

Quarterly Report on Planning Performance	23rd October 2019
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

FOR NOTING

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 First Quarter 2019/20 Statistical Bulletin was published on 26th September 2019 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-april-june-2019> 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 first quarter of 2019-20 business year and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils.

Table 1: Planning Applications

2019/20	Major		Local		Total		Live	
Q1	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Total	Over 12mths
Planning Applications	2	8	313	304	315	312	765	143 (18.7%)
Rank	7 th	2 nd	5 th	5 th	5 th	5 th	3 rd	5 th (%)
Average Processing Times	74.5 weeks		20.2 weeks					
Rank	7 th		10 th					
Approval Rate	100%		93%		93.2%		8 th Rank	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2019/20 Statistical Bulletin

- 2.2 In the Q1, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council issued the 2nd highest number of major applications out of the 11 Councils, and has the 3rd highest number of live applications. In comparison to the same period last year, the number of major applications received has reduced from 4 to 2. Processing times for both major and local applications have improved when compared to the same period last year with more major and local applications being processed within the statutory timeframe.
- 2.3 The percentage of live applications that are over 12months in the system remains an area of concern. With the 3 Fixed Term Contract posts coming to an end over the next couple of months, consideration must be given to retaining these posts for another 2 years or making the posts permanent. Otherwise there is a high risk that the case loads of staff will increase once more and this will have a negative impact on performance.
- 2.4 As continual negotiation is not an efficient use of staff time and resources, consideration must be given as to how to improve the development management process. It is proposed to hold a workshop with Planning Committee Members to develop and agree a more efficient process.

Enforcement

- 2.5 Table 2 below shows statistics in relation to enforcement for Q1 of the 2019/20 business year. Of note is that of the cases closed, over 39% were as a result of no breach of planning control being identified. Furthermore, the Enforcement team concluded the second highest percentage of cases within the 39 weeks statutory target – 92%. Furthermore the team issued the 2nd highest number of prosecutions in Q1 out of the 11 Councils.

Table 2: Enforcement

2019/20	Open	Conclude	Conclusion Times	Court Action	
Q1			70% within 39wks	Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	104	100	92%	5	0
Rank	4 th	6 th	2 nd	2 nd	-

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2019/20 Statistical Bulletin

Other Activity by Planning Department

- 2.6 Tables 3 and 4 below indicate the level of other activity carried out by the Planning Department over Q1 of 2019/20 business year.

Table 3: Other Activity

Q1 2019/20	Received	Rank
Discharge of Conditions	23	5 th
Certificate of Lawful Development	10	10 th
Pre Application Discussions	18	4 th
Non Material Change	9	9 th
TPOs	2	7 th
Pre Application Notice	2	3 rd
FOI/EIR	20	
General Correspondence	135	
Total	219	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2019/20 Statistical Bulletin

- 2.7 In addition to the formal applications received, the Planning Department received 64 other types of applications relating to planning applications, 20 FOI/EIR requests and issued 135 responses to general correspondence.

Income

- 2.8 Table 5 below provides a breakdown of the income generated by the Planning Department in Q1 of 2019/20. Income is relatively steady at less than £9,000 lower when compared to same period last year.

Table 5: Income

Q1 2019/20	Received
Planning Applications	£324,283.45
Property Certificates	£33,800
Total	£358,083.45

Source: Unvalidated Statistics – Internal Reports

Conclusion

- 2.9 In conclusion, performance within the Planning Department continues to steadily improve towards meeting the statutory targets. However areas of concern remain

with the number of applications in the system over 12 months and the length of time taken to process local applications. Caseloads of Planning Officers continue to be monitored and consideration must be given to extending the 3 FTC coming to an end over the next couple of months.

3.0 Recommendation

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