

**Planning Service Peer Challenge 2023  
Action Plan 2024**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What we're doing already</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resource</b>
<b>R1 Backlog</b>	<p>Prioritise work to address the <b>backlog of applications</b> and manage the risk of lost income through the return of application fees.</p>	<p>Staff have been working on an <b>action plan to clear the backlog</b> since Summer 2023 which is already reducing the backlog</p> <p>In September 2023 the Council bid for DLUHC's Planning Skills Delivery Fund and on 19 December 2023 it was announced the Council had been <b>successful in securing £75k</b> for this</p> <p>The DM service relies on timely responses from <b>internal (and external) consultee services</b> and many of the delays result from issues with certain consultees</p>	<p><b>Action 1: Clear backlog &amp; return caseloads to normal levels by May 2024</b></p> <p>Put in place greater <b>monitoring of caseloads and backlog</b> to ensure officers have sufficient capacity and throughput to ensure a further backlog is not created and that output balances or exceeds the number of applications received</p> <p>Put in place measures to improve the timeliness and quality of responses from <b>internal consultee services</b> in Transport, Carbon Management and Environmental Health / Noise</p>	<b>Head of DM&amp;E</b>	<b>May 2024</b>	<p>Additional <b>staff and overtime hours</b> for a temporary period</p> <p>Supporting input from <b>internal consultee services</b></p> <p>Ensure the service has adequate staff to process the quantity of applications received including in busy periods by <b>implementing R9</b></p>

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<b>R2 Local Plan officer lead</b>	There should be a dedicated <b>officer lead for the local plan</b> . The unfilled position of Planning Policy Team Manager and the combined responsibilities of the Head of Planning Policy, Transport & Infrastructure is not giving enough priority to the production of the local plan. This must be seen as key going forward.	<p>The <b>Planning Policy Team Manager post has been kept vacant</b> whilst the postholder is acting up as Interim Head of Planning Policy, Transport &amp; Infrastructure (HoPPTI).</p> <p>The HoPPTI post is being reviewed as a result of the <b>Transport Planning Team moving out of the PPTI service</b> to the Environment &amp; Resident Experience directorate. Unfortunately this transfer is taking longer than originally expected.</p> <p>When the HoPPTI post is reviewed and filled on a permanent basis, the Planning Policy Team Manager post will also be filled.</p> <p>This has meant the Planning Policy Team Manager post has been kept vacant longer than it should have, which has regrettably had an impact on the Local Plan.</p>	<b>Action 2: Recruit to Planning Policy Team Manager post</b>	<b>AD Planning, Building Standards &amp; Sustainability</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	Complete the <b>move of the Transport Planning Team</b> out of the Planning Policy, Transport & Infrastructure service to the Environment & Resident Experience directorate

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<b>R3 Local Plan political lead</b>	Maintain a clear and consistent <b>political lead for the local plan</b> . Have a <b>more formal Local Plan Member Working Group</b> , chaired by the Cabinet Member for Planning with other relevant cabinet members on it, to receive regular updates on progress of the local plan, focus to the work, and highlighting the work to come, making strategic joined up decisions across portfolios and to give clear political steer, leadership and champion the local plan.	<p>The Cabinet Member responsible for the Local Plan is the <b>Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters &amp; Planning</b> which since May 2023 is Cllr Sarah Williams</p> <p>In June 2020 a <b>Local Plan Member Working Group</b> was set up to maintain frequent and informal engagement with Members and to act as a 'sounding board' as the New Local Plan is prepared. It is comprised of the same Members as Strategic Planning Committee and chaired by the Cabinet Member. It is not a public meeting and documents are a work in progress and confidential. The Group has met 19 times and covered all Local Plan topic areas at least once.</p>	<p><b>Action 3: Ensure joint Planning &amp; Placemaking Cabinet Member meetings as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Chair) Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters &amp; Planning</li> <li>• Cabinet Member for Housebuilding, Placemaking &amp; Local Economy</li> <li>• Assistant Director Planning, Building Standards &amp; Sustainability</li> <li>• Assistant Director Regeneration &amp; Economic Development</li> <li>• Other supporting officers</li> </ul> <p>This will not be a public meeting and documents will be work in progress and confidential</p> <p>This will be in addition to the existing Local Plan Member Working Group which will continue to meet</p>	<p><b>Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters &amp; Planning</b></p> <p><b>Head of PPTI</b></p>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Within existing resources</b>

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<b>R4 Local Plan resourced programme and communication strategy</b>	<b>4a)</b> A detailed and <b>resourced programme for the production of the new local plan</b> should be produced, with specific project management support, recognising the resources required, the timetable for delivery and confirming the proposed timescales are deliverable.	As set out in response to R2, the Council is working to fill the vacant Planning Policy Team Manager post on a permanent basis to lead on programme management of the Local Plan  More <b>Programme Management support currently within the Regeneration &amp; Economic Development</b> service is being made available to the Planning service which will support programme management of the Local Plan	<b>Action 4a: Publish New Local Plan programme</b>	<b>Head of PPTI</b>	<b>July 2024</b>  June 2025 DLUHC deadline for submission of current style Local Plans	<b>Programme Management support within Placemaking &amp; Housing</b>

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	<p><b>4b)</b> It should have a clear <b>communication strategy</b> to partners and communities, to support meaningful engagement beyond the “usual suspects” as part of the <b>Haringey Deal</b>, as well as broader policy work in future for area specific policies and design codes.</p>	<p>A <b>Communication and Engagement Plan for the New Local Plan ‘First Steps Engagement’</b> was approved by <a href="#">Cabinet in October 2020</a> and implemented</p> <p>The <b>New Local Plan First Steps Engagement won the 2022 Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) London Chair’s Award and <a href="#">2022 RTPI National Planning Award for Excellence</a></b>. “The judges were very impressed with Haringey’s great example of engagement... They set the mark in 2020 that others have since followed... They ensured that the plan was not only socialised but <b>reached under-represented groups</b> and engaging with a huge range of people through <b>innovative</b> methods. The team went above and beyond what was required and have <b>paved the way for others</b> who wish to follow.”</p>	<p><b>Action 4b: Publish New Local Plan Communication &amp; Engagement Plan</b> in line with the principles of the <b>Haringey Deal</b> for the next engagement exercise at Regulation 18 stage</p> <p>This will include making published materials as accessible as possible (e.g. via a digital-based Local Plan)</p>	<p><b>Head of PPTI</b></p>	<p><b>July 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Within existing resources</b></p>

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<b>R5 Vision</b>	<p>The planning service, as part of the Placemaking &amp; Housing Directorate, need to be fully engaged in the work on the <b>long-term vision</b> of the Council, being clear about what type of development Haringey wants to see in the future and how the local plan will reflect the aspirations and needs of different communities of the borough, including working with agents and developer forums in sharing these key visions. Officers should engage with senior counterparts within the GLA and TfL to accelerate key opportunities and remove existing blockers.</p>	<p>The Planning service is <b>working closely with the Corporate Policy Team</b> as work on the emerging new borough Vision progresses</p> <p>The Planning service takes part in <b>regular meetings with the GLA/TfL</b> as part of the wider Placemaking &amp; Housing functions and the Transport Planning functions. The Planning service contributes to various GLA forums e.g. the Digital SHLAA Project Board and the Planning for London engagement events</p> <p>The Council recently adopted its <b>Inclusive Economy Framework 'Opportunity Haringey'</b> which includes a priority action to 'bring new investment to the borough' and developing an <b>Inward Investment Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Action 5: Ensure Planning service engaged on the emerging new borough Vision and Inward Investment Strategy</b></p> <p>Also ensure engagement with key stakeholders such as developers, GLA, TfL</p>	<p><b>AD Planning, Building Standards &amp; Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>AD Strategy, Communications &amp; Collaboration</b></p> <p><b>AD Regeneration &amp; Economic Development</b></p>	<b>Autumn 2024 adoption of the borough Vision</b>	<p>Support from <b>Corporate Policy Team</b></p> <p><b>Economic Development service</b></p>

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<b>R6 Infrastructure Delivery Plan</b>	Continue the work on the Council's <b>Infrastructure Delivery Plan</b> and make sure it is integrated to support the development and adoption of the local plan.	It is currently planned to complete a Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) ahead of consultation on a Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan. Work is ongoing to ensure the scope of the IDP is appropriate for the purpose of supporting the New Local Plan.	<p><b>Action 6: Publish Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) alongside Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan</b></p> <p>Include linkages to other service plans e.g. Local Area Energy Plan, Local Implementation Plan</p>	<b>Head of PPTI</b>	<b>July 2024</b>	<p><b>Within existing resources</b></p> <p><b>Support from other services</b> e.g. Carbon Management, Transport Planning etc</p>

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<b>R7 Planning and Regeneration</b>	<p>Look at relationship between the <b>Planning and Regeneration</b> functions, recognise where there can be mutual benefits, more <b>joined up working and shared resourcing</b> - as is already occurring for Housing. Placemaking and Planning should be more intrinsically linked, utilising planning and placemaking and regeneration team resources, streamlining or sharing engagement processes. Investigate scope for developing a shared resource, potentially using capital funding, to support the production and delivery of the local plan and Regeneration priorities. Making use of architects, planners, designers and project managers from across the Directorate to use their skills to assist with local plan.</p>	<p>The Planning and Regeneration services work very closely together on a wide range of projects to ensure general strategic consistency</p> <p>Close working should, however, not jeopardise the <b>independence of planning advice and decisions</b>. The Council's Constitution already includes a Planning Protocol which sets out how planning decisions on Council owned land should be made solely on planning grounds to ensure appropriate separation of Council functions when necessary</p> <p>More <b>Programme Management support currently within the Regeneration &amp; Economic Development</b> service is being made available to the Planning service which will support programme management of the Local Plan</p>	<p><b>Action 7: Ensure joint Planning &amp; Placemaking Cabinet Member meetings</b></p> <p>As set out in Action 3</p> <p>This will cover issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough-wide placemaking framework</li> <li>• New Local Plan oversight</li> <li>• Key Planning and RED activities e.g. allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</li> <li>• Programme Management support</li> <li>• Ensuring Service Plans and staff targets for PBSS and RED reflect work on joint projects</li> </ul>	<p><b>Director Placemaking &amp; Housing</b></p> <p><b>AD Planning, Building Standards &amp; Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>AD Regeneration &amp; Economic Development</b></p>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Programme Management support within Placemaking &amp; Housing</b>



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R8 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Consider how allocation of <b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</b> and Neighbourhood CIL spending can support members and broader community engagement in the planning process, highlighting the positives of development, and giving clear communication of how those decisions are made.	In March 2020 the <a href="#">Council allocated</a> £2.2m of <b>Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL)</b> to 41 projects following a public consultation exercise	<b>Action 8a: Round 1 NCIL &amp; SCIL: communicate positive outcomes</b>  Work with project delivery services and Communications Team to highlight to the community that NCIL and SCIL from development was used to part-fund the projects	<b>Head of PPTI</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	Support from <b>relevant services</b> and <b>Communications Team</b>
		In December 2020 the <a href="#">Council allocated</a> £14.6m of <b>Strategic CIL (SCIL)</b> to 15 projects	Publish <b>annual IFS</b> , internal quarterly reports & improve commencement notifications			
		Every year the Council publishes an <b>Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)</b> required by law setting out CIL spend and delivery	<b>Action 8b: Round 2 SCIL</b>  As part of the 2024/25 budget setting process, highlight the use of <b>SCIL in the Council's Capital Programme</b> to support the Council's financial position and that the funding comes from new development	<b>Head of PPTI</b>  <b>Head of Finance (Placemaking &amp; Housing)</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Within existing resources</b>  Support from <b>Finance service</b>
		The Council's Corporate Delivery Plan commits to developing a Haringey approach to <b>participatory budgeting</b> consistent with the Haringey Deal, potentially using NCIL. Officers have started to explore options available	<b>Action 8c: Round 2 NCIL</b>  Engage with members and the community, <b>potentially through a participatory budgeting approach</b> , and highlight that the funding comes from new development	<b>Head of PPTI</b>  <b>Policy &amp; Equalities Team Manager</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	Support from <b>Corporate Policy Team</b>

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<b>R9 Development Management &amp; Enforcement</b>	<p>a) Give the <b>Development Management &amp; Enforcement</b> service the headspace to review their operation and improve the service from within – this means assessing their <b>structure, processes, workflows</b>, potential access to shared resources in other teams and opportunities to maximise income....</p> <p>...Working with something like the PAS DM Challenge Toolkit to identify any structural issues, process improvements and customer engagement processes that could be introduced to better focus the use of planning resources and...</p>	<p>It is welcome that the Peer report recognises the “planning service has been on a <b>dramatic journey of improvement over the last 10 years</b>, with unrecognisable improvement in planning performance and the delivery of high-quality large development sites within the borough”, that we are “<b>performing well</b>” and that we are a “<b>very good example of how public facing planning committees are run</b>”</p> <p>The team has started to work through the <b>Planning Advisory Service (PAS) DM Challenge Toolkit</b> to revisit the team’s approach which is creating positive outcomes</p> <p>In December 2023 the Council submitted bids to DLUHC’s <b>Digital Planning Improvement Fund &amp; Proptech Innovation Fund</b> for national data standards and digital citizen engagement. Awards will be announced in 2024</p>	<p><b>Action 9a: Structure &amp; processes</b></p> <p>As part of <b>R10 Digital System</b> processes and workflows will be reviewed to increase automation, streamlining and efficiencies</p> <p>Complete the <b>PAS DM Challenge Toolkit &amp; Action Plan</b> to review the principles that the team works to including improving the balance of work between fully qualified planning staff and assistant planning officers</p>	<b>Head of DM&amp;E</b>	<b>June 2024</b>	<p><b>Staff resource</b> to prepare and carry out <b>PAS DM Challenge Toolkit &amp; Action Plan</b></p> <p>Potential resource from DLUHC’s <b>Digital Planning Improvement Fund &amp;/or Proptech Innovation Fund</b></p>

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	<p><b>b) This will mean ensuring a good commercial approach by striking the right balance between good customer service and experience with providing more advice through the paid-for planning advice service.</b></p>	<p>It is welcome that the Peer report recognises the planning service's financial contribution to the Council "through S106 and developer contributions, application fees, accessing external funding and savings already made and indirectly through the related extra Council tax, Business rates and New Homes Bonus for new homes and commercial spaces from planning decisions. There is <b>good initial work underway to maximise this commercial income...</b>"</p> <p>We are a highly commercial service eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are 1 of only 2 planning services providing <b>fast-track</b> services</li> <li>• We recently moved from "pre-application" to "<b>planning advice services</b>" to capture income from all stages</li> <li>• <b>New fees &amp; charges</b> are proposed for 2024/25 to charge for more advice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action 9b: Commerciality</b></p> <p>Once the backlog is cleared (R1) the team's focus can shift back again to commerciality</p> <p>Implement the new fees &amp; charges for 2024/25 to capture all opportunities for income generation</p> <p>Negotiate on planning applications primarily through charged services</p> <p>Publish a statement on revised approach to commerciality, negotiation and customer service</p>	<p><b>Head of DM&amp;E</b></p>	<p><b>May 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Within existing resource</b></p> <p>Income and work required is dependent on the wider economic context and the development market</p> <p>Requires commercial approach from Finance, HR</p>

	<p>c) ...through a <b>workforce strategy</b> for the service, highlight any skill deficits or resilience issues across the service. Planning officers may require some additional training or support to enable them to take on complex cases and have the confidence to engage with key partners, and negotiate on schemes with confidence, having clarity on the key aims for development in the borough. Freeing up senior leadership in the service to focus on managing the service and team leaders to actively manage the caseload performance.</p>	<p>The Council has an <b>existing Workforce Development Strategy 2019-2023</b>. This is currently being updated, working towards adoption in late spring 2024</p> <p><b>Continuing Professional Development (CPD)</b> are already part of biannual <b>'My Conversations'</b> performance framework meetings with staff</p> <p>The Council has been successful in being part of <b>Cohort 1 of DLUHC / LGA's new Pathways to Planning</b> scheme where we will secure a new graduate in April 2024</p> <p>The Council currently has training subscriptions to <b>New London Architecture, Urban Design London</b>, and <b>Future of London</b>. Training is also available from the <b>Royal Town Planning Institute</b>, the <b>Planning Officers Society</b> and also the LGA's <b>Planning Advisory Service</b></p>	<p><b>Action 9c: Workforce Strategy</b></p> <p>Implement a workforce strategy training plan for Planning including work on Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion (EDI)</p>	<p><b>AD Planning, Building Standards &amp; Sustainability</b></p>	<p><b>May-December 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Within existing resource</b></p> <p>Support from <b>Human Resources</b></p>
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<b>R10 Digital System</b>	Specifically project manage the integration of the <b>new IT system (Arcus)</b> to embed and maximise its use within the service. Highlight and support key super users to support and advise others, upskilling case officers in its use and team managers in using the system to manage performance, in Planning and Enforcement.	<p>The <b>full implementation of this new software was not completed</b> due to resource pressures from the backlog built up while implementing</p> <p>Grant funding from DLUHC was sought but not awarded. There is limited revenue funding in the DM&amp;E budget to progress this work</p> <p><b>Super users</b> have been identified but further training is required and a <b>project lead and project management resource</b> is required</p> <p>In December 2023 the Council submitted bids to DLUHC's <b>Digital Planning Improvement Fund &amp; Proptech Innovation Fund</b> for national data standards and digital citizen engagement. Awards will be announced in 2024</p>	<p><b>Action 10: Draft and implement a new Arcus Project Plan</b></p> <p>Setting out key improvements, super users and training</p>	<p><b>Head of DM&amp;E</b></p> <p><b>Business Performance &amp; Monitoring Manager</b></p>	<b>July 2024</b>	<p>Potential resource from DLUHC's <b>Digital Planning Improvement Fund &amp;/or Proptech Innovation Fund</b></p> <p>Using remaining capital funding to project manage and resource this</p> <p>Permanent recruitment to the <b>Business Performance &amp; Monitoring Manager</b> post (currently acting up)</p>