

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2019		
TITLE:	PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - Quarters 1 & 2 2019/20		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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**1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides performance figures for the past year starting with quarter 1 (April - June) and quarter 2 (July - September) of 2019. The report sets out the Council's current performance against government criteria for designation as under-performing.

**2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Performance is assessed by government based on the speed and quality of decisions made on major and non-major planning applications.  
Major applications are those for 10+ dwellings or dwellings on sites over half a hectare or non-residential building(s) exceeding 1000m<sup>2</sup> or on sites exceeding 1 hectare.  
Non-Major (or Minor) applications are those for 1-9 dwellings (unless floorspace exceeds 1000m<sup>2</sup> / under half a hectare or non-residential buildings up to 999 m<sup>2</sup> or on sites under 1 hectare.  
Other applications are therefore a subset of minor applications and include all the other types of applications including householders.  
Householder applications are for changes to or in the grounds of an existing dwelling for any purpose of a domestic nature.
- 3.2 To meet the speed performance requirement major applications should be determined within 13 weeks or an agreed extended timescale while non-major applications should be determined within 8 weeks unless an extension is agreed. Major applications tend to take longer due to their greater complexity and likelihood of requiring extensive consultations and legal agreements before

decisions can be issued. In all cases decisions should be made within 26 weeks of validation unless agreement is made in writing to go beyond this.

- 3.3 The quality performance requirement is based on the percentage of appeal decisions allowed, thus overturning the local planning authority’s decision, when compared to the total number of decisions made. The current percentage threshold is 10 per cent of an authority’s total number of decisions.

#### 4. PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 The following table (Table 1) provides information on the speed this planning service is making planning decisions so far this year compared to previous years:

**Table 1 RBC Planning Service Speeds Performance Indicators for first half of year 2019/20 compared with previous years.**

Description	MCHLG 2019 Target	17-18	18/19	Q1 19-20	Q2 19-20
Number and Percentage of major applications decided within: (i) statutory 13/16 weeks, or (ii) the extended period agreed with the applicant.	60%	29 93%	32 97%	4/4 100%	5/5 100%
Number and Percentage of all other minor applications decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period agreed by the applicant.	70%	234 88%	179 90%	44/52 85%	52/62 84%
Number and Percentage of other applications (including householder applications) decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period as agreed by applicant.	70%	698 90%	611 94%	167/177 94%	112/137 82%
Number and Percentage of householder applications (not for prior approval) decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period agreed by the applicant.	70%	464 88%	418 94%	114/118 97%	75/90 83%

- 4.2 The next table (Table 2) shows our performance on quality based on how well we have been able to defend decisions at appeal when we refuse planning permission.

**Table 2: Performance at Appeals against refusal of planning permission**

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 so far
APPEALS LODGED	38	41	35
NUMBER OF APPEAL DECISIONS	43	37	25
APPEALS ALLOWED	8	11	8
APPEALS DISMISSED	34	26	17
SPLIT DECISIONS	0	0	0
APPEALS WITHDRAWN	1	0	0

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 The purpose of the planning service is to support the delivery of economic and sustainable growth while providing appropriate regulation to secure an attractive and safe town. We do this by maintaining planning performance and developing policy and systems to secure sustainable development. This contributes to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2018-21:
- Securing the economic success of Reading;
  - Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs;
  - Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe;
  - Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Statutory consultation takes place on planning applications and appeals and this can influence the speed with which applications and appeals are decided. Information on development management performance is publicly available.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 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.

7.2 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered that the development management performance has no adverse impacts.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The collection and monitoring of performance indicators is a statutory requirement and a requirement of MHCLG while the determination of planning applications is a mandatory requirement on the Local Planning Authority.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.