

Title of Report:	Quarterly Report on Planning Performance
Committee Report Submitted To:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	27 October 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Information

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	Head of Planning

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

Screening Requirements	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 First Quarter 2020/21 Statistical Bulletin was published on 30 September 2021 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-2021> 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 2021-22 business year and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils.

Table 1: Planning Applications

2021/22	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	0	6	364	343	364	349	910	187 (20.5%)
Rank	11th	1st	5th	5th	5th	4th	5th	4th (%)
Average Processing Times	84 weeks		18.6 weeks					
Rank	9th		10th					
Approval Rate	100%		95.8%		95.9%		5th	

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2021/22 Statistical Bulletin

- 2.2** In the Q1, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council issued the highest number of major planning applications out of the 11 councils, 100% of which were approved. These decisions granted permission for 2no. schools, a hotel, an open farm and a total of 306 residential units.
- 2.3** The overall approval rate for decisions on planning applications was 95.9%, 1.1% above the Northern Ireland average. For residential applications, the approval rate was 97.2%, 4th highest out of the 11 Councils and 1.9% above the NI average. However, the negotiations on planning applications to achieve a scheme that is acceptable under planning policy causes delay to the processing times of applications. Although average processing times for both major and local applications are below the Northern Ireland average, they are an improvement on the end of year position for the previous business year (quicker by 2.2 weeks and 1.6 weeks respectively), indicating continual improvement towards meeting the statutory performance indicators.
- 2.4** In terms of live applications, this Planning Department has the 4th highest live applications with the 4th highest percentage of live applications over 12 months in the system. The percentage of live applications that are over 12 months in the system has reduced by 2.5% when compared to the end of year position of 2020/21. The number of applications in the system over 12 months will continued to be monitored over this business year.

Enforcement

- 2.5** Table 2 below shows statistics in relation to enforcement for Q1 of the 2021/22 business year. Of note is that the Enforcement Team had the highest number of prosecutions out of the 11 Councils accounting for 75% of prosecutions by all 11 Councils. The percentage of cases concluded within the statutory target of 39 weeks continues to be achieved sitting 5.2% above the NI average.

Table 2: Enforcement

2021/22	Open	Conclude	Conclusion Times	Court Action	
Q1			70% within 39wks	Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	95	52	76.9%	9	0
Rank	6 th	8 th	6 th	1 st	-

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2021/22 Statistical Bulletin

Percentage of Local applications determined under delegated powers

- 2.6** Table 3 below details the total number of Local applications determined under delegated powers. Determined is taken as the date the decision issued and excludes withdrawn applications. DfI Development Management Practice Note 15 Councils Schemes of Delegation recommends that councils should aim to have 90-95% of applications dealt with under the scheme of delegation. To date 97% of applications determined were delegated under the scheme of delegation.

Table 3: Percentage of Local applications determined under delegated powers

Applications Determined				
2021/22	Total Determined	Delegated Determined	Planning Committee Determined	% Delegated Determined
April	107	103	4	96.3%
May	114	111	3	97.4
June	113	110	3	97.3
Total	334	324	10	97%

Source: Unvalidated Statistics

Number of applications taken to Planning Committee and percentage of Committee decisions made against officer recommendation

- 2.7 Table 4 provides details on the number of decisions that were determined by the Planning Committee at each monthly meeting and the percentage of decisions made against officer recommendation, including Major, Council and Local applications. This is taken from the date of the Planning Committee meeting. To note is that all referred local applications had the officers' recommendation overturned at Planning Committee which is a 100% overturn rate for referred applications and a 35% overturn rate in total.

Table 4 Percentage of decisions at Planning Committee against Officer Recommendation

2021/22	Total Planning Committee Determined	Officer Recommendation Overturned	Requested Referred to PC Determined	Total no of Referrals overturned by PC
April	8	5	2	2
May	-	-	-	-
June	12	2	2	2
Total	20	7	4	4

Source: Unvalidated Statistics

Percentage of appeals against refusals of planning permission that are dismissed

- 2.8 Table 5 below details the number of appeal decisions issued YTD of 2021/22 business year. Please note that these figures relating to planning appeal decisions are unvalidated statistics extracted from internal management reports.

Table 5 Appeals to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC)

Appeal Decisions	April 21/22	May 21/22	June 21/22	Total To Date
Upheld	0	1 Partially	1 Partially	1
Dismissed	0	1 Partially	1 Partially	1
Cumulative Total Appeal Decisions	0	1	1	2

Source: Unvalidated Statistics Internal Management Reports

Number of claims for costs received by the PAC and number of claims awarded

- 2.9** Table 6 provides the details of the number of application for claims for costs made by either third parties or Council to the PAC and the number of claims where the PAC have awarded costs. Costs were partly awarded in this case due to the retrospective planning application relating to the enforcement notice being capable of being issued prior to the appeal hearing and therefore the requirement for the hearing would not have been necessary.

Table 6 Total number of costs received

2021/22	Claims for Costs by third parties	Cost awarded against Council	Claim for Costs by Council	Costs awarded to the Council
April	0	1 Partly Awarded	0	0
May	0	0	0	0
June	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1	0	0

Source: Unvalidated Statistics Internal Management Reports

Total number of referrals requested

- 2.10** Table 7 details the number of contentious applications which have been circulated to all Members and the number of applications subsequently referred to the Planning Committee for determination.

Table 7 Total number of referrals requested

2020/21	No of contentious applications	No of contentious applications referred	% Referred
April	1	0	0%
May	4	2	50%
June	10	2	20%
Total	15	4	26.7%

Source: Unvalidated Statistics Internal Management Reports

Other Activity by Planning Department

- 2.11 Tables 8 below indicate the level of other activity carried out by the Planning Department over Q1 of 2021/22 business year.

Table 8: Other Activity

Q1 2021/22	Received	Rank
Discharge of Conditions	17	6 th
Certificate of Lawful Development	10	10 th
Pre Application Discussions	15	5 th
Non Material Change	4	11 th
TPOs	1	7 th
Pre Application Notice	4	4 th
Total	51	-

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2021/22 Statistical Bulletin

- 2.12 In addition to the formal applications received, the Planning Department received 51 other types of applications relating to planning applications. The number of Proposals of Application Notices received is double that received for the same period last year and 2/3rds of those received for the whole of the last business year. This providing an indication of the number of major planning applications likely to be submitted over the next number of months, showing continuing interest in investment in this Borough.

Income

- 2.13 Table 9 below provides a breakdown of the income generated by the Planning Department in Q1 of 2021/22. Taking account of both the planning application fees and property certificates fees, income is 18% higher than predicted for this period.

Table 9: Income

Q1 2021/22	Received
Planning Applications	£323,035
Property Certificates	£51,885 (to be received in period 6)
Total	£374,920

Source: Unvalidated Statistics – Internal Reports

Conclusion

- 2.14 In conclusion, performance within the Planning Department continues to steadily improve towards meeting the statutory targets. Recruitment of staff to fill vacant posts continues which will assist in reducing workloads and improving average processing times for both planning applications and enforcement cases. Agreements on Standing Advice with statutory consultees to seek agreement on the reduction of statutory consultations continues, again assisting in the reduction of timeframes for processing planning applications.

3.0 Recommendation

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