



**NOTICE OF MEETING**

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date and Time:</b>	<b>Tuesday 17 August 2021 7.00 pm</b>
<b>Place:</b>	<b>Council Chamber</b>
<b>Enquiries to:</b>	<b>Committee Services committeeservices@hart.gov.uk</b>
<b>Members:</b>	<b>Axam, Collins, Crookes, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Harward, Smith, Wildsmith and Worlock (Chairman)</b>

Joint Chief Executive

CIVIC OFFICES, HARLINGTON WAY  
FLEET, HAMPSHIRE GU51 4AE

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**AGENDA**

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- At the start of the meeting, the Lead Officer will confirm the Fire Evacuation Procedure.**
- The Chairman will announce that this meeting will be recorded and that anyone remaining at the meeting had provided their consent to any such recording.**

**1 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)**

The minutes of the meeting of 20 July 2021 are attached to be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence from Members\*.

**\*Note:** Members are asked to email Committee Services in advance of the meeting as soon as they become aware they will be absent.

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To declare disclosable, pecuniary and any other interests\*.

**\*Note:** Members are asked to email Committee Services in advance of the meeting as soon as they become aware they may have an interest to declare.

### **4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

Anyone wishing to make a statement to the Committee should contact Committee Services at least two clear working days prior to the meeting. Further information can be found at:

[Public Participation leaflet 2020 A4.pdf \(hart.gov.uk\)](https://www.hart.gov.uk/public-participation-leaflet-2020-a4.pdf)

### **6 CORPORATE SERVICE PANEL UPDATE**

Feedback from Members of the Service Panel for Corporate Services.

### **7 ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2021/22 (Pages 11 - 42)**

This annual review from the Ombudsman covers:

- the complaints and enquiries received in the period
- the decisions made in the period
- compliance with the recommendations recorded during the period

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

There is no recommendation as this report is for information only.

### **8 WEBSITE REDESIGN PROJECT (Pages 43 - 48)**

To request authority to draw down from Digital Strategy earmarked reserves to fund the procurement of the new website project.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Overview & Scrutiny review and provide comments and recommendations on the proposed website project and procurement route.

### **9 2022/23 BUDGET & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE (Pages 49 - 55)**

To consider the emerging budget for 2022/23 and the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the issues around the emerging budget for 2022/23 be discussed and level of savings noted
2. The tier system for rating savings be noted.
3. The timetable for 2022/23 budget setting be discussed and noted.
4. The reserves policy in Section 6 be discussed and noted.

**10 QUARTER ONE - REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING AS AT 30TH JUNE 2021**  
(Pages 56 - 59)

To present the Quarter One (Q1) forecast of the outturn position against the General Fund revenue budget to give an expectation of possible variances against budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

To note:

- i) the Quarter One forecast for the General Fund Revenue budget.
- ii) the key reasons for projected variations between actual expenditure and budgeted expenditure.

**11 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES UPDATE** (Pages 60 - 76)

To update the Committee on what has happened in the service since July's O&S. To include proposals for the implementation of the Planning Development Management Improvement Plan and current issues being experienced by the service.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the content of the Assessment of the current Development Management Service: August (Appendix 1) and the Development Management Service Action Plan update (Appendix 2); and
2. Highlight any particular area which it thought would be useful for the Overview & Scrutiny Working Group to look at when it meets at the end of September 2021.

**12 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 77 - 80)

To consider the Cabinet Work Programme.

**13 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 81 - 83)

To consider and amend the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

**Date of Publication: Monday, 9 August 2021**

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 1

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time:** Tuesday 20 July 2021 at 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber

**Present:**

Axam, Collins, Crookes, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Harward, Smith and Worlock (Chairman)

**In attendance:**

Cllr James Radley  
Cllr Graham Cockarill  
Cllr Steve Forster

**Officers:**

Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Head of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Mark Jaggard	Head of Place
Kirsty Jenkins	Head of Community
Steven Bennett	Change and Digital Manager
Rachael Wilkinson	Community Safety Manager
Jenny Humphreys	Committee Services Officer
Rebecca Borrett	Committee Services Officer

### 8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### 9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Wildsmith.

### 10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

### 11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

### 12 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded members who hadn't yet, to register and enable Modern.Gov to view Meeting Agendas and Minutes.

### **13 REVISED SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURE AND PROPOSED MODERN SLAVERY TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT**

The Community Safety Manager presented the updated Safeguarding Policy, which as a local authority we are required to update every three years. The reporting concerns procedure within this policy had also been updated.

The newly drafted Modern Slavery Transparency Statement was also discussed. This is not a requirement but it's best practise and sets out the council's intent to support the stand against it.

Members asked questions that included:

- The new areas that had been highlighted and the main differences to the previous policy.
- The production of a contacts card for staff and members with links on and numbers of organisations to contact.
- The involvement of youth groups in this kind of work.

Members also reminded the team to regularly update their lists of contacts. The Manager highlighted the quarterly safeguarding champion meetings that are held across Hart and Rushmoor which helps with this.

### **DECISION**

The Committee welcomed the draft revised Safeguarding Policy & Procedure and Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and subject to the inclusion of a contacts card recommended that Strategy to Cabinet.

### **14 CRIME AND DISORDER JOINT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Minutes from the meeting held on 29 June 2021 were noted, with the following comments from members considered:

- In agenda item 6 it didn't say how the team is meeting or succeeding the plan. The plan was shared prior to the meeting but the Chairman agreed that it would have been useful to have the plan attached.
- More information and detail was requested on antisocial behaviour.
- The Cabinet member for crime and disorder be invited to provide more information or attend a member briefing in the future.
- It was also noted that there had not been a briefing recently to the council from the District Commander for Hampshire Constabulary.

The Chairman highlighted that it would be good to also invite Cllr Miller from Basingstoke and Deane (the current Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Joint Committee) to a future meeting.

The Head of Community highlighted to members that there is a new Community Safety Newsletter.

## **15 COMMUNITY TRIGGER POLICY**

The Community Safety Manager gave a summary of the policy. It was highlighted that the council had received a letter recently from Government confirming their commitment to anti-social behaviour and this policy supports that.

### **DECISION**

The Committee reviewed the policy and procedure and asked Cabinet to consider the following points:

- How would staff and members of the public be aware of previous complaints?
- The accuracy of reporting complaints.
- How will anonymity be managed when reporting complaints and can this be clarified?
- Local schools, community and church leaders and shops should be involved if they are not already.

## **16 CUSTOMER CARE POLICY**

The Joint Chief Executive and Change and Digital Manager presented the updated Customer Care Policy and Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy to the Committee.

The pandemic had highlighted the lack of letters (post) that the council now receives, and the policy reflects this. The policy had been written reflecting the Council's Change Champions experiences.

The Change and Digital Manager plans for the policy to have more presence as a section on the Council's website rather than a document that is uploaded.

The Change and Digital Manager agreed with a member that more analysis of complaints and the feeding back on how those complaints are dealt with would be beneficial and something we could look at further.

The Committee question the practical implications of restricting access to officers if a complaint persisted in acting unreasonably, The Joint Chief Executive advised that this form of restriction was highly unusual. There were no recent examples of it being necessary albeit in some instances a single point of contact arrangement was put in place where it was necessary to co-ordinate the Council's response when a 'scatter-gun' approach across Councils services was being adopted by a complainant. Instances where the Council had decided to terminate contact with a complainant and discontinue any investigation into their complaint would be reported to Overview and Scrutiny as part of general complaint monitoring.

The Joint Chief Executive reminded Members that the Council's complaints procedure was only part of the complaints wider end to end process and that ultimately all complaints had a right to have their complaints independently considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. In this regard the Ombudsman issues Annual reports to all Council's and the Annual reports for Hart will be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee shortly.

## **DECISION**

The Committee had no comments to forward on to Cabinet.

## **17 PLACE SERVICES**

The Chairman highlighted that Councillors Farmer, Smith and Wildsmith have agreed to provide liaison on the implementation of the Planning Development Action Peer Review.

The Head of Place gave a summary that included recruitment in the team, current issues being experienced by the service and case management. It was confirmed that there are two contractors currently in the department and the rest are permanent employees.

The Council is looking to appoint a new Development Management & Building Control Manager due to a senior manager leaving. There are also plans in place to appoint an Interim Manager to cover any gaps in the meantime, which is first being looked at through internal recruitment.

The Portfolio Holder for Place highlighted there have been staffing and budget challenges over the last year. Caseloads have also been high.



Members discussions on this issue included:

- The teams budget.
- The restrictions to on-site visits due to the covid-19 pandemic.
- The customer experience and what happens during this process, not just the end result.
- Looking at best practise from other councils planning teams.

The Committee recognised and appreciated the staff's dedication and hard work

The Joint Chief Executive, Head of Place and Portfolio Holder for Place agreed to give an update at August's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **18 HART HOUSING PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY**

Councillors Davies, Farmer, Harward and Smith volunteered to comprise the Hart Housing Property Management Company's Scrutiny Panel.

The Joint Chief Executive to ask Cabinet if the four members can make up the panel, as the original intention was to have three members.

## **19 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2020/21**

The Head of Corporate Services and S151 Officer summarised the annual review report, which included Outturn and Compliance and highlighted that all requirements had been met.

Members questions included:

- Interest rates and why we have money invested in other borough councils.
- Internal borrowing and how it is represented.

The Head of Corporate Services stated that we have our rate with Barclays due to banking with them. Local authorities are considered safe to invest in as they are backed by Central Government.

The Head of Corporate Services also agreed to look at how internal borrowing can be displayed in this kind of report in the future.

### **DECISION**

The report was noted and will be considered by Cabinet in August. A section on internal borrowing to be added.

## **20 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet work programme was noted with members suggesting that Cabinet may wish to consider or include in its work programme the following matters:

- The Parking Review that came into effect in May and its impact.
- A review of the Civic Quarter.
- A full medium term financial strategy.

The Joint Chief Executive agreed these would be passed on the Cabinet Chairman.

## **21 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny workplan was noted, with members highlighting items they would like to see included in it:

- Community Safety Transition – 6 month review update.
- Multi Agency and Parish Flood Forum – dates to be added.
- Corporate Risk Management – dates to be added.
- Waste Management Transition to Basingstoke – 6 month review update.

The Joint Chief Executive agreed to look at these.

The meeting closed at 9.13 pm

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**DATE OF MEETING:** 17 AUGUST 2021

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review Letter 2020

**Report of:** MONITORING OFFICEDR

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to receive the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (The LGO) Annual Review Letter 2021 (attached as Appendix 1). It contains a summary of statistics on complaints and enquiries made to the LG&SCO about Hart District Council for the year ending 31 March 2021.

### 2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 There is no recommendation as this report is for information only.

### 3 COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The LGO investigates allegations of [maladministration](#) that have caused injustice to the complainant. Most council services can be investigated including some areas of housing, planning, education, social services, council tax, housing benefit and highways.
- 3.2 The LGO provides dispute resolution services free of charge to the complainants. It will usually only become involved after a council's complaints procedure has been exhausted.
- 3.3 If the LGO finds the body investigated acted with fault, which caused the person an injustice, it will recommend a remedy to put things right. The LGO remedies are aimed at putting the person back in the position they would have been in were it not for the fault. Where appropriate it also recommends action to avoid similar issues affecting other people – such as reviewing practice and procedure – and can recommend remedies for other persons affected by faults found in an individual complaint.

### 4 COMMENTARY

- 4.1 The Council has a good relationship with the LG&O and this year is no different. The LGO reviewed four complaints that related to Hart District Council of which one of them, a Housing Benefit case, was upheld. The LGO synopsis of these four cases is attached.
- 4.2 The Annual Review Letter acknowledges the exceptional pressures under which local authorities have been working under recent months and makes it clear that the volume of complaints does not necessarily reflect local

performance.

## **5 ACTION**

5.1 No action is required.

### **Background Paper:**

#### **Attachment:**

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO) Annual Review Letter 2021

19 009 465

20 001 454

20 002 130

20 007 347

#### **Contacts**

Daryl Phillips, Monitoring Officer: [daryl.phillips@hart.gov.uk](mailto:daryl.phillips@hart.gov.uk)

21 July 2021

*By email*

Ms Hughes & Mr Phillips  
Joint Chief Executives  
Hart District Council

Dear Ms Hughes & Mr Phillips

### **Annual Review letter 2021**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

### **Complaint statistics**

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

**Complaints upheld** - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

**Compliance with recommendations** - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

**Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority** - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

### **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

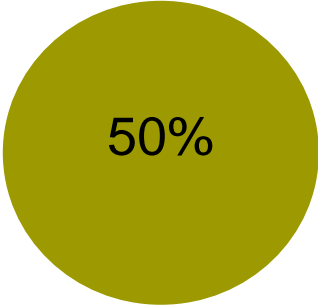
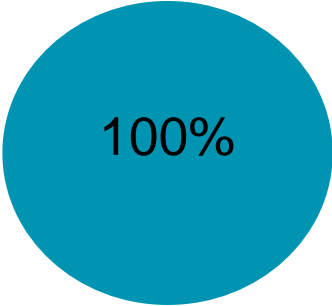
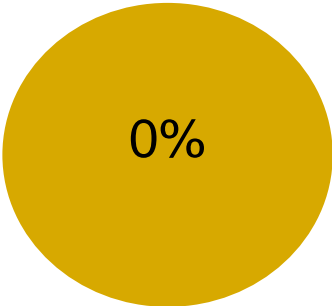
With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Yours sincerely,



Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld		
	<p><b>50%</b> of complaints we investigated were upheld.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>53%</b> in similar authorities.</p>	<p><b>1</b> upheld decision</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 2 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations		
	<p>In <b>100%</b> of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>100%</b> in similar authorities.</p>	<p>Statistics are based on a total of 1 compliance outcome for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An authority with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.</li></ul>		
Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority		
	<p>In <b>0%</b> of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.</p> <p>This compares to an average of <b>16%</b> in similar authorities.</p>	<p><b>0</b> satisfactory remedy decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 2 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>

**NOTE:** To allow authorities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we did not accept new complaints and stopped investigating existing cases between March and June 2020. This reduced the number of complaints we received and decided in the 20-21 year. Please consider this when comparing data from previous years.

# Hart District Council (19 009 465)

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Category : [Planning](#) > [Planning applications](#)

Decision : **Not upheld**

Decision date : **26 Jun 2020**

<b>The complaint</b>
<b>The Ombudsman's role and powers</b>
<b>How I considered this complaint</b>
<b>What I found</b>
<b>Final decision</b>

## The Ombudsman's final decision:

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**Summary: Mrs L complains about the Council not taking enforcement action against a developer who has built a play area she says breaches planning permission. The Ombudsman does not uphold the complaint, as we see no evidence of fault.**



# The complaint

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1. The complainant, whom I shall refer to as Mrs L, complains that:
  - a. The Council is not taking enforcement action against a developer who has breached planning permission. She says the developer has built a local area of play (LAP) that does not meet the requirements of the planning permission, or of a planning obligation. Specifically that:
    - The LAP as built is not big enough – guidance the Council follows recommends LAPs are at least 100 square metres, which Mrs L says it is not.
    - The guidance recommends that LAPs have at least a five metre buffer zone to the boundary of neighbouring homes. But the LAP as built is less than 3.5 metres from their boundary.
      - b. The Council has refused to come out to measure the LAP.
      - c. The S106 planning obligation says the developer should complete the play areas before occupiers move into their homes. They moved into their new home in April 2016. But the first planning permission they saw for the LAP was not until June 2017.
2. Mrs L would like the LAP moved, as it causes security and privacy problems.

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## The Ombudsman's role and powers

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3. We investigate complaints of injustice caused by 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. I have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We cannot question whether a council's decision is right or wrong simply because the complainant disagrees with it. We must consider whether there was fault in the way the decision was reached. (Local Government Act 1974, section 34(3), as amended)
4. If we are satisfied with a council's actions or proposed actions, we can complete our investigation and issue a decision statement. (Local Government Act 1974, section 30(1B) and 34H(i), as amended)

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## How I considered this complaint

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5. As part of the investigation, I have:
  - considered the complaint and the documents provided by Mrs L;

- made enquiries of the Council and considered its response;
- looked at the publicly available planning documents;
- spoken to Mrs L;
- sent my draft decision to Mrs L and the Council and invited their comments.

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## What I found

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### Legal and administrative background

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#### Planning

6. The role of local planning authorities is to balance the right of a landowner to do what s/he wishes with his or her land and property against the public and private interests of those who own and enjoy land that may be affected by development. Provided there was no administrative fault in the way the local planning authority came to a decision, it is not for the Ombudsman to criticise the way it balanced these often conflicting interests.
7. Outline planning applications seek to establish whether the scale and nature of a proposed development is acceptable. Detailed proposals can be "reserved" for later applications.
8. A breach of planning control is defined in Section 171A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as:

- the carrying out of development without the required planning permission; or
  - failing to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission has been granted.
9. The Council's policy about small open play spaces is based on the National Playing Fields Association's "Fields in Trust" (FIT) guidance. At the time of the relevant planning permissions (2011 and 2012), the FIT guidance was Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play 2008. About LAPs, that guidance recommended:

"A buffer zone of 5 metres minimum depth normally separates the activity zone and the forward-most part of the nearest dwelling that faces the LAP."

## What happened

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10. In 2011 the Council granted planning permission for a major residential development. The developer says it used the FIT guidance as a starting point for designing the play areas for the site. The Council granted planning permission, with a condition that development should not start until it had approved hard and soft landscaping, which included details of the play equipment.
11. The approved documents included a legal ("Section 106") agreement between the Council, developer/landowner, and Parish Council. It bound the developer and the Council to not complete, or allow completion, of each phase of the development until the LAPs and other play areas (Local

Equipped Areas of Play – LEAPs – and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play – NEAPs) were completed. The agreement said the LAPs would be at least 100 square metres and have five metre buffer zones. The LAPs would not have any play equipment. These specifications were in line with the FIT guidance.

12. In 2012 the developer applied for a further planning permission, for matters reserved from the 2011 application. This included plans detailing several children's play areas – NEAPs, LEAPs and LAPs – across the development.
13. The Council's planning committee approved the application with a condition that, before development started, it needed to approve details of the layout and precise specification of play equipment. The reasons were to comply with the Council's general policy for development. And so occupiers of the new homes were aware of the impact of the equipment.
14. In 2015 the developer sent the Council details of the equipment proposed for the play areas. The developer provided drawings in 2017 and 2018. These showed a picnic table, bench and boulders in the LAP this complaint is about. The Council notes that, as this was not play equipment, the condition did not apply to it. So there was no need for the developer to provide the further details for the LAP (unlike the LEAPs and NEAPs, which did have play equipment).
15. Mrs L had moved to a house in the development in 2016. She commented on the proposals for the LAP next to her house. In the middle of 2018 the Council discharged the condition.

16. Mrs L and some neighbours were in discussion with the developer and the Council about moving the LAP, as she and the neighbours were concerned about the effect on their privacy and security. The Council advised them its requirement was for the developer to provide the LAP it had approved. But if the neighbours and the developer could find an alternative site, it would not object.
17. The developer asked a consultant to consider alternative LAP sites. It considered three locations and suggested two of these would meet the FIT criteria, as alternative locations. In May 2019 the Council gave its pre-application opinion that it would consider a planning application to move the LAP on its planning merits. But it noted any application would need to consider the implications for the wider development and should meet the needs of residents as a whole.
18. In July the developer advised Mrs L it had decided to build the LAP as set out in the approved planning permission. It would not be making a formal application to move it, as it could not meet the advice about the wider development's needs.
19. Mrs L began to ask the Council to measure the proposed LAP's dimensions. She cited the minimum space requirement for LAPs in the FIT's 2015 "Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard". Mrs L's view was the surface area of the LAP did not meet the 100 square metre space standard. And the proposed LAP was less than five metres from her property's boundary. She noted the requirement for LAPs in the (2015) Guidance was for a buffer of five metres from a property's "boundary"

(unlike NEAPs and LEAPs which gave minimum distances from the “habitable façade” of a property). She said the LAP was less than five metres from the boundary of their garden.

20. Mrs L was not happy with the Council’s view that the LAP met the requirements of the planning permission. So she complained. The Council’s response advised:

- It did not want to be obstructive if she and neighbours could reach an agreement with the developer. But that was a matter for them.
- It would now “...expedite the requirement on the developer to implement the approved works.”
- It would not be responding further, as the complaint was essentially about a 2012 planning permission.

21. Mrs L was unhappy with the response, so she complained to the Ombudsman. In response to my enquiries, the Council stated that the size of the LAP was around 129 square metres and it was five metres from the nearest property. So it met the specifications set out in the legal agreement.

## **Was there fault by the Council?**

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22. I agree with the Council that it granted the planning permission for the LAP in its 2011 and 2012 planning permissions (not 2018, which is Mrs L’s understanding). The relevant drawings are in the planning file, available on the Council’s website. So information about the LAP was available when Mrs L bought her property. Mrs L says her representatives did not make her aware of the LAP during

the sale. That may be so, but that does not mean there was fault by the Council.

23. The 2018 planning issue Mrs L commented on was only about the equipment for the play areas. The Council's view is that, as the developer was not proposing play equipment in the relevant LAP (only a bench and table), it was not subject to the relevant condition. So the developer did not need planning permission to install the bench and table.
24. Mrs L complains the Council should have ensured the developer built the LAP before she moved in, as the legal agreement said that should happen. But my reading of the agreement is not as Mrs L says. Instead, it says the developer should build play areas before completing each phase of the development. It is possible, as seems to have happened here, that a developer will start to sell residential units for occupation before it has fully completed a development. So I see no evidence of fault.
25. That leaves the matter of the LAP's dimensions. Mrs L says the LAP is not big enough and is too near her boundary. The Council says the LAP is big enough – around 129 square metres. My own rough estimate, from the drawings in the planning file, suggests that, on the balance of probabilities, the site is over 100 square metres.
26. With the buffer zone, Mrs L places weight on the different wording in the FIT 2015 Guidance for LAPs, compared to other types of play area. But in 2011 and 2012, when the Council granted planning permission, the Guidance Mrs L cites had not been published. Instead the relevant Guidance was from 2008. This states unambiguously the



measurement is from the nearest part of the building. As all parties accept the LAP is five metres from the façade of Mrs L's home, my view is there is no fault.

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## Final decision

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27. I do not uphold the complaint, as I see no evidence of fault. I have completed my investigation.

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### Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman

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# Hart District Council (20 001 454)

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Category : [Planning](#) > [Planning applications](#)

Decision : **Closed after initial enquiries**

Decision date : **14 Oct 2020**

<b>The complaint</b>
<b>The Ombudsman's role and powers</b>
<b>How I considered this complaint</b>
<b>What I found</b>
<b>Final decision</b>

## The Ombudsman's final decision:

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**Summary: The Ombudsman will not investigate Ms X's complaint that the Council was at fault when dealing with a listed building in need of repair and gave poor advice before an application for listed building consent. The Ombudsman cannot investigate because the complaint is outside his**

**jurisdiction. The owner has appealed the Council's refusal decision to the planning inspector.**

## **The complaint**

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1. Ms X complains, on behalf of a company, that the Council has failed to give proper advice about the restoration of a listed building. Ms X says the Council has denied giving pre-application advice. It has not fully engaged following the company making a listed building consent application in late 2019. Ms X says the Council should give advice and keep to it, grant consent to enable the building to be restored, and pay for professional costs.
2. Ms X complains that the Council delayed dealing with her complaints about the matter and failed to give an adequate response.

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## **The Ombudsman's role and powers**

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3. We cannot investigate a complaint if someone has appealed to a government minister. The Planning Inspector acts on behalf of a government minister. (Local Government Act 1974, section 26(6)(b), as amended)
4. The Planning Inspector considers appeals about:

- delay – usually over eight weeks – by an authority in deciding an application for planning permission
- a decision to refuse planning permission
- conditions placed on planning permission
- a planning enforcement notice.

5. We cannot investigate late complaints unless we decide there are good reasons. Late complaints are when someone takes more than 12 months to complain to us about something a council has done. (Local Government Act 1974, sections 26B and 34D, as amended)

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## How I considered this complaint

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6. I have considered Ms X's information and comments. I have considered information on the Council's planning website including correspondence from the planning inspector. I have considered the complaint correspondence.

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## What I found

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7. There is reference to an earlier application, around 2016, for a change of use of the listed building. Ms X refers to the development options being picked up again from 2018. Sometime later a fire damaged the listed building.
8. Late in 2019 the company applied for listed building consent to repair and reinstate the building. This included removal of a water tank to allow repairs to the structure of the building. The Council refused approval.
9. In September 2020, the planning inspector wrote to the Council saying it has received an appeal against refusal of listed building consent. The company has also applied for costs on the grounds that the Council has acted unreasonably.
10. In April 2020 Ms X complained to the Council. The Council completed its three-stage complaint procedure on 21 July. Ms X complained to this office on 13 July.

## Analysis

11. I will not investigate this complaint because it is outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction for the following reason:
12. Where a right of appeal is used the Ombudsman is legally barred from investigating a complaint (see paragraph 3 above). The company has appealed to the planning inspector. This places all actions regarding the listed building consent application, including any advice relating to the application and costs, outside our jurisdiction.
13. A complaint about the Council's actions before 14 July 2019 is also outside jurisdiction because it is made late, outside

the 'permitted period' of 12 months (see paragraph 5). I will not exercise discretion to investigate because:

- a. Any period where there was an application for building consent is outside jurisdiction due to the right of appeal to the planning inspector.
- b. It is for the developer to take his own advice and decide when to apply for planning consent. Once this is done there are rights of appeal covering a variety of problems including delay (see paragraph 4).

14. The Ombudsman cannot normally investigate complaint handling where the substantive matter is outside jurisdiction. We cannot do so in this case. The Ombudsman would not be critical of the small amount of delay in dealing with the complaints.

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## Final decision

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15. The Ombudsman will not investigate Ms X's complaint that the Council was at fault in dealing with a listed building in need of repair and gave poor advice before an application for listed building consent. The Ombudsman cannot investigate because the complaint is outside his jurisdiction. The owner has appealed the Council's refusal decision to the planning inspector.

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## **Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman**

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# Hart District Council (20 002 130)

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Category : Benefits and tax > Housing benefit and council tax benefit

Decision : **Upheld**

Decision date : **29 Sep 2020**

<b>The complaint</b>
<b>The Ombudsman's role and powers</b>
<b>How I considered this complaint</b>
<b>What I found</b>
<b>Final decision</b>

## The Ombudsman's final decision:

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**Summary: The Ombudsman cannot and will not investigate Mrs X's complaint that the Council invoiced her for overpaid housing and council tax benefits for several years. This is because Mrs X has already appealed to the tribunal about her housing benefit claim and an investigation of the other issues**



would be unlikely to achieve a significantly different outcome as the Council has offered an appropriate remedy.

## The complaint

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1. Mrs X complains the Council invoiced her for overpaid housing and council tax benefits for several years. She says the Council should not have tried to recover the money and that a tribunal agreed with her. She says the Council made significant errors in the Council's handling of the appeal, ignored her complaints and delayed implementing the tribunal's decision.

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## The Ombudsman's role and powers

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2. The Local Government Act 1974 sets out our powers but also imposes restrictions on what we can investigate.
3. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this statement, I have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We provide a free service, but must use public money carefully. We may decide not to start or continue with an investigation if we are satisfied with the actions a council has taken or proposes to take. (Local Government Act 1974, section 24A(7), as amended)

4. We cannot investigate a complaint if someone has appealed to a tribunal. (Local Government Act 1974, section 26(6)(a), as amended)

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## How I considered this complaint

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5. I considered the information Mrs X provided in her complaint, the Council's responses to her and its response to my request for information.
6. I sent a copy of my draft decisions to Mrs X. I considered her comments before making a final decision.

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## What I found

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### Background

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7. The Council invoiced Mrs X for overpaid housing and council tax benefit for a 6-year period.
8. Mr X appealed the decision she had been overpaid and the tribunal decided she should not repay the money.
9. Mrs X complained to the Council that it should not have attempted to recover the overpayment and errors it made

during the appeal. She says the Council's decision and how it handled the appeal caused her significant distress and inconvenience. She also says the Council has not responded to her complaints and continued to pursue her for the money after the tribunal decided she did not owe it.

10. In its response to my enquiries, the Council accepts it fell short of its own standards and accepts there were delays in its handling of Mrs X's case. It says it has apologised to Mrs X and proposes to offer her £500 in recognition of time and trouble Mrs X has been caused. It also says it will be reviewing its procedures to prevent something similar happening again.

## Analysis

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11. The law says the Ombudsman cannot investigate a complaint if someone has already appealed to a tribunal. Because Mrs X has already appealed to the tribunal the Ombudsman cannot investigate the Council's decision to recover the alleged overpayment.
12. The Council has apologised to Mrs X in its responses to her complaint which I have seen. It has also offered to make a payment of £500 to Mrs X. We would be unlikely to achieve a significantly different remedy if we were to investigate.

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The Ombudsman cannot and will not investigate this complaint. This is because Mrs X has already appealed to the tribunal about her housing benefit claim and an investigation of the other issues would be unlikely to achieve a significantly different outcome as the Council has offered an appropriate remedy.

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## **Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman**

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# Hart District Council (20 007 347)

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Category : [Environment and regulation](#) > [Health and safety](#)

Decision : **Closed after initial enquiries**

Decision date : **14 Dec 2020**

<b>The complaint</b>
<b>The Ombudsman's role and powers</b>
<b>How I considered this complaint</b>
<b>What I found</b>
<b>Final decision</b>

## The Ombudsman's final decision:

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**Summary: We will not investigate this complaint about the Council's decision not to prosecute a supermarket for selling an out of date product. This is because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council.**

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1. The complainant, whom I refer to as Mr X, complains the Council will not prosecute a supermarket for selling out of date food. Mr X wants the Council to prosecute the supermarket.

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## **The Ombudsman's role and powers**

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2. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this statement, I have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. I refer to this as 'injustice'. We provide a free service, but must use public money carefully. We may decide not to start an investigation if we believe it is unlikely we would find fault. (Local Government Act 1974, section 24A(6), as amended)

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## **How I considered this complaint**

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3. I read the complaint and the Council's responses. I considered the Council's Enforcement Policy, the Food Law Code of Practice and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. I also considered comments Mr X made in reply to a draft of this decision.

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## What I found

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### Council Enforcement Policy

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4. The policy says the Council considers each case on its own merits. In deciding whether to prosecute it has regard to the Code for Crown Prosecutors. The latter says that for a prosecution to start there must be enough evidence for a realistic prospect of a conviction and a prosecution must be in the public interest. The Council prosecutes for serious or recurrent breaches, or where other enforcement actions have failed. The policy does not say the Council must prosecute every breach.
5. The Food Law Code of Practice says enforcement action must be reasonable, proportionate, risk based and consistent with good practice. There are a range of enforcement actions which can include prosecution. The Code says authorities should usually start with the least

robust approach and escalate the approach if problems persist.

## What happened

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6. A supermarket delivered an out of date custard tart to Mr X. Mr X says his wife could have died if she had eaten it. Mr X reported the incident to the Council.
7. The Council investigated what had happened and liaised with the council which has primary responsibility for the supermarket (the council known as the Primary Authority). The Council found out the breach occurred due to the introduction of a home delivery service and pressures caused by COVID-19. The Council said the supermarket checks dates but, on this occasion, an error occurred. It said the supermarket and Primary Authority had done a full investigation. The Primary Authority reported that the supermarket had overhauled its systems early in 2020 and this review included date checking. The Council said it had not received any other complaints about this store and it was satisfied it was an isolated incident based on unusual circumstances. The Council said it would continue to monitor the store but had decided not to prosecute.
8. Mr X complained about the decision not to prosecute. In response the Council explained that it has regard to its policy, the Food Law Code of Practice, and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. It said the store had sold an out of date product but enquiries had shown it was an isolated event and the shop had already been working with the Primary



Authority to improve its procedures. The Council explained that prosecution would not be in the public interest as policies were unlikely to change due to a prosecution and enquiries had shown the incident was unlikely to happen again. It said it does not prosecute purely to take a company to task.

9. Mr X disagrees with the response and wants the Council to prosecute the store. He says the store must be held to account and not prosecuting gives it permission to fail again.

## Assessment

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10. I will not start an investigation because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council. The Council has investigated the breach in line with its policy and other guidance. It is satisfied the incident was an isolated event and, in conjunction with the Primary Authority, it is satisfied the shop does not need to take additional action. The Council is not required to prosecute every incident. In addition, it has explained why it does not think prosecution would be in the public interest and why prosecution would be unlikely to result in any procedural changes. The Council's decision is consistent with the policies so there is no reason to start an investigation. I appreciate Mr X disagrees with the Council's decision but that disagreement does not mean the Council has done anything wrong. In addition, I have no power to make the Council prosecute the shop.

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## Final decision

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11. I will not start an investigation because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council.

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### Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman

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## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**DATE OF MEETING:** TUESDAY 17 AUGUST 2021

**TITLE OF REPORT:** WEBSITE REDESIGN PROJECT

**Report of:** Head of Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio:** Digital

**Key Decision** Yes

The recommendation in this report relates to a Key Decision as it will result in the Council incurring expenditure of over £30,000. The decision has been included in the Forward Plan.

**Confidentiality** Non Exempt

### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Overview & Scrutiny's endorsement of the proposed website redesign project and procurement process subject to any comments and recommendations to Cabinet.

### 2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Overview & Scrutiny review and provide comments and recommendations on the proposed website project and procurement route.

### 3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Hart's website is used on average by 35,000 visitors per month and provides news and service area information alongside entry points to key transactional services such as Revenue and Benefits, Planning and Parking.

- 3.2 Hart's website content management system (CMS) has been in place for eight years. The CMS needs to be replaced for the following reasons.

- The current system is end of life in Nov 2022 and updates and security patches will discontinue in 15 months' time. The site performance will degrade over time and the platform will be unsupported and insecure
- Hart published its accessibility statement in Sept 2020 setting out the ambition to attain Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA compliance by April 2021. However, the website has a number of issues in the core code which will not be resolved
- Oxford Web Applications (OWA) provide hosting and support services. This relationship began in 2013 but has not been reviewed, benchmarked or market tested since then
- 62 forms on the site are routed through to service area inboxes. Service requests received via the website's basic forms package need to be

rekeyed into business applications resulting in inefficiency and process delays.

- 3.3 This project also presents an opportunity to review the amount and type of information we hold on the site. There are large amounts of content that is not consumed by the user. There is no consistent or coordinated approach to the management of content across the business. In addition, the corporate tone of voice has become diluted, creating an inconsistent customer experience.
- 3.4 Members signed off the Digital Strategy in June 2019. Included within the strategy roadmap was the redesign of the website. The ambition was to include bespoke customer accounts, properly integrated web forms, geographical mapping and integration with 3rd party hosted systems.
- 3.5 Recognising these points and in line with the constitution and procurement regulations, the Council are seeking approval to run a competitive procurement process. This is due to start from September 2021 if budget approval is forthcoming to design and build the new CMS.

#### 4 CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 A new website would offer an improved digital experience for all visitors to the site. Our website requirements are being drafted and our ambition is to improve our online service and:

- enhance the user experience across the site with a new design, structure and refreshed content
- improve the customer journey to our third parties
- integrate online forms with back office applications
- develop end to end services on priority services using self service

4.2 Four options were considered in the business case and are summarised below.

Merits	Drawbacks
<b>Option 1. Do nothing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current stability and reliability of CMS</li> <li>• Availability of technical support from OWA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is out of support and becomes technically vulnerable from Nov '22</li> <li>• Degradation in SEO, user experience, security and accessibility over period of time</li> <li>• Additional support costs to manage security flaws</li> <li>• Won't provide channel shift capabilities or Digital Strategy priorities</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2. Migrate to Drupal 9 using current agency</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing proposal to manage transition to new version &amp; include research, identification and module plan required for migration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No market testing of agencies for support &amp; hosting</li> <li>• Frustrations with current relationship with OWA ie lack of proactive support for accessibility</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phased redevelopment to include functional overhaul with updated design and user interface</li> <li>• Known costs and timescales with OWA proposal</li> <li>• Content editors familiar with Drupal as CMS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No analysis of Drupal CMS suitability of future requirements of digital platform</li> <li>• Procurement/ standing orders compromised due to existing contract length with OWA</li> <li>• Complex migration</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3. Go to market, procure agency, design &amp; build new CMS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test market and look for improved commercial terms on support and hosting</li> <li>• Test market for CMS suitability based on current &amp; future requirements</li> <li>• Refresh website design &amp; structure to latest website design trends</li> <li>• Build in accessibility to ensure min. AA compliance with WCAG 2.1</li> <li>• Longer phase to commence engagement in content migration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longer time frame for delivery</li> <li>• Develop relationship and trust with new agency</li> <li>• Resource intensive in procurement activity and agency selection</li> </ul>
<b>Option 4. Go to market, procure agency, build Digital Experience platform</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One provider to deliver modular CMS &amp; CRM solution</li> <li>• Improve self-service offer with new portal for range of services</li> <li>• Single view of customers and break down of silos across the Council</li> <li>• Deliver personalised targeted services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential integration into third party CRM solutions (Capita and BDBC) adds complexity, cost and contract questions</li> <li>• No team resourced to manage customer interactions through the digital platform</li> <li>• Expensive solution depending on modules required</li> <li>• Data management issues</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

4.3 Option 3 is considered the most viable option based on anticipated cost and current resource availability to manage the project. With current CMS platforms offering a range of integration options, we will set out our requirements at procurement stage and investigate this further with the successful agency.

4.4 We are putting the final touches to our requirements. Once we have agreed our specification, we will investigate the most appropriate framework to provide a cost-effective way of going to market. We will also ensure we are compliant with contract standing orders, to complete the procurement process.

## 5.0 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Please see appendix 1 to see the specific project objectives with reference to Hart's 2040 vision.

## 5.2 SERVICE PLAN

Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan?	Yes
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Is the proposal being funded from current budgets?	Yes
Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal?	Yes

## 6.0 LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No direct legal or constitutional issues arising from the recommendations

## 7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Previous years ear-marked reserves have been set aside to assist with the anticipated costs for the procurement of the website CMS system.

7.2 The process to inform the proposed budget commenced with soft market testing between March - July 2021. This included demonstrations, researching innovations in the marketplace and contacting local authorities around their current content management systems and support arrangements, in order to get a good understanding of what was available.

7.3 The Communication Team are not resourced to manage a project of this size. A Project Support role will be factored into the budget to cover the migration of content and general administration of the project.

7.4 A high level implementation plan has been produced. This will be developed further on completion of the award of the new contract with the design agency, but the target dates are set out in the table below:

7.5	<b>Implementation timescales</b>	
	Sept 2021	Budget approval sought from Cabinet
		Procurement commences
	Oct	Selection assessment
		Contract award letter issued
	Nov	Discovery phase begins with agency
	Jan 2022	Development phase begins
		Content review and migration begins
	June 2022	Testing begins
	July 2022	Anticipated launch of beta site

## 8.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 A full risk register will be developed. A key risk is the delivery of secure and efficient online services resulting in reputation of the council.

## 9.0 EQUALITIES

9.1 The proposed website will ensure that the Council meet its obligations under W3C WCAG 2.1 and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, ensuring future continued compliance.  
How will it be reported back to O&S and Cabinet in 6 months' time.

## **10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

There are two broad consequences with regard to climate change:

- We intend to test the green credentials of the digital agencies with the use of their hosting arrangements and if they measure their carbon emissions or that of their third party support providers
- The original business case cited Local Government Association and Socitm data to analyse the cost of shifting customers to online services. We are noticing a rise in visitors to the office again since pandemic restrictions were lifted. The promotion of simple and well designed online services will aid the migration away from traditional customer channels

## **11 ACTION**

- 1.1 That Overview & Scrutiny Committee support the project and the use of ear-marked reserves to fund this procurement phase of the project.
- 11.2 The responsible Officer will update Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet committees on progress with the project every six months.

**Contact Details: Steven Bennett / [steven.bennett@hart.gov.uk](mailto:steven.bennett@hart.gov.uk)**

## **Appendix 1**

In line with Hart's 2040 vision, the specific objectives of this project are:

### **Create welcoming services that are inclusive and engaging**

- grow the number visitors accessing the site
- improve the user experience by refreshing the information architecture and content across the site
- enhance the accessibility of our online services and meet WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards as a minimum

### **Create efficient services available 24/7**

- future proof CMS platform to build and integrate more digital services
- reduce maintenance and support with the ongoing commitment on accessibility, usability and other digital standards
- remove unnecessary demand from other channels including emails and phone

### **Develop our staff, training and empowering them to innovate**

- provide content editors with greater structure for their digital content
- deliver robust training for content editors to manage and deliver web ready content
- reduce time and work involved to create and publish different formats of content

### **Develop partnerships to enable delivery**

- refresh commercial relationship with digital agency to support, maintain and host the website
- engage with third party suppliers to provide seamless routes into portals and pages from the new CMS



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**DATE OF MEETING:** 17<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

**TITLE OF REPORT:** 2022/23 BUDGET & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

**Report of:** Head of Corporate Services

**Cabinet Member:** Deputy Leader and Finance

### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the emerging budget for 2022/23 and the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

### 2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the issues around the emerging budget for 2022/23 be discussed and level of savings noted
- 2.2 The tier system for rating savings be noted.
- 2.3 The timetable for 2022/23 budget setting be discussed and noted.
- 2.4 The reserves policy in Section 6 be discussed and noted.

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report sets the context for the future financial position for Hart District Council. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a statement on the council's approach to the management of its financial resources to meet its Corporate Priorities. The MTFS also considers the appropriate level of reserves that the Council holds to mitigate current and longer-term risks.
- 3.2 In February 2021, Council approved the budget for 2021-22 including an indicative forward forecast for future years. This forecast has been updated for recent investments and additional Minimum Revenue Provision because of internal and external borrowing incurred in Quarter 1 2021-22 to fund affordable homes and investment property.
- 3.3 To renew understanding for Members; additional explanation and definitions have been provided for each line within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy within Section 4 of this report. The updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy is shown overleaf at 3.4.

### 3.4 Updated Medium Term Financial Strategy

£'000	Approved 2021-22	Revised 2021-22	Forecast 2022-23	Forecast 2023-24
Net Service Budget	10,536	10,536	11,910	12,704
SANG Expenditure	258	258		
<b>Cost of Service</b>	<b>10,794</b>	<b>10,794</b>	<b>11,910</b>	<b>12,704</b>
Contractual Inflation		0	300	300
MRP Growth	418	516	363	0
Pressures/Savings	600	600	131	0
New Homes Bonus	-1,847	-1,847	-800	-500
Other non-ringfenced grant	-199	-199	-199	-199
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>9,766</b>	<b>9,864</b>	<b>11,705</b>	<b>12,305</b>
<b>Financed by:</b>				
Council Tax		-7,487	-7,487	-7,487
<b>Council Tax Increase</b>			-205	-410
Business Rates				
Retained		-1,400	-1,440	-1,480
Collection Fund - CT Surplus				
Collection Fund - NNDR Deficit				
S106 Receipts		-53	-53	-53
SANG Receipts		-258	-258	-258
Commercial Income		-783	-1,048	-1,048
<b>Total Financing</b>		<b>-9,981</b>	<b>-10,491</b>	<b>-10,736</b>
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>		<b>-117</b>	1,214	1,569

## 4 DETAILED DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

### 4.1 Net Service Budget

Gross expenditure for a service, less directly related income. This is made up of the prior year figure with any pressures, MRP and inflationary growth added to it.

### 4.2 SANG Expenditure

SANG expenditure is revenue spend on our SANGs sites. Historically this was shown separately but is not incorporated into the net service budget.

### 4.3 Cost of Service

Net Service Budget added to SANG expenditure.

### 4.4 Contractual Inflation

Estimated inflation on the Waste and Capita contracts. These will be calculated in detail and applied on the next version of the MTFs reported in October.

- 4.5 **Minimum Revenue Provision Growth**  
The minimum revenue provision (MRP) is the minimum amount that must be charged to an authority's revenue account each year and set aside as a provision for debt repayment or other credit liabilities.
- 4.6 **Pressures / Savings**  
This is the total of additional expenditure required by additional pressures or a reduction in expenditure due to savings. Current levels anticipated for 2022/23 are made up of payments to Capita caused by a change in the allocation of costs.
- 4.7 **New Homes Bonus**  
The New Homes Bonus was an unringfenced grant linked to the delivery of additional housing. There is uncertainty as to whether this will continue into 2022/23; an estimation has nevertheless been made as to the level of funding that may possibly replace it.
- 4.8 **Other non-ringfenced grant**  
This grant is a District Tier level specific grant first received in 2021-22. This is expected to be received again in 2022-23.
- 4.9 **Net Expenditure**  
Total service cost after New Homes Bonus and Other non-ringfenced grant.
- 4.10 **Council Tax**  
This is the estimated Council Tax rate based on projected collection rates at Band D equivalent level. It is calculated by taking Council Tax across the Band D equivalent level of properties and multiplying it by the collection rate
- 4.11 **Council Tax Increase**  
There is currently an assumption of a 2% Council Tax increase; additional income is stated in this line.
- 4.12 **Business Rates Retained**  
This is the amount of Business Rates retained after payments have been made to Central Government.
- 4.13 **Collection Fund surplus / Deficit**  
This is any surplus or deficit above what has been forecast to be received from Council Tax and Business Rates after the monetary amount has been shared between the preceptors.
- 4.14 **Section 106 receipts**  
These are developer contributions towards the implementation and maintenance of infrastructure assets.
- 4.15 **SANG receipts**  
The contribution from the SANGS reserves pays for the SANG revenue expenditure. This is drawn down annually.

- 4.16 **Commercial Income**  
Proceeds of commercial rental income. Hedge End is included in Net Service Budget, other schemes are shown in bottom line.
- 4.17 **Total Financing**  
Total Financing Income – total of cells above.
- 4.18 **Surplus/Deficit**  
Difference between Net Expenditure and Total Financing.

## **5 SIGNIFICANT FACTORS AFFECTING THE BUDGET**

- 5.1 As reported in previous Medium Term Financial Strategies with the threatened removal of New Homes Bonus. The financial challenges for local authorities will continue indefinitely and there are several factors which make accurate medium-term financial forecasting problematic at this stage. This report outlines the issues that may have the most impact on the Council's revenue budget.

### **5.2 Local Government Settlement**

It is expected that the Government will publish a one-year spending review in November 2021. The longer-term Spending Review is likely to be delayed.

Hart has not received a Revenue Support Grant (RSG) since 2017/18. From 2020/21 Hart was likely to have a negative grant whereby the Council would have to pay the Government at least £500,000 per annum. However, the Technical Consultation confirmed that the Government would continue to fund "negative RSG" until the end of 2021/22. It is unknown if this will continue beyond 2021/22.

### **5.3 New Homes Bonus (NHB)**

The Council relies heavily on funding from NHB. NHB provided £1.847 million in 2021/22.

New Homes Bonus is due to end in 2021/22. It is not clear whether there will be a replacement, nor whether Hart would qualify for any future payments. The Medium- Term Financial Strategy assumes that there will be a replacement at a lower level of funding.

### **5.4 National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)**

The new system of 75% business rates retention was delayed until 2022/23 and there is no current update on this implementation. It is too early to predict the exact consequences for the Council, but the new system is unlikely to lead to significant extra funding.

### **5.5 Fair Funding Review**

The formulae the Government uses for calculating local government funding are still under review. Further funding from April 2022 could be significantly affected by this review, however there is doubt over whether this could be implemented in time for 2022/23.

**5.6 Other Budget Pressures**

The Council faces several other potential budget pressures such as:

- Collection fund deficits on the NNDR account, particularly as the result of appeals and Covid-19.
- Pay increase for staff as required by NJC.
- Inflationary adjustments and indexation on major contracts.
- Reductions of fees and charges income because of Covid-19
- Impact of the National Waste Strategy

**6 RESERVES**

6.1 The Council is required to maintain a minimum level of General Fund Reserves that equates to approximately 10% of net expenditure (£1m in Hart’s case). For the life of this strategy the reserve needs to be set at a minimum of £1.17m.

6.2 The Section 151 Officer recommends that the above balance is increased in Hart’s case to take account of specific risk arising being loan repayments, New Homes Bonus, and Income from Garden Waste. The Section 151 Officer also recommends a temporary increase in General Fund due to risk of underperformance in income on the Leisure Contract.

The calculation of our recommended minimum level of reserves is therefore shown below:

	2022-23 £'000
10% of Net Expenditure	1,170
Garden waste income	900
New Homes Bonus	1,847
Leisure Contract	1,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,317</b>

At the end of 2020/21 General Fund reserves were over £6.8m, more than the minimum level required, however, there are undoubtedly significant financial pressures to come in future years.

**7 COMMERCIAL STRATEGY**

7.1 The Council has already recognised the future funding risk and has successfully adopted a Commercial Strategy. This will deliver over £1.2m in additional income. There is however, a risk involved in this approach and whilst the Council has purchased two investment properties and developed affordable homes there are no guarantees that further profitable opportunities will be found

7.2 In addition, the Council will be taking on additional risks such as voids and the timing of acquisitions and construction. Factors such as the performance of the wider economy may impact on future income.

## 8 IDENTIFIED SAVINGS

8.1 A programme of potential savings has been identified. These savings have been risk rated and tiered according to several internal and external factors.

8.2 Level One savings are those savings which will have limited impact on the vital services we provide to our residents and communities. These savings can also be delivered 'at pace' in line with the requirement for savings in the coming financial year with minimal political risk and minimum implementation risk.

Suggested Level One Savings are listed below:

#	Description	Estimated level of savings
21.1	<b>Community</b> – Use built up grant budgets to fund revenue spend for three years	150
21.2	<b>Technical and Environmental - CCTV</b> change of contract as approved by Cabinet captures savings	70
21.3	<b>Place</b> – Reduced cost on Hart Civic Offices	60
21.4	<b>Cross organisation</b> – Capitalisation and recharge	55
	<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>

8.3 Level Two savings are those that will need to be examined in more detail, to consider the implications, and ultimately may not be achievable but at present present the best opportunities (beyond level one savings) to make the required savings on our budgets.

Suggested Level Two Savings are listed below:

#	Description	Estimated level of savings
21.5	<b>Corporate</b> – Corporate Services Restructure – bring services back from Mendip and restructure	100
21.6	<b>Corporate</b> – Review and revise skills and resources at Senior Management Team	90
21.7	<b>Corporate</b> – Carry out a review of Member and Staff allowances	100
21.8	<b>Corporate</b> – Outsource of Internal Audit to one provider.	60
21.9	<b>Place</b> – Review and revise skills and resources and skills required in the future within Place	40
21.10	<b>Technical and Environmental</b> – Review and revise skills and resources required within Technical and Environmental Services	35
21.11	<b>Place</b> – Review and revise corporate Health and Safety functions	15
21.12	<b>Technical and Environment</b> – Review County Highways Agency contract	27

Total Level 2 2022/23 savings provisionally identified	<b>467</b>
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8.4 This report when taken to Cabinet, will recommend that the Level One savings are agreed and implemented and that, reflecting the potential impacts associated with them, business cases are worked up on all Level 2 savings; with the outcome of those business cases presented to Cabinet in November for decision.

8.5 Due to the level of savings required there remains a budget gap after Level savings and Level 2 savings are agreed. A further report identifying potential Level 3 savings will be presented to Cabinet in November 202 for consideration. These will be accompanied by business cases.

## **9 NEXT STEPS**

9.1 Work on the budget will continue to refine the figures, timetable going forwards and savings. The current position will be reported to Cabinet for the approval of the Level 1 savings. Approval will also be sought to proceed to develop business cases for the proposed level 3 savings.

9.2 A summary of the results of the business cases will be presented to Cabinet in November along with a revised MTFS; updated for any funding information and detailed Council Tax data. Members will be invited to approve Level 2 savings at this point. At this meeting a list of potential Level 3 savings will also be presented to Members for a decision on which areas which be shortlisted to be worked up into a further set of business cases.

9.3 It is anticipated that final funding information from Government will be received in December 2021. A report will be presented to Cabinet in January which will requests approval, in the event of it being necessary, of Tier 3 savings and incorporation of these savings into the 2022/23 budget process.

9.4 As part of the report to Cabinet in January; the MTFS will be extended to a period of ten years into the future as recommended by the CIPFA Code of Financial Management.

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**DATE OF MEETING:** 17 AUGUST 2021

**TITLE OF REPORT:** QUARTER ONE – REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING  
AS AT 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2021

**Report of:** Head of Corporate Services

**Cabinet member:** Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and  
Assets.

### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the Quarter One (Q1) forecast of the outturn position against the General Fund revenue budget to give an expectation of possible variances against budget

### 2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

2.1 To note

- i) the Quarter One forecast for the General Fund Revenue budget.
- ii) the key reasons for projected variations between actual expenditure and budgeted expenditure.

### 3 BACKGROUND

3.1 This report provides the first monitoring position statement for the financial year 2021/22. The purpose is to notify members of any known significant variations to budgets for the current financial year, highlight any key issues and to inform members of any action to be taken if required.

3.2 The first quarter of 2021/22 has continued to be impacted by Covid-19 with extended restrictions continuing until 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021. The previously approved arrangement to waive Leisure Contract contractual income continued until the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

3.3 This quarter is the last quarter where compensation income could be claimed from Central Government. The claim deadline for Q1 is August 2021. It is expected that a claim of approximately £330K will be submitted.

### 4 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

4.1 In February 2021, the Council approved a total net service budget of £10,794k. Budgeted expenditure at the end of Quarter One was £4,557k.



- 4.2 The forecast position for expenditure as of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 was a variance to Budget of £2.7m. The table below details expenditure and forecast by service area.

**Table 1.1 Hart DC – Revenue Budget Comparators – 2021/22 (June – Period 3) before Covid and Grant adjustments.**

Service Area	Original Full Year Budget 2021/22	Q1 Budgeted Expenditure	Actual Q1 Expenditure	Over/Under	Full Year Forecast 2021/22.	FY Forecast v FY Budget 2021/22
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate	£2,992	£1,802	£924	-£878	£4,182	£1,190
Community	£2,530	£374	£43	-£331	£2,060	-£470
Technical and Environmental	£4,354	£882	-£230	-£1,112	£4,387	£33
Place	£2,427	£824	£296	-£528	£2,459	£32
Accounting Treatment	-£1,509	£675	£815	£140	-£1,518	-£9

#### 4.3 Method of Quarterly Accounting

Historically, the Council has not accounted for accruals and prepayments from month to month, this contributes to large swings in expenditure particularly in the earlier quarters of the year. The Section 151 Officer will be implementing full quarterly accruals accounting from December 2021 with increased accruals accounting taking place at the end of September 2021. This will allow more accurate accounting and forecasting as part of the Quarterly Budget Monitoring exercise.

#### 4.4 Significant Variances Corporate

Corporate Services is forecasting an overspend at year end of £1.2m. This is largely due to uncertainty around income on the Leisure contract. A separate report on this will be brought to Cabinet when more information is available.

The underspend in Q1 is due to no invoices being received from South & Vale Councils for the recharge of Capita services; this is the reason why the forecast for the full year does not reflect this underspend. The value of invoices not yet received is £1,096K.

There is also a risk of overspend on IT software licences as the organisation moves to a Software as a Solution (SAAS) payment for software licences and

Office 365 Tenancy back up. This will be reviewed and reported within the Quarter Two Budget Monitoring.

With exception of the above, no significant variances against profiled budget are reported.

#### 4.5 **Significant Variances Community Services**

In Community Services, expenditure for the service is on schedule with profiled budget with exception of one key area where £373K of domestic violence partnership payments have not yet being invoiced.

#### 4.6 **Significant Variances Place Services**

The total variance on place services is a £528k underspend for Q1. The key factors contributing to this variance are shown below. They stem largely from invoices not being received from partnership suppliers, salary underspends and additional planning income:

- Planning Income of £191K more than profiled budget
- Neighbourhood Plan funding carried forward of £47K not yet utilised for referenda.
- Invoices not received from Rushmoor for Building Control services of £137K
- Invoices not yet received from Basingstoke and Deane Council relating to licensing for £31K.
- Rental Income of £32K which needs to be moved across to Commercialisation.
- Salary underspends in planning of approximately £30K although this is expected to be balanced somewhat by agency payments in future months.
- Invoices not yet received for software of £25K.

A request has been made by the Section 151 Officer to the officers managing the Place Budgets that profiling will need to be reviewed for the remaining three quarters of the year for both income and expenditure.

#### 4.7 **Significant Variances Environment and Technical Services**

There is a Q1 underspend on Environment and Technical Services of £1.112K which is wholly due to timing differences on invoices and invoices not being received from Basingstoke and Deane Council. This is made up of;

- waste contract £471K,
- street cleaning £156K,
- green sacks £394K and
- Grounds Maintenance £107K.

The Section 151 Officer has requested that the waste budget is reviewed to ensure that it is fully updated to consider how the waste contract will be accounted for in future

### 5 **MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

5.1 The monthly budget monitoring process examines all income and expenditure against budgets in order that significant variances are highlighted immediately and to identify areas where expenditure is being incurred but where insufficient or no budgetary provision exists. This allows officers to take corrective action to maintain overall expenditure within budgets.

5.2 The review of profiling and introduction of quarterly accruals will improve the accuracy and intelligence of quarterly budget monitoring information. There is also work to do with all key partners to ensure that invoices are raised on a prompt basis.

### 6 **CONCLUSION**

6.1 COVID-19 continues to influence Leisure income due to the Extended Restrictions put in place. Implementation of Quarterly accruals and improved profiling will improve the quality of future budget monitoring.

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## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

**DATE OF MEETING:** 17 August 2021

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Development Management Service update

**Report of:** Head of Place

**Cabinet Portfolio:** Place

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 For Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to receive an update on progress in the implementation of the Development Management Service Action Plan.

### **2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Committee is recommended to:
- 2.2 Note the content of the Assessment of the current Development Management Service: August (Appendix 1) and the Development Management Service Action Plan update (Appendix 2); and
- 2.3 Highlight any particular area which it thought would be useful for the Overview & Scrutiny Working Group to look at when it meets at the end of September 2021.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its July 2021 meeting received a oral update on the implementation of the Planning Development Management Service Action Plan. The Committee also received an update on current recruitment.
- 3.2 The Joint Chief Executive, Head of Place and Portfolio Holder for Place agreed to give an update at August's Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### **4 PEER REVIEW**

- 4.1 In December 2019, a Peer Review of the Development Management (DM) Service was published.
- 4.2 The Review highlights a number of Actions that the Council should implement to turn the Service from a Good to a Great Service.
- 4.3 A draft Action Plan was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) in July 2020. A Task and Finish Group of O&S Members was set up to shape the Action Plan. In addition, Planning Committee created its own Working Party to consider those recommendations which specifically related to the work of the Planning Committee function.

- 4.4 The Planning Committee endorsed a number of actions relating to the work of Planning Committee at its meeting on 17th August 2020. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered an updated Action Plan on 17th November 2020 and recommended that Cabinet approve it.
- 4.5 The Development Management Service Action Plan was approved by Cabinet in December 2020. The Action Plan divided the actions into Short Term (expected completion by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021) Medium Term (expected completion by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021) and Long Term (expected completion by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022). An update to that Action Plan covering the position at August 2021 column and an Implementation column is attached at Appendix 2.
- 4.6 Ongoing assessment of Service performance needs to be considered in the context that the team, like the rest of the Council, are still dealing with the consequential implications of operating through the Covid-19 pandemic, including delayed site visits and staff re-deployment in to Covid-19 response tasks. There has also been an increase in day-to-day workload, with increases in March 2021 of 82% compared to this time last year, April increase of 39% and May increase of 75%. This increase reflects the national surge in applications. In addition to this, a key member of the management team has been on long-term sickness absence.

## **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Any additional costs of implementing the Development Service Management Action Plan will be brought to Cabinet for approval if and when required.

## **6 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

## **7 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 7.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from the recommendations.

## **8 ACTION**

- 8.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee set up a sub working group to oversee the DM Action Plan targets and actions. The Planning Committee set up a sub working group to oversee the DM Action Plan target and actions relating to Planning Committee. A joint Working Group of the two sub groups has been set up for 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The respective Working Groups will report back later in the Autumn.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Assessment of the current Development Management Service: August 2021  
Appendix 2 – Development Management Service Action Plan: August 2021 update

## Assessment of the current Development Management Service: August 2021

### The POSe Review of the Development Management Service

The Council appointed the Planning Officer's Society Enterprises (POSe) to carry out a Peer Review of the Development Management Service in November 2019.

The review was undertaken at a high-level focusing on what changes are necessary or desirable to make the service fully fit for purpose over the next three to five years.

The Council wished to commission an external review of the service which would look across the board at all aspects of the service. It is considered best practice for a service to regularly review:

- Performance
- Structure and resources
- Procedures and processes
- Pre apps engagement
- Use of extensions of time
- Reporting to the Planning Committee and its effectiveness
- Use of conditions and monitoring
- User satisfaction and alternative models for delivery.

In particular the review was to explore the scope for further streamlining of procedures and working practices as well as identifying existing good practice.

The Review Team was remained mindful of the financial pressures upon local authorities, and the need for staff structure and numbers to be economical and efficient as well as the difficulties in recruitment of good quality planning staff, and the need for pragmatism in any new staffing proposals.

The Peer Review highlights a number of Actions that the Review Team recommended that the Council consider implementing in order to turn the Service from a Good to Great Service.

It must be recognised that creating an exemplary service will not be entirely dependent on completing each of the improvements or actions set out in the Action Plan. Aspects of the Action Plan can be grouped together as projects and in some cases there will be overlaps. For example, delivering excellent customer service links into a number of different actions but also into the wider corporate aims set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Service will need to consider how to deliver more for less whilst looking at the use of IT to improve efficiency and ease of access to information for residents. Whilst improvements have been made to the Council's website, for example, there will need to be further work once the Council acquires a new website platform as part of the Council's Digitalisation Strategy

It is important that consideration is also given to other potential improvements that may not be explicitly identified in the Action Plan. For example, there is currently an audit of our Planning Database being carried out where the suppliers are reviewing how we are currently using the system compared to how it could be used. This is to assist training but also to ensure that our systems are used as efficiently as possible.

Whilst work on each of the actions will commence, it must be recognised that they cannot be dealt with in isolation and that there still needs to be a strategic and holistic review of the Service – to transform it into more of a customer focused enabling service. The actions will be the building blocks for bigger changes although it should be recognised that cultural change cannot happen overnight

### **What does good look like?**

The Peer Review (Section 6) suggested the “blueprint” for good practice in any English authority should include the following:

1. An up to date fully NPPF compliant local plan, locally specific, reflecting corporate objectives, in place at the earliest opportunity;
2. Clear corporate objectives for the service, endorsed by Members;
3. Evidence of at least a 5-year housing land supply to meet the standard methodology
4. A comprehensive Infrastructure Delivery Plan signed off by all relevant partners;
5. A clearly expressed policy regarding the use of S106 obligations setting out when they will be required, for what purpose and the necessary mechanisms to ensure delivery as well as a clear approach to CIL;
6. A pre-applications service including PPAs and charges, a protocol for involving Councillors on significant cases and MOUs with key consultees;
7. An efficient proactive development management service that meets all statutory and local targets and offers good customer care and consistent planning advice, using up to date technology and delivering, enabling, monitoring and enforcing quality outcomes;
8. A proactive approach to implementation including masterplans and/or development briefs for significant sites, regeneration schemes and proactive care for the historic environment;
9. A strong approach to design;

10. A valued, motivated and skilled team of officers, working as an integrated planning service with appropriate performance management systems and training opportunities;
11. An effective scheme of delegation, mandatory training for Councillors especially those sitting on the Development Management Committee, clear and transparent Committee procedures with clear coordinated professional planning advice available to Members; and
12. Adequate resources to deliver all of the above, including a fit for purpose IT system and hardware.

The rest of this report is structured around these 12 items.

### **Local Plan / Policy Framework**

Hart has an up to date fully NPPF compliant local plan, locally specific, reflecting corporate objectives. Since the date of the review (November 2019) the following documents have been published, adopted or 'made':

Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032 adopted April 2020

The Council successfully defended the adoption of the Local Plan from a legal challenge.

Neighbourhood Plans 'made':

- Fleet Neighbourhood Plan made 28 November 2019
- Hartley Wintney Neighbourhood Plan made 28 November 2019
- Hook Neighbourhood Plan made 27 February 2020 following legal challenge in early 2020
- Crondall Neighbourhood Plan made 6 May 2021 following legal challenge threat Feb 2020
- Crookham Village Parish Neighbourhood Plan made 6 May 2021

The team are currently supporting Yately Town Council as it prepares a Neighbourhood Plan.

Other publications providing planning guidance:

- TAN - Privacy, Daylight and Sunlight published Nov 2020
- Affordable Housing Informal Development Guidance updated and published July 2021

Regular publications updated include:

- Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)
- 5 year Housing Land Supply
- Brownfield Register



- SANG capacity August 2020
- SANG allocations criteria + updated tariff April 2021
- Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)

### **Corporate objectives for the service**

Hart has clear corporate objectives for the Service, endorsed by Members. The Hart Corporate Plan was adopted in 2018 and covers the period 2017 to 2022. Hart District Council's Vision for 2040 was adopted in 2019 [*Recommendation 2, 4, 5, 7, 9*].

The Council's Corporate Plan and Vision 2040 feed into the Annual Service Plans. The 2020/21 Service Plans were reviewed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March 2021 and adopted by Cabinet in April 2021.

The Overview & Scrutiny working group were consulted on draft key performance indicators in March 2021. Development Management Statistics were circulated to Members of O&S and Planning Committee in July 2021. The joint working group in September can review the latest statistics alongside the KPIs.

### **5-year Housing Land Supply**

The Council published the 5-Year Housing Land Supply as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 in September 2020. The team are currently working on the figures for 2021.

This document sets out Hart District's five-year supply of housing land as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. It is based on an annual requirement of 423 homes in the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2032. As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, Hart had a 5-year supply of 2,599 homes, or 10.2 years supply.

### **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)**

As part of the evidence base for the Hart Local Plan 2032 the Council published the Hart Local Plan (Strategy & Sites) 2016-2032 Infrastructure Delivery Plan in February 2018. This IDP was part of the evidence base with formed part of the public examination of the Hart Local Plan.

As part of the evidence base to inform the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule the Council is producing an update to the 2018 IDP. There will be further engagement with key partners in early Autumn, and this will form part of the consultation on the Charging Schedule later in the year.

## **S106 / CIL**

A report on CIL was presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2020. The Committee welcomed the report and agreed to recommend to Cabinet that Officers undertake the processes to implement the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Cabinet considered a further report in September 2020. Cabinet resolved that Officers commence the processes to set the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered a CIL Update report in December 2020. As the project proceeds, Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to consider the draft CIL charging schedule prior to both planned public consultations.

### **Pre-Applications and PPAs**

The Service has introduced a new approach to pre application advice on major sites. Applicants have been keen to engage in this bespoke service. New pre-application fee charging was introduced in April 2021 as part of the Council's setting of the fees and charges [*part Recommendation 11*].

Since the review in November 2019, the sites include:

- Hartland Park Phase 2
- Hartland Park Phase 3
- Grove Farm
- Bramshill House
- The Elvetham
- Bartley Wood, Hook

There is an on-going review of the Pre-App process in general for advice on smaller proposals.

### **Efficient & proactive Development Management Service**

Following the POSe review, the DM team are implementing a series of actions and improvements in the pursuit of becoming an efficient and proactive DM service that not only meets all statutory and local targets but offers high levels of customer care. This includes providing consistent planning advice and utilising up-to-date technology together with delivering, monitoring and enforcing quality outcomes.

Linked to the DM Action Plan is a continued review of case management following a project management approach. Further emphasis is being placed on the customer experience, regular contact and response times. Due to the increase in planning

applications, and consequential higher caseloads for individual Officers, arrangements are being made for additional resources to provide additional capacity. This will enable Officers to deliver more efficient and proactive case management with enhanced levels of customer service [*part Recommendation 42*].

Earlier restrictions on Officer site visits due to Covid-19 risk assessments have been gradually relaxed when appropriate, with Officers now able to conduct all site visits subject to normal procedures (such as pre-arranging unaccompanied internal visits for Listed Buildings and pre-checks that there are no self-isolating occupiers). This has had a positive effect on determination timescales.

Alongside additional resourcing, the DM team is continuing to explore the use of existing resources and opportunities to streamline processes.

There has been a review of the process of registration and validation of planning applications. This will simplify the process with BSU and the planning team [*part link to Recommendation 12, 13, 39*]

New protocol on Extensions of Time (EoT) was implemented August 2021 for new applications, especially householder applications [*Recommendation 8*].

New simpler checklist approach implemented for Delegated Reports on householder applications with no objections was implemented August 2021 [*part Recommendation 26*].

On 2<sup>nd</sup> September Cabinet will consider an update to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to reflect the recommendation contained within the Peer Review [*Recommendation 15, 16*]. This will bring forward a reduction in consultation length on planning applications from 28 days to 21 days, which is in line with the statutory requirement. This provides an additional week where Officers can determine planning applications following receipt of comments to provide speedier decisions and allow for those comments to be considered and actioned where appropriate. At the same time the SCI will reconfirm the approach to Site Notices which was introduced under emergency powers during Covid, in line with the Peer Review 'to cease the posting of site notices except where required by statute'. This SCI will also be updated to reflect changes to the planning policy elements; although this will need to be reviewed further with the planned changes to the national planning system

We are looking further into how other Councils have improved their planning systems using Systems Thinking. We are reviewing the learnings from Stratford-on Avon approach which was implemented a few years ago.

## **Proactive approach to implementation**

The DM team has a proactive approach to implementation and when appropriate will consider the use of masterplans and/or development briefs for significant sites. This begins at the pre-application stage and continues through the various application stages.

Since the Peer Review the Council has taken a new approach to the review of Conservation Area Appraisals. The Council is providing advice and guidance to Parish and Town Councils to work with external consultants. The approach is leading to a new style of appraisals, with more succinct precise and useable documents. Odiham Parish Council is the first to adopt this innovative approach.

The Council is reviewing options in relation to the existing Article 4 Direction which prevents office to residential permitted development on our key employment sites. This needs to be considered in light of the recent national changes in this respect.

Similarly, following the Government's announcement on First Homes, a cross service team has been established to consider the implications, and the Council's response. This is likely to lead to further guidance, and maybe a supplementary planning document.

## **Urban Design**

The DM Team has been continuing a strong approach to the importance of design within the pre-application and planning stages. This reflects the national emphasis on creating beautiful places and increasing design focus.

The Council has worked with a well-regarded Urban Designer (Dr Stefan Kruczkowski; co-author of Building for a Healthy Life) on urban design matters for major developments.

In the Summer of 2020, Dr Stefan Kruczkowski provided Member Training on Building for a Healthy Life.

Following Member Training the Council started using Building for a Healthy Life as a design guide.

The revised NPPF 2021 sets an expectation that all local authorities should prepare local design guides or design codes and alongside this MHCLG has published the National Model Design Code. The Council is currently considering design options for achieving this whilst still utilising Building for a Healthy Life as a high-level Design Code.

## **Valued, motivated and skilled team of Officers**

As outlined above, there are procedures in place for recruitment to assist the short-term increase in workload for the DM team overall and to cover the interim promotion for one member of staff. Permanent recruitment is underway for one Planner post and interviews have been scheduled for the permanent Development Management & Building Control Manager post.

Focus is continuing on Continued Professional Development, coaching and/or mentoring opportunities for staff members with mid-year Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) a prime opportunity to review Officers' own aspirations. Mid-year PDRs are also a key time to highlight the team's successes and individual contributions made by Officers.

## **Planning Committee / effective scheme of delegation**

The Council has an effective scheme of delegation, there is already mandatory training in place for Councillors especially those sitting on the Development Management Committee. There is a clear and transparent Committee procedure with coordinated professional planning advice provided to Members within Officer reports and during the Committee meetings.

The DM Action Plan has highlighted areas for consideration in respect of Planning Committee and they are being progressed.

## **Adequate resources**

In respect of having a fit for purpose IT system and the relevant hardware, many changes for home working have delivered improvements in this area. Following the commencement of an audit of the IT system used by the DM team, improvements are being explored and implemented [*Recommendations 46, 47, 48*].

In the period since the POSe Review (November 2019) one Planner has left the DM team and one Senior Planner went on maternity leave. The current Planning Manager is leaving shortly and one Principal Planner will be leaving the Council in the autumn.

Steph Baker has been appointed as the interim Development Management & Building Control Manager until the end of November. The interviews for the permanent appointment are being held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August.

To replace the Planner who left, a permanent Planner post is being advertised from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August. Another permanent Officer has been moved to full-time DM duties

initially for a 3 month period, as opposed to the previous split between DM and Planning Enforcement work.

Two contractors joined the DM team on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> August to cover the Planner post and back-fill the Senior Planner role. Two further contractors are being recruited to provide the additional capacity that the team requires.

A Structure Chart of the DM Team was sent to all Members Audit Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. An updated Structure Chart was shared with all Councillors as part of the presentation for Member Induction on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021.

## COMPLETED ACTIONS

No	Recommendation summary	Service Plan Themes	Comment December 2020	Update August 2021	RAG Status
17	Confirm a process for signing-off decision notices	Good to Great	Completed	Complete / now on going	C
21	Improve Planning Policy support for DM	One Council	Regular DM/Policy meetings set up to discuss issues, policy support provided in relation to planning applications	Complete / now on going	C
25	Cease the practice at Committee of the Chairman proposing the motion to accept the Officer recommendation prior to the debate	Good to Great	October Planning Committee adopted a new procedure	Complete / now on going	C
27	Allow Officers to introduce their own cases at Committee	Good to Great	Implemented	Complete / now on going	C
28	Reconsider whether it is appropriate for Committee members to ask questions to speakers	One Council	October 2020 Planning Committee agreed to retain the ability to ask speakers questions	Complete / now on going	C
30	Review the continued need for a Major Sites Sub-Committee	One Council	October 2020 Planning Committee resolved to retain the use of the Major Sites Sub-Committee ensuring that any applications referred to it from Planning Committee had clear terms of reference	Complete / now on going	C

## SHORT TERM ACTIONS

Expected completion by 31st March 2021

No	Recommendation summary	Service Plan Themes	Comment December 2020	Update August 2021	RAG Status	Implementation Plan
1	Prepare Improvement Action Plan in consultation with the staff	Good to Great Best in Class	Cabinet November for final adoption	Complete - Cabinet adopted the Development Management Service Action Plan in December 2020.	C	N/A
2	Establish clear service objectives with priorities, targets and performance indicators	One Council Income generation	Key Performance Indicators will be reviewed. Other internal performance indicators will be adopted and kept under review and adopted accordingly	O&S working group were consulted on draft KPIs in March 2021. Development Management Stats were circulated to Members of O&S and Planning Committee 02.07.21	A	Discuss the KPIs with Joint Working Group in September 2021

4	Establish objectives and targets agreed by Members as part of a performance management framework	Good to Great	Key Performance Indicators will be reviewed. Other internal performance indicators will be adopted and kept under review and adopted accordingly	O&S working group were consulted on draft KPIs in March 2021. Development Management Stats were circulated to Members of O&S and Planning Committee 02.07.21	<b>A</b>	Discuss the KPIs with Joint Working Group in September 2021
5	Set performance criteria to align with MHCLG structure	Good to Great Best in Class	Key Performance Indicators will be reviewed. Other internal performance indicators will be adopted, kept under review and adopted accordingly	O&S working group were consulted on draft KPIs in March 2021. Development Management Stats were circulated to Members of O&S and Planning Committee 02.07.21	<b>A</b>	Discuss the KPIs with Joint Working Group in September 2021
7	Set targets for reducing the average taken to determine applications (and reduce reliance on Extensions of Time)	Good to Great		O&S working group were consulted on draft KPIs in March 2021. Development Management Stats were circulated to Members of O&S and Planning Committee 02.07.21	<b>A</b>	Discuss the KPIs with Joint Working Group in September 2021
8	Introduce a Protocol for Extensions of Time	Good to Great Best in Class	Protocol is drafted	Protocol is drafted and discussed with the DM team	<b>G</b>	New Protocol for Extensions of Time implemented as of August 2021
9	Report performance monthly to Service Management Team (cross ref DM Audit Report Risk 3 & 5)	Good to Great Best in Class	Content of monthly Service Management Team report to evolve in line with work pressures / above actions RE service priorities / performance indicators	Link to KPIs (Action Points 2, 4 5, 7 above). DM Stats circulated to Members in July 2021	<b>G</b>	DM Stats / KPIs will be reported to the Joint Working Group in September and at subsequent Working Groups
10	Report performance quarterly to Planning Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Good to Great Best in Class	Quarterly reports to Planning Committee to resume on Planning Application Performance and Enforcement. O&S need to input re what needs to be reported / updating KPI (cross link 1/2/4)	Link to KPIs (Action Points 2, 4 5, 7 above). DM Stats circulated to Members in July 2021	<b>G</b>	DM Stats / KPIs will be reported to the Joint Working Group in September and at subsequent Working Groups
12	Provide more detailed and regular validation training for BSU staff (cross ref DM Audit report Risk 1 & 4)	One Council Good to Great	Validation Training held December 2019. Validation Surgery Sessions are held regularly. Further training will take place on the new Validation requirements once adopted (November 2020)	Validation training with BSU Team for new Validation Local List. New Protocol for liaison with DM Team Leaders	<b>G</b>	Ongoing / keep under review
14	Review the application allocation process to consider a "triage" approach and possibly self-allocation for householder cases	Good to Great	Self-Allocation was trialled following the lean review of DM however this led to unbalanced caseloads and sometimes prevented career development. Triaging of cases will be reviewed	Role of Team Leaders to allocate, Case Officer to review much earlier in the time period. Not moving forward with the self-allocation process	<b>A</b>	Formal procedure guide to be provided Autumn 2021 re case management



15	Adopt a 3-week consultation period for Parishes (with flexibility in certain cases)	Good to Great GOLD		Revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is being Considered by Cabinet in September 2021	<b>A</b>	Implement the changes if revisions to the SCI are adopted in September 2021
16	Cease posting of site notices except where required by statute	GOLD	Already completed in response to Covid-19 restrictions. Council's SCI has been amended as a temporary measure; Cabinet will need to agree permanent changes.	Revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is being revisited and will be consulted on for 6 weeks and reported to Cabinet for adoption.	<b>A</b>	Report the SCI to 02.12.21 Cabinet for adoption
20	Report appeal decisions on regular basis to officer and Members	Good to Great	Quarterly reports to resume on appeal decisions. Key decisions will be reported separately to Councillors. Officers already get regular updates. All Councillors and Planning Officers are informed of decisions when they are received.	Quarterly reports were presented to .... Reports were paused as the agenda was too busy. Plan to report to working group of O&S and Planning Committee instead.	<b>G</b>	Appeals will be reported to the Joint Working Group in September and at subsequent Working Groups
23	Review the roles of the Conservation Team, aiming for a policy-driven approach and acting as consultee for DM, rather than Case Officers	One Council	Conservation Officers have ceased being Case Officers	Complete / now on going	<b>C</b>	N/A
26	Introduce a simpler Committee report format with a more consistent and structured approach	Good to Great Best in Class	Discussed at Planning Working Party and Officers and starting work on this	Initial work completed	<b>G</b>	Review again in the Autumn 2021 PLUS updated training sessions on report writing for officers
37	Establish an Officer group to review service training needs and opportunities	Good to Great	Started	Complete / now on going. Also introduced a new CPD form alongside the PDR process.	<b>C</b>	Now on going
38	Ensure all new staff are trained on IT systems immediately after they arrive	Digitalisation		Complete / now on going	<b>C</b>	Complete / now on going
40	Regularly review training and development requirements and arrange training and other CPD opportunities through the PDR process	Good to Great		Reviewed Team wide and PDR process. Reviewed at 6 month review. New CPD form introduced Service wide	<b>C</b>	Complete / now on going

**MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS****Expected completion by 31st December 2021**

No	Recommendation summary	Service Plan Themes	Comment December 2020	Update August 2021	RAG Status	Implementation Plan
3	Consider measures to increase the management capacity of DM as a priority	GOLD Best in Class	May have wider implications for budgets / resources	Ms. Aird brought in to line manage Heritage/Conservation Team	<b>G</b>	Review short term measures in 3 months' time

11	Review pre-application advice process for major applications to include consultees, local community and Members (cross ref DM Audit report - Risk 2 and Review of Pre-App advice)	Customer Focused Good to Great	Needs own project to review existing service and establish new service	Introduced a new Pre App process for major applications - e.g. Hartland Park, Grove Farm, Bramshill	<b>G</b>	Sub group of officers to work on process and best practice / Customer Charter. Need to review Protocol for Pre App (November 2021).
13	Create a Validation Guidance Manual for BSU	One Council Good to Great		Local Validation List was updated and adopted December 2020 Planning Committee. Training provided to BSU team following this.	<b>G</b>	More training to follow after new starters join, guidance will follow
18	Provide additional training on planning appeals for Officers, Member and Parish & Town Councils	Best in Class	Link to 31 (Member training)	Member training undertaken in May / June 2021. Planning Forum deals with learning from planning appeals for officers. Now on-going	<b>C</b>	Member Induction August 2021. Look to provide a bespoke training session on appeals late Autumn 2021
22	Improve liaison between the Shared Legal Team and Enforcement with set timescales and milestones for processing enforcement cases	Good to Great One Council	Peer Review of the Enforcement Service has commenced	Introduced monthly meetings with Development Management Team Leaders and Shared Legal Services to review cases and matters (Whip List)	<b>A</b>	Now on going
24	Review process of Ward Members being able to request site visits and review timing of site visits to try to improve attendance by Members	One Council	Planning Working Party has already started looking at this. Officers to draft options to trial with the Committee.	To be reviewed. Range of options considered as part of Planning Committee Sub Committee Working Group. No site visits taken place since lockdown started	<b>A</b>	On going review
29	Review the continued need for an Enforcement Sub-Committee	One Council	Link to 22 (Peer Review of Enforcement)	Enforcement Sub-Committee has not met for at least 2 years. Consider as part of the working groups	<b>A</b>	Review in Autumn 2021
31	Review the content of Member training and consider updates for Parish / Town Councils	One Council	Covid-19 has meant delivering training differently. Will continue to review content for annual training and consider setting up a Parish Forum.	Annual Member training undertaken in May / June 2021. Building for a Healthy Life training Summer 2020. Climate Change & Planning training for Climate Change Working Group spring 2021.	<b>G</b>	Member Induction August 2021. Look to provide a bespoke training session on appeals late Autumn 2021
32	Re-instate the Enforcement and Householder Team Leader in DM and review the functions of the two DM teams	GOLD	Link to wider management / staffing / resource review and Enforcement Peer Review	Ms. Lewis is the Team Leader with the responsibility for the Householder Team and Planning Enforcement	<b>C</b>	Complete / now on going
33	Introduce an additional Team Leader in DM and review the functions of the two DM teams	GOLD	Link to 3 (Increase Management Capacity)	Initially put on hold the recruitment of an additional Team Leader post. Ms. Aird brought in as short term support for the Heritage/Conservation Team	<b>A</b>	Review short term measures in 3 months' time

34	Consider further delegation of signing off applications	Customer Focused	Flows from review of Management capacity and potential additional team leader post (3, 32 and 33)	Temporary additional support brought in (Ms. Aird) who also does sign off. Review further in Autumn 2021 following appointment of DM & BC Manager	<b>G</b>	Review Autumn 2021
35	Improve communication in DM through a more formalised approach to Planning Forum meeting, an increased emphasis on performance management and completing Personal Development Review (PDR) actions	One Council	Commencing with mid-year PDR reviews	Planning Forums have been re-instated	<b>G</b>	More formalised approach to Agendas, Minutes. Calander of PDRs, 1-2-1s and 'catch ups' in the diary
36	Review the location and reporting lines for the Conservation Team	One Council	Already changed reporting lines but it needs a proper review linked to overall review of management structure of the servcie (see recommendation 3)	Temporarily reporting to Ms Aird	<b>G</b>	Review Autumn 2021
39	Review current split of functions and processes of validation within BSU to deliver a more streamlined process	Good to Great One Council		Revised procedure guidance July 2021	<b>A</b>	Review Autumn 2021
41	Examine level and nature of complaints received in last few years to identify any common causes or areas of concern	Customer Focused Good to Great	Process for handling complaints has been reviewed and amended - commence November 2020. Part of a wider review of the complaints process in Place Service	On going. Internal Council wide audit of the complaints process	<b>A</b>	On going. Internal Council wide audit of the complaints process
42	Encourage a culture of customer care throughout DM at all levels	Customer Focused Best in Class		Some areas of excellence, however some areas where improvement is still required	<b>A</b>	Training session on customer care in Autumn 2021. Regular coaching and advice from Managers & Team Leaders
45	Review the current duty planner arrangements	Customer Focused	Linked to the pre-application advice service	Subject to a further review Autumn 2021	<b>G</b>	Subject to a further review Autumn 2021
46	Commence training for case officers and enforcement on the Enterprise programme (once its future is confirmed)	Digitalisation GOLD	IDOX audit commenced November 2020, training on Uniform and Enterprise will follow	Enterprise Training from Managers / Team Leaders / IDOX Autumn 2021	<b>G</b>	Enterprise Training from Managers / Team Leaders / IDOX Autumn 2021

**LONG TERM ACTIONS****Expected completion by 30th June 2022**

No	Recommendation summary	Service Plan Themes	Comment December 2020	Update August 2021	RAG Status	Implementation Plan
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6	Establish ambitious, but realistic local targets with the aim to reach the national upper quartile performance in 3 years	Best in Class	Needs to link to Service performance measures and be reviewed over 3 years to ensure movement towards upper quartile	O&S working group were consulted on draft KPIs in March 2021. Development Management Stats were circulated to Members of O&S and Planning Committee on 2nd July 2021	<b>G</b>	Discuss the KPIs with Joint Working Group in September 2021. New milestones required for 31st Dec 2021, 31st March 2022
19	Consider introducing annual tour of completed developments for Members and officers, when resources permit	Good to Great	On hold due to Covid-19	Set up first prior to 31st March 2022	<b>G</b>	Pick up and plan Autumn 2021
43	A telephone hunt group should be set up for the case officers	Customer Focused	Link to Corporate IT / Digitalisation Strategy for Council, especially the new telephony system and the call centre	New telephony system being introduced corporately	<b>G</b>	Review the process following the new telephony system
44	Obtain and analyse telephone statistics so Team Leaders can address any issues	Customer Focused	Link to Corporate IT / Digitalisation Strategy for Council, especially the new telephony system and the call centre	Working with Corporate Services around Customer Call Centre at B&D. Emerging new Customer Care Standard	<b>G</b>	Review in the Autumn
47	Ensure the IT hardware is upgraded to ensure fast and efficient access to the systems (Uniform and Enterprise)	Digitalisation GOLD	Link to Corporate IT / Digitalisation Strategy for Council. New laptops and phones have been rolled out in response to Covid-19 lockdown	Complete / now on going	<b>C</b>	Complete / now on going
48	Any investment in IT hardware and development software needs to factor in new working practices when budgeting and procurement occurs	Digitalisation GOLD	Link to Corporate IT / Digitalisation Strategy for Council. New laptops and phones have been rolled out in response to Covid-19 lockdown. Link to Revitalise Hart	Complete / now on going	<b>C</b>	Complete / now on going

**CABINET**

**KEY DECISIONS/ WORK PROGRAMME, AND EXECUTIVE DECISIONS MADE**

**September 2021**

Cabinet is required to publish its Key Decisions and forward work programme to inform the public of issues on which it intends to make policy or decisions. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also notes the Programme, which is subject to regular revision.

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Date item agreed for report</b>	<b>Outline/Reason for Report/Comments</b>	<b>Original Due Date</b>	<b>Revised Due Date</b>	<b>Key Decision Y? Note 1</b>	<b>Cabinet Member (Note 2)</b>	<b>Service (Note 3)</b>	<b>* This item may contain Exempt Information</b>
Quarterly Budget Monitoring - Outturn	Quarterly	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to consider a report on Quarterly Budget Monitoring	Sep 21 Dec 21 Mar 22			JR	F	
Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Annual	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny To give an early consideration of the emerging budget for 2021/22 and the MTFS	Aug 21	Sep 21		JR	F	
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Sep 21	To approve the update to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Sep 21			GC	P	
Website Redesign Project	Sep 21	To request authority to draw down from Digital Strategy earmarked reserves to fund the procurement of the new website project	Sep 21			TC	CS	

Report Title	Date item agreed for report	Outline/Reason for Report/Comments	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date	Key Decision Y? Note 1	Cabinet Member (Note 2)	Service (Note 3)	* This item may contain Exempt Information
Food and Health and Safety Service Plan	Annual	Recommend to Council that the annual Food Safety Plan be adopted	Oct 21			SK	P	
Homelessness Strategy	Nov 21	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to consider a new Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027	Nov 21	Dec 21		SB	CSF	
Draft Comms and Engagement Strategy	Dec 21	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to consider a new Communications and Engagement Strategy	Dec 21			JR	CS	
Treasury Management 2021/22 (Half Year Report)	Annual	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to consider a Half Year review report on Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21	Dec 21			JR	F	
Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Annual	To give an early consideration of the emerging budget for 2021/22 and the MTFS	Dec 21			JR	F	

Report Title	Date item agreed for report	Outline/Reason for Report/Comments	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date	Key Decision Y? Note 1	Cabinet Member (Note 2)	Service (Note 3)	* This item may contain Exempt Information
Draft 2021/22 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax Proposals	Annual	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to agree to recommend to Council the 2021/22 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax Proposals	Feb 22			JR	F	
Draft 2021/22 Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Asset Management Plan	Annual	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to agree to recommend to Council the 2021/22 draft Capital Strategy, the 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Asset Management Plan	Feb 22			JR	F	
Service Plans	Annual	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, agree the 2021/22 Service Plans	Apr 22			DN	ALL	
Outside Bodies	Annual	To approve representation from the Council on identified outside bodies	Jun 22			DN	JCX	
Revenue and Capital Outturn 2021/2022	Annual	Post consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to consider the Annual report on outturn	Jul 22			JR	F	

**Note 1**

A “key decision” means an executive decision which, is likely to -

- a) result in Council incurring expenditure or the making of savings which amount to £30,000 or 25% (whichever is the larger) of the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the area of the district of Hart.

**Note 2****Cabinet Members**

DN	Leader	TC	Digital	RQ	Commercialisation (Cn)	SB	Community (Cy)
SK	Regulatory	AO	Environment	JR	Finance and Corporate Services	GC	Place

**Note 3****Service:**

JCX	Joint Chief Executive	CS	Corporate Services	P	Place Services
CSF	Community Safety	PP	Planning Policy	TS	Environmental & Technical Services
F	Finance	H	Community Services		
SLS	Shared Legal Services	MO	Monitoring Officer		

**Note 4**

\* **This item may contain Exempt Information** - Regulation 5 of the Local Authority (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

**EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

26/07/21	Cllr Neighbour	To release S106 funding towards implementing Blackwater and Hawley Town Councils Leisure Strategy	No call-in



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME – August 2021**

Issue and Description of Topic	Current Position Objective	Original Due Date	Revised Due Date	Resources Required	Contact	*This item may contain Exempt Information
<b>Corporate Service Panel Update</b>	Feedback from Members of the Service Panel for Corporate Services.	Aug 21		Oral Update	Service Panel Members	
<b>Annual Review Letter 2021/22</b>	This annual review from the Ombudsman covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaints and enquiries received in the period</li> <li>• the decisions made in the period</li> <li>• compliance with the recommendations recorded during the period</li> </ul>	Aug 21		Report	JCX	
<b>Website Redesign Project</b>	To scrutinise Digital Strategy earmarked reserves to fund the procurement of the new website project, prior to approval by Cabinet.	Aug 21		Report	Change and Digital Manager	

<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Asset Management Plan</b>	To comment on the annual reports setting out the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy position and future Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Asset Management Plan, prior to consideration by Cabinet.	Aug 21		Report	Head of Corporate Services	
<b>Quarterly Budget Monitoring - Outturn</b>	Quarterly update on budget position.	Aug 21 Nov 21 Feb 22		Report	Head of Corporate Services	
<b>Place Services Update</b>	To update the Committee on what has happened in the service since July's O&S. To include proposals for the implementation of the Planning Development Management Improvement Plan and current issues being experienced by the service.	Aug 21		Report	JCX, Portfolio Holder and Head of Place	
<b>Food and Health &amp; Safety Service Plan</b>	To consider the draft Food and Health & Safety Service Plan and to forward comments to Cabinet.	Sep 21		Report	Head of Place	
<b>Homelessness Strategy</b>	To consider a new Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027, prior to consideration by Cabinet.	Nov 21		Report	Head of Community Services	

<b>Draft Comms and Engagement Strategy</b>	To consider a new Communications and Engagement Strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet.	Nov 21		Report	Media & Communications Manager	
<b>Draft Budget</b>	To make comments on the draft 2022/23 Budget prior to consideration by Cabinet.	Annual		Report	Head of Corporate Services	