

Decision Maker: **RENEWAL AND RECREATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: **Wednesday 18 March 2015**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **PLANNING PERFORMANCE**

Contact Officer: Jim Kehoe, Chief Planner
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Chief Officer: Director of Regeneration & Transformation

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

Planning Performance issues were last reported to the Committee in November 2014. This report provides an update with progress on application processing and also refers to appeals and other issues raised by the Committee.

This report focusses on the following areas:-

- The Service by telephone;
- Planning application performance;
- Planning appeal performance.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S) that:**

Progress with Planning Application and Appeal Performance be noted.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Planning
 4. Total current budget for this head: £1.59m
 5. Source of funding: Existing Controllable Revenue Budget 2014/15
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 60fte (Excluding Building Control, Land Charges)
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 20
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): those projecting and commenting upon about 3,300 planning applications per year.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: not applicable

2.1 Background

Planning Performance issues were last reported to the Committee in November 2014. This report provides an update with progress on application processing and also refers to appeals and other issues raised by the Committee.

This report focusses on the following areas:-

- The Service by telephone;
- Planning application performance;
- Planning appeal performance.

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The Planning Service for telephone customers

The new telephone system includes monitoring information. The performance over the year 2014 for the main enquiry number is about 75%. This demonstrates that the Planning's main enquiry team performance is close to the Council standard of answering 80% of calls within 30 seconds. In this period, the Planning team's performance was one of the highest measured performances in the Council.

The Planning main enquiry number (0208 313 4956) is the recommended first public contact point for Planning.

3.2 Planning Application Performance

Planning application performance in the second half of 2014/2015 has improved relative to the first half, as shown in Appendix Two.

At the time of the last report to the Committee in November, we were about to reach the full staff complement after losing several staff in the summer. The fuller staffing level and the commitment of the teams has led to a performance improvement in the second half of the year, with the 'Major' and 'Other' categories much closer to the target. This is in the context of a 13% increase in applications determined compared with the year 2013/2014.

The Bromley rate of refused applications is around 25% compared with a national average of around 15%. No specific reason has been identified for this difference, which is a long term pattern. The most likely reason is the relatively demanding policies in the Development Plan.

At Planning Appeal, 44% of appeals were allowed in 2014/2015, compared with a national average of 34%. This is not an immediate problem but will continue to be monitored.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly from this report

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly from this report

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly from this report

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly from this report

Non-Applicable Sections:	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]

Appendix 1

Planning Services Performance Levels

Telephone Customers:

The performance measure is to answer 80% of calls within 30 seconds.

2014	Current Planning Performance
2014/2015 to date	75.00%
Council Target	80.00%

Appendix 2

Planning Application Performance by Time Taken

Year	Major	Minor	Other
2014/2015 April - September	43%	42%	68%
2014/2015 October to date	55%	51%	75%
Target	60%	65%	80%