

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE – MARCH 2021

1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 This report sets out performance in relation to the determination of planning applications in both Development Management and Majors teams on the basis of speed and quality of decision against national benchmarks. This report is provided as an analogous report to the reporting of The Planning Portfolio Holder to Full Council. The report is provided on a monthly basis.

2. BACKGROUND:

2.1 The table below sets out the current national performance targets as set by Central Government as measured over a cumulative 24-month period.

Measure and type of application	Threshold and assessment period
Speed Major Development	60% of applications determined within 13 weeks or an agreed extended deadline over a 24-month cumulative period. (EIA development 16 weeks or an agreed extended deadline).
Quality Major Development	Not more than 10% of appeals overturned over a 24 month cumulative period.
Speed of Non-major ¹ Development	70% of applications determined within 8 weeks or an agreed extended deadline over a 24 month cumulative period.
Quality of Non-major Development	Not more than 10% of appeals overturned over a 24 month cumulative period.

3. CURRENT PERFORMANCE:

3.1 The current period for assessment runs from April 2020 to April 2022. Applications performance data in relation to speed of decisions for Majors and Non-majors is shown, with current position as at the date of publication.

3.2 Major developments as measured under Table 151 of MCHLG guidance:

	All Major Decisions	Major Decisions within 13 weeks	PPA, EoT or EIA Decisions	PPA, EoT or EIA Decisions in time	Out of time	Result
Q1 Apr - Jun 2020	6	0	6	6	0	100%
Q2 Jul - Sep 2020	3	1	2	2	0	100%
Q3 Oct - Dec 2020	7	2	5	5	0	100%
Q4 Jan - Mar 2021	8	0	7	4	4	50%
Q5 Apr - Jun 2021	4	0	4	3	1	75%
Q6 Jul - Sep 2021	1	0	1	1	0	100%
Q7 Oct - Dec 2021	3	0	3	3	0	100%
Q8 Jan - Mar 2022	3	0	3	3	0	100%
total	35	3	31	27	5	86%

Minimum level required 60%

* EoT – Extension of Time Period for determination.

- 3.3 Three major decisions were issued in February. Performance in major developments remains shows a rise by 2% since reporting in February to 86% (over the 2-year average). The rise in performance results from a number of older applications with agreed extension of time where S106 Obligations have been completed enabling a decision to be issued. Our aim as officers and managers remains focused on performance improvements to ensure the figures move to the 95% mark.
- 3.4 A list of cases with outstanding S106 Obligations is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report. The list, arranged in Parish order, identifies the case, site and proposal, planning officer, whether the decision was a delegated or Committee decision and the date of resolution to approve. The sets out the current position and a RAG rating at the end. Red relates to cases that are more than three months past their date of resolution to approve, amber relates to schemes over two months past resolution to approve and green correspondences to cases less than two months past date of resolution to approved.
- 3.5 In total there are 17 S106 cases, five of which have been completed and can be removed from the next performance list. Of the remaining 12 cases, two have a red RAG rating and are being prioritised for resolution. Overall, the number of S106 cases is considered to be manageable and Officers are working with Eastlaw to ensure this position remains so.

3.6 **Projected** Non Major Performance as measured under Table 153 of MCHLG guidance:

Non-majors (153)						
	Non-major Decisions	Non-major Decisions within 8 weeks	PPA, EoT or EIA Decisions	PPA, EoT or EIA Decisions in time	Out of time	Result
Q2	200	71	122	110	19	91%
Q3	182	44	131	126	12	93%
Q4	235	61	155	118	56	76%
Q5	308	41	178	130	137	56%
Q6	298	83	123	104	111	63%
Q7	196	57	108	99	40	80%
Q8	287	119	154	146	22	92%
Q9	359	153	187	179	26	92%
	2065	629	1158	1012	424	79%

Minimum level required **70%**

* *EoT – Extension of Time Period for determination.*

Projecting performance forward from January gives a quarter with 359 decisions at 92% in time, moving to 79% of decisions over the two-year time period being in time. Our aim is for the figure to be maintained for each quarter to be at no less 90% with over 300 decisions being made in total.

February:

Performance in non-major developments is broadly maintaining the improvements in terms of speed. February' performance was at 91.76%. This compares to January at 94.28% and the December figure of 92.8%.

The quantity of decisions in February was 85 compared with January at 105 December at 84 decisions.

Reliance of extension of time period raised to 58% of all decisions under extensions and improved conversions standing at 94% being completed in the agreed time.

We will strive to deliver more decisions, and for more of those decisions to be within the 8-week period, creating a reduce reliance on extension of time period requests.

3.7 Appeals performance data (the quality criteria) is defined as no more that 10%

of all appeals against the Council's decisions being overturned over via the appeal process over the same two-year period. Performance in both Major and Non Major Decision making remains strong in terms of Quality.

3.8 For major development appeals the current figure to February stands at 2.50%; remaining a single case overturned during the 2-year performance period in Spring 2021.

3.9 For Non-Major development the figure fell to 0.56% for the appeals determined over the 2-year aggregate.

4. INFLUENCING FACTORS AND ACTIONS

4.1 Officer caseloads – the number of older cases held in the service's live caseload is reviewed monthly in this report with Development Committee. The current live case load of all matters in the service stands at 593.

Average caseloads in the Non-Major's group has risen to 32 cases per officer (29 from last month). Our average cases per officer are increasing in the Non Major group in part due to a temporary contractor role ending mid February.

We have a rise to 30 cases per officer in the Majors team (29 last month). A vacancy exists in the major group which is being reviewed to assist capacity in the group.

High rates of first time validation are being achieved with average timing remaining consistent at around 3 days per case for the PPU team to move the applications through to case officers.

4.2 Software updates – No new software updates are expected in the near future.

4.3 Staffing – Vacant Planning Officer role in Majors Team is out to advert.

4.4 Consultations – pressure remains in this area; internal consultees are under pressure from competing work areas. Case officers are being proactive and supportive. Assessment of cases at first clear date remains central to driving forward speed and quality of decision making.

4.5 We continue to monitor key performance areas for improvement:

- Reduce reliance on extension of time periods. Ensure that wherever possible extended timescales are met
- Monitor need to boost capacity to meet any short term needs (review experience profile across DM Team).
- Enhanced performance management reports for Case Officers, Team leaders and Managers, (completions graph available for managers).
- Improved communication agents / applicants (generally positive, escalation process in place where required)

- Improved business process, (produced consultation pro-former response forms).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

5.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report.