consultation exercises.
Climate Change
The new Local Plan contains policies that are stronger than ever to reduce the effects of climate change arising from new development. It is also one of the themes in the Sustainability Appraisal that we are required to assess Local Plan policies against. Production of a new Climate Change SPD has begun, which will provide more detail for developers, and this is now out to consultation at the time of writing.
SERVICE RISKS (consider likelihood and impact) – relate where appropriate to corporate risk
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The pandemic and administration changes have resulted in considerable delays to the Local Plan preparation. The team has worked hard to catch-up on as much time as possible and the submission version was agreed by the Council in May 2022, followed by submission in November 2022. However, the examination hearings that began in May 2023 have now been paused twice and the Council is now subject to an intervention by central government to prevent withdrawal of the Local Plan. The latest pause is dependent on factors outside the Council’s control, namely publication of changes to the NPPF, and there will then be a period during which Members and officers need to discuss any resulting changes to the Local Plan that we wish to suggest to the Inspector. During this period until the hearings resume and we can progress forward to adoption of the Local Plan, we will continue to be falling short of our housing need, which leaves us vulnerable at appeal for speculative development. There have already been delays to adoption of our Plan and a large degree of uncertainty over when this is likely to take place. 2. Further intervention in the Local Plan by DLUHC ministers is possible if the examination does not resume in a timely fashion. This could involve DLUHC taking over the remainder of the Plan entirely or seeking another body, such as Surrey County Council, to take this forward. Officers have already advised Members of this risk and will continue to do so. 3. Whilst turnover of staff in the Strategic Planning team has been relatively low compared to other authorities, there is a risk that further uncertainty and delay may result in more vacancies arising and stress levels amongst officers is high. Managers and MAT are providing support, for which the team is grateful, but there is currently no clear end in sight for adoption of the Local Plan and for when officers can move on to other key pieces of work. 4. Governance arrangements have now been in place for some time for the spending of CIL, plus Local CIL, after considerable time to put in place, and projects have been identified for funding. This will be an area of development as there is much for infrastructure improvements to be delivered and there will be debate on what the priorities are when the cost of the schemes outstrips the amount of funding available, which they are beginning to do.
NON-LEGAL ISSUES
None

8. LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD: OTHER KEY ISSUES/RISKS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS –

SERVICE AREA
Failure to have a Local Plan in place risks speculative development proposals coming forward on Green Belt sites not proposed for release or that the Plan could be produced by a third party if the Secretary of State deems we have not made satisfactory progress, particularly in light of the current intervention measures. The Plan will need to adapt to further changes proposed by national legislation and policy, including on climate change, or any change in the position on Heathrow Expansion and any other key infrastructure projects affecting the borough. Maintaining the current progress is key to reducing this risk so that our Local Plan is adopted as soon as possible.

9. KEY CONTACTS

Ann Biggs a.biggs@spelthorne.gov.uk	Service Lead for Strategic Planning and Enterprise
Jane Robinson j.robinson@spelthorne.gov.uk	Local Plans Manager
Joanna Ghazaleh j.ghazaleh@spelthorne.gov.uk	Infrastructure Delivery Co-ordinator

10.0 MANAGEMENT

10.1 Group Head’s comment/signoff

Signature/ date	

8.2 Comments/sign off from the Deputy Chief Executive

Signature/date	Comments

Document Reference:	Service Plan 2023/24
Version:	V3 (PT)
Date of issue	
Originator:	
Reviewer:	
Plan Status:	Final

Appendix A SERVICE PLAN TEMPLATE – Risk Appetite

There are numerous Services operating across the Council, possibly with varying risk appetites. Being clear on your Service risk appetite will assist you as Managers in making transparent and informed risk-based decisions as part of service provision and delivery of objectives, as well as ensuring the application of proportionate actions and risk mitigation measures (as far as practical and possible) that align with your appetite.

As an example to assist the risk appetite of the Regeneration and Growth Service sits is outlined below:

Appetite Category	Minimal	Cautious	Exploratory	Seeking
Appetite Description	Areas where Spelthorne will apply a strong control environment to reduce or minimise the likelihood that a risk will occur and/or reduce the impact of any risk	Areas where Spelthorne seeks low-risk delivery options and will pilot innovation only in a controlled environment	Areas where Spelthorne strikes a balance between the potential upside benefits and downside risks of a decision and explores new solutions and	Areas where Spelthorne takes risks by working with new ideas and approaches, looking for innovation and recognizing that failures are an opportunity for learning and improving.

			options for delivery	
How are each of these appetites articulated when applied across the RAF impact measure for 'Service Provision'?	Services delivered as planned with mandated developments only	Tried and tested changes made. Use of limited pilots to develop new approaches	Open to new ways of doing things and taking a balanced and pragmatic (capacity-driven) approach to making changes	Continuous re-evaluation of services and how they are delivered to explore new ideas, learn from failures to invest in ever-improving delivery
What is the Council's overall risk appetite for 'Service provision' (CURRENT)?		X		
Use the information above, review the content within your Service Plan and reflect on your Service approaches to establish where your specific Service risk appetite is currently positioned. Add X				
Appetite Category	Minimal	Cautious	Exploratory	Seeking
2.Strategic Planning		X		
<p>Why does your service risk appetite(s) sit against this category? Provide one or two examples of practices and approaches within your Service to support your assessment. For example, if you define your Service(s) to have a minimal or cautious risk appetite is this influenced by a strong regulatory working environment presenting wider implications or repercussions if this appetite category was not adhered to.</p> <p>The 'Cautious' approach applied to the Strategic Planning service area is a result of the highly regulated nature of Local Plan preparation. Plans must comply with the tests of soundness by being consistent with national planning policy and guidance so there is little scope for a more exploratory attitude to risk. Furthermore, Plans are required to be evidence-based, i.e. the evidence informs the policies we produce, so again there is limited opportunity to depart from how the evidence steers the direction of the Plan. This position has been explained to those Members who have, at times, sought a different strategy to what the evidence would support. Throughout preparation of the Local Plan,</p>				

officers have sought legal advice internally and from Counsel, plus planning advice from a visiting inspector on two occasions and had regular dialogue with senior officers from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (and previous iterations of this government department). The current intervention does not presume that the Local Plan will be found sound, only that by preventing its withdrawal this will ensure that the examination can be completed and the soundness of the Local Plan can be assessed. It is likely that Members will seek to make changes to the Plan upon publication of the revised NPPF but it will be for the Inspector to consider whether such changes are required on soundness only. Changes that would result in a new strategy are likely to trigger withdrawal, which is not an option open to Members under the current ministerial direction.

DRAFT

Organisation Chart

Strategic Planning Team – September 2022

