



# Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Report for:</b>	Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Title of report:</b>	Planning Quarter 2 Performance Report 2023-24
<b>Date:</b>	1 November
<b>Report on behalf of:</b>	Cllr Sheron Wilkie, Portfolio Holder for Place
<b>Part:</b>	I
<b>If Part II, reason:</b>	N/A
<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Performance Report
<b>Background papers:</b>	
<b>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</b>	None

### Report Author / Responsible Officer

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<b>Corporate Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment</li> <li>- Building strong and vibrant communities</li> <li>- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity</li> <li>- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need</li> <li>- Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery</li> <li>- Climate and ecological emergency</li> </ul>
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

<b>Purpose of the report:</b>	1. To set out the performance outturn for the service for Quarter 2 of 2023-24.
<b>Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):</b>	1. That the report is noted.
<b>Period for post policy/project review:</b>	

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the performance outturn for the Planning service for the second quarter (July - Sep) of the business year 2023-24. The full performance report is at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The performance report at Appendix 1 shows a total of 5 indicators. Of the revised Key Performance Indicators, two are departmental performance measures and three are measures that reflect local construction activity. Of the two departmental performance measures, one is green and one is red.

### Planning Applications Determined Within Target

- 1.3 The percentage of all planning applications determined within target (DMP01) sits at 79%, against a target of 70%. The percentage is up from 76% compared to Q1. This represents sustained overall good performance from the team, particularly given the ongoing restrictions relating to the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC and the number of vacancies within the Development Management team. However, some caution must be added as this figure includes applications that were granted within an agreed extension of time.
- 1.4 Major planning application performance remains at 100%.
- 1.5 As for Minors and Others, they performed in Q2 as follows, against a 70% target:

MONTH	MINORS (%)	OTHERS (%)
July 2023	58.3	85.9
August 2023	88.9	79.3
September 2023	84.6	76.7
TOTAL Q2	71.7	80.7

- 1.6 Minors took a dip in July, but recovered well in August and September, so that for Q2 overall the performance exceeded the 70% target. In respect of Others (i.e. householders) the performance was well above target, but with a downward trend. This is unsurprising, given the three Planning Officer vacancies that existed at that level during Q2. It is worth noting that one of these vacancies has now been filled with a second to be filled at the beginning of November, though both new post holders are joining as Trainee Planners and will therefore require some time before they are able to have a full caseload.

### Enforcement Site Visits

- 1.7 The percentage of all planning enforcement priority site visits (PE04) has fallen to 49%, against a target of 100%. There are a number of reasons why performance is at this level. Workload remains very high for the Enforcement team. The team are having to triage new cases coming in so that the most harmful cases are visited quickly, whilst others may be held in abeyance until resources become available to look at them. The situation should ease, and live caseload begin to go down, as we have welcomed an Agency Enforcement Officer on Oct 2nd (with the second one due to start on November 13th) as part of the Reserves funding for this service. However, as the additional resource picks up cases previously held in abeyance we are likely to see a further drop in first site visit performance before an improvement in this measure in Q4.
- 1.8 Furthermore, the Enforcement service remain focused on dealing with the most harmful breaches of planning

control. A total of 7 formal Notices were served in the quarter (4 Enforcement Notices, 2 Breach of Condition Notices, and 1 Stop Notice). (In addition, a further 2 Breach of Condition Notices and an Enforcement Notice have been served in October).

- 1.9 Finally, it is important to note that the Principal Planning Enforcement Officer is involved with a Public Inquiry at the beginning of December, which will have an impact on the resources available to the Enforcement team in Q3.

#### Affordable Housing

- 1.10 Indicator DO1 and DO2 – the number of affordable housing starts and the number of completions in the period has been changed to an annual rather than quarterly indicator, as a Local Authority we receive the figures annually. These will be reported in Q4 of each year.

#### Retail Properties

- 1.11 For indicator CPE01 – the number of retail properties (vacancy rate) for the period – there is no data on this for the period as we are reliant on external parties. This will be reported at the earliest opportunity.

## **2. Options and alternatives considered**

- 2.1 Not applicable.

## **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 James Doe – Strategic Director (Place)
- 3.2 Diane Southam – Assistant Director, Place Communities and Enterprise
- 3.3 Philip Stanley - Interim Head of Development Management
- 3.4 Ronan Leydon – Team Manager, Strategic Planning

## **4. Financial and value for money implications:**

#### Financial

- 4.1 None arising from decisions on this report though the financial indicators for Planning fees report an under recovery of income against target levels.

#### Value for Money

- 4.2 None arising from this report.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None arising from this report.

## **6. Risk implications:**

- 6.1 None arising from this report. Risks addressed through service level risk register.

## **7. Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:**

- 7.1 Community Impact Assessment - Not applicable for this report.
- 7.2 Human Rights – There are no Human Rights Implications arising from this report.
- 8. Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)**
- 8.1 None arising from this report.
- 9. Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)**
- 9.1 None arising from this report.

**10. Conclusions:**

10.1 Not applicable

**Appendix 1 - Performance Report (attached separately)**

