

KPI's – Q3 - Planning performance report

Planning Policy Committee Thursday 18 January 2024

Report of: Chief Planning Officer

Purpose: For information

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

This report includes information about the key planning performance indicators for quarter 3 (1 October – 31 December). The Council is required to submit this data quarterly to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC). It also contains information about current planning applications.

This report supports the Council's priority of:

Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we need

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Recommendation to Committee:

To note the Quarter 3 2023-2024 performance indicators for the Planning Policy Committee.

Reason for recommendation:

To support the committee in monitoring and managing performance.

Introduction and background

1. Performance reports are presented to each policy committee at the end of each quarter. This report is divided into two sections: the first is a summary of the position with regard to the statistics collected by DLUHC, and the second contains a broader performance update on the work of the planning service.

Statistics collected by DLUHC

2. The following performance information will be submitted to DLUHC. With reference to the indicator descriptions, an "agreed extension of time" relates to when the applicant has given their consent to the Local Planning Authority exceeding the Government's statutory target date for the determination of their application.
3. The performance statistics only cover applications for planning permission but exclude a whole range of other application types including Prior approvals, Lawful Development Certificates, Pre-application advice, discharge of conditions and tree applications. They are the official statistics that the government monitors and on which our performance is judged.

Indicator	National Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Cumulative
Percentage of decisions on major applications made within 13 weeks or within agreed extension of time	60%	100%	90%	60%	86%
Percentage of decisions on minor applications made within 8 weeks or within agreed extension of time	70%	85%	85%	86%	85%
Percentage of decisions on other applications made within 8 weeks or within agreed extension of time	70%	94%	90%	88%	91%

4. During quarter 3 there were 231 decisions, made on the following categories of applications:

Type of application	Total	Granted	Refused
Major applications	5	1	4
Minor applications	70	54	16
Other applications (incl. 129 householder)	156	138	18
Total decisions	231	193	38

5. Of the 5 major applications detailed in the table above, 3 were decided within the agreed time or with an agreed Extension of time.
6. Of the the 70 minor applications, 60 (86%) were decided within the agreed time or with an agreed Extension of time.
7. Of the the 156 other applications, 138 (88%) were decided within the agreed time or with an agreed Extension of time.
8. Cumulatively of the 231 decisions issues in quarter 3 as detailed above, 201 (87%) were made within the statutory deadlines or with an agreed Extension of time.
9. These results are in line with DLUHC's required performance levels for planning applications and demonstrate the continued improved performance of the planning service.
10. This quarter 3 major applications were resolved by the Planning Committee to grant planning permission subject to completion of a legal agreement and/or referral to DHLUC. These 3 applications are therefore currently undetermined and thus not included in the above table.

Planning service performance – reducing the backlog (including non-DLUHC statistics)

11. Work continued during Q3 to further reduce the backlog of planning applications.
12. A backlog occurs when the number of planning applications being determined is less than the number of new applications received. If this occurs over a succession of quarters then the backlog position gradually worsens. The total number of regular applications for planning permission received in Tandridge in the year 2022-2023 was 907.
13. Work on reducing the backlog continues and further progress has been made though Q3. 231 planning applications were determined compared to the 177 applications received. We were successful in our application for funds from the government's newly announced Planning Skills Delivery Fund. This grant will be helpful in assisting with reducing the backlog.

14. The following table shows the comparison between the figures reported to the 22 June meeting and those prevailing at the time of writing (09 January 2024) there were:

Measure	June 2023	30 August 2023	5 January 2024
Undetermined planning applications	375	354	287
Undetermined Lawful Development Certificates	81	54	59
Undetermined Prior Notifications	13	14	9
Other outstanding submissions *	180	176	158
Cases waiting to be validated	148	41	62
Invalid applications	67	35	32
Cases past their target date with no EOT	196 (52%)	186 (53%)	142 (49%)

* including pre-application advice cases, notifications, consultations, discharge of conditions and non-material amendments.

15. The validation timescales have substantially reduced since last year and that position is being maintained.

16. In terms of outstanding cases, of the 287 undetermined planning applications, 47 applications are more than one year old and 142 (i.e. 49%) were past their target determination date with no agreed extension of time. In most cases an extension of time will be requested and granted before a decision is made.

17. Officers aim to deal with applications in chronological order and within the statutory time limit but this is not always possible due to the reasons set out below:-

- Further information requested from the applicant.
- Amendments being made to the application.
- Specialist advice being sought.
- Waiting for responses from key consultees
- The need to consult again once revised information is received.

18. On Appeals, the performance in Q3 has been as follows:

- Planning appeals - 18 decision issued. (5 allowed & 13 dismissed).
- Enforcement appeals - 3 decisions issued. (0 allowed & 3 dismissed).
- New Planning appeals received in 16
- New Enforcement appeals received - 2
- Live Planning appeals at beginning of the quarter – 60 in total, comprising 2 Inquiries, 1 Hearing, 41 Written Reps & 16 Householders.
- Live Enforcement appeals at beginning of the quarter – 14 in total, comprising 2 Inquiries, 1 Hearing & 11 Written Reps.
- Live Planning appeals at end of the quarter – 44 in total, comprising 2 Inquiries, 1 Hearing, 29 Written Reps & 12 Householders.
- Live Enforcement appeals at end of the quarter – 13 in total, comprising 2 Inquiries, 1 Hearing & 10 Written Reps.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

There are no direct financial implications from this report as it is presented for noting. Performance against specific KPIs may have a financial impact. Financial implications will be drawn out where relevant in the regular quarterly financial update report.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The performance indicators measure how well the Planning Service is performing and help to plan for future service improvements.

Equality

This is a factual report with no implications for equalities.

Climate change

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None

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