

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE – APRIL 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	7	1	6	6	0	100%
	total	39	4	34	30	5	87%
Minimum level required							60%

3.3 Four major decisions were issued in March. Performance in major developments remains very good remains and shows a rise by 1% since reporting in March to 87% (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.

3.5 In total there are 12 S106 cases, three of which have been completed and can be removed from the next performance list. Of the remaining 9 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	275	114	143	132	29	96%
	1981	590	1114	965	426	78%
Minimum level required					70%	

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

Actual performance from January to end of March gives a quarter with 275 decisions at 96% in time, moving to 78% 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.

March

Performance in non-major developments has dropped away somewhat in terms of speed. March performance was at 85% Tis compares to February' at 91.76% and January at 94.28%.

The quantity of decisions in March was 93 compared with February at 85 and January at 105 decisions.

Reliance of extension of time period was 44% of all decisions under extensions and improved conversions standing at 85% 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 than 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 2.44%; remaining a single case overturned during the 2-year performance period in Spring 2021.

3.9 For Non-Major development the figure fell to 0.39% 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 619.

Average caseloads in the Non-Major's group has risen to 33 cases per officer (32 from last month). Our average cases per officer are increasing in the Non Major group in part due to the legacy of temporary contractor role ending mid February.

We have a slight reduction to 26 cases per officer in the Majors team (30 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 in the process of being offered.

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:

- We need to increase the number of cases that are put through for decision on time, especially those not affected by Nutrient Neutrality advice from Natural England.
- Reduce reliance on extension of time periods. Ensure that wherever possible extended timescales are met

- Continue to monitor capacity of teams, caseloads and experience profile.
- 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.