REPORT of
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP

to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
3 SEPTEMBER 2026

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE ACTION PLAN REVIEW

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Committee on the review of the Development Management Service Action Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

(i) That the Committee agrees the work completed on the scrutiny of the Development Management Service Action Plan to date;

(ii) That the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee assumes responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and oversight of the Development Service Action Plan, receiving periodic progress reports from the relevant Lead Officer and making any recommendations it considers necessary to ensure delivery of the agreed actions.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the request of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to review the report and Development Management Service Action Plan at the previous meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 July 2026.

3.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group (the Working Group) met on 4 August 2026 and considered the Peer Review and the Action Plan to address the 37 recommendations made. A Summary of the Peer Review and the Action Plan is attached as **APPENDICES 1** and **2** to this report.

3.3 The Working Group noted that a number of actions were already underway, including the reintroduction of a Duty Planner service for householders and preparatory work linked to changes required by the National Scheme of Delegation and revised Planning Committee arrangements.

3.4 The Development Management Service Action Plan contained a number of operational and management issues that the Working Group were satisfied were being addressed.

3.5 The Working Group requested that further information be provided on a number of the actions raised specifically:

- Members involvement and training in the Planning Appeals process.

- Update on the National Scheme of Delegation and changes to the Planning Committee process.
- How the Council processes and publishes public objections to planning applications.

3.6 Since the meeting of the Working Group the following update can be provided in relation to the points raised in section 3.5 above.

3.6.1 Legal and Planning Officers are currently drafting changes to the Constitution that will be required to ensure that the Council acts lawfully in relation to the National Scheme of Delegation. A Member briefing on these changes is planned for early October 2025. A full report will be provided to the Council on 22 October 2026.

3.6.2 The legal changes required to the size of the Planning Committee will be considered at the meeting of the Council on 22 October 2026.

3.6.3 Council Officers are considering the recommendations in relation to the legal requirements and processing of objections and notification of planning applications. On completion of this work a report will be provided to the Strategy and Resources Committee for consideration.

3.6.4 Member Training is currently being organised in relation to making planning decisions which is scheduled to take place before 31 October 2026. Following this training Officers will consider, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Planning Committee, identifying further training needs of Members and arrange any further training which may be appropriate.

3.7 The Working Group also suggested that the report did not fully consider any issues or improvements in relation to the leadership strategy for the Development Management team.

3.8 The Local Government Reorganisation and the challenges and opportunities that this brings were not considered.

3.9 There was no consideration of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the strategy.

3.10 The Working Group has planned a further meeting to discuss the outstanding matters as set out in this report.

3.11 The Working Group discussed that the monitoring of the Development Management Service Action Plan and that it may be appropriate to transfer the monitoring of the Action Plan on completion of this piece of scrutiny work to the Performance Governance and Audit Committee.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 This report provides an update on the initial discussions of the Working Group, and a further report will be provided to the Committee on completion of this work.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 **Delivering good quality services**

5.1.1 The implementation of the Action Plan will see an improvement in the quality of service provided by the Development Management Team to the public.

6. IMPLICATIONS

(i) **<u>Impact on Customers</u>** – On completion of the Action Plan customers will see a better service from the Development Management Team.

(ii) **<u>Impact on Equalities</u>** – None.

(iii) **<u>Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)</u>** – None.

(iv) **<u>Impact on Resources (financial)</u>** – None.

(v) **<u>Impact on Resources (human)</u>** – Implementation of the action plan will require staff engagement as part of their role.

(vi) **<u>Impact on Devolution / Local Government Reorganisation</u>** – Where changes are proposed to the Development Teams working practices officers will liaise with colleagues from neighbouring areas to align procedures and practices where it is appropriate to do so.

<u>Background Papers:</u>
APPENDIX 1 Summary of POS Enterprises Ltd (POSe) Review
APPENDIX 2 Action Plan

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