

TRANSPORT AND PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL Agenda

Place Committee Rooms 4 & 5, Town Hall, Wellington Street,
Woolwich SE18 6PW

Date Thursday, 3 October 2024

Time 6.30 pm

This meeting is open to the press and public and they are entitled to take photographs, film or record the proceedings.

Councillors

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Maisie Richards Cottell (Chair) | Labour |
| Cathy Dowse | Labour and Co-operative |
| David Gardner | Labour and Co-operative |
| Sam Littlewood | Labour and Co-operative |
| Calum O'Bryne Mulligan | Labour |
| Denise Scott-McDonald | Labour and Co-operative |
| Matt Hartley | Conservative |
| Aidan Smith | Labour |

Members are reminded that officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and they are welcome to raise questions in advance with the appropriate officer. This does not prevent further questioning at the meeting.

If you require further information about this meeting please contact the Scrutiny Officer:

Raymond Bruce-Cathline

Telephone: 020 8921 5134

Email: scrutiny@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies from Members of the Panel.

2. Urgent Business

The Chair to announce any items of urgent business circulated separately from the main agenda.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any personal and financial interests in items on the agenda. Attention is drawn to the Council's Constitution; the Council's Code of Conduct and associated advice.

4. Minutes

Members are requested to confirm as an accurate record the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2024.

No motion or discussion may take place upon the Minutes except as to their accuracy, and any question on this point will be determined by a majority of the Members of the body attending who were present when the matter in question was decided. Once confirmed, with or without amendment, the person presiding will sign the Minutes

5. Flood Risk/Water Management Update

To consider the report on the current status and future work programme of the Council related to flood risk and water management.

6. Update on Local Plan, Planning Enforcement and Planning Performance

To note the update on Planning Services Performance and the Local Plan.

7. Commissioning of Future Reports

To note the work items that are scheduled to be presented to the meeting of the Transport and Place Scrutiny Panel taking place on 20th November 2024.

Date of Issue
Wednesday, 25 September 2024

Debbie Warren
Chief Executive

Filming and Recording Meetings

Please be aware that this meeting will be recorded and broadcast on the internet as part of the support for democratic engagement under section 8(e) of the Data Protection Act 2018, and that by attending this meeting, you will be recorded. The recording will be uploaded on to the [Council's Youtube Channel](#).

If you have any queries regarding the recording of meetings, please contact the Corporate Governance Manager at committees@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Safety

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| TRANSPORT AND PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL | |
|---|---------------------|
| TITLE Declarations of Interests | ITEM NO 3 |
| CHIEF OFFICER Chief Executive | |

I. Decisions Required

The Panel is requested to:

- I.1 Note the list of Councillors' memberships (as Council appointed representatives) on outside bodies, joint committees and school governing bodies.
- I.2 Request that Members orally declare any personal or financial interests, including those detailed, in specific items listed on the agenda as they relate to matters under discussion.

2. Members' Interests

- 2.1 Appended to this report is a list of the outside bodies, joint committees and school governing bodies that each member of Council has been appointed to by the Council or the Leader. The list does not include bodies with which a Member is involved in a personal or private capacity.

Personal interests

- 2.2 A Member has a personal interest where any business is likely to affect:

- (a) them, or
- (b) a relevant person or a relevant body (where the Member is aware that they have the interest);

more than a majority of those in the ward you represent.

A **relevant person** is defined as the member's spouse or civil partner, a person who they are living with as husband and wife or as civil partners, or a person with whom they have a close association.¹

¹ See the guidance in Annex I of the Code of Conduct

A **relevant body** is defined as (a) any organisation, school governing body or outside committee or trust which they have been appointed to by the Royal Borough or by the Leader, or (b) any other voluntary organisation, school governing body or commercial organisation where you are a management committee member, school governor, trustee or director.

- 2.3 Members must declare the existence and nature of any personal interest at the start of the meeting, or when the interest becomes apparent. Members must say which item their interest relates to.
- 2.4 A Member who has a personal interest may stay, speak and vote, except where the business:
- (a) affects the financial position of the Member or any person or body described in paragraph 2.2 above, or
 - (b) relates to an interest that would be affected financially or relates to the determining to any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the Member or any person or body described in paragraph 2.2 above

Financial Interests

- 2.5 A Member has a financial interest where any business relates to or is likely to affect an interest set out in paragraph 18 of the Code of Conduct, and which is the Member's interest or the interest of a person described in paragraph 2.2(a) above.
- 2.6 Members must declare the existence and nature of any financial interest at the start of the meeting, or when the interest becomes apparent. Members must say which item their interest relates to.
- 2.7 A Member who has a financial interest must leave the meeting, but may attend to make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, and provided they leave the meeting immediately after doing so. The Member must not participate in the discussion nor the vote.

General

- 2.8 The Code also requires Members to declare interests in relation to relevant bodies for six months after ceasing from being a member and take the appropriate action in relation to financial interests.

Background Papers

Agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Council – 22 May 2024

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| Councillor | Organisation | Role | Governorship |
|-------------------|---|-------------|---------------------|
| Dowse | Greenwich Service Solutions | Member | Montbelle School |
| Gardner | Greenwich Millennium Village Management Ltd | Member | |
| Gardner | Local Government Information Unit | Member | |
| Gardner | St Luke's (Charlton) Parochial Charities | Member | |
| Hartley | London Road Safety Council | Deputy | |
| Littlewood | St Luke's (Charlton) Parochial Charities | Member | |
| O'Bryne Mulligan | DG Cities Limited | Member | |
| O'Bryne Mulligan | London Road Safety Council | Member | |
| O'Bryne Mulligan | Sir John Evelyn Charity | Member | |
| O'Bryne Mulligan | Twinkle Park Trust | Member | |
| Richards Cottell | Greenwich Theatre Board | | |
| Scott-McDonald | Greenwich Millennium Village Management Ltd | Deputy | |
| Scott-McDonald | Greenwich Peninsula Management Company Ltd | Member | |
| Smith, A | Sir John Evelyn Charity | Member | |

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ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH
TRANSPORT AND PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL
THURSDAY, 25 JULY 2024 AT 6.30 PM
MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Councillor Maisie Richards Cottell (Chair), David Gardner, Calum O'Bryne Mulligan, Denise Scott-McDonald and Matt Hartley

Under Standing Orders:

Councillor Averil Lekau (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Climate Action, Sustainability and Transport)

Officers:

Deputy Corporate Governance Manager

Item

No.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sam Littlewood and Councillor Cathy Dowse.

2 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

3 Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED -

That the list of Councillors' memberships as Council appointed representatives on outside bodies, joint committees and school governing bodies is noted.

4 Cabinet Member Update - Climate Action, Sustainability and Transport

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport provided an update on some of the things she had done and her priorities from the next 24 months. The main highlights were:

Emission-based Charging

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport began with an update on recent initiatives, including the emission-based charges introduced in July of the previous year. This policy has effectively reduced the number of high-emission vehicles, with the trend expected to continue due to the influence of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ).

DLR and Rapid Bus Transit

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport reported that a business case for the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and Rapid Bus Transit had been submitted to the central government. £23 million has been approved for the Rapid Bus Transit, but discussions regarding DLR funding are ongoing. Concerns about the financial burden on local authorities are being addressed through negotiations with the Mayor and government.

Parking Design and CPZ Implementation

Updates were provided on Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) and parking design projects. The Welling Way scheme has received approval and is set to be implemented with a Traffic Management Order (TMO) expected to go live by the end of July, with enforcement starting in early August. The Charlton CPZs, implemented in January, faced challenges due to simultaneous road marking by contractors, causing disruptions. Feedback from residents is being collected to inform future projects.

Sustainable Streets

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport provided updates on sustainable streets projects. Public engagement for the Woolwich area review is expected to start in August or September. Initiatives are planned for Plumstead and Thamesmead West, with public engagement to follow. Additional CPZs are planned for Charlton, Shooter Hill, and Kidbrooke, with consultations beginning in January 2025.

Cycle Network Development

Significant work is underway to develop the local cycle network. Collaborations with Transport for London (TfL) are in place to develop cycle routes in Greenwich Town Centre and other areas. An enhanced cycle route scheme in Plumstead and Abbey Wood is being developed based on stakeholder feedback. A procurement process for expanding cycle hangers is also underway, with substantial increases expected by Autumn.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

An innovative licensing approach for EV charging infrastructure has been proposed, with providers expected to apply by July and awards anticipated in Autumn. This initiative aims to balance charging provision across the borough, including disadvantaged areas, with a target of adding 200 new charging points per year.

Street Lighting and Street Furniture

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport reported that the dimming of streetlights and upgrades to LED lighting have been completed. Additionally, a program to declutter streets by removing unnecessary street furniture is in progress.

Dockless Bikes

The Cabinet is adopting a London-wide approach to managing dockless bike services to address issues such as street clutter.

20mph Zones

The feasibility, design, and consultation for 20 mph zones in Horn Park, Prince Rupert Road, and Pier Tree Way are ongoing, aiming to complement Transport for London's changes.

Highways Contract

A new highways contractor has been appointed following a procurement process. Early results from the new contractor's work have been positive.

School Streets Program

The School Streets Program includes seven temporary and four permanent streets. All temporary streets will be made permanent with new enforcement measures, including 24 cameras. The program is expected to expand over the next few years.

Local Safety Schemes

Ten major and minor local safety schemes were delivered in 2022-23, with nine more programmed for 2023-24. The goal is to deliver an additional ten schemes in 2024-25.

Greenwich Town Centre and Plumstead Developments

The project to remove vehicles from Greenwich Town Centre to improve walking and cycling is ongoing. In Plumstead, funding from the Pettman Crescent development is being used for transformative projects expected to be completed by October.

Future Plans (2024-25)

Future plans include accelerating EV provider deployment to 2,000 charging points per year, delivering new cycleways in Eltham and Greenwich, making ten additional School Streets permanent with a plan to deliver another twenty over the next two years, implementing healthy sustainable streets including new CPZs, and developing a £1 million sustainable drainage project for flood alleviation.

Responding to a question about the transport prioritization programme, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport confirmed that the research had been completed and will be published imminently. However, it will not include specific timings or a strict list of prioritized interventions. Instead, it will outline the criteria used to determine priority areas. This approach aims to provide transparency about the factors influencing priority areas without creating unrealistic expectations.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport acknowledged the issues and assured that a cautious approach will be taken in publishing schedules to avoid unrealistic expectations. She stated that interventions for West Hallows will be addressed within the year 2024-25.

Responding to a question about the Silvertown Tunnel the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport confirmed ongoing support for repurposing the tunnel but noted that the Development Consent Order (DCO) does not compel action from the mayor. The council is aligning with Newham and making representations regarding the lack of active travel crossings. Discussions with Newham and the Mayor of London are focusing on cross-river cycling plans and other alternatives.

Responding to a question about the progress on the Council's Carbon Neutral Plan and Transport Strategy, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport acknowledged slow progress, with only a 2% reduction in car kilometres" travelled from 2015 to 2023. She stated that the Council is working more cohesively to address this, particularly through the Strategic Leadership Group, with new programs expected to contribute to future progress. Monitoring will continue through the Carbon Neutral Action Plan.

Responding to a question about whether the Council's submission to TfL's consultation on vehicle charges for the Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnel will focus on reducing overall traffic through both tunnels, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport affirmed that it would form part of the submission, though exact emphasis is still under discussion. The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport emphasised the importance of making a strong submission.

Responding to a question about the steps being taken to improve Greenwich's ranking on the 2024 Healthy Streets Scorecard, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport acknowledged that Greenwich had fallen in the rankings, particularly due to low scores on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) and school streets. She stated that the Council was taking steps to improve, including making 10 school streets permanent and planning 20 more. She added that there are ongoing discussions with boroughs like Lewisham, to learn from their successes.

Responding to a question about the traffic management interventions and when information will be published, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport clarified that the publication would include criteria for prioritization and immediate areas to be worked on, which are already funded. She added that as work progresses, the list will be updated with new priorities. She stated that ward councillors will be involved in shaping these priorities through feedback.

Responding to a question about finding balance between supporting local businesses and reducing vehicle traffic due to the Silvertown Tunnel, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport stated that discussions were ongoing to address the issues. She stated that local exemptions were being considered, but the broader implications of reducing

traffic need to be evaluated. She stated that improving north-south transport links and evaluating the bus network are also priorities.

Responding to a question about the strategy for improving bus services and Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) ratings, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport outlined efforts to collaborate with the regeneration and planning departments to address transport network needs. She stated that there is a need for a comprehensive assessment of bus routes and connectivity, which has been delayed due to recent elections.

Responding to a question about expanding Electric Vehicle(EV) charging infrastructure, including home charging solutions and the use of street lighting for charging points, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport confirmed that exploring home charging options was ongoing but acknowledged practical and logistical challenges. She revealed that progress had been slower than hoped, but there is a commitment to finding viable solutions. She stated that concerns about the safety and practicality of current charging practices, such as loose cables across pavements, will be addressed with clearer guidelines and better oversight.

Responding to a question about mechanisms for monitoring air quality related to the Silvertown Tunnel, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport acknowledged the need for robust monitoring and assessment. She stated that she is committed to providing updates on air quality measures and baseline readings before and after the tunnel's opening.

Responding to a question about whether there is a contingency plan if post-intervention air pollution levels exceed pre-intervention levels, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport stated that while improved public transport advocacy remains a priority, a detailed contingency plan will be developed if actual pollution levels deviate from predictions.

Responding to a question about the Cabinet Member's reflections on communication strategies for transport decisions, focusing on what had worked well and what had not, the Cabinet Member highlighted the implementation of the Charlton Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) as an example there had been a challenge with communication. She stated that despite the intention to manage parking effectively, the implementation led to confusion and dissatisfaction. She stated that the Charlton CPZ, while initially controversial, ultimately received positive feedback from residents who now support its extension. On the other hand, the improvements at the gyratory at

Plumstead and collaborations with developers and Transport for London (TfL) on the rapid bus transit system were cited as successful communication examples.

The Panel discussed potential use of Section 106 funding to enhance public transport, particularly in areas where TfL has not fulfilled its commitments. The Panel questioned the feasibility of using this funding to support specific projects, such as the XI 61 express bus route, to improve connectivity from the southern part of the borough to the Elizabeth line. The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport acknowledged that while Section 106 funding is not unlimited, it could serve as leverage to negotiate with TfL. The Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability, and Transport emphasised that while the primary goal is to ensure TfL fulfils its responsibilities, using Section 106 funds may be a practical approach if necessary. The specific routes or projects would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Resolved –

That the Cabinet Member update be noted.

5 Work Programme Schedule 2024-2025

The Panel noted the 2024/25 work programme items and agreed the scope for the following items:

- Transport Work Programme Update,
- Income from Developments
- Flood Risk/Water Management Update
- Planning

The Panel agreed that the Transport Work Programme update should cover

- An action/delivery plan on when things will happen/and how we will meet our targets in terms of Traffic reduction and the Healthy Streets Scorecard.
- The Supporting Action Plans: Kerbside Management Action Plan; Road Safety Action Plan; Active Travel Action Plan; Electric Vehicles Strategy / Action Plan; Streetscape Guidance & Asset Action Plan. What are their current statuses and how will they be developed/furthered during 2024-25?
- Transport Prioritization Programme. How transport interventions are being prioritised?

- Bus times – what are we doing to improve bus times from a local council perspective?

The Panel agreed that the Income from Development update should also cover how the money is being spent and how strategic the decisions are.

The Chair informed the Panel that the Flood Risk/Water Management update will be coming to the October meeting of the Panel and the possibility of inviting The Environment Agency, Thames Water and/or Port of London Authority.

The Panel agreed that the Planning update will cover

- Performance
- Capacity
- Enforcement effectiveness
- The Local Plan

Resolved -

That the Work Programme Schedule 2024-2025 be noted.

6 Commissioning of Future Reports

The Panel noted the work items that were scheduled to be presented to the meeting of the Transport and Place Scrutiny Panel taking place on 5th September 2024.

The meeting closed at 8:20pm

Chair

| | | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Transport and Place Scrutiny Panel | DATE 03/10/24 | ITEM NO 5 |
| SUBJECT Lead Local Flood Authority update | WARD (S) All | |
| CHIEF OFFICER Director of Communities, Environment and Central | Climate Change, Environment and Transport | |
| DECISION CLASSIFICATION <i>Scrutiny Report</i> | N/A | |

SECTION I

1. Recommendations to decision maker:

- 1.1 To consider a report on the current status and future work programme of the Council related to flood risk and water management, and to make recommendations to the Executive, if necessary.
- 1.2 To agree that the report and any recommendations be submitted to the Chief Executive.
- 1.3 To note that the report and response to the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

2. Links to Our Greenwich Missions

- 2.1 This report relates to the Council's agreed missions as follows:
 - People's health supports them in living their best life
 - Everyone in Greenwich is safer, and feels safer
 - People in Greenwich have access to a safe and secure home that meets their needs

- It is easier, safer and greener to move around the borough and the rest of London
- Development delivers positive change to an area for existing and new communities
- Neighbourhoods are vibrant, safe and attractive with community services that meet the needs of local residents
- Greenwich plays an active role in tackling the climate crisis and improving environmental sustainability, in line with our commitment of being carbon neutral by 2030
- Town centres, high streets and shopping parades are vibrant, prosperous, well-maintained places that meet the needs of local people
- Our Council is better at listening to communities, and communities feel they are heard
- We develop networks with communities, key partners and businesses to meet need and address challenges together
- We design our services around the needs of our residents
- Our Council is an adaptive organisation, enabling it to navigate the increasing number of challenges it faces while remaining financially sustainable
- Our Council works in the most efficient and effective ways possible

3. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

This report advises on the current status and future work programme of the Council related to flood risk and water management. The report additionally provides an overview of the statutory responsibilities of the Royal Borough of Greenwich as a flood risk management authority and the role of partners (e.g. Environment Agency and Thames Water etc.) involved in flood risk reduction. This includes the role of Royal Greenwich as a local planning authority and a category one responder.

SECTION 2

4. The Report

Background

In response to the floods in summer 2007, the government commissioned the 'Pitt review' to investigate the scale, causes, and impacts of the flooding.

Over 55,000 homes and 6,000 businesses were flooded and related insurance claims were approaching £3 billion by the end of 2007. The 'Pitt review' recommended the creation of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and Lead Local Flood Authorities. (LLFA)s are county councils, unitary authorities or borough councils. We lead in managing local flood risks (i.e. risks of flooding from surface water, ground water and ordinary (smaller) watercourses).

Challenges for Greenwich

With regards to flood risk, Greenwich faces some unique challenges in comparison to other London Boroughs. These include:

- Thames Barrier – Although this is an Environment Agency asset, it directly impacts upon Greenwich residents. In particular, it has been identified that the Thames Barrier will need to be replaced by 2100. This will involve raising the height of the barrier, and moving it to a new downstream location.
- Thamesmead Area – Thamesmead is formed of former marshland, and largely sits beneath river level. It is artificially kept dry. There is significant housing stock in Thamesmead, which would be put at severe risk if a flood event were to occur.
- Greenwich has the longest river frontage of all London Boroughs, putting us at greater risk of flooding.
- Significant parts of the borough are classed as critical drainage areas, meaning that properties in these areas are at higher risk of flooding in the event of heavy rain downpours.

Who is responsible for flood risk in the Royal Borough of Greenwich?

Royal Borough of Greenwich has responsibilities for flood risk as a Lead Local Flood Authority, Local Planning Authority, Highways Authority and a Category One responder.

Our Flood Risk Responsibilities as a Lead Local Flood Authority:

As the Lead Local Flood Authority for the borough, we are responsible for managing flood risk from:

- surface water flooding
- groundwater
- ordinary watercourses, such as small rivers, streams, brooks, and ditches

Lead Local Flood Authority Duties

We have several duties that we fulfil as the Lead Local Flood Authority:

1. investigate significant local flooding incidents and publish the results of such investigations.
2. develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management. Local flood risk is the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. The council is required to produce and publish a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) every six years, which outlines how the LLFA plans to manage flood risk for the area.
3. co-operating with other flood risk management authorities. Risk Management Authorities have a statutory co-operate with each other, act in a manner that is consistent with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England and the local flood risk management strategies developed by Lead Local Flood Authorities, and exchange information. We have formed partnerships with the following Risk Management Authorities (RMAs):
 - Environment Agency
 - Neighbouring Lead Local Flood Authorities
 - Greater London Authority
 - Water and sewerage companies
 - Highways authorities.
4. ensuring new developments do not increase local flood risk
5. undertake a statutory consultee role providing technical advice on surface water drainage to local planning authorities on major developments
6. maintaining a flood risk asset register.
7. ensuring ordinary watercourses are free of blockages
8. granting consent for third-party works on ordinary watercourses
9. acting consistently with national flood and coastal erosion management strategies. For example:
 - Throughout much of the Thames Estuary, flood walls and embankments that protect property and infrastructure will need to increase in height by a metre or more by 2100 to offer adequate protection against tidal flooding.
 - The Royal Borough of Greenwich Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) is a non-statutory document which can be used to identify the existing risk of surface water flooding. The SWMP also provides

a tool for the LLFA to identify options to manage risk, make informed investment decisions, and plan for the delivery of actions to manage flood risk.

Lead Local Flood Authority Powers

To fulfil these duties LLFAs have several important powers to help them manage and mitigate flood risks effectively such as:

- undertaking works to manage flood risks from surface runoff and groundwater (section 14A of the Land Drainage Act 1991)
- designating structures and features that significantly affect flood risk (section 30 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010)
- requesting information from any person about flood and coastal erosion risk management (section 14 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010)
- civil sanctions that can be applied to individuals or organisations that do not comply with information requests (section 15 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010)
- taking enforcement action where works on ordinary watercourses have been completed without our consent (Land Drainage Act 1991)
- taking enforcement action to maintain a proper flow of water on ordinary watercourses (Land Drainage Act 1991)

Other Flood Risk Risk Responsibilities

In addition to our responsibilities as an LLFA, RBG has the following responsibilities with respect to Flood Risk:

Local Planning Authority Responsibilities

As a Local Planning Authority (LPA), we manage all planning applications for development in Greenwich. We ensure that all major planning applications are reviewed with regards to flood risk and surface water drainage. RBG has a responsibility to ensure that any development does not increase flood risk either upstream, downstream, or on-site.

Highways Authority Responsibilities

Royal Borough of Greenwich Highways teams are responsible for maintaining highway assets such as drains, kerbs, road gullies, ditches and

pipes up to the point where they connect to the public sewer network, at which point they becomes Thames Water's responsibility.

Emergency Planning Team Responsibilities

The Royal Borough of Greenwich Emergency Planning Team administer the Council's role as a Category One responder and oversee the response to major incidents such as flooding, explosions, or large-scale evacuations. Category One responders have responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) when a major flooding incident is declared. They are directly involved in the management and delivery of the response.

Category One responders in the Royal Borough of Greenwich include:

- RBG
- Emergency Services (Police, Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Services)
- Environment Agency

A major flooding incident can be defined as flooding which endangers life, threatens serious damage to the environment, impacts a significant number of properties, or causes significant disruption to key parts of the infrastructure.

Other Risk Management Authorities

Environment Agency

It's important to note that 20%-25% is defended by flood defences (Thames Barrier, a series of flood walls, and Sutcliffe Park), there is a need to work on the front foot with the Environment Agency to future plan and reduce the impacts of climate change. The Environment Agency (EA) are responsible for managing main rivers. The key duties of the Environment Agency include:

- Delivering flood risk warnings in partnership with the Met Office
- Managing the construction and maintenance of flood defences on main rivers
- Providing consent for and enforcement of works near to or within main rivers
- Producing guidance on Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs)
- Supporting other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), such as the Greenwich Council, in the delivery of flood risk management projects as appropriate.

The EA-designated main rivers within and adjacent to the Royal Borough of Greenwich are:

- Butts Canal
- Deptford Creek
- Kid Brook
- The River Ravensbourne
- The River Thames
- The River Quaggy
- Wickham Valley Watercourse

Thames Water

Thames Water are responsible for managing public sewers and ensuring their systems have sufficient capacity to cope with heavy rainfall and surface water runoff, as required. They are also responsible for maintenance of their sewer network.

The main roles of water and sewerage companies in managing flood and coastal erosion risks are to:

- make sure their systems have the appropriate level of resilience to flooding, and maintain essential services during emergencies
- maintain and manage their water supply and sewerage systems to manage the impact and reduce the risk of flooding and pollution to the environment. They have a duty under section 94 Water Industry Act 1991 to ensure that the area they serve is “effectually drained”. This includes drainage of surface water from the land around buildings as well as provision of foul sewers.
- provide advice to LLFAs on how water and sewerage company assets impact on local flood risk
- work with developers, landowners and LLFAs to understand and manage risks for example, by working to manage the amount of rainfall that enters sewerage systems
- work with the Environment Agency, LLFAs and district councils to coordinate the management of water supply and sewerage systems with other flood risk management work.

Transport for London

Transport for London (TfL) has the duty to manage London’s public transport network. Under this role, TfL is also responsible for managing certain highway drainage and roadside ditches along TfL’s red routes under the Highways Act (1980). TfL’s red routes in Greenwich are:

- A2 (Blackheath Hill, Blackheath Road, Deptford Bridge, East Rochester Way, Shooters Hill Road)
- A20 (Eltham Road, Sidcup Road)
- A102 (Blackwall Tunnel Southern Approach)

- A205 (Grand Depot Road, South Circular Road, Well Hall Road)
- A210 (Eltham Road)
- A2204 (New Ferry Approach)
- A2213 (Kidbrooke Park Road)

National Highways

National Highways are responsible for highway drainage and asset management of motorways. National Highways also identify areas at greatest risk of flooding through their Drainage Data Management System, helping to prioritise upgrades to the drainage system which may be required.

What is the borough doing to mitigate flood risk ?

1. Flood investigations

We have recently undertaken flood risk investigations under Section 19 of Flood and Water Management Act 2010 at Woodbrook Road in November 2022, and flood investigations are in progress for Kingsground, Plumstead High Street, Nathan Way and White Hart Road.

2. Updating Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)

Our existing LFRMS expired in 2015. As an interim measure the objectives and its accompanying action plan sets out flood risk management flood risk objectives were reviewed and revised in 2022. Phase I of the new the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) has been completed. The scoping exercise was completed by Flood Risk Consultancy Binnies. We aim to commission the new strategy in 2025, and the objectives will be developed and delivered in collaboration with risk management authorities, residents, and businesses.

3. Cooperation with other Risk Management Authorities

We currently meet with the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee on a quarterly basis and sit on the committee representing RBG, and the boroughs of Bexley, Lewisham and Bromley.

Water has no boundaries and the partnership facilities essential partnership working between the boroughs to reduce flood risk. The Royal Borough of Greenwich attends a monthly partnership call with the South East London Flood Risk Management (SELFRM) Group. The group consists of boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Lewisham, and the Environment Agency, and Thames Water.

RBG attends the Thamesmead and Marsh Dykes Partnership and the Ravensbourne Catchment Partnership which is hosted by local river restoration charity Thames 21

A working group with Thames Water, RBG Highways Team, and the LLFA has been established since the first quarter of 2024 to jointly investigate flooding hotspots within the borough.

We also attend the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) Flood and Water Management Group and London Drainage Engineers Group (LoDEG) through which the Royal of Greenwich contributes towards the development national strategy and recently the production of London's Surface Water Strategy.

4. The flooding team and planning teamwork partnership to ensure development does not increase flood risk elsewhere enabling the authority to satisfy their flood risk obligations on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition to this RBG also completed a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2019 to ensure that planned future development is at the lowest possible risk of flooding, where possible. We are working with the local plans team to produce a new in SFRA in 2025.
5. The flooding team play an important role in the planning system and support the delivery of green/blue development that best meets the needs of the local area through our role as a statutory consultee to the local planning authority. The number of planning applications we review has steadily grown; in 2020, we commented on 80 applications, and we are on track to comment on 220 applications for 2024/2025.
6. Our asset register is work in progress and we have recently developed a legal agreement with Thames Water enabling both organisations to share data. Thames Water have recently provided the authority with a GIS of their sewer network throughout the Royal Borough Greenwich. We have mapped locations for gullies, manholes, sewers, and flood defences within the Royal Borough of Greenwich in the asset register.
7. The Royal Borough of Greenwich is working on a Riverside Strategy with partners to enable opportunities for upgrading flood defences through planned developments. This Riverside Strategy will also facilitate the

creation of good public spaces, which will provide flood protection whilst being green, accessible, vibrant, and attractive. Riverside Strategies need to be in place by 2030 to enable future planning regarding flood defence upgrades in line with these visions.

8. The Royal Borough of Greenwich have been working with Metis to revise the existing Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and to develop a SuDS opportunity map to identify strategic locations where SuDS and flood alleviation schemes could be constructed to reduce flooding, and convert the grey to green. The creation of a SuDS opportunity mapping has the potential to provide the evidence base that is necessary to unlock partnership funding from Thames RFCC.
9. The Royal Borough of Greenwich recently completed a flood alleviation scheme in Clothworkers Wood in June 2024. The Clothworkers Woods scheme is a Natural Flood Management (NFM) scheme in the Shooters Hill area, designed to utilise Clothworkers Wood as a flood storage area for the Wickham Valley Watercourse through the creation of a wet woodland. The was commissioned as there is a high risk of flooding to Willow Dene School and the surrounding urbanised area. This is particularly due to the risk of blockages to the existing culvert inlet near the Willow Dene School. The Surface water flood map as shown below identifies approximately 30 properties at risk of flooding, predominantly along Edison Grove.
10. The Royal Borough of Greenwich successfully secured £1 million in funding from the Natural Flood Management Programme initiated by the Environment Agency and Defra in September 2023. The £25 million fund attracted over 600 applications, and 40 projects are set to benefit from this fund. 40 projects to benefit from £25 million funding for natural flood management - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
11. Remedial works to streams. Since the flooding on Woodbrook Road. RBG has taken the lead and are regularly maintaining the river at the rear of Woodbrook Road to keep the grids and grilles clear of debris. The ownership of this asset remains unclear. RBG recently removed a river wall from the River Quaggy under the instruction from the Environment Agency. The river wall was knocked into the stream by the fire service and was causing an obstruction to flow.

12. The flood team also oversees Highways Drainage Infrastructure. Our future plan is to adopt a risk-based approach to asset management and to facilitate plan we are investigating options to purchase an asset management app called Karrbontech. It is envisaged through this app we can map both RBG's and Thames Waters network, and monitor silt levels, gully jetting and emptying. Our current programme is to maintain gullies annually, however this is not always the best approach as some gullies require emptying more frequently, and some do not requiring emptying for 4 years.

What and are the current and future challenges and barriers?

Climate Change and aging infrastructure

We are facing more weather extremes in London and across the U.K, climate change is leading to heavier rainfall and extreme floods across the country. As well needing to adapt to the impacts of climate change, we are confronted with the challenges of aging infrastructure. The combined risks of climate change and aging infrastructure creates an environment for floods. These impacts can be reduced through installation of SuDS throughout the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

Policy and resourcing

Defra plan to Implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in 2024. Schedule 3 will make sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) mandatory in new developments in England. The LLFA will become a SuDS Approval Body (SAB), and SuDS schemes will require approval from the local authority acting in its capacity as a SAB in addition to other permissions from planning and highways. All sites that meet the SAB approval thresholds will require a SAB approval to be in place prior to starting construction, New developments including Permitted Development (PD) and minor development require the use of SuDS. It will be mandatory for the authority to adopt SuDS schemes approved by the SAB.

Current resources

Prior to 2020, the flood service was managed by one member of staff and whilst we were delivering projects, we were not robust in responding to planning applications. The flood service was subsequently re-established, allowing the flood service to establish a pipeline of projects to deliver on top of our obligation to respond to planning applications. As part of the departmental re-organisation which is currently being implemented, we

expect to bring the service up to a resourcing level consistent with that of other local boroughs.

We will, in addition, continue to work with consultancy partners (primarily Metis and Aecom) when their technical expertise is required.

6. **Next Steps**

- 6.1 The Chair will set out closing remarks and make recommendations to the relevant decision maker as required at the meeting and these will be published as an appendix. The Relevant decision maker will respond to the recommendations in a separate published appendix and both will be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee/Panel.

7. **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications**

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|---|--|---|
| Legal including Human Rights Act | The purpose of this report is to advise the Panel on the current status and future work programme of the Council related to flood risk and water management. As such, no decisions are required, and no legal implications arise. | Eleanor Penn, Assistant Head of Legal Services (Planning & Procurement), 20th September 2024 |
| Finance and other resources | This report provides an overview of the statutory responsibilities of the Royal Borough of Greenwich as a flood risk management authority and the role of partners involved in flood risk reduction. This includes the role of Royal Greenwich as a local planning authority and a category one responder. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. | Sue Rock Accountancy Business Change Manager 19/09/2024 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Equalities | <i>The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users. The Council's Equality and Equity Charter is integrated into all projects. Developing a best practice approach enables the authority to meet its obligations under the Council's Equality Objectives 2020 - 2024</i> | <i>Ashish Patel Flood Risk Manager 17/09/24</i> |
| Climate change | <i>This report supports the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan as the Lead Local Flood Authority encourages developers and partners to install Greener SuDS to provide biodiversity, amenity, water quality and quantity</i> | <i>Ashish Patel Flood Risk Manager 17/09/24</i> |
| Community Engagement | <i>No community engagement was conducted as part of this report</i> | <i>Ashish Patel Flood Risk Manager 17/09/24</i> |

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|--|--|---------------------|
| TRANSPORT AND PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL | DATE 3 rd October 2024 | ITEM NO 6 |
| Update on Local Plan, Planning Enforcement and Planning Performance | WARD (S) All | |
| CHIEF OFFICER Director of Regeneration, Enterprise & Skills | | |
| DECISION CLASSIFICATION <i>Scrutiny Report</i> | | |

I. Recommendations to decision maker:

To consider a report on the Cabinet Member for an update on the local plan, planning enforcement and planning performance and make recommendations to the Executive, if necessary.

To agree that the report and any recommendations be submitted to the Chief Executive.

To note that the report and response to the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

Links to Our Greenwich missions

I.1 The Service contributes to the delivery of Our Greenwich (Corporate Plan) 2030 priorities. With the exception of one Mission (strike out for clarity below) all the missions are relevant to Planning. The Services primarily works towards the delivery of the following Our Greenwich Missions, with the relevant Service identified in brackets after the Mission:

People

1. People's health supports them in living their best life (Policy, DM)
2. People will not experience discrimination (Policy, DM)
3. Children and young people can reach their full potential (Policy, DM)
4. Everyone in Greenwich is safer, and feels safer (Policy, DM, Plan Enf)

Place

6. People in Greenwich have access to a safe and secure home that meets their needs (Policy, DM)
7. It is easier, safer and greener to move around the borough and the rest of London (Policy, DM)
8. Development delivers positive change to an area for existing and new communities (Policy, DM, Plan Enf)
9. Neighbourhoods are vibrant, safe and attractive with community services that meet the needs of local residents (Policy, DM)
10. Greenwich plays an active role in tackling the climate crisis and improving environmental sustainability, in line with our commitment of being carbon neutral by 2030 (Policy, DM, BC)

Economy

11. Everyone has the opportunity to secure a good job (Policy, DM)
12. Town centres, high streets and shopping parades are vibrant, prosperous, well-maintained places that meet the needs of local people (Policy, DM)
13. Our economy attracts new high value businesses whilst strengthening its foundations (Policy, DM)
14. The voluntary, community and socially motivated sectors in Greenwich are strengthened and able to provide more support to the most in need (Policy, DM)

Communities

15. Our Council is better at listening to communities, and communities feel they are heard (Policy, DM)
16. We develop networks with communities, key partners and businesses to meet need and address challenges together (Policy)
17. We design our services around the needs of our residents (All)

Organisation

18. Our Council is an adaptive organisation, enabling it to navigate the increasing number of challenges it faces while remaining financially sustainable. (All)
19. Our Council works in the most efficient and effective ways possible. (All)
20. Our Council is a great place to work, with a diverse workforce who have the right skills and are motivated and empowered to deliver. (All)

1.2 All the work of Planning services (Policy, Development Management, Enforcement) contributes to the Corporate Missions as identified above.

1.3 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on Planning Services Performance and the Local Plan. The brief required consideration of the following three main areas:

- Local Plan Update.
- Update on planning enforcement.
- Update on performance.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Report will provide an overview of the local plan process to date, planning enforcement and planning performance. This section of the report will cover the three areas identified in the brief as outlined in Section 1.

2.2 Before we go into the detail of each sector it is useful to set down what planning is and what it does. Planning is about big things - it is about sustainable development – balancing the economic, environmental and social impacts of new development.

2.3 Planning is not just about dealing with planning applications; it's about the long-term vision captured in the Borough's plan, and the decisions then made on applications through this decision-making framework.

2.4 It will impact on such issues as housing, job creation, climate change, infrastructure, and investment and the quality of people's lives in the borough. Planning cuts across all of the 'Our Greenwich' Missions. Planning is also often seen as controversial with opposing arguments as to why development should or shouldn't be allowed. Finding the right balance between different objectives is what makes planning both challenging and exciting.

2.5 The purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development and is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations – this is a principle enshrined in the National Planning Policy Framework (Government Guidance).

- 2.6 The planning system is a key contributor to making this happen, setting a long-term vision for a place and managing and balancing these competing interests and delivering change on the ground.
- 2.7 There are 3 aspects to planning in local government – Spatial Policy Planning – formulating and implementing a plan, Development Management which deals with development through planning applications, and finally planning enforcement that deals with any harmful breaches of planning.
- 2.8 As planning manages the right to develop land there is often a conflict between what a developer wants to do (private interests) and what the local community (public interest) would like to see, and these different interests need to be balanced.
- 2.9 So, what is important in the planning system? Planning is a positive driver for place-making, regeneration and good growth. It isn't just about stopping poor quality or destructive development from happening. It is proactive and it is about delivering a local plan for the whole community. It is about focusing and working to encourage investment in the kind of development that will be more likely to deliver the vision that you, your communities and neighbourhoods wish to see for the Borough. This is enshrined in the local plan and then translated through the work of development management and enforced, if breached and harmful through planning enforcement.

2.10 The Local Plan

The Royal Greenwich Local Plan sits alongside the London Plan and any neighbourhood plans in the area to form the Council's Development Plan. The Development Plan is the starting point for decisions on planning applications and the Local Plan sets out the Council's vision and aspirations for new development in the Royal Borough.

- 2.11 The process for updating a Local Plan is lengthy and complex. The Council is bound by regulatory and national planning policy requirements to prepare the Local Plan in a series of stages. These are:
1. Initial "Issues and Options" consultation
 2. Evidence Gathering and plan preparation
 3. Draft Plan consultation
 4. "Soundness" consultation
 5. Examination in Public

- 2.11 The Council undertook its issues and options consultation in Summer 2023. It was based around five “Big Themes” which were: housing and communities; climate change and environment; town centres and high streets; design and heritage, and transport and movement. The consultation received 303 responses. Subsequently officers have held workshops with the Local Plan Members’ Working Group and equivalent officer groups representing teams across the Council to gather further feedback and input on the content of the Local Plan.
- 2.12 Officers are currently in the evidence gathering and plan preparation phase. The following studies are currently being undertaken to shape and inform policy:
- Local Housing Needs Assessment
 - Employment Needs Assessment and Employment Land Review
 - Ecology Study
 - Retail and Leisure Study
 - Playing Pitch Strategy
 - Metropolitan Open Land Review
 - Open Space and Local Nature Infrastructure Study
 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment¹
- 2.13 This evidence is complemented by our existing evidence base:
- Characterisation and Tall Buildings Study
 - Towards Net Zero Carbon Study
- 2.14 The Council will also use other sources of data and evidence, including other Council strategies, in devising its planning policies.
- 2.15 The Council also conducted a “Call for Sites” in Summer 2024 to invite prospective development sites to be put forward for potential allocation in the Local Plan. 130 sites were received through this exercise and officers are now starting to analyse the sites put forward and consider their development potential.
- 2.16 The Local Plan must also be prepared in accordance with the Council’s Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is essentially the timetable for preparing the Local Plan. The latest Local Development Scheme was published in 2022.

¹ London-wide assessment undertaken by the Greater London Authority

2.17 Due to a combination of staffing issues, other commitments and various changes to national planning policy and the planning system, including recently proposed changes under consultation at the time of writing, the timetable in the existing LDS is now out-of-date. A new LDS will need to be prepared to update the timetable and confirm the timeframe for the next stage of consultation.

2.18 Planning Enforcement

Planning Enforcement plays an important role in the planning process ensuring that the developments are completed in accordance with appropriate policy and design aspirations of the Borough and where they are not that this is addressed and rectified. Whilst breaches of planning control are not usually a criminal offence there are legislative powers (except in the case of listed buildings, some breaches in conservation areas and works to a tree protected by a tree preservation order etc) that enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure that where necessary and appropriate formal action can be taken to require remedial action

2.19 The Planning Enforcement team is a small team with three full time planning enforcement officers, one principal planning enforcement officer and a planning enforcement and appeals manager covering the whole borough and a wide range of different type of case work. Over the past year the team has been challenged with some capacity issues with two officers leaving and the posts being recruited to. One post is currently still vacant, but recruitment.

2.20 Despite the capacity issues the team have worked to their full ability and it is clear from the monthly figures which are produced, that the team have continued to receive a consistent number of planning enforcement enquiries this year so far and are making significant progress in resolving cases.

2.21 The table below shows the previous year's figures in comparison with the year to date.

| Years | Open | Closed | No of Notices |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|
| April 24- To date | 229 | 596 | 50 |
| April 23- March 24 | 599 | 636 | 146 |

2.22 In addition to the investigation process for all cases, other cases require further legal work leading to appeal and prosecution action. Currently

there are 7 Enforcement Notices that are pending appeal decision with the Planning Inspectorate and 2 cases are pending prosecution.

- 2.23 Within the current year there have been two Planning Enforcement Appeal outcomes, with one appeal dismissed and the Enforcement Notice upheld, and another withdrawn by the applicant leading to the notice coming into effect. These two cases are now pending compliance with the notice requirements they are within time to address these requirements to date.
- 2.24 There has been one case brought to prosecution for non-compliance with an Enforcement Notice where the defendant was found guilty, fined £3446 and ordered to pay costs of £2100 to the Council. This notice is now due to be complied with by December 2024.
- 2.25 The Mast Quay Enforcement Notice, from investigation, report drafting and notice drafting prior to its issue and the public information, distribution of the notice and information and the Inquiry process itself, documentation and process that accompanies it has been an incredibly labour-intensive case. Whilst we await the Inspectorate's decision, we are confident that our best possible case was put forward with everyone involved working together. Once a decision is received it is inevitable that either way it will lead to a further considerable amount of work going forward.
- 2.26 The ongoing and steady receipt of new enquiries and therefore the number of cases each officer is investigating at any one time has been considered as part of a review of the enforcement process and procedures. The Planning Enforcement Strategy is currently under review and will set out the improvements to the process aimed at improving the workflow of enforcement casework and give officers more manageable caseloads that are considerate of the team and officers capacity.
- 2.27 There is an annual report for the Appeals and Enforcement team for 2023-2024 currently being drafted which will be finalised in Autumn.

Planning Performance

- 2.28 This section of the report will provide an overview of planning performance. This section will focus on Development Management as the preceding sectors have focused on Planning Policy and Planning

Enforcement.

- 2.29 Development Management is split into Majors and Non-Major developments. The Service structured into 3 teams. A Majors Teams dealing with proposals of 10 units or more, or 1000sqm + of new floorspace and two area teams – East and West dealing with non-major proposals of less than 10 units, or up to 999sqm of floorspace.
- 2.30 Development Management receives between 4000 to 4500 applications each year. For the six year period 2018/19 to 2023/24 this averages at 4294 applications p.a. This includes everything from major applications, non-majors applications including householder application, change of use, listed building, prior notifications, submission of details and tree applications.
- 2.31 Central Government has criteria for designating authorities in special measures for slow or poor-quality decision making. These are

i) Speed of decision making:

- Major Applications – less than 60% of decisions made within 13 weeks or without extension of time
- Non Majors – less than 70% of decisions made within 8 weeks or without extension of time

ii) Quality of decision making:

For Appeals 10% of an authority's total number of decisions on applications made during the assessment period being overturned at appeal.

2.32 Performance

The following table gives an overview of performance over the last 4 years and is broken down categories of applications.

| | 23/24 | 22/23 | 21/22 | 20/21 |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Majors (PS2) | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Non Majors (PS2) | 88.25% | 92% | 92.67% | 95.47% |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Others (PS2) | 91% | 87.75% | 93.33% | 94.3% |
| PSI | 54.10% | 51% | 52% | 58% |

*Note % figures includes extension of time or planning performance agreements.

- Performance on major applications is good with 100% of applications determined within the required timeframe or with a planning performance agreement (agreed extension of time). All major applications are dealt with by planning performance agreements which sets down a reasonable and realistic timeframe for determining major applications outside the normal 13-week period.
- Performance on non-major applications has ranged between 88% - 95% over the reporting period.
- PSI applications includes certificates, prior notifications, submission of details, trees. Performance in this category is impeded solely by submission of details. Certificates, Trees and prior notification are dealt within the 6 or 8 week timeframes depending on application type.

| | 23/24 | 22/23 | 21/22 | 20/21 |
|--------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Appeal | 64.25% | 63.5% | 57% | 51% |

- Appeal performance for the year 23/24 and 22/23 is well within the government performance criteria. In 23/24 the Borough dealt with 128 appeals of which 64% of appeals were dismissed, 36% allowed. performance dipped in 21/22 and 20/21. When appeal decisions are received, they are reviewed, and consideration is given as to whether it would result in a change to our approach to decision making going forward.

Backlog

2.33 Many LPA have struggled with determining applications for several years. This frustrates applicants who want a decision, residents who are objecting and want resolution, and officers who carry too large caseloads to keep on top of workloads and bear the brunt of these frustrations. Backlogs have resulted due to many factors, but the primary reason is staffing levels not matching the volume of applications a service receives.

2.34 The following table shows a snapshot of applications over the statutory time period from November 2020 to September 2024. As of April 24,

this has decreased through various internal initiatives to reduce the backlog. The current backlog levels are still considered to be at unacceptable levels and further work needs to be done to reduce these further, especially in the major team.

| Teams | Nov 2020 | April 2023 | April 2024 | Sept 2024 |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| East | 132 | 77 | 43 | 39 |
| West | 153 | 120 | 50 | 61 |
| Majors | 386 | 425 | 391 | 340 |

Footnote: Majors - In July 2023, 323 cases were older than 12 months (83%). By August 2024, 189 cases are over 12 months (53%). The backlog is reducing, and focus has been on the older, more difficult submissions.

- 2.35 The service has undertaken a review is to understand our service problems, understand why a backlog occurred in RBG in the first place, find solutions where possible and focus on what we able to do to ensure we minimise this happening again in the future.
- 2.36 The service has put significant effort into reducing the backlog, whilst this work is not finished, we do not want to see the backlog increasing in the future.

Challenges affecting Performance.

- 2.37 As referenced above in respect of backlogs there are a number of challenges that affect performance, these include:
- staff shortages,
 - no head of development management in the current structure,
 - business support shortages,
 - service failures (errors at validation and consultation),
 - lack of communication with agents,
 - consultation delays,
 - poor quality submission of applications
 - delayed consultee responses.
- 2.38 These challenges have been reviewed within the service and several improvements have been introduced or will be introduced imminently. These include:
- responsive recruitment,
 - re-organisation including the introduction of a Head of DM,
 - strengthening internal specialist input,

- influencing speedy external consultee responses,
- committee changes introduced to speed up non majors application being presented to committee,
- work with agents to improve quality of submissions and prompt decision making.

3. Consultation

No consultation has been undertaken for this report.

4. Next Steps

The Chair will set out closing remarks and make recommendations to the relevant decision maker as required at the meeting. The Relevant decision maker will respond to the recommendations, and both will be recorded for the next meeting of the Committee/Panel.

5. Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|---|--|--|
| Legal including Human Rights Act | <p>The purpose of this report is to update the Scrutiny Panel on the Council’s local plan, planning performance and planning enforcement in order that the Panel can make recommendations to the Cabinet if desired.</p> <p>As such, there are no legal implications arising directly from the report.</p> | <p>Eleanor Penn, Assistant Head of Legal Services (Planning & Procurement), 23rd September 2024</p> |
| Finance and other resources | <p>This report provides an update on Planning Services Performance and the Local Plan. The brief required consideration of the following three main areas:</p> <p>Local Plan Update.</p> <p>Update on planning enforcement.</p> | <p>Sue Rock Accountancy Business change Manager 18/09/2024</p> |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Update on performance.</p> <p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.</p> | |
| Equalities | <p>The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.</p> <p>The report does not make any contribution to the Council's Equality and Equity Charter and the Council's Equality Objectives 2020-2024.</p> | <p>Victoria Geoghegan, Assistant Director, 17th Sept 2024</p> |
| Climate change | <p>The report makes no contribution to the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan agreed by Cabinet on 18 November 2020.</p> | <p>Victoria Geoghegan, Assistant Director, 17th Sept 2024</p> |
| Risk Management | <p>n/a</p> <p>As this is an update report there is no risk associated with briefing report</p> | <p>Victoria Geoghegan, Assistant Director, 17th Sept 2024</p> |
| Community Engagement | <p>n/a</p> <p>No consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this update report</p> | <p>Victoria Geoghegan, Assistant Director, 17th Sept 2024</p> |

11. **Report Appendices**

None.

12. **Background Papers**

None.

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|--|---|
| TRANSPORT AND PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL | DATE 3 rd October 2024 |
| TITLE Commissioning of Future Reports | ITEM NO 7 |
| CHIEF OFFICER Director of Communities, Environment and Central | CABINET MEMBER |

1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to note the work items that are scheduled to be presented to the meeting of the Transport and Place Scrutiny Panel taking place on 20th November 2024.
- 1.2 The Panel is asked to consider the scope of forthcoming reports and specify any detailed requirements.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 This report advises the Panel of items scheduled for its consideration for the municipal year 2024/25.

3. **Report**

- 3.1 The Transport and Place Scrutiny Panel is scheduled to receive the following reports at its meeting on 20th November 2024:

| 20th November 2024 (Meeting 3) | |
|--|---|
| Item | Scope/Theme |
| Transport Work Programme | To receive an update on the transport work programme over 2024-2025. |
| Third Party Strategic Projects (Transport) | To receive an update on strategic transport projects being delivered within the borough by third parties. |
| Cabinet Member Update | To receive an update from the Cabinet Member for Planning, Estate Regeneration and Development Update |

- 3.2 The Panel is asked to consider the items outlined above, to determine any specific requirements, prior to those reports being commissioned. This will ensure that its lines of enquiry are addressed, information provided is relevant and appropriate, and scrutiny practice is well directed and effective.

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Transport and Place Scrutiny Panel
Draft Meeting Schedule – 2024/2025

| Date of Meetings | Report / Items |
|---|---|
| Meeting No 1 25th July 2024 OCCURED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member - Climate Action, Sustainability and Transport • Cabinet Member Update - Planning, Estate renewal and Development |
| Meeting No 2 3rd October 2024 SCHEDULED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Risk/Water Management • Planning • Cabinet Member Update - Planning, Estate Regeneration and Development |
| Meeting No 3 5th September 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Work Programme • Third Party Strategic Projects(Transport) |
| Meeting No 4 5th December 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways Asset and Risk Management • Regenerating our Greenwich • Capital Projects update |
| Meeting No 5 16th January 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Transport Scrutiny |
| Meeting No 6 3rd April 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Asset Review • Thames Path connectivity and upgrade time-limited review |

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