

Publication of Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2018/19 Statistical Bulletin	24th October 2018
Planning Committee	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
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	Denise Dickson
Cost: (If applicable)	N/A

1.0 Background

The Northern Ireland Planning Statistics is an official statistics publication issued by Analysis, Statistics & Research Team within Department for Infrastructure. The First Quarter 2018/19 Statistical Bulletin was published on 20th September 2018 providing provisional planning statistics for this period. It also provides a summary of Council progress across the three statutory targets for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases as laid out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

2.0 Details

2.1 **Website link** <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-planning-statistics-april-2018-june-2018> provides the link to the published bulletin and Appendix 1 provides an overview against the three statutory targets.

Development Management Planning Applications

2.2 Table 1 below provides a summary of performance in relation to the statutory target for major development applications and local development applications for Q1 and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils.

Table 1: Planning Applications – Q1 of 2018/19

2018/19	Major		Local		Total		Live	
	Rec'd	Dec'd	Rec'd	Dec'd	Rec'd	Dec'd	Total	Over 12mths
Q1								
Planning Applications	5	0	296	291	301	291	780	129
Rank	4 th	-	5 th	5 th	5 th	5 th	4 th	5 th (%)
Average Processing Times	357wks (target 30wks) based on 1 withdrawn application		23.7wks (target 15wks) including 21 withdrawn applications					
Rank	11 th		11 th					
Approval Rate	- %		94.2%		94.2%		8 th Rank	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: 2018/19 First Quarterly Statistical Bulletin

2.3 As is clear from Table 1 above, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is in the top half of the 11 Councils when comparing the number of applications received, determined and live applications. However, it is clear that performance in terms of processing times of both major and local applications is the slowest out of the 11 Councils. The main reasons for the lengthy time to process applications relates to the continual negotiations on applications to achieve high quality design or seek reports on flooding, ammonia, and protected species. This is because 42% of the Borough is covered in an environmental designation, including 5 Conservation Areas and 4 AONBs, either wholly or partially.

2.4 Nevertheless, performance against statutory targets remains an area for improvement and progress has been made in relation to the time to process local applications, improving from 33.4% of applications processed within the 15 weeks in Q4 of 2017/18 to 33.7% weeks in Q1 of 2018/19. With the ongoing recruitment of additional staff it is anticipated that this should show improvements in performance against statutory targets in Q3 and more noticeably in Q4 when staff will have been recruited and in post.

Enforcement

2.5 Table 2 below shows statistics in relation to enforcement in Q1. The high number of enforcement cases opened continued yet we continue to close more cases than we open keeping the overall live caseload at a manageable level. Of note is that of the cases closed in Q1, 28% were as a result of no breach of planning control being identified.

Table 2 Enforcement – Q1 2018/19

2018/19	Open	Conclude	Conclusion Times	Live	Court Action	
Q1			70% within 39wks		Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	71	99	85.9%	296	2	1
Rank	7 th	4 th	4 th	5 th	3 rd	1 st

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: 2018/19 First Quarterly Statistical Bulletin

Conclusion

2.6 In conclusion, performance within the Planning Department remains steady. However, the processing times and number of over 12 month applications requires focus over this business year in an attempt to increase the number of applications processed within the statutory targets and reduce the number in the system over 12 months. With the agreed recruitment of additional staff, this improvement should be visible in Q4 performance statistics.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 IT IS RECOMMENDED that the Planning Committee note the update on the Northern Ireland Planning Statistics 2018/19 First Quarterly Statistical Bulletin.