

 Reigate & Banstead BOROUGH COUNCIL Banstead Horley Redhill Reigate	TO:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
	DATE:	26 th July 2023
	REPORT OF:	HEAD OF PLANNING
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AGENDA ITEM:	8	WARD: All

SUBJECT:	DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT Q1 2023-24 PERFORMANCE
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	To inform members of the Q1 2023/24 Development Management performance against a range of indicators
RECOMMENDATION:	To note the performance of Q1 2023/24

Planning Committee has authority to note the above recommendation

BACKGROUND

1. Development Management encompasses a wide range of planning activities including pre-application negotiations and engagement; decision making on planning applications through to compliance and enforcement.
2. It puts the Council's locally adopted development plan policies into action and seeks to achieve sustainable development.
3. It is a non-political, legislative system with all Development Management functions falling under the responsibility of the Planning Committee in the Council's Constitution. As such it is a non-Executive function falling outside the scope of the quarterly corporate performance reports that are presented to the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
4. Development Management performance has always been monitored and reviewed in line with statutory and local targets with quarterly reports sent to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities. However, given that all functions of the Council as Local Planning Authority fall under the responsibility of the Planning Committee, the performance information has also been shared with the Planning Committee Chairman. This report enables the performance indicators to be noted by the Planning Committee itself.
5. This first quarterly report of the 2023/24 municipal year and provides the quarterly performance at Table 1. Also provided at Table 2 is the performance measure, relating to the time taken in total days from receipt of a valid application to its registration.

PERFORMANCE

	Applications determined (in 8/13 weeks or agreed)	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	22/23	Q1
1	Major applications	60%	75%	100%	100%	83%	90%	100%
2	Non-major applications	70%	81%	80%	84%	82%	82%	93%
3	Average days to decision	73	78	82	78	98	83	82
Appeals								
4	Appeals Received	-	19	8	13	23	62	16
5	Major Appeals Decided	-	-	1	-	4	5	0
6	Major Appeals Dismissed	70%	-	1 (100%)	-	3 (75%)	4 (80%)	-
7	Non-major appeals Decided	-	5	2	10	9	26	9
8	Non-major appeals Dismissed	70%	4 (80%)	2 (100%)	8 (80%)	6 (66%)	20 (76%)	4 (44%)
Enforcement								
9	Reported Breaches		110	127	111	135	483	110
10	Cases Closed		95	103	123	116	437	117
11	On hand at end of period		213	193	178	192	192	176
12	Cases over 6 months old		53	59	47	45	45	44
13	Priority 1 Enforcement	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Application Workload								
14	Received		377 310 HH	325 286HH	272 248 HH	316 251 HH	1290 1005 HH	320 219 HH
15	Determined		413	334	308	261	1316	305
16	On hand at end of period		423	404	358	410	410	424
17	Withdrawn		10	9	9	13	41	16

Table 1 - Development Management performance

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2.3	2.8	2.4	3.5	2.6	2.4	3.1	4.5	5.0	2.8	3.1	7.3	10.0	7.3	10.8	12.3	8.2	5.6

Table 2 – Time taken from receipt to registration (working days)

Reason for delay	Number
Awaiting compliance check	1
Awaiting submission of application	10
Awaiting outcome of application	11
Written in past month chasing information/regularisation	1
Open/ongoing prosecution	1
Awaiting Appeal	12
Expediency of harm be concluded with input from statutory consultees	1
Regularising works commenced but not yet complete	3
Chasing up of costs	1
Temporary Stop Notice Served	1
Awaiting planting of replacement tree	1
Delayed by probate	1

Table 3 – Reason for enforcement investigation over 6 months

6. 320 planning applications (219 householder) were received in Q1 which is up from Qs 3 and 4 but down from last year. This reduction in planning submissions has been reported across the country, reflecting high interest rates, high building costs and housing market uncertainty. Despite the apparent lull in applications, cases per Officer has remained high given we have only just recruited to a vacant Planning Technician and Planning Support Officer role.
7. The Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure Order 2015 sets the statutory period for the determination of planning applications at 8 weeks for non-major applications and 13 weeks for major applications (10+ dwellings or 1,000+ sqm floorspace). This statutory period is relaxed where an extension of time is agreed between the applicant and local planning authority. In order to monitor the performance of local planning authorities, the Government sets targets for the determination of major and non-major planning applications within the statutory period or agreed extension of time. For major developments, this target is 60% and for non-major developments it is 70%.
8. In this Quarter the time indicator for both majors and non-majors was comfortably met at 100% and 93% respectively.
9. The average days to decision came down, as expected from the high of 98 days in the last quarter to 82 days for this quarter, which is consistent with the usual determination period, accounting for delays as applications are improved through amendment and further information required to satisfy consultee requirements.

Planning appeals

10. Alongside the Government performance measures based on speed of determination of planning applications, is the other performance criteria set for local planning authorities aimed at assessing the 'quality' of decision making. This is measured as a percentage of total applications which result in an appeal allowed, broken down between major and non-major development proposals. The relevant target for both types of application is that not more than 10% of applications should be allowed at appeal.

For example –

If 100 major applications are determined by the authority over the qualifying two-year period and 9 are allowed at appeal that would result in a figure of 9% which is acceptable. However, if 100 major applications were determined and 11 of these ended up being appealed and the appeals allowed, this would result in a figure of 11% which fails the 10% target.

The assessment considers appeals allowed against applications refused by each authority across a two year period. Over this latest two-year period 79 major applications were determined meaning 8 or more appeals allowed in the two year period to 31st December 2022 will lead to the target being missed and likely poorly performing designation together with the loss of control by virtue of the ability to submit applications directly to the Secretary of State.

11. In this last quarter no major appeals were determined meaning there is no increased pressure upon this performance indicator.
12. 4 out of the 9 non-major appeals determined in this quarter were dismissed, representing a figure 44% dismissed across so missing the target. With a relatively low number from which to draw a picture, it is not considered that this is representative or a trend or risks triggering the poor performance statutory indicator yet. 2 of the 5 allowed were for the same site, the Redhill Ambulance Station and a 3rd was also a Committee item for a single house at 5 Carlton Road, Redhill.

Planning Enforcement

13. There were 110 reported enforcement breaches in the quarter, which equals the same period last year and seems to be a new, consistently high trend, reflecting the increase in householder applications; the increase in working from home and the ease at which matters can be reported compared to historically. More cases were closed than reported meaning there was a decrease in the total number on hand and those over 6 months old.

Registration

14. Table 2 shows performance in the time taken from receipt to registration of new applications. As reported last time, the first few months of the year suffered as a result of staff vacancies but with those post now filled, it is encouraging to see registration down to 5.6 days in June from the high of 12.3 in April.

Summary

15. Performance has improved in the first quarter of the year following a couple of new starters and it is expected that will help maintain performance although with a senior officer due to take maternity leave in August/September options will need to be considered to help cover for this.