

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Quarterly Report on Planning Performance</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>24 February 2021</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Information</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets
Outcome	Pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Planning

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	Nil
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

## 1.0 Background

1.1 Schedule 4 of The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out the statutory performance targets for the Planning Department for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases.

1.2 The statutory targets are:

- Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks
- Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks
- 70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.

1.3 The Northern Ireland Planning Statistics is an official statistics publication issued by Analysis, Statistics & Research Team within Department for Infrastructure. It provides the official statistics for each Council on each of the statutory targets and is published quarterly and on an annual basis. The Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin was published on 17 December 2020 providing planning statistics for this period. It also provides a summary of Council progress across the three statutory targets.

## 2.0 Details

Website link 1

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-planning-statistics-july-september-2020> provides the link to the published bulletin.

### Development Management Planning Applications

2.1 Table 1 below provides a summary of performance in relation to the statutory targets for major development applications and local development applications for the second quarter of 2020-21 business year and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils.

2.2 Of note is that we issued the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of major planning applications out of the 11 Councils in Q2 and has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of live applications. However, there has been a reduction in the number of decisions issued when compared to the same period last year due to the restrictions imposed due to Covid-19. In terms of decisions issued in Q2, although this has increased when compared to Q1 we are 8<sup>th</sup> out of 11 Councils in terms of the number of decisions issued in this quarter.

2.3 In terms of average processing times in Q2, we sit mid-ranking in terms of local applications average processing times but were the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest (i.e. longest time) for major applications.

**Table 1: Planning Applications**

2020/21	Major		Local		Total		Live	
Q2	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Total	Over 12mths
Planning Applications	3	4	314	172	317	176	896	220 (24.6%)
Rank (highest)	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> (%)
Average Processing Times	93.6 weeks		20.7 weeks					
Rank (highest)	3 <sup>rd</sup>		5 <sup>th</sup>					
Approval Rate	100%		95.1%		96.2%		8 <sup>th</sup> Rank	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin

- 2.4 Table 2 below provides the YTD position at end of Q2. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council sits mid-ranking in terms of applications received, live cases and percentage of live cases over 12 months old. Performance has also improved in relation to the average processing time for local applications. Major planning application processing times were impacted by the postponement of Planning Committee meetings in March, April and May and no Committee meeting in July, impeding the progression to decision of the major applications.
- 2.5 Focus on the over 12 month applications in the system is required to reduce the number of older applications in the system. This will be assisted by the recruitment of additional staff in Q4. Therefore, progress in relation to the reduction of over 12 month applications is unlikely to be forthcoming until Q1 of 2021/22 business year.

**Table 2: YTD Planning Applications Statistics**

2020/21	Major		Local		Total		Live	
YTD	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Total	Over 12mths
Planning Applications	5	5	528	324	533	329	896	220 (24.6%)
Rank (highest)	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> (%)
Average Processing Times	87.8 weeks		20.1 weeks					
Rank (highest)	1 <sup>st</sup>		5 <sup>th</sup>					
Approval Rate	100%		94.1%		96.2%		5 <sup>th</sup> Rank	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin

## Enforcement

- 2.6 Table 3 below shows statistics in relation to enforcement for Q2 of the 2020/21 business year and Table 4 shows the position year to date at end of Q2. Of note is that the Enforcement Team continues to meet the statutory target to conclude 70% of cases within 39 weeks. To note, the enforcement team closed the 5<sup>th</sup> highest number of cases with over 35% as a result of no breach of planning control being identified. Furthermore, the Enforcement team had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of prosecutions in Q2 out of the 11 Councils. The Enforcement Team have the 5<sup>th</sup> highest number of live enforcement cases with the 4<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of cases over 2 years in the system.

**Table 3: Enforcement**

2020/21	Open	Conclude	Conclusion Times	Court Action	
Q2			70% within 39wks	Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	65	65	72.3%	3	0
Rank (highest)	7 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	-

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin

**Table 4: YTD Enforcement Statistics**

2020/21	Open	Conclude	Conclusion Times	Court Action	
YTD			70% within 39wks	Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	124	105	71.4%	3	0
Rank (highest)	7 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	-

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin

## Other Activity by Planning Department

- 2.7 Tables 5 and 6 below indicate the level of other activity carried out by the Planning Department over Q2 and year to date at end of Q2 of 2020/21 business year.

**Table 5: Other Activity**

Q2 2020/21	Received	Rank
Discharge of Conditions	22	4 <sup>th</sup>
Certificate of Lawful Development	21	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Pre Application Discussions	12	5 <sup>th</sup>
Non Material Change	6	9 <sup>th</sup>
TPOs	4	6 <sup>th</sup>
Pre Application Notice	1	10 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin

- 2.8 In addition to the formal applications received, YTD at end of Q2 the Planning Department received 109 other types of applications relating to planning applications, 36 FOI/EIR requests, 304 general correspondence and 34 complaints at varying stages.

**Table 6: YTD Other Activity**

YTD 2019/20	Received	Rank (highest)
Discharge of Conditions	39	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Certificate of Lawful Development	26	6 <sup>th</sup>
Pre Application Discussions	23	4 <sup>th</sup>
Non Material Change	14	7 <sup>th</sup>
TPOs	4	6 <sup>th</sup>
Pre Application Notice	3	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin

#### Income

- 2.9 Table 5 below provides a breakdown of the income generated by the Planning Department in Q2 of 2020/21. Income (including Property Certificates but excluding DfC Covid Fund) is 69% of that predicted for this period.

**Table 5: Income**

Q2 2020/21	Received
Planning Applications	£457,301.56
Property Certificates	£50,054
DfC Covid Fund	£146,445
<b>Total</b>	<b>£653,800.56</b>

Source: Unvalidated Statistics – Internal Reports

#### Conclusion

- 2.10 In conclusion, performance within the Planning Department continues to steadily improve towards meeting the statutory targets even during the tight restrictions imposed by the Northern Ireland Executive due to Covid-19 pandemic. However areas of concern remain with the number of applications in the system over 12months and the length of time taken to process local applications. With the recruitment of additional staff in Q4 it will be Q1 of 2021/22 before any impact of the additional staff will be achieved.

### 3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Committee note the Planning Departments Quarterly Report.