

REPORT TO: Scrutiny and Overview Committee

3 April 2014

LEAD OFFICER: Jo Mills, Director of Planning & New Communities

CONSERVATION SERVICE REVIEW

Purpose

1. To provide the Scrutiny and Overview Committee with details of the implementation measures we are putting in place by 5 May 2014 to support new ways of working in the Urban Design and Conservation Consultancy Team.
2. This is a not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Scrutiny endorses the measures as being sufficient to drive the level of change sought for the new Urban Design and Conservation Consultancy team.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. This report is brought to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee to:

Clarify the proposed measures to support implementation of the new Service and to provide the opportunity for Scrutiny to discuss the extent to which they will support the new Urban Design and Conservation Consultancy team.

Executive Summary

5. This report outlines the proposed changes we are putting in place to provide the customer with a marked change of experience when dealing with the Council on all Conservation and Urban Design issues.
6. It describes each measure and the impact this will have on achieving change and is supplemented by **Appendix 1**. This is a clear matrix which shows what the customer would have experienced in the past compared to what the recommended changes are seeking to achieve.
7. We are proposing a series of measures to support the officers in working in this new way. This includes the DC Officer who will be empowered as the key contact and project manager for all applications, taking decisions on conservation and setting of listed building matters which would previously been undertaken by the specialist officer in the former Conservation Team.
8. The report provides details on a wider range of measures which includes training and new processes and procedures, which are all written down to provide clarity and consistency in approach.

9. We have provided a breakdown of responsibilities of the Planning Officer and Consultancy Officer for reasons of clarity, but also to demonstrate the shift in responsibilities to create a much more customer focused service.
10. Finally the report provides details of progress made in recruiting the new team and arrangements put in place to provide business continuity.
11. The report provides the opportunity for Members to discuss the recommendations and ensure that combined, they will achieve the desired outcomes. We have had to start putting some measures in place, such as training to ensure that staff are sufficiently up-skilled before the new service starts on 5 May. We are also pleased to report that we have had positive feedback from the Agents Forum on 17 March, that they are starting to see the benefits from the changes we have made.

Background

12. The report to Scrutiny in February 2014 provided an update on the broad strategy for implementing change within the Urban Design and Conservation and Services. This included:
 - A fit for purpose structure;
 - Recruitment of a new team who have the right competencies and professional skills;
 - A vision for the new team; and
 - A phased approach to implementation based on the principles approved by the Portfolio Holder in October 2013.
13. It is worth confirming that delivery of the previous Conservation Service was variable, it received compliments as well as complaints. The problems described in **Appendix 1** did not happen consistently, however their occurrence did present a sufficient risk to the Council. Customer dissatisfaction was cited as one of the main drivers for change.

Considerations

Proposed changes to the customer experience

14. We are seeking Members' views on the proposed measures, which have been designed so customers experience a marked difference when they access the services and also to ensure our officers are focusing their effort where needed. The proposed measures are:
 - a. Single point of contact with a named DC Planning Officer for each case, which will address the problems experienced previously with inconsistent opinions being given by different officers on cases.
 - b. The DC Planning Officer will use their professional skills and refer to a written triage process to draw in expertise of specialist staff as consultees only where it is needed. This will avoid the problem previously experienced where specialist officers were getting bogged down in unnecessarily detail.
 - c. The DC Planning Officer will manage the level of detail requested from the specialist officers as consultees and will weigh it up against other considerations before discussing any required changes to schemes with customers. Again this will help mitigate unnecessary detail being discussed with the customer.

- d. A Duty Officer providing an accessible advice service, providing Board advice on conservation as well as general planning issues; consistency will be achieved by developing the skills and knowledge of officers and providing them with FAQs. Previously customers complained of difficulty in getting a consistent view from officers, they were not always available and customers were often asked to write in with queries and provide detailed information to get a general view.
- e. Access to specialist staff on request; the process will still be managed by the Case Officer e.g. meetings to discuss changes to a scheme requested in a consultation response for an application. This will ensure when customers do need to discuss specialist advice, that it will be facilitated in the most efficient way. This will avoid the issues in the past where specialists entered into prolonged debates with customers with no concrete outcome.
- f. Same day emergency service to ensure that customers get quick decisions on important issues which require an immediate response. This would be piloted as a service for conservation issues for 3 months and is proposed the cost for the service should be £100 to cover costs. Previously it was difficult to get a quick response from officers, which presented a risk to our heritage buildings.
- g. Initial view pre-application service piloted for 3 months for listed building proposals only; providing a speedy in-principle view on whether customers' initial ideas are likely to be acceptable. This is provided on site with the customer present and gives the opportunity for the Council to steer proposals in the right direction, by discussing ideas at an early stage. This will benefit the customer by avoiding unnecessary time and expenditure in pursuing ideas which may be unacceptable. It is proposed the cost for this service should be £350.
- h. For larger applications, project management from initial feasibility to implementation of proposals by Case Officer on request, drawing in specialist skills in a co-ordinated and controlled way and ensuring delivery is timely. This will address previous concerns about delays and fragmented advice by different officers dealing with different aspects of the case.
- i. The Consultancy Team will provide a single point of contact for co-ordinating multi-disciplinary advice when requested by a Case Officer. Will also draw in sustainability/public art expertise as required. This will address the problem of delays and customers previously getting mixed messages about different aspects of cases and being asked for too much detail on relatively insignificant matters.
- j. The Consultancy Team will provide a single point of contact and undertake an enabling role for specialist conservation projects, such managing buildings at risk and wildlife enhancement scheme. Projects will be delivered according to a set of specific requirements defined by customers/partners and have clear timeframes. The team will facilitate partnership arrangements and use expertise to present options and new ideas, whilst respecting those of others. The service has previously had criticism about being too directive and always listening to others.

15. The benefits of the new service are cited against potential customer scenarios in **Appendix 1**. Customers will be provided with more certainty, timely decisions, and we will use our expertise to help them meet their desired outcomes whilst achieving high quality design and conserving our important historic, ecological and landscape assets.
16. It is proposed that the emergency service and initial view pre-application service both be trialed as a pilot for three months, this will allow us to monitor customer feedback and assess the implications on staff providing it. We will then decide whether it need to be adapted and if it should be extended to other planning proposals.

Supporting staff

17. We are also seeking Members' views on the following measures we are putting in place to support Planning Officers:
 - We have already undertaken staff skills analysis and surveys to understand the level of expertise in conservation and urban design amongst planners who are not included as specialists in the Consultancy team.
 - It has been interesting to note that some of the DC Planners had considerable conservations skills, which they were not previously empowered to use. These officers will be encouraged informally to support other less experienced officers in their decision making.
 - From 5 May 2014, DC officers will be making decisions on all conservation applications and setting of listed building applications. We have designed and delivered training in March based on what DC officers have told us they need to support them in doing this. All DC, New Communities and Policy Planners have attended and feedback has been very positive.
 - Follow-up training will be provided in April 2014 and we will then work on developing training needed to support officers in assessing some listed building applications and also in ecology, landscape and urban design issues.
 - We are regularly reviewing effectiveness of training and will use feedback to adapt the design of courses and to inform personal development plans for officers.
 - Easy to read, succinct guidance to support Planning Officers in making informed decisions on proposals in conservation areas and some listed building applications. For example stepping them through the process of assessing a common conservation proposal, such as a barn conversion or alternation to a thatched cottage. An example of officer guidance prepared for heritage statements is included in **Appendix 2**.
 - Written approaches on common considerations such as double glazing in historic buildings are prepared by the specialist officers and made available to all Planners so they are confident in dealing with issues consistently and efficiently. We have drafted a list of considerations with officers based on their experiences and specialist officers are preparing stances on how they will be dealt with. We will discuss stances at team meetings to reach a consensus on approach.

- Frequently asked questions for common customer enquiries to support Duty Officers in providing advice. These will also be put on the web to enable the public to self-serve, allowing professionals officers to spend their time in the most beneficial way.
- New process maps will be prepared to provide a consistent and clear record on how they will deal with customer queries, applications and other service requests. They will provide clarity on where effort should be focused and when different parts of the process should be undertaken, to get things done on time and allow the triage system to work.
- A written triage system which provides clarity to Planning Officers on what they need to pass to specialists for an opinion. It will also identify exceptions for example if the DC officer spots a complex issue on his initial site visit, which was not covered in application description
- Tools which support our approach such as:
 - Consultation templates, which will be specific about the level of detail Case Officers need
 - Timesheets which allow the Consultancy Team to recharge for their services and manage and monitor time spent on specific service requests. This will ensure they are being dealt with efficiently and maximise the use of our ICT system, to improve information flows.

Roles

18. As indicated above, the role of the Planning Officer and that of the Consultancy Officer is very different from the dynamic between the Planning Officer and officers in the former Conservation Service. The roles outlined below have been designed to provide the most efficient and effective service to the customer.
19. The role of the Planning Officer is to:
 - Provide a key point of contact for customers on all applications, pre-application and Duty Officer advice
 - Take the overall decision in relation to all applications
 - Decide when to engage specialists and what weight to give their advice in context of other considerations
 - Assess considerations in Conservation Areas and some Listed Building proposals
 - Manage the application process achieving effective outcomes in an efficient manner
 - Manage direct customer contact between the customer and specialist if required
 - Help define the terms of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) including specific requirements from Consultancy Team and performance targets
 - Accountable for delivering planning applications and monitoring the Consultancy Officer's performance against the agreed targets in the SLA

20. The role of the Consultancy Officer is to:

- Provide constructive, enabling and timely specialist advice to the Case Officer as a consultee
- Meet with the customer if instructed by the Case Officer, being open to ideas and provide clear, constructive and succinct guidance
- Find creative solutions to seemingly complex problems
- Where possible, provide customers with an indication whether something is acceptable as early in the process as possible
- Support and in some cases design training and other measures to up-skill Planning Officers and others including Councillors, Parish Councillors and partners where relevant
- To be the key point of contact for specialists on site works reporting to the DC Case Officer as overall Project Manager for discharge of conditions
- Develop and share best practice, using it to promote the Consultancy Service
- Increase understanding and convey the essence of a scheme from a specialist perspective and take a pragmatic approach relative to the value of the asset
- Regularly monitor and seek feedback from customers on performance
- To explore options were there is capacity to provide specialist consultancy to other neighbouring authorities and Parish Councils

Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

21. It is proposed that Service Level Agreements be used as an active tool in supporting the Consultancy Team in adopting a business-like approach. They will form an agreement between the relevant Planning Team and Consultancy Team, providing clarity on:

- The roles of the Planning Officer and Consultancy Officer
- Requirements of what the Consultancy Team needs to deliver opposite internal customer requirements i.e. DC, policy and New Communities
- Targets and expectations for level of service
- Management arrangements for the interaction between the planning teams and consultancy unit

Recruiting the new team and business continuity

22. The Council has recently advertised vacancies in the new Consultancy Team. The advertisements have a high profile on the most popular website for jobs in planning, and also for one post, on a specialist website for historic buildings jobs. Interviews are scheduled for late March 2014.

23. Four employees have transferred or been appointed to the new team and one employee has been given a permanent post elsewhere in the department. In addition, an interim officer applied and has been appointed to the part-time post of Consultancy Officer (Landscape).

24. We are using the services of Essex Design to provide additional urban design and historic building resources whilst the new team is being recruited. Essex Design is part of Essex County Council and operates a similar consultancy service to a number of local authorities. This is being undertaken under a shared service arrangement. We will be exploring the potential for this relationship to be developed further to provide professional supervision for the new team and also top up resource should

demand for service increase in the future. There would be significant merit in this as Essex Design are already operating in a business approach and are happy to share lessons learned from their own experiences.

Managing and Monitoring Excellent Customer

25. Providing excellent customer service is central to everything we do and as such we have developed a set of customer commitments to provide clarity on what internal and external customers should expect from the Consultancy Team. A draft is included in **Appendix 3**.
26. It is proposed that we regularly monitor our performance against targets agreed with our customers and use this information to review and adapt our service.
27. We will celebrate our successes and use examples of good practice to promote our service.

Implications

28. The proposals above are intended to achieve positive outcomes for the delivery of the Conservation Service. These are intended to improve customer service and deliver a more efficient fit for purpose solution.

Financial

29. The review will make a contribution to the corporate savings target, which will be reported in the Medium Term Financial Strategy in November 2013. It will operate in a business-like fashion, re-charging for time spent on paid services such as pre-applications and using management tools such as timesheet to monitor and manage time spent on activities, to ensure they are being delivered efficiently.

Legal

30. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Staffing

31. We are in the process of recruiting to the Consultancy Unit, individuals who have the appropriate professional skills and competences to fulfil the role outlined above

Risk Management

32. Risks are recorded and monitored in the project risk register. There will still be an element of uncertainty for staff and customers as we enter the final stages of implementation, before the new service starts on 5 May 2014. We will continue to provide support and additional resources if necessary, to maintain delivery of services.

Equality and Diversity

33. We will prepare a training and development plan as part of the recommendations and will follow Council policies on staffing changes.

Climate Change

34. The training and development plan will include best practice on energy saving/conserving measures into design and conservation.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

35. The team identified a list of agents who regularly use the Conservation Service. Telephone interviews were carried out, and feedback is reported above. The feedback will be used to inform the recommendations outlined above.
36. Research of best practice has been gathered from other local authorities, professional bodies and relevant British standards. These have been used to shape recommended processes and procedures.
37. No consultation was undertaken with the Youth Council.

Effect on Strategic Aims

38. The recommendations seek to achieve the Council's three "A"s.
39. Conservation has an important role to play "*in offering an outstanding quality of life for our residents,*" however we are aware that measures are put in place to ensure that officers consider conservation in relation to wider considerations such as the Council's growth agenda including to create "*opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world leading innovation.* "

Background Papers

- Planning Services Update presented to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder's meeting on 24 July 2013
- Scrutiny report February 2014

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Appendix 1: Customer scenarios : Comparison of the new customer service with that provided previously (put in landscape)

	Customer Scenario	Previous Service	New Service Provided	Level of new Service	Benefits of new service to customer
1.	I am thinking about extending my property which is in a Conservation Area and would like to speak to someone to get some general advice about the process and what I need to consider.	Customer queries were largely dealt with by the Conservation Team and with the absence of an agreed approach stances on issues varied often by officer. There were reports of some delays in getting advice from officers.	<p>All technical questions, directed to the duty officer from the contact centre. The duty officer will provide general professional advice. The duty officer is available Monday to Friday 9:30 – 17:00. (Phase 1 measure in place by 5th May 2014)</p> <p>All Duty officers have been trained and are provided with FAQs based on analysis of customer queries. This ensures the advice they are giving is targeted and consistent.</p>	<p>We aim to return all calls on the same day.</p> <p>If Duty officers need to refer a question to a specialist, the specialist will aim to return the call within 2 days</p>	<p>A consistent approach to advice</p> <p>Certainty - an officer will provide advice within an agreed timeframe</p> <p>That other planning issues/considerations are more likely to be picked up by a DC officer than if the enquiry was passed directly to a specialist</p>
2.	I need to speak to someone to find out if the property I am thinking about buying is a listed building	Conservation officers dealt with all queries, affecting their capacity to deal with other matters. Officers were not consistently available at all times which led to delays in getting back to customers.	<p>All customer calls are routed through the contact centre. They will deal with non-technical questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether a property is in a conservation area or listed - Point customers to listings on the web - Fees <p>The contact centre has been provided with scripts and information prepared by professionals</p>	The contact centre answer all calls within the same day	<p>That professional officer time is freed up to provide a more responsive service on specialist matters</p> <p>More customers will receive an immediate response to relatively simple queries</p>

	Customer Scenario	Previous Service	New Service Provided	Level of new Service	Benefits of new service to customer
3.	I have a listed building and would like to make it more energy efficient – where can I get more information on this?	The Conservation team provided information on this issue however Stances taken varied from officer to officer. There have also been instances when advice given to customers has changed when issues had been discussed with others in the team.	<p>The duty officer can provide broad advice on what may or may not be acceptable.</p> <p>We are drafting a series of guidance for internal use on how common issues including managing energy efficiency should be dealt with. These will be used to compliment training, providing clarity and a reference point for DC officers as they upskill and take ownership of basic decision making in relation to historic Buildings, Ecology, Landscape Design and Urban Design considerations. (Guidance which will be in place by 5th May)</p> <p>As the emerging Local Plan proceeds through the next steps to adoption we will be looking at how some of this guidance can be adapted to become adopted guidance/policy when it will be made available to the public on the web. (We aim to have this in place by end of Phase 2 November 2014)</p>	We aim to deal with or return all duty calls on the same day	<p>Guidance and training will improve consistency of advice and minimise occurrences of different advice being given on the same proposal</p> <p>That the duty officer service will ensure that the majority of customers are provided with answers to their queries on the same day</p>
4.	I have some ideas on extending my listed building, I don't want to get plans drawn up yet until I get some guidance from the Council. I am	Generally the onus was on the applicant to provide officers with information to enable them to reach a view on whether a proposal would be acceptable. In some cases the	<p>The customer can submit an initial view pre-application.</p> <p>Requests will be assigned to a DC case officer. In this example there are planning, ecology and Historic buildings issues. The case officer will manage the process, making an appointment with the customer,</p>	We aim to provide an in principle view within 10 days of registering the customer service request, unless otherwise agreed with the customer	Customer can get a view on whether something is acceptable or not in principle at an early stage avoiding expensive mistakes and the drawing up of proposals which are not acceptable

	<p>concerned that I might have bats in my loft and am not sure if the extension will be too close to my neighbour.</p>	<p>level of detail required was not in proportion to the issue which needed to be considered. On some occasions this would have resulted in customers incurring expenditure in getting plans drawn up to be informed later that proposals were not acceptable.</p>	<p>decide which specialist officers go on site with him/her and co-ordinate input from each specialist in order to reach an overall view.</p> <p>This service will be pro-active we will offer positive and practical solutions where possible and provide clarity on next steps. We will confirm our view by email</p> <p>We will charge a set fee of £300 for this service. It will be piloted for three months after which time a decision made whether it will be continued, amended and extended to other areas of planning</p>		<p>There will be an opportunity to discuss various options at an early stage and agree a preferred way forward with the planning authority</p>
5.	<p>I have developed a business plan for my farm which includes wind turbines and conversion of some of my farm buildings into houses. I have had some plans drawn up and would like some detailed comments on what elements are acceptable and where I might need to modify my ideas</p>	<p>The Conservation service did not have a formal, consistent pre-application process on occasions it meant customers experienced delays securing views from officers. Queries sent directly to specialists presented a risk of other planning considerations being missed or impacts of recommendations not being considered in relation to other professions. For example some</p>	<p>Where more detailed advice is needed the customer can submit a pre-application request for written advice</p> <p>This will be assigned to a DC case officer who will co-ordinate input from specialists such as the historic buildings officer and landscape design officer. The pre-application pro-forma is being reviewed to enable the customer to be more specific about the level of detail they need from the Council and whether they would like a meeting on site to discuss proposals. Similarly the case officer will send a pro-forma to the specialist officer which will specify what aspects he/she wants them to comment on. This will help keep the advice focused and proportionate.</p>	<p>We aim to provide pre-application advice within 20 working days of registering the pre-application, unless the customer requests a site meeting which may prolong the process. We will always agree a new time frame with the customer if we need longer to come to a decision</p>	<p>That the customer will receive one, agreed response which has been co-ordinated by the case officer.</p> <p>That the process ensures that record are kept in one accessible place so that customers can be certain that the advice given will stand if they decide to delay submission of an application</p> <p>That there is provision made for the customer to discuss options and</p>

		<p>recommendations given were not compliant with building regulations.</p> <p>Records of advice provided were not always kept in one place which meant that when some officers left the organisation there was no record of what had been agreed.</p>			<p>agree a way forward with a DC officer, providing certainty prior to an application being submitted</p>
6.	<p>I have submitted a listed building application for replacement UPVC windows and have just received a message from the DC case officer asking me to call him.</p>	<p>All listed building applications were dealt with by the conservation team. Whilst many applications were processed within the target date, there was not an agreed approach to ensure customers were be informed as soon as possible when proposals were clearly unacceptable. This meant in some occasions customers were advised of problems at much later stage in the process reducing their</p>	<p>All planning applications will be assigned to DC officers who will be the key point of contact for the customer. The DC officers will be trained and guidance will be provided which will enable them to identify early in the process when proposals are clearly unacceptable. In these instances the case officer will call the applicant as soon as possible and encourage them to withdraw the application. When possible he/she will discuss potential solutions and point customers to guidance, if available. If more detailed advice is needed from a specialist customers will be invited to use our in-principle pre-application service.</p>	<p>We will aim to assess applications within the 8 and 13 week targets</p>	<p>That customers will be given a clear view as soon as possible on whether their proposals are not acceptable.</p> <p>We will provide certainty to customers where possible by working with them to find an appropriate solution as quickly as possible</p>

		ability to remedy the situation and also generating more work in relation to processing the application than if it were withdrawn earlier.			
7.	I have just had a call from the case officer who has told me my proposal is largely acceptable although I need to amend the roof design of the extension so it is more in keeping with adjoining listed building	<p>Conservation officers were case officers on all listed building applications as mentioned above this presented a risk of other planning considerations being overlooked.</p> <p>We previously received a number of complaints which indicated that there were occasions that officers were taking an excessive stance in terms of design detail of alterations and use of materials. There were also reports of officers being unwilling to discuss alternative options.</p>	<p>The case officer will manage the application process including the input from consultees and will make the final judgment on whether a scheme is acceptable. Where schemes are largely acceptable but some amendments are needed, the customer will be invited to submit amended plans. Our process allows for one meeting between the customer, the case officer and relevant specialist to discuss the amendment required in more detail.</p> <p>A triage document is being prepared which clarifies when specialist officers need to be consulted.</p>	We will aim to assess application within the 8 and 13 week targets	<p>Overview by the case officer of each case will provide a check to ensure that the stance provided by specialists is reasonable and that customers are only asked to make changes that are essential.</p> <p>Where schemes are largely acceptable customers are offered the opportunity to openly discuss a way forward with the relevant officers which avoid unnecessary delays if the application was instead refused or withdrawn whilst ensuring the application is processed in a timely manner.</p>

	Customer Scenario	Previous Service	New Service Provided	Level of new Service	Benefits of new service to customer
8.	The case officer has just called me to advise that the historic building officer has asked for changes which my agent thinks are not necessary how do I get the issue resolved.	There have been instances of lengthy debates between applicant and case officer both in relation to information required from applicants to justify their stance or excessive changes to proposals to secure approval	<p>The case officer will invite the customer to a meeting where all parties can discuss the request and alternative solutions. If an agreement is not reached the applicant will be invited to withdraw the application and enter into further discussions through the pre-application process.</p> <p>In any event we will encourage applicants to use the pre-application process as far as possible to resolve issues and avoid delays at application stage. The case officer will maintain overall control of the decision making process. Potential risks raised in consultation responses will be discussed at the weekly DC team leader meeting and the aim will be to reach a consensus on the way forward before we speak to applicants. We are putting senior supervision in place to act as a sounding board in instances such as this and to ensure our approach is reasonable.</p>	<p>We will aim to assess application within the 8 and 13 week targets</p> <p>We will aim to give pre-application advice will be given within 10 or 20 days depending on the type of service requested</p>	<p>The measures put in place are to ensure that the Council is consistently reasonable in its approach.</p> <p>That resolutions to problems will be reached as soon as possible within an agreed timeframe</p>
9.	I have developed initial proposals for a mixed use development on a fairly large greenfield site which I intend to implement in two phases. I would like	There was not previously one point of contact for all applications, this would have made it more difficult for advice to be co-ordinated in the way described	All cases including major applications will be assigned a case officer who will be responsible for managing the process as well as making decisions. They will also be the key point of contact for the customer. We encourage all major applicants to engage in pre-application discussions and develop a planning performance agreement to ensure the process is		<p>Co-ordinated views will provide the customer with clarity and the confidence that appropriate weight has been given to all of the planning considerations.</p> <p>The new service will</p>

	to secure advice from the Council's specialist officers on the number of different aspects of the scheme. It would save me time if this was co-ordinated and provided as I need it.		managed effectively and timeframes are adhered to. The project co-ordinator role has been created within the consultancy unit to support the planning officer in co-ordinating specialist officer input into this process and ensuring advice is co-ordinated and provided in a timely manner.		ensure that advice is timely and input is provided to the customer when needed.
10.	My builders are on site and have told me that the roof riles you have approved have been discontinued, they have brought others that look similar but would like to get your agreement before they put them in place	There was no emergency process in place which resulted on occasion in delays in making crucial decisions. This presented a significant risk to listed buildings.	We have put an emergency same day service in place. The relevant officer will come out on site and provide advice to mitigate the issue. Our policy defines the criteria for emergency situations. We will also aim to provide this service when unexpected problems occur on site and quick decisions would be highly beneficial for the customer. A call out fee of £100 will be applied to this service	The emergency advice service will provided on the same day unless agreed otherwise	This service will help protect our listed buildings when at risk. It will also provide assurance for customers that we have a process in place should an emergency occur. Delays and costly mistakes can be avoided if advice is provided quickly The risk of enforcement is minimised if we have the opportunity to intervene before mistakes are made
11.	I am concerned that about the length of time that it	A number of conditions are not fit for purpose and as	We have reviewed our conditions for historic buildings, ecology, landscape and urban design to ensure that they are fit for	The project management service will allow us to agreed	The new service will provide greater certainty for customers when

	<p>might take to discharge the conditions on my application and the impact that this will have on getting started on site.</p>	<p>such present a risk to the Council. There was no consistent process for discharging conditions which in many occasions lead to significant delays.</p>	<p>purpose. We have also prepared guidance to ensure that officers are clear on how and when they should be used and who needs to be involved in their discharge. We can provide a project management service similar to the PPA (Planning Performance Agreement) where case officers can manage the process of discharging conditions. The cost for this service will be based on officer time and agreed in advance of the service being provided.</p>	<p>clear timeframes for discharging conditions</p>	<p>planning implementation of their consents.</p>
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Appendix 2: Sample of Guidance prepared to support Planning Officers

“Guidance for Planning officer on Heritage Statement Requirements”

Types of Applications for which a Heritage Statement is required:

- Listed Building Consent
- Planning permission for proposal affecting a nationally or locally listed building including its curtilage
- Planning permission for proposal affecting nationally or locally designated parks & gardens
- Planning permission for proposal affecting an ancient monument or its setting
- Planning permission for proposals affecting undesignated heritage assets that are recorded on the Historic Environment Record including known archaeological sites or known historic buildings

Whilst the scope & degree of detail necessary in a Heritage Statement varies with the particular circumstances of the application, general guidance is shown below.

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Format: Written Statement / Relevant Plans & Maps / Photographs

Scope: Whole / Section of building affected by proposals to include where relevant

- Schedule of works to Listed Building(s), site and setting
- Analysis of **significance** of archaeology/history/character/development of building
- Assessment of **harm** of proposals on significance of asset together with any justification or mitigation eg independent structural report if demolition is proposed on grounds of being structurally unsound or market report if uneconomic
- Landscape plan taking into account setting of designated & any adjacent assets

As of 6 April 2014, a number of heritage provisions will be introduced aiming to simplify the listed building consent scheme including

- *Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreements*
- *Local Listed Building Consent Orders*
- *Certificates of Lawfulness of Proposed Works*

Once full details are known of the above, similar guidance will be inserted here

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Format: Written Statement / Relevant Plans & Maps / Photographs

Scope: Heritage assets related to or impacted by proposal

- Plans showing historic features that exist on or adjacent to application site
- Analysis of **significance** of archaeology/history/character of the heritage asset
- Assessment of **harm** on special character of heritage asset

Heritage statements for applications affecting archaeological assets should include

- A desk-based archaeological assessment & an archaeological investigation of the site initially based on existing published material & the preservation and/or recording of historic of archaeological importance
- In some cases a written Scheme of Investigation or investigative works prior to submission may be required. Discussion as to relevance/requirement for this or need for consultation with Historic Environment record will be indicated in pre-application report.

For the avoidance of doubt the following categories of application **do not** require the submission of a Heritage Statement:

- Householder for Planning Permission for works or extension to dwelling -regardless of whether the property lies within the Conservation Area
- Approval of Details reserved by condition
- Advertisement Consent
- Lawful Development Certificate for an existing use or operation or activity including those in breach of planning condition
- Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use or development
- All types of Prior Notification Application (for agricultural works & works by electronic communication code operators)
- Application for Hedgerow Removal
- Application for Tree Works

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Historic Maps can be found at www.old-maps.co.uk

Listed Buildings - Listed Buildings Online gives formal designation information on individual buildings of special architectural and historic interest.

<http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk/Login.aspx>

Conservation Areas/ Scheduled Ancient Monuments/Registered Historic Parks & Gardens - The location of these designated heritage assets are shown on the Local Development Framework Adopted Proposals Map. It does not show the settings of the assets or the curtilage of Listed Buildings

[Http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/AdoptedProposalsMap.htm](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/AdoptedProposalsMap.htm)

Information on some of the District's Conservation Areas is given in Conservation Area Appraisals

Information on Scheduled Ancient Monuments together with a comprehensive archive of archaeological sites and finds is available from

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/archaeology/historic/record

The Heritage Gateway gives online access to national & local records of England's historic sites & buildings including Historic Parks, Gardens & designed landscapes.

<http://heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/about/default.aspx>

Appendix 3: Draft Consultancy Team Service Standards Statement Objective: Putting Customers First

Our goal is to provide a first class, friendly and accessible consultancy service which gives our customers confidence and us pride.

Our priority is to provide a fast, efficient and relevant service for our customers.

We are striving:

1. To provide an excellent service to all customers
2. To continuously improve efficiency
3. To ensure that customer service is measured across all areas of the business
4. To use feedback from customers to help us improve our levels of customer service

Customer Commitments:

1. To actively listen to our customers and understand their requirements
2. To recognise that there are often a number of viable options to achieving outcomes
3. To be pro-active, working with our customers to find creative solutions to difficult problems
4. To use the most effective way of contacting/liasing with our customers
5. To only ask for more information or detail if it is essential

We regularly monitor our progress against these and other service objectives and will regularly publish electronic performance monitoring information so you can monitor how we are performing.

Service Standards

For internal customers

Our service performance standards are as follows:

- We aim to acknowledge all correspondence within two working days
- We aim to provide specialist comments on non-urgent referrals within 20 working days of receipt of all relevant information
- We aim to provide specialist comments on urgent referrals within 10 working days of receipt of all relevant information
- We aim to provide immediate advice on straight forward matters an ad hoc basis in person or over the phone where possible, or where prior research required, offer them an appointment to discuss the matter at another mutually convenient time

- Customer satisfaction with speed of response, clarity of advice and overall quality of service will be measured by the issuing of customer feedback forms once advice has been issued

For external customers

- We aim to acknowledge all correspondence within five working days
- We aim to provide specialist comments on non-urgent referrals within 20 working days of receipt of all relevant information
- We aim to provide specialist comments on urgent referrals within 10 working days of receipt of all relevant information
- We aim to provide immediate advice on straight forward matters an ad hoc basis in person or over the phone where possible, or where prior research required, offer them an appointment to discuss the matter at another mutually convenient time
- Customer satisfaction with speed of response, clarity of advice and overall quality of service will be measured by the issuing of customer feedback forms once advice has been issued