



Service Area Plan for Financial Year 2023/24

Business Unit: Development & Building Control

Corporate Head of Service: Ashley Smith

Version: 1.0

Approvals

Approved by CLT: Date

Approved by Service Chair: Date

Approved by Service Cttee: Date

Service Area Narrative and Mission Statement

The Council's Development Management and Building Control services are currently performing to a demonstrably high level. This is demonstrated by a high level of performance against national and local targets, outstanding appeal performance and low level of customer complaints.

Both services have delivered a number of key projects in recent years including process updates, system roll outs and service restructures. In 2023/24 it is intended to build upon this work and deliver service objectives and statutory services from these strong foundations that have been laid in recent years.

For Development Management the service remains in a key delivery phase delivering the Local Plan allocated sites, windfall sites and its normal planning service for householders in the Borough. This delivery is focused on quality, with the service looking to deliver good infrastructure rich communities where people wish to live and visit as well as good conditions for businesses to deliver and thrive. The service will look to maintain its high level of service and performance even with the continued increase in complex work expected over the coming years. Growth of half a post FTE was proposed to help meet these challenges and improve the resilience of the service. Following recent enhancement of the Planning Enforcement team the service is planning for significant enforcement progress in 2023/24.

Having entered in to shared management arrangements with Surrey Heath in 2022 the Building Control service has continued to deliver a high standard of performance and is looking to potentially progress in to a full partnership in the 2023/24 municipal year. Growth was requested to help facilitate the delivery of such a shared service and meet any resultant set up costs. A full partnership is likely to significantly improve the resilience of the service in both Boroughs, increase market share and provide economies of scale.

Both sections have potential legislative changes on the horizon. In planning, changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and the Levelling Up Bill have the potential to impact upon the service. Similarly the new obligations set out in Building Safety Act 2022 are likely to be rolled out in this plan period. The Council is in a good position to plan for and react to changes as they arise.

Business Unit: Development & Building Control

CHoS Ashley Smith
 Service Area 1: Development Management
 Service Area 2: Building Control
 Service Area 3: Technical Admin Team



Service Organisational Structure [Link to organisation chart](#)

Budget Book Information [Budget information 2022-23](#)

Description of Service (1) Development Management

Main Purpose: The management of development and the delivery of new homes, through the encouragement and assessment of applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, to deliver the housing and economic growth specified in the adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan including the Longcross Garden Village; the use of enforcement powers under that Act to control harmful and unauthorised development, and the protection of trees that are protected under that Act, and the administration and monitoring of contributions received under that Act.

Development Management decisions are made against the development plan for Runnymede which is the recently adopted Runnymede 2030 Local Plan; Development Management decisions are to increase housing supply by 7629 net additional dwellings 2015-2030 as well as provide significant employment floor space and other opportunities.

Key Functions and relevant Statistics from Previous Year/ projections for next FY:

The key functions within the Development Management Team are:

- The provision of planning advice to customers (both external and internal) including pre-application advice
- The processing and determination of applications for planning permission and associated consents
- The investigation of breaches of planning control and exercise of the Council's planning enforcement functions
- The administration and collection of developer contributions and obligations under s106 agreements, the supporting of CMC in accordance with Developer Contribution governance arrangements for the spending of infrastructure moneys.
- The protection of trees which contribute to the quality of the environment and the protection of heritage assets which contribute to the historic environment and provision of advice to residents, and processing associated consents
- The defence of Council decisions in these areas in appeal and court, as may be required
- Partnership working with Local Plans and Economic Development Business Unit, including in relation to National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and equivalent, the Local Plan Runnymede 2030, and forthcoming Supplementary Planning Guidance

The number of enforcement requests in 2022/23 is estimated to be 280, and expected to remain at a similar level in 2023/2024. The number of applications of all types determined in 2022/2023 is estimated to be 2000 and expected to remain at a similar level in 2023/2024 the applications are likely to continue to be of a complex nature due to the recent adoption of the Local Plan.

Description of Service (2) Building Control

Main Purpose: Providing a Building Control Service as required by the Building Act 1984, including a 24/7 dangerous structures callout provision.

Key Functions and relevant Statistics from Previous Year:

The key functions within the Building Control Team are:

- The provision of Building Control advice to customers (both external and internal)
- The determination of applications for building regulation approval and associated consents
- The setting and collection of application charges ensuring the section breaks even in its fee related account
- The inspection of works on site to ensure compliance with the building regulations and associated legislation
- The investigation of potential breaches of the building regulations and exercise of the sections enforcement functions

- The inspection of unauthorised building works and exercise of the sections enforcement functions
- The processing of demolition notices and safety inspections of works on site
- The provision of a 24/7 dangerous structure call out service including major incidents
- The defence of council decisions in these areas in court, as may be required
- The processing of approved inspector applications, and maintain a register of their works
- The processing of competent persons applications, and maintain a register of their works

The section has successfully retained Quality Assurance accreditation to ISO 9001:2015 during the last 12 months and will look to maintain the standards set by the scheme. The service will look to maintain non statutory fee income.

Based on 2022/23, the key scope of the team’s activities during 2023/24 is estimated as shown below.

- To determine circa 450 Building Regulation applications, and undertake 3,200 site inspections of building works within 24 hours, or on the same day where notification is received by 10.00am.
- Undertake investigations of approximately 10 reported unauthorised building works and
- Administer 10-15 demolition notices with sites attended during the demolition process.
- Provide a 24/7 dangerous structure callout service, with staff committed to attending site within 2 hours of initial notification; approximately 6 callouts are projected within the period.
- The team also project the processing of 250 approved inspector applications and maintain a register of 4,000 approved inspector and competent person notifications.
- In addition, the section is legally obliged to provide free general advice, assistance and up to 1 hours pre submission consultation for proposed works; as such these works are dealt with in the most cost/ time efficient method generally by telephone.

Description of Service (3)

Technical Admin Team

Main Purpose: To provide technical administration for both Development Management and Building Control.

The key functions of the team are:

- Provide the first point for general customer contact
- Administration of development management and building control functions, including GDPR tasks
- To register requests for planning enforcement investigations and provide first point of administration
- To notify the tree officer of dangerous tree notifications
- To administer requests for pre-application advice
- To provide administration support for planning aspects of National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
- Administer systems for Northgate Planning and Building Control, and liaise with Land Charges section on this basis
- To assist with the administration of the Exacom system and developer contribution processes as required.

Service Area Plan for Year 2023/24

Business Unit: Development & Building Control

Ref	Type of initiative	Service Area	Description of initiative	Outcomes/ Deliverables	Priority	Service Area Lead Team/ Individual(s)	Additional resources required from outside department	Additional growth required? Y/N plus indicative costs ££	Anticipated start date	Anticipated completion date
DMO 01	Service/ efficiency improvement	Building Control	<p>Building Control Shared service project.</p> <p>At CMC in December 2021 steps to commence the integration of building control with Surrey Heath. In April 2022 a shared manager started. The next step is to consider full integration of the service in the form of a Full Partnership most likely hosted by Surrey Heath Borough Council. It is possible that this project could lead to one of growth costs to set it up. For example any costs incurred merging records, acquiring licences or similar set up costs. These are likely to remain unknown until we receive Surrey Heath's proposal which is now expected Q1 2023. It is prudent to plan for this in budgets, it is possible that the costs involved in this may be modest due to the size of the team and Surrey Heath already having a lot of the relevant items in place. However there could be unexpected costs, if these arise we will notify finance ASAP and the funding can be released back.</p> <p>In 2023 the project will be to assess whether or not moving to a full partnership remains in the interests of the Boroughs and if so to move towards delivery of that service. The singly year growth will assist delivering the integration of the services and hopefully provide a more resilient and stronger shared service in future years as well provide opportunities for market share growth and economies of scale.</p>	Integrated shared service for Building Control.	Must - the initiative has to be done	Samantha Hallam / Ashley Smith	Finance, HR, IT	Probably, Surrey Heath BC are preparing a proposal expected to be available Q1 2023. This will detail any one off set up costs. Expected to be at most £20k-50k. Spend profile can be flexible to suit RBC in terms of timing. For example the launch of the full shared service could be delayed if required.	TBC, 2023	By end of municipal year
DMO 02	Staff / Resources	Development Management	<p>During the pandemic growth was withdrawn for two enforcement officers in my service due to Covid pressures. As Growth of the Enforcement team was a Councillor and chief exec priority the CHDMBC agreed to use two existing Development Management posts in the service to facilitate the early delivery of this objective. At the time it was hoped that the service could get these two posts back if future Council budgets allowed. Development Management have been carrying this work with higher workloads for team members. Two members of the Development Management Officer team will be going on maternity leave in Q1 2023. And as such the service is likely to run in to a resourcing problem. the Service has in hand a budget of 18.5 hours of a career grade planning officer post. Growth was request for 18.5 hours of budget so i can appoint a full time senior planning officer on a permanent basis.</p> <p>This growth will help mitigate the need for contractors, constitutes only a 25% restoration of these posts that the CHDMBC provided for forward funding of the Enforcement Officer posts and will allow the service the skills, resource and resilience to continue to perform at a high level. The enforcement posts that have been forward funded will allow the delivery of a more effective enforcement service.</p>	Appropriately staffed service to be able to flex resources and ensure workloads are manageable	Should - the initiative should be done	Ashley Smith	N/A	Yes. Appoint Snr Planning Officer at Grade , offset with 18.5hrs of F0084. Growth required is c£30k revenue (£23K plus on costs at 28.5%)	Q1 2023	ongoing
DMO 03	Service/ efficiency improvement	Development Management	Develop procedures and system for the supporting of the Developer Contributions Governance arrangements to ensure that the Council has process to consider infrastructure delivery bids and effectively spend its money.	Efficient and effective procedures and governance to support allocation of developer contributions	Should - the initiative should be done	Ashley Smith/Victoria Gibson/Tom Fry Planning Policy Colleagues	Yes. Close working with Planning Policy colleagues	No	May-23	23-Sep
DMO 04	Service/ efficiency improvement	Technical Admin Team	Review all planning processes to reflect and take advantage of new planning IT systems such as Exacom and the Northgate upgrades. Review best practice in other Authorities to continue to maintain high standards.	Continuous improvement to ensure return on investment in digital upgrades and systems.	Should - the initiative should be done	Ashley SMith/ Technical administration team	No	No	23-May	ongoing
DMO 05	Service/ efficiency improvement	Development Management	Climate change- to identify and introduce new ways of working to reduce the business unit's carbon footprint/positive impact on climate change	Positively contribute to climate change initiatives and the aim for Council services to be net zero by 2030	Should - the initiative should be done	Ashley Smith	Climate change officer	No	May-23	Ongoing

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DMO 06	Legislative/Regulatory Change	Development Management	Train staff on changes to planning system in terms of NPPF updates and levelling up bill.	Proactively prepare for and react to legislation change whilst minimising impact on service.	Must - the initiative has to be done	Victoria Gibson/ Ashley SMith	No	No	TBC (Depends on legislation)	Ongoing
DMO 07	Legislative/Regulatory Change	Building Control	Ensure that Building Control staff have the skills and training required to adapt to the requirements of the Building Safety Act.	Proactively prepare for and react to legislation change whilst minimising impact on service.	Must - the initiative has to be done	Samantha Hallam / Ashley Smith	No	No	TBC (Depends on legislation)	Ongoing
DMO 08	Legislative/Regulatory Change	Building Control	To retain the Council's Quality Assurance Certification in accordance with ISO 9001:2015 (Building Regulations)	Ensure quality of service provision.	Should - the initiative should be done	Samantha Hallam / Ashley Smith	No	No	TBC	Apr-24
DMO 09	Staff / Resources	Development Management	Recruit to service vacancies when possible in line with service need. Give consideration to structure to deliver services as effectively as possible.	Fully resourced service that can deliver services as effectively as possible	Must - the initiative has to be done	Ashley Smith	No	No	May-23	Apr-24