



Planning and Place Business Plan 2020/21



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA



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1. Council Plan

This Planning & Place Business Plan contributes to the delivery of Council Plan priorities in the context of our ongoing recovery from the Grenfell Tower tragedy, our declaration of a Climate Change Emergency and the Council's Vision Carbon Zero.

It outlines the strategic objectives of the Department and details how we plan to achieve them in line with the 'What we will do' sections of the Council Plan. We remain committed to prioritising Grenfell recovery; making RBKC a great place to live, work and learn; supporting and safeguarding vulnerable residents; providing healthy, clean and safe places; and, creating a place of culture to visit and explore.

Cross-cutting themes

Priorities

Community involvement

Local people want to be involved in policy development and service users rightly expect to be part of service development. We will engage openly with our residents and service users, seeking to capture all points of view to make better informed decisions. We will use the talents and skills within our communities to co-design and commission better services.

Narrowing the gap

We will improve outcomes for our residents, with a focus on narrowing the gap between different communities, and seek to ensure that individuals have equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. This means people having equal access to jobs, housing, education, employment, health and social care services.

Prevention and early intervention

By focusing on prevention and early intervention, particularly in adults' and children's services, we can find better value for money solutions that promote people's wellbeing and go beyond "crisis management". We will ensure the health and social care needs of the whole community are being addressed now and in the future, for adults, children and families.

Grenfell recovery

A great place to live, work and learn

Supporting and safeguarding vulnerable residents

Healthy, clean and safe

A place of culture to visit and explore

2. Driving Change

Our staff have chosen new values that we are using to deliver change throughout the Council. They define how we do things and how we act towards our communities, businesses and visitors. We believe that co-design is the foundation for true business development of the Planning and Place department and see our Values as core to making a tangible difference.

2020 saw massive change for our department with a workforce restructure and the unexpected need to respond to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. This has driven us to new ways of working to make best use of our staff and resources.

We expect 2021 to see further reorganisation across the whole Council and are mapping how we can respond to that in an agile way that

builds resilience within our teams and promotes our Values and Behaviours in all that we do. Just as we were the first in London to host a fully remote Planning Committee in response to Covid-19, we are also keen to lead the way in digital engagement alongside traditional methods. This will enable us to hear from a wider audience.



Putting Communities First

- we put local people at the heart of decision making in everything we do
- we seek to include and involve: all voices matter
- we provide quality services that are responsive, effective and efficient



Respect

- we listen to others and value the personal experiences of people in our communities and each other
- we adopt a fair and involving approach regardless of any way in which an individual is different to us



Integrity

- we act with openness, honesty, compassion, responsibility and humility
- we let people know how we are doing and communicate why and how decisions have been made



Working Together

- we work together and in partnership with everyone that has an impact on the lives of our residents
- we want to understand, learn from each other and continually adapt

3. Strategic Priorities

In order to deliver the Council's ambitions our Lead member has identified the following priorities, which form the basis of our work programme.

1. Engaging better to support thriving, inclusive and unique communities

RBKC is made up of diverse communities with local heritage and identity. We will seek to protect and enhance local uniqueness and help improve the outcomes for all residents with a focus on narrowing the opportunity gap between different communities.

We will engage openly with our residents, businesses, partners and the voluntary and community sectors. We will co-design new policy documents and engage openly on planning proposals at the earliest possible stage.

We will seek to ensure that all our residents, businesses and partners have equal opportunities to engage by using a wide variety of engagement techniques for all Planning documents.

We will find new and creative ways to engage remotely whilst the current social distancing continues.

We will support the staging of unique cultural events throughout the Borough.

2. Planning for the delivery of homes in areas of opportunity and bringing development sites forward

We will ensure that the development of the Opportunity Areas of Earl's Court and Kensal Canalside are optimised for new homes, alongside local employment opportunities. The Opportunity Areas will create great places to live, work and spend time and strengthen the Borough's distinct and varied character. They will promote sustainable development principles and play a key role in delivering new affordable homes.

We will identify other areas where there is the potential to intensify land use within the Borough considering context and character to boost our housing supply and delivery and to increase local employment opportunities. We will undertake a plan led approach with more sites being allocated in the new Local Plan and with the production of planning briefs and other guidance which supports this growth.

We will adopt a design led approach to growth to ensure that the Borough's historic townscape is protected and that sites are well connected to strengthen the Borough's distinct and varied character.





We strive to deliver the best planning service to our communities....

We will work with all stakeholders including residents and businesses, developers, agents and consultants to ensure that these areas come forward in a proactive and planned way and that opportunities are optimised.

We will implement in full the action points in the Housing Delivery Action Plan to ensure that affordable housing delivery within the Borough is increased and that the rate of delivery is speeded up to meet the minimum housing target set out in the London Plan with a minimum of 35% of homes being affordable.

We will play the leading role in a collaborative approach with Property and Housing to bring forward Council homes that are genuinely affordable, meet local need, and have fire safety built into the design and life cycle of buildings

By adopting a Community Housing SPD that provides evidence and justifies the 70:30 split of social rent/genuinely affordable rent to Intermediate Rent we will create mixed and inclusive communities.

We will create good quality homes that meet high standards of design and floorspace and provide for identified needs including the elderly.

We will identify and allocate a range of sites, including small sites to cater for the delivery of genuinely affordable homes together with appropriate supporting infrastructure.

3. Addressing the climate emergency

We will continue to promote the walkable neighbourhoods and neighbourhood facilities approach of the Local Plan to ensure that residents benefit from a comprehensive coverage of local facilities within a 10 minute walk.

We will take opportunities to improve access to our greenspaces as well as providing new greenspace where this is possible.

Through a Greening SPD, we will improve and enhance the delivery of new green infrastructure such as SUDS and green roofs and walls and introduce an 'urban greening factor' on new major development.

We will work closely with other stakeholders, such as Public Health and the NHS to ensure that necessary infrastructure needs are provided for and there is good access to health facilities and other community infrastructure to support a healthy lifestyle and reduce inequality.

We will ensure that policies within the new Local Plan make a significant contribution towards improving energy efficiency through design and supporting a low carbon economy and the Council itself becoming zero carbon by 2030, the Borough by 2040 and London becoming a zero carbon city by 2050.

We will ensure through good design that buildings and infrastructure is designed to the needs of a changing climate, mitigating the impacts of climate change through flood prevention and sustainable ways of heat prevention.

Through a design led approach, we will ensure that we create a safe and secure environment and all times which is resilient against the impact of all types of emergency.

4. A new local plan delivering the Council's agenda

We will ensure that a new Local Plan acts as the catalyst for growth and appropriate protection and enhancement throughout the borough.

We will ensure that there is a wide range of economic and other opportunities supported by Local Plan policies and mixed-use site allocations and work closely with the Economic Development team to ensure that all synergies are exploited.

We will promote the role of the Borough's higher order town centres to ensure that their social, civic, cultural and economic roles are brought forward in partnership schemes with a variety of stakeholders including working with other Council departments.

We will ensure that the Borough's centres, streets and public spaces are easy to move around and spend time in through comfort and safety,



creating places where people interact, both in the daytime and evening, and where culture can be celebrated.

We will protect and enhance conservation areas to ensure that the rich character and heritage of the Borough is maintained, together with its cultural assets and promote the night time economy in the right places.

5. High performing planning service

We will put engagement with our communities at the heart of everything that we do.

We will increase resilience across our workforce and incorporate agile working to improve performance and productivity. We will ensure that our workforce is highly skilled and engaged.

We will continue to embed new values and Council priorities for all our officers.

We will have robust financial management to ensure savings but also identification of new funding opportunities.



6. Being at the forefront of a new building safety and control regime

We will ensure that the Council is at the forefront of the new building safety regime, working with the new Building Safety Regulator, London Fire Brigade and other stakeholders in driving up standards in the design, construction and maintenance of buildings in the Borough.

As a newly designated Building Control Authority, we will become a leading public safety agency for the Council. In this role we will:

- Robustly enforce the building regulations, including the use of new enforcement powers for unauthorised and non-compliant building work;
- Support the new Building Safety Regulator in the discharge of its duties, including acting as lead inspector for in-scope building control projects.
- Support the Planning department to manage developments through the Gateway points associated with the new building safety regime; and,

- Support the Housing and Corporate Property departments in the creation of building safety cases for Council owned buildings.

We will work with the Social Investment and Corporate Property department in ensuring that the Council's ambitious new homes programme successfully delivers high quality housing within the Borough.

We will work with the Housing department to ensure that the capital works programme upgrades to Council owned properties meet modern building standards, including energy efficiency.



Appendices

Appendix 1 – Planning and place structure chart



Appendix 2 – Key Priorities 20/21

1. Engaging better to support thriving, inclusive and unique communities

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Deliver changes to pre-application service as set out in response to recommendations in the Planning Advisory Service Review September 2019 particularly introduction of Development Forums.	Revised pre application services introduced and Development Forums established as part of pre-application engagement.	Lisa Cheung
Implement the engagement processes for Development Management and Spatial Planning outlined in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (February 2020) and continue with being in the vanguard of digital solutions, building on the base of the first Virtual Planning Committee in London.	New engagement processes are bedding down and those in Development Management are in process of being implemented.	Lisa Cheung Jonathan Wade Jago Williams
Implementing new digital platforms for engagement – VuCity and Built-id.	A revised planning service capturing the views of a wider group of residents and other stakeholders within the Borough.	Jonathan Wade Lisa Cheung
Engaging communities on a new Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL) methodology.	An effective system bedded down which allows communities to bid for an NCIL allocation for projects that are important to them and appropriate governance of Decisions.	Jonathan Wade

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Progress Conservation Area Management Plans - Thames, Holland Park and Hans Town as part of a rolling programme.	Management Plan programme underway.	Jonathan Wade
Complete Conservation Area Appraisals review.	The remaining conservation area appraisals are all progressing towards adoption.	Jonathan Wade
Deliver design guidelines with St Quintin Neighbourhood Forum for Latimer Road.	Latimer Road design guidelines progressing towards adoption.	Jonathan Wade
Adopt a Royal Brompton Hospital Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide a future health and research use being maintained on the site if it is vacated by the Royal Brompton Hospital.	Royal Brompton Hospital site SPD adopted.	Jonathan Wade
Progressing a new vision for Kensington High Street as part of a Council improvement plan emerging from the Covid pandemic and new Class E.	Moving towards a shared vision for High Street recovery.	Jonathan Wade

2. Planning for home delivery in areas of opportunity and bringing development sites forward

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Site allocations in new Local Plan to ensure adequate five year housing supply and to assist in granting permissions for a minimum of 448 new homes a year.	Evidence base is progressed, and results of initial Issues consultation analysed.	Jonathan Wade
Support delivery of Council own housing programme over next 5 years. 600 homes of which 50% genuinely affordable.	Strategic sites team providing support and first phase homes granted.	Lisa Cheung
Borough Characterisation Study.	Draft areas of potential land intensification and protection identified considering existing context and character.	Jonathan Wade
Kensal Canalside Opportunity Area SPD.	To have completed consultation on the draft SPD and to prepare final document for adoption.	Jonathan Wade
Earl's Court Masterplan.	To have liaised with the landowners to ensure excellent engagement with local communities and the department for a new site allocation as part of the Local Plan and a site delivery timetable.	Lisa Cheung Jonathan Wade

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Lots Road SPD.	To have started engagement with the local community on bringing forward a development brief for the site to include new homes, some of which will be for affordable extra care, commercial floorspace and appropriate infrastructure.	Jonathan Wade
Planning Frameworks/SPDs for areas of growth opportunity.	New site allocations coming forward as part of the new Local Plan process, SPDs starting to come forward for areas of growth opportunity.	Jonathan Wade
Review process for determining major applications.	New approach to dealing with major applications in place involving better engagement with communities, the GLA, members.	Lisa Cheung
Review of Buildings at Height SPD.	To be considered as part of Characterisation study. Decision whether to review by March 2021.	Jonathan Wade

3. Addressing the Climate Emergency

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Greening SPD – responding to climate change, setting minimum standards and addressing smart cities agenda.	Consultation undertaken on the Greening SPD and progressing to adoption.	Jonathan Wade
Review approaches to heritage to enable buildings to meet modern standards whilst preserving their heritage. Consider a digital Design code methodology.	To be considered as part of Local Plan review and possible planning reform pilot.	Jonathan Wade
Right Tree Right Location – Guidance note on tree planning in a changing climate.	Guidance note published and training provided to Councillors.	Lisa Cheung
Ongoing Street Trees planting target.	Planting programme for 2020/2023 to include a commitment to plant new street trees each year.	Lisa Cheung
SuDS implementation plan.	A programme in place for SuDS development in the Borough in collaboration with Parks and Leisure and Highways works. Portobello Court SuDS project being progressed.	Jonathan Wade
Annual Borough Design Awards to include sustainable and low carbon development.	Initial progress for setting this up – judging by a panel to be decided and rolled out in late 2021.	Jonathan Wade

4. A new Local Plan delivering the Council's agenda

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Consultation undertaken on Issues and progressing towards Issues and Options consultation.	Evidence base progressed and results of initial issues consultation analysed.	Jonathan Wade
Ensuring direction of travel in Government White paper on Planning reform is reflected in ongoing Local Plan work streams.	Ensuring that the Local Plan process can facilitate changes suggested in the White paper.	Jonathan Wade
Support delivery of Council's own housing programme over next 5 years. 600 homes of which 50% genuinely affordable with appropriate site allocations in Local Plan.	Identification of suitable sites.	Jonathan Wade
Site allocations in new Local Plan to ensure adequate five year housing supply.	Evidence base is progressed, and results of initial Issues consultation analysed.	Jonathan Wade
To work with Adult Social Care/Children Services/Housing and Planning to develop local plan policies reflecting the needs of the elderly, vulnerable adults and children.	Ensure that sound and effective policies are being developed as part of new Local Plan review.	Jonathan Wade
Support delivery of affordable workspace (Economy Strategy target).	To be developed through evolving Local Plan policy as informed by the Council's Economic Strategy.	Jonathan Wade

5. High performing Planning service

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Workforce supported to ensure they are highly skilled and engaged.	Develop new action plan to implement our Learning and Development Commitment, E&C Workforce Plan and Our Voice action plan.	Amanda Reid
Increase resilience across our workforce.	Training and development opportunities, shared responsibilities and cross training including mentoring.	Amanda Reid
Continue to embed new values and Council priorities for all staff.	Develop new action plan to implement our Learning and Development Commitment, E&C Workforce Plan and Our Voice action plan.	Amanda Reid
Robust Financial management and delivery of departmental savings targets.	3 year savings agreed and agreed plan to implement.	Amanda Reid
Identify income generating and new funding opportunities.	Opportunities identified through LEAN and implementation of Corporate MTFS.	Amanda Reid
Implement Exacom to monitor S106 and CIL.	Exacom in place and monitoring s106/CIL.	Jonathan Wade Jago Williams

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
PLAN-IT improvement programme – efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application process.	IT improvements to improve efficiency and effectiveness have been identified. New ICT hardware rollout to replace existing laptops complete.	Lisa Cheung Jago Williams
Lead on the corporate review of ACOLAID with an outcome focused approach that takes account of CREST.	Ongoing involvement in project team to scope proposal.	Jago Williams
PAS Service review September 2019.	PAS review recommendations on track for implementation.	Lisa Cheung Jonathan Wade Jago Williams

6. Being at the forefront of a new building safety and control regime

Task	Outcome by March 2021	Lead
Embed new Building Regulations resulting from Hackett review (including early stage high-level technical fire safety advice.)	Fire Statements working effectively with the Planning process and system bedded down.	Jago Williams

Appendix 3 – Departmental Risks

Risk	Management Controls
Land Charges Income: The slowing down of the housing market resulting in land charges income targets not being met.	Income can be closely monitored with expenditure controls to mitigate any potential income reduction.
Building Control new regime: Risk of not being able to deliver new responsibilities as part of the new Building Safety regime.	Active participation as part of LABC/LDSA in preparatory work for the new regime. Build into building control structure posts that specialise in high risk regulatory compliance surveying and engineering.
Financial burden re: LLC1 transfer: Financial burdens imposed on the Council in supporting LLC1 not adequately covered by the Land Registry.	Active participation in Land Registry programme and liaison with other Councils through the LGA to ensure burdens regime is adequate in compensating the Council regarding LLC1. Council is not part of Phase 1 due to Acolaid not being supported by HMLR. An API will need to be created to enable auto transfer of data.
Staff recruitment and retention difficulties: Risk of not being able to retain or recruit sufficiently skilled staff such that core services cannot be delivered to the expected high standard.	Structured staff training and development programme, promotion of the Council as a place to work through professional institute involvement, consideration of graduate scheme and external recognition focus on making the Council a great place to work and develop. Prompt recruitment campaign to fill vacant posts.
Drop in Planning Income: Risk of fee income for planning services falling below budget targets such that it impacts on overall budget levels for department and expenditure.	Regular reviews of fee income levels by Senior Management Team, review of nature of current workload to identify where fee income drop most likely to occur, forward service planning to limit impacts of income reduction, continued emphasis on use of pre-application service including current review to make sure effective and attractive to customers, investigate other sources of income. The fee structure for applications is national, with fees for major developments cross subsidising householder applications. With major applications particularly falling in number, income falls disproportionately to the amount of case work.

Risk	Management Controls
<p>Poor appeals performance leading to department being placed in special measures: Risk of being placed in special measures by MHCLG and losing some decision-making powers if appeals performance falls below 20% of the decisions on major applications being overturned at appeal.</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring of appeal decisions to spot any trends which can help to improve performance; monitoring of major cases by management team to ensure decisions are consistent and well-made.</p>
<p>Deregulation leading to reduced ability to manage development in the area: Deregulation means that more can be done without planning permission and the Council has less ability to influence and manage development in the area.</p>	<p>Proactive response to Government consultations identifying early threats to any weakening of policies that are important in RBKC. Identify the risk and take appropriate action - if severe then an Article 4 Direction may be justified. Maintain good communication with residents and councillors to make them aware of the changing context and resultant implications for the Borough.</p>
<p>Planning White paper proposing radical reforms to the Planning system potentially meaning that the Council has less ability to influence and manage development in the area and residents have a reduced ability to participate in the decision making process.</p>	<p>Proactive response to Government consultations identifying early threats that weaken local policies that are important in RBKC. Identify risks and take appropriate actions. Ensure that the skill set and training is in place so that officers can respond appropriately and be in the forefront to deal with both risks and opportunities.</p> <p>Communication with residents and councillors to make them aware of any changing context.</p>

Appendix 4 - Departmental Budget 20/21

£'000s	Planning Directorate	Development Management	Spatial Planning	Land Charges, Business Development, and BC non-Trading Account	Building Control Trading Account	Total
Staffing	171	1,715	1,493	1,194	402	4,975
Other Expenditure	13	1,077	174	182	77	1,523
Income	0	-3,024	-410	-1,241	-646	-5,321
Net Budget before Corporate Recharges	184	-232	1,257	135	-167	1,177
Corporate Recharges	377	370	1,616	810	99	2,062
Net Budget after Corporate Recharges	561	138	2,873	945	-68	3,239