

## Providing planning resilience support to

## Warrington Borough Council

Due to a resourcing gap within Warrington Borough Council's planning department, Urban Vision, (Capita's joint venture partnership with Salford City Council), were commissioned to work alongside the Council to provide development management support to assist with their high volumes of incoming householder and minor planning applications.

### What we did

Two full time members of our Planning Team with additional occasional support when demand peaked was commissioned on a 3 month rolling basis between September 2015 and April 2017 to process 413 householder planning applications and 146 Minor planning applications on behalf of the Council. The minor applications included the building of 1-9 houses and up to 1000 sqm of new floorspace for retail and industrial use.

### The list of services provided included:

- > Planning application collections and handover briefings with council officers
- > Reviewing the planning applications and supporting documents
- > Conducting site visits and writing up assessments
- > Reviewing national and local planning policy and any other relevant documents
- > Assessing consultee and third party representations
- > Negotiations as part of the planning application process to secure amendments and added value
- > Producing recommendations and condition reports and reviews
- > Uploading all documents and reports to the Council's back office systems for a decision.

We provided a remote working solution, which involved us visiting the Council office for meetings to discuss cases in detail but complete all background works remotely at our planning hub which involved the uploading of completed reports into the Council's back office system.

### The outcome

- > By adding extra capacity and expertise, Warrington Borough Council were able to meet their government targets on speed and quality and so avoiding the potential of the Council being put into special measures and having to refund planning application fees.
- > The support aided the speed of the planning application and decision making process which contributed to the realisation of development and regeneration projects, investment and job creation opportunities in the area.
- > Our consultants were contactable by the applicant and the local community to discuss individual cases, so we were able to deal with customer expectations.



The sheer volume of planning applications dealt with by Urban Vision has been very impressive and helped us immensely during a period when our planning section was under severe pressure

Richard Evans– Principal Planner,  
Warrington Borough Council.