

Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder Statement 2017-18 - Councillor Alan McDermott

My Responsibilities:

I am responsible for leading on Planning - ensuring that we balance the enhancement of the borough's natural and built assets and that the economy develops in a sustainable way. I also lead on transport and parking issues - engaging with Kent Highways Services as the Highways Authority. I am responsible for operation of the Council's car parking facilities including enforcement. My work contributes to the Council's strategic priorities, particularly to providing a prosperous borough - supported through the Local Plan.

Functions and Services:

I am responsible for the services below, covering a 2017/18 expenditure of £5.6 million

- Planning Policy and Local Plan Review
- Building Control
- Development Management
- Parking (on and off street)
- Planning Enforcement
- Transportation
- Conservation & Heritage Planning
- High Weald AONB

I am also Deputy Leader and the Lead Cabinet member on a range of partnerships and working groups, namely:

- Planning & Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board (Chair)
- Planning Policy Working Group (Chair)
- Public Transport Forum (Chair)
- Development Advisory Panel (Deputy Chair)
- Cycling Forum (Chairman)

Key Plans and Strategies for which I have specific responsibility:

- Core Strategy & Site Allocations Local Plan
- Conserving the Natural and Built Environment
- Planning Enforcement and Compliance Strategy
- Borough Transport Strategy
- Borough Cycling Strategy
- Parking Strategy (incl. Enforcement & Permit policies)
- High Weald AONB Management Plan

Achievements in 2016-17:

- The Council's parking strategy was implemented and in the first year focused on improving the operation of permit parking schemes to the advantage of local residents.
- Post Payment parking machines were rolled out in Royal Victoria Place car park – allowing users to pay by credit/debit card.
- John Street car park was resurfaced and made useable
- The Council's Site Allocations Local Plan was adopted as part of the Development Plan for the borough.
- Work on an evidence base, including a funding bid to the DCLG was undertaken, to inform the Local Plan Review
- The Contaminated Land Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in September 2016
- Neighbourhood areas were designated for Goudhurst, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst allowing them to progress with Neighbourhood Plan Development.
- In February 2017, an update of the Tunbridge Wells Borough draft Landscape Character Assessment was published.
- £1 million secured from the West Kent Local Sustainable Transport Fund for Public Realm improvements
- The Kent High Weald Partnership engaged with 22 Schools and 23 Community groups, ran 210 public events and organised 13,054 hours of volunteer work on green spaces.

Priorities for 2017-18:

- Continued development of the Council's new Local Plan – securing suitable sites to meet the borough's housing, economic and development needs.
- A review of the Council's Borough Transport Strategy and delivery of the projects in partnership with KCC and secure further funding to tackle congestion, encourage cycling and promote 20mph schemes
- Continued support for local communities and councils in the development of neighbourhood plans
- Production of a Planning Development Framework for the Civic Development
- Production of a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for potential adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Maintaining the Councils Self Build Register and establishing a Brownfield Land Register
- Take the Draft Landscape Character Assessment through the formal adoption process by the Council for use in Planning.

Contact:

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