

Planning Applications Committee

01 November 2023



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT - PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Julie Williams, Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Inclusive Economy
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To note the report.

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To advise Committee on the work and performance of the Planning Development Management team and Building Control team for the second quarter of 2023/2024 (July to September) with comparison to previous years.
- 1.2. Unlike the annual reports these quarterly reports are focussed on just planning and building control application processing performance. There is a separate report on the agenda for Planning Enforcement performance.

2. Planning Development Management team

2.1 Performance Targets

a. For applications for major development: **60 per cent** of an authority's decisions should be made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant.

b. For applications for non-major development: **70 per cent** of an authority's decisions should be made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant.

Decisions Issued

- 2.2 The following Table 1a provides a breakdown on the decisions issued for the first two quarters of this year compared to the previous year's quarters. Those issued within the statutory timeframe or an agreed extended timeframe for the different types of planning applications handled compared to total applications decided are still being confirmed and will be shared in an update at your meeting.
- 2.3 The number of applications decided in this second quarter has dropped for minor applications and the number of applications received is also reduced – an experience shared across neighbouring authorities.

**Table 1a: Planning Application Performance
By quarters in 2022/2023 and in quarter 1 2023/2024**

Description	DLUHC Target	Q1 2022 Apr-Jun	Q2 2022 Jul-Sept	Q3 22/23 Oct-Dec	Q1 2023 Apr-Jun	Q2 2023 Jul Sept
Major	60%	0/1 0%	5/5 100%	3/4 75%	7/7 100%	6
Minor	70%	35/57 61%	35/50 70%	37/44 84%	29/32 90%	13
Others (including householders)	70%	89/144 62%	60/111 54%	138/156 88%	110/119 92%	166
Overall Totals		124/202 61%	100/166 60%	178/204 87%	146/158 92%	185* Performance to be advised

2.4 The following table shows fee income for the same quarters.

Table 1b provides information on fee income.

Fee Income	Q1 22/23 Apr-Jun	Q2 22/23 Jul-Sept	Q3 22/23 Oct-Dec	Q4 22/23 Jan-Mar	Q1 23/24 Apr-Jun	Q2 23/24 Jul-Sept
Applications	£189,196	£219,296	£222,689	£102,522	£203,555	£125,412
Pre-App	£30,037	£29,074	£27,910	£9,498	£11,720	£47,813
Miscellaneous	£5,161	£1,717	£4,943	£905	£1,436	£4,962
Totals	£224,394	£250,087	£255,542	£112,925	£216,711	£178,187

3. Building Control

3.1 The team comprises the Building Control Team Leader, two trainee building inspectors, three technical support officers and two agency surveyors. The team is currently recruiting for three more experienced building control surveyors. The aim is to develop the team to provide a competent and effective service providing expert support for corporate projects and private developers.

3.2 Table 2 shows the case load as submitted for each quarter last year (2022/2023) and for the last two quarters for this year 23/24. The team are working on preparing for the massive changes coming to the building control regulatory services next April by reviewing processes to ensure that the best quality and competent service can be provided while helping our customer agents come to terms with the changes. Additional data will be provided either verbally or as an update report to your meeting.

Table 2: Building Control work.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2022/2023	Q1 2023 Apr-June	Q2 2023 July - Sept
Dangerous structures attended. Non fee work	5	4	7	11	27	12	8
Inspections carried out					1629	333	339
Building Control applications submitted	97	92	140	64	393	70	165
Applications approved within 5 & 8 weeks Statutory limits	85/97 96%	88/92 96%	137/140 98%	44/44 100%	354/373 95%	68/70 98%	Detail to be advised 95.2%
Number of completion certificates issued	24	13	89	108	234	73	114
Fee income	£70,670	£62,044	£77,487	£69,597	£279,798	£61,207	£63,651
Approved Inspectors Initial Notices	131	65	124	43	363	107	97

4. Contribution to strategic aims

- 4.1 The processing of planning applications and associated work (trees, conservations areas and listed buildings) and building control activities contribute to creating a healthy environment with thriving communities and helps the economy within the Borough, identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan in Section 2 of this report.

5. Community engagement

- 5.1 Statutory consultation takes place on most planning applications and appeals. The Council's website also allows the public to view information submitted and comments on planning applications and eventually the decision reached. There is also information on policy matters and the and this can influence the speed with which applications and appeals are decided. Information on development management performance is publicly available.

6. Equality impact assessment

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.2 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered that the development management performance set out in this report has no adverse impacts.

7. Environmental and climate implications

7.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

7.2 The Planning & Building Control and Planning Policy Services play a key part in mitigating impacts and adapting building techniques using adopted policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly, making efficient use of land, using sustainable materials and building methods.

8. Legal implications

8.1 The collection and monitoring of performance indicators is a statutory requirement. In addition, a number of the work targets referred to in this report are mandatory requirements including the determination of planning applications and the preparation of the development plan.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report although we welcome the commitment in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to increase application fees which will help to better resource the planning service.