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| Report for: | Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Date of meeting: | 10 November 2020 |
| Part: | 1 |
| If Part II, reason: | |

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| Title of report: | Planning, Development and Regeneration Quarter 2 Performance Report 2020-21 |
| Contact: | Cllr Graham Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure Author/Responsible Officer: James Doe, Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration Sara Whelan, Group Manager – Development Management and Planning |
| Purpose of report: | To set out the performance outturn for the service for Quarter 2 of 2020-21 |
| Recommendations | That the report is noted. |
| Corporate objectives: | All Corporate Objectives are relevant with this annual review of service performance. |
| Implications: | <u>Financial</u> None arising from decisions on this report though the financial indicators for Planning fees and Local Land Charges report an under recovery of income against target levels. |
| 'Value for money' implications | <u>Value for money</u> None arising from this report. |
| Risk implications | None arising from this report. Risks addressed through service level risk register. |

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| Community Impact Assessment | Not applicable for this report. |
| Health and safety Implications | Not applicable for this report. |
| Consultees: | Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration Chris Taylor, Group Manager Strategic Planning and Regeneration Sara Whelan, Group Manager Development Management and Planning |
| Background papers: | Performance report (appendix 1) |
| Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report: | None. |

1. This report presents the performance outturn for the Planning, Development and Regeneration service for the second quarter (July-September) of the business year 2020-21. The full performance report is at Appendix 1.
2. Of 13 indicators, seven are running at green; two at red; one at amber; and three are for information only.

Income

3. As reported to the meeting on 30 September on Quarter 1 performance, the principal exceptions to performance are around the service's two main income streams: planning fees and land charges searches.
4. Planning fees income (FIN 16). The financial position in relation to planning fees continues to improve. In Q1, a 21% under-recovery against the expected receipts at that stage in the business year was reported. By the end of Q2, receipts had risen to just over £556k against the profiled target of £602k, so the rate of under-recovery had narrowed to 7.6%. As reported for Q1, caution needs to be exercised in the event of economic downturn, but for now, business remains strong.
5. A total of 692 planning and related applications were received in Q2, up marginally by 20 from Q1.
6. Land Charges Income (FIN17). There has been a significant improvement for Q2. At Q1, under-recovery of fees was running at 61% of the profiled income target. Since then, the housing market has recovered strongly, with the number of searches received by the Council at 486, compared to just 179 in

Q1 (LC03). This represents 2.7 times the Q1 level. Income has been boosted to a total of £75k by the end of Q2, and the under-recovery rate has been narrowed to 35%.

7. As reported for Q1, the housing market appears to have responded well to the stamp duty holiday for purchases up to £500,000. This runs until 31 March 2021. As with planning fees, a measure of caution needs to be applied to future projections for both when the stamp duty holiday ends and the developing wider economic picture

Development Management Performance

8. The only exception to performance in the Development Management service relates to the speed at which minor planning applications are dealt with (DMP05). From the target of 70% to be determined within eight weeks of receipt, performance in Q2 was just under this at 68%, but up from the 59% achieved in Q1.
9. A rising trajectory of performance in this category was reported last time. This has generally continued, with performance in July at just under 67%, August at 72% and September at again just under 67%.
10. As reported above, incoming caseload remains high and slightly up on Q1. By the same token, the proportion of caseload running over time has come down from 41% in Q4 of 2019/20 to 29% at Q2 this year. Members will note from the last report that the service is implementing a programme of improvements to bring forward, amongst other things, a reduction in the volume of 'work in progress' by improving case turnaround times.
11. Performance elsewhere in the service has been good in Q1. 75% of major applications were determined on time (DMP04) and almost 81% of applications in the other category on time (DMP06), up from 75% in Q1.
12. The validation of planning applications was at 96% within three days, against the target of 70% (DMP08). This high level of performance has been maintained constantly across the quarter.
13. 75% of planning appeals were defended successfully, with nine out of twelve appeals going the Council's way (DMP30). 100% was achieved in Q1, but the number of appeals being decided rose by a further three cases – so the number of cases won stayed the same.

New Development

14. Finally, Members will note from the indicators reported for information, there has been a large rise in the number of new dwellings completed (SPR05) and the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy payments (SPR20) received.
15. In Q2, 223 new home completions were recorded which is encouraging performance for a single quarter. This will reflect the volume of new apartments coming forward in Hemel Hempstead Town Centre, and the new development under way at site LA5 in western Tring by Cala Homes.
16. Similarly, the CIL receipts jumped to just over £2.1m in Q2. Members may wish to refer to the report to Cabinet on 20 October on the Council's annual

infrastructure funding statement, which reported total CIL receipts held at the end of March 2020 of just under £6.7m and with demand notices issued for a further £9.5m for developments coming on stream. Officers will bring forward proposals for the targeted allocation of CIL to help the provision of new infrastructure in association with forthcoming development, in 2021, so this resource can be used to its best effect.