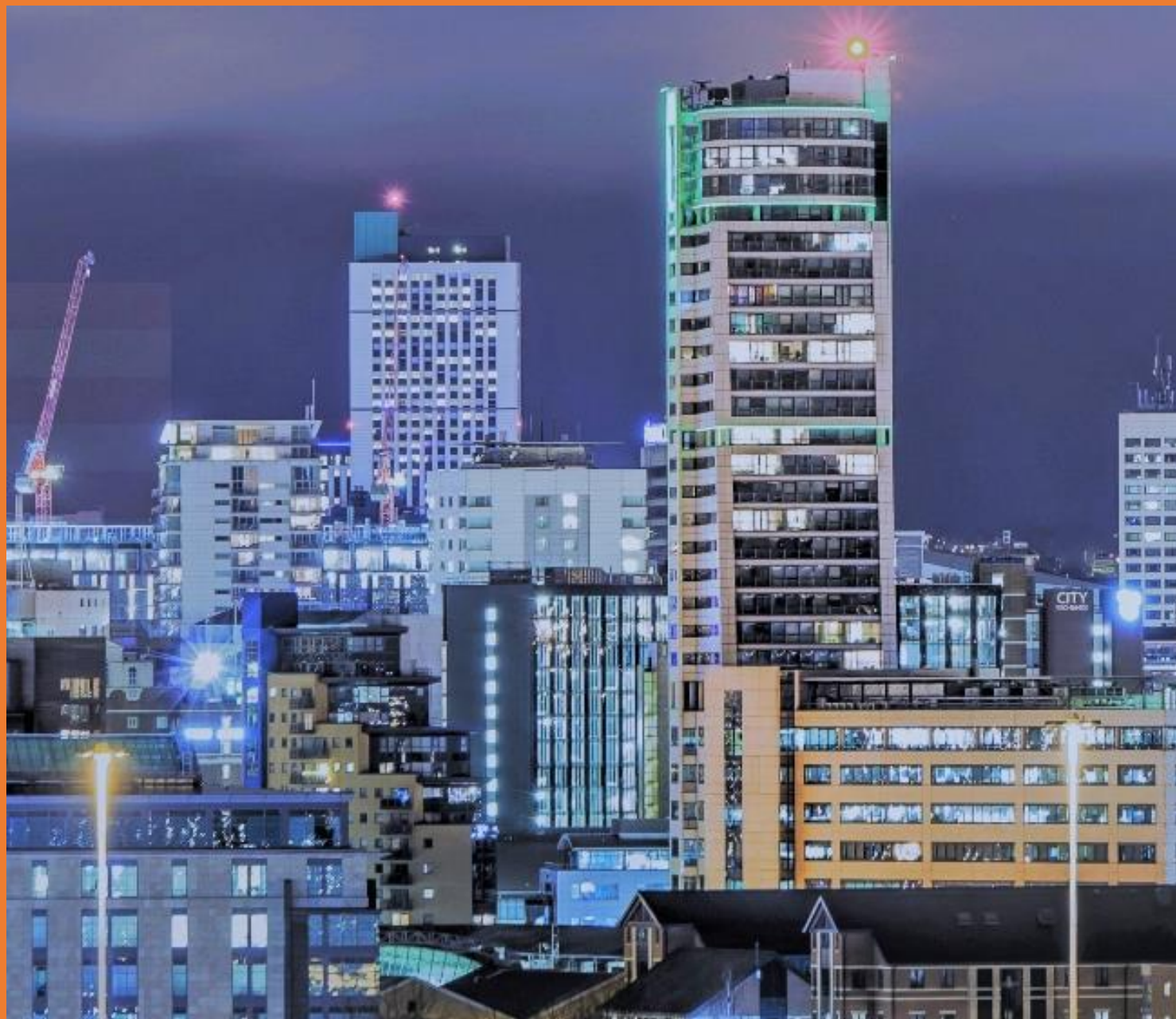


Plans Panel Annual Report 2016-17



Introduction



Welcome to the second Plans Panels and the Development Plans Panel annual report covering the work of the Panels April 2016- March 2017. This report provides the opportunity to highlight and review last year's activity and describe some of the key achievements in helping deliver the Best Council Plan through contributing to the Breakthrough Projects.

The Panels continue to be busy throughout 2016-17 seeing some large and strategically important schemes coming forward, particularly for housing sites which are imperative to deliver the homes we need for our local communities. There have been a number of proposals for sensitive housing sites this year, some leading to appeals; however it's vitally important for the Plans Panels to consider carefully that the right homes are delivered at the right time and to ensure that the quality of those homes is of the standard we expect for Leeds.

The Plans Panels often have a difficult role; the planning system exists to consider development proposals in light of the wider public interest. This can be particularly challenging on sensitive sites, where there are community concerns on proposals. The role of Panel is to take the overview and take in account the interests of the city and act in a way which is fair, and is seen as being so. This has been a significant part of the work of the Panels.

For the Development Plans Panel it has also been a significant year, developing the criteria for the Core Strategy selective review, working through the detail and implementing the final submissions for the Site Allocations Plan, development of the Aire Valley Action Plan, through to its successful inspection and consideration of an eagerly awaited Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document.

Going forward, there is the need to ensure that there are appropriate resources to cope with the increasing number of planning applications and deal effectively with the biggest schemes, generating significant investment for the city, maintain our capacity to deal with enforcement matters and to manage the Community Infrastructure Levy effectively. The 20% increase in planning fees is expected before the end of 2017, which will assist in maintaining and improving service quality and delivery in 2018 and beyond.

A final reflection; it has been another challenging year but nonetheless a year filled with successful delivery of permissions for new homes, commercial and industrial schemes and has been a testament to the continuing strong economy of Leeds and the role of Plans Panels, as the shop window to Leeds, playing a significant part in delivering good growth for the City.



Councillor Richard Lewis, Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning



Strong communities benefiting from a strong city

creating vibrant and cohesive neighbourhoods through well designed neighbourhoods



Housing growth and high standards in all sectors

delivery of housing growth and promoting the Leeds Standard for our own housing stock



Early intervention and reducing health inequalities

Access to high quality housing in safe neighbourhoods, green spaces, strong communities and good transport systems all contribute to positive health and wellbeing.



Cutting carbon and improving air quality

encouraging and promoting the use of cycles, public transport and delivering schemes to connect the city



More jobs, better jobs

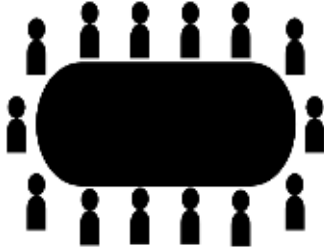
through use of planning obligations in S106 to provide jobs to people in localities

by expeditious delivery of planning permissions, encouraging business investment in Leeds

Plans Panels and the Development Plans Panel:

Contribution to the delivery of the Council's Breakthrough Projects

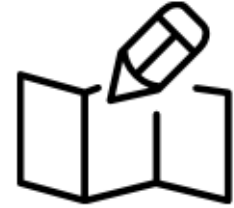
Summary of activity 2016-17



38 Plans Panel meetings
and 9 Development Plans
Panel meetings



151 items to Plans Panels



112 applications for
determination



90 site visits



105 decisions



11 decisions contrary to
officer recommendation

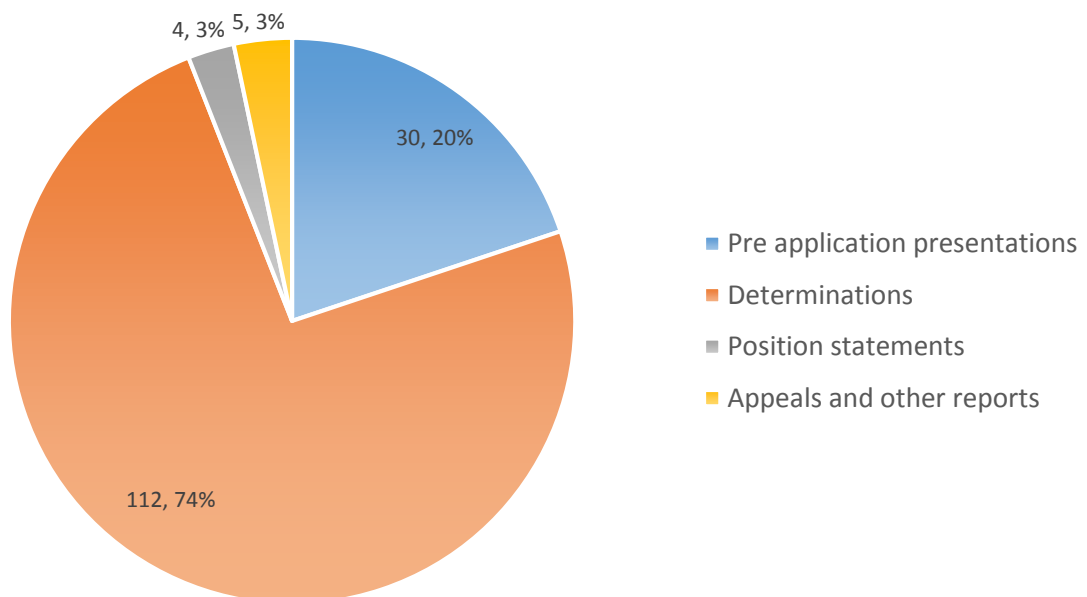


**Plans Panels delivering approvals for around 2,500
new homes throughout the City**

Workload breakdown



- 41 major schemes
- 23 major residential schemes
- 25 minor residential schemes
- 7 major and minor retail schemes
- 10 household schemes



Significant approved applications



Majestic, City Square

- Former Seacroft Hospital, 503 dwellings
- Clarence Road, mixed residential and commercial scheme
- Towcester Avenue, 93 dwellings
- Spofforth Hill, 325 dwellings
- Devonshire Lodge, Lidgett Park, 41 unit retirement housing accommodation
- 228 new apartments in 5 buildings at Hilltop Works, Chapeltown
- Outline application for residential development at Spencer House, Holywell Lane
- 46 dwellings at land off New Village Way, Churwell
- 93 dwellings, public space, new roads, link from Throstle Road to Towcester Avenue

Headingley Stadium



Development Plan Panel



This has been a particularly busy year for the Development Plan Panel, primarily due to the work involved in preparing for the final stages of the Site Allocations Plan (SAP), in readiness for the Inspection in October 2017 and in taking forward the Aire Valley Action Plan through to Inspection.

Other significant work carried out in 2016-17 includes:

- Core Strategy Selective Review
- National Housing Standards
- Strategic Land Availability Assessment
- Review of the Inspectors report on the Bradford Core Strategy
- Site Allocations Plan consultation outcomes and proposed changes
- Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document
- Affordable Housing Benchmarks
- Site Allocation Outer North East housing market area proposals

Reflecting on the year

Joint Plans Panel

The Joint Plans Panel has met twice during 2016-17 to discuss matter relating to development management, planning policy and government initiatives. Items covered in 2016-17 included:

Planning performance

Use of planning conditions

Member training

Buildings at risk

Local Enforcement Plan

Planning reform

Neighbourhood planning

Nominations for the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Planning Excellence Awards

The local planning authority was shortlisted for two planning excellence award, by the industry ruling body the RTPI. The RTPI Awards are the most established and respected awards in the UK planning industry. Running for 40 years, they celebrate exceptional examples of planning. 2016-17 saw nearly a 40% increase in entrants. Our two nominated categories were:

- Local Planning Authority of the Year
- Excellence in Planning to Create Economically Successful Places- Victoria Gate Development (Phase 1) (Approved by City Plans Panel).

The service did not win, but it was a significant achievement to be shortlisted.

Customer Service Excellence (CSE)

CSE is a government initiative which recognises and rewards organisations for their focus on customer service. The service is reassessed each year on key “customer journeys”; customer journeys plot the route from an enquiry or need for service and the interaction with the Council. This year one of the journeys selected was:

Customer makes an objection on an application which is going to a Plans Panel meeting and wishes to speak

The CSE assessor accompanied North and East Plans Panel members on the site visits and then attended as an observer the meeting that afternoon. The assessor commended:

It was good to see that all speakers were treated fairly and politely by all those who questioned them. The Chair had an approach that put the agents and members of the public at ease, the members questioning was well reasoned leading to the Panel making logical decisions. The officers from the Planning Services had a difficult role in offering advice and guidance to the Panel but their knowledge and experience shone through.

The service was reaccredited with the Customer Services Excellence Award

Member training

In order to sit on the Panel members must complete mandatory training; 100% of Plans Panel members completed this training in 2016-17. Changes to the Council Procedure Rules to allow greater flexibility around the appointment of substitutes to Plans Panels was agreed by full Council in January 2017, subject to members having the appropriate training and abide by the *Planning Code of Good Practice*. All members substituting on the Plans Panels have received this training.

Additionally, further training was offered in 2016-17 as part of a rolling programme of member training and included viability which was also attended by the District Valuer and representatives from the volume house building industry and the first workshop on tall buildings.