



Planning and Regeneration

CLlr Gareth Williams



Scope of Portfolio

Planning Policy

- The Planning Policy team are responsible for developing and maintaining the policies which set the foundation to enable sound and robust planning decisions. A key area of work for this team is development of the new Buckinghamshire Local Plan for adoption in 2025, and adoption of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) is anticipated later this year.
- A number of key milestones in developing the Buckinghamshire Local Plan have already been achieved, including Cabinet agreement of the Local Development Scheme, a brownfield “call for sites” (with a second call expected later this year) and a public engagement on the Statement of Community Involvement.
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide more detailed guidance on matters set out in Local Plans. Work is progressing on a number of SPDs including for specific sites such as Aylesbury South, Hollands Farm and Biodiversity Net Gain. The team also support Parish and Town councils in preparing Neighbourhood Plans.

Planning Enforcement

- Enforcement and compliance teams monitor developments once approved to ensure that they are built within the local plans. The Local Enforcement and Monitoring Plan was adopted by Cabinet in June 2020 and gives an overview of the service and sets out how the Council will investigate alleged breaches of planning control and how decisions on formal enforcement action will be made.
- In 20/21, Buckinghamshire Council issued 47 Planning Enforcement Notices (63 formal notices in total). This was the 12th highest nationally and the 5th highest of all local authorities outside of London.

Scope of Portfolio

Development Management

- The Development Management (DM) team use national and local planning policies to determine applications, dealing with around 13,000 planning applications a year.
- These are determined by officers under delegated arrangements or through the 5 Area Planning Committees and Strategic Sites Committee, which all now meet in person having met virtually for the first year due to the COVID pandemic.
- The DM team ensure sustainable and high-quality development, securing appropriate mitigation in the form of financial contributions or physical improvements through legal agreements.
- Highways DM are responsible for overseeing the delivery of development related highways works and the adoption of new residential roads as public highway.

Building Control

- Ensuring compliance with regulations and enforcing standards, the building control team deal with around 2,600 building regulation applications each year and undertake in the region of 28,000 site inspections.
- Building regulations are minimum technical standards set by Government which over the construction, extension and alteration of most buildings. They are intending to protect people's health, safety and welfare in and around buildings.
- The team works in direct competition with the private sector, and in Q4 2021/22 had 78.8% market share.

Scope of Portfolio

Town Centre Regeneration

- Teams in the Economic Growth & Regeneration service are working to regenerate and champion our places, ensuring sustainable growth meets the needs of our communities and helps deliver jobs, skills, homes, amenities and ultimately produces economic growth. This local priority is reflected nationally in the increased access for funds to support investment in our town centres.
- The current focus of regeneration activity is around Aylesbury (which has Garden Town status and an adopted masterplan) High Wycombe and Chesham. In the past year, engagement has been held the first major project from the Aylesbury Garden Town masterplan – Aylesbury Gardenway, a proposed 18km orbital park that will encircle Aylesbury. High Wycombe Regeneration Board has been established to collectively consider and advise the Council in relation to overall delivery of regeneration in High Wycombe. In the past year, we have been successful in receiving £11.7m of Future High Streets Funds from Government which will be used for key regeneration schemes in High Wycombe.
- Work is underway to explore development of an overarching strategic regeneration framework which will not only cover Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham, but also the other 11 towns across the county including Chesham, Amersham, Buckingham, Princes Risborough and Marlow and the large villages.
- Our proposals and initiatives show the ambition of Buckinghamshire to build on its reputation as an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Some areas of focus:

- Progression of the Buckinghamshire Local Plan
- Keeping planning decisions local with five planning committees
- Continue our tough new approach to planning enforcement, taking actions where necessary on unauthorized buildings or activities
- Focusing our policies and decisions on delivering new, 'green' growth
- Introducing higher, more energy efficient standards for all new developments
- Continuing our commitment to Aylesbury Garden Town and focus on the regeneration of Aylesbury, High Wycombe and other town centres (including the development of a regeneration framework)
- Supporting the continued development of Neighbourhood Plans across the County
- Leading the Planning Improvement Board to deliver lasting and consistent improvements to the planning service