

Report to: **Regeneration Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date: **2 June 2008**
Report of: **Head of Planning and Building Control**
Subject: **Planning and Building Control Quarterly Performance Report**
Ward: **All**

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide information on the performance of the Planning and Building Control Services Unit.

2.0 Consultation

2.1 Consultation has taken place with appropriate staff of the Planning and Building Control Services Unit.

3.0 Performance

3.1 Performance improvement continues to focus upon on BV 109 (determination of Planning Applications), and current performance is show below. Performance is still showing significant year on year improvement, exceeding national and Council service targets for major and minor applications during 2007/8. Whilst significant performance improvement was also demonstrated for 'other applications', the end-of-year out-turn fell slightly short of the service target and is now within 1% of 'high quartile' performance.

BVPI 109	National Target	Service Target	2006/7	2007/8
Major Applications	60% (13 weeks)	69%	63.9%	69.4%
Minor Applications	65% (8 weeks)	74%	68.7%	78%
Other Applications	80% (8 weeks)	92%	80.8%	90.7%

3.2 In addition to normal duties, staff have also contributed to workstream and sub-workstream activity designed to recommend appropriate new structures for both the Planning and Building Control, and the Engineering and Countryside functions within the new authority. Development of the planning workstream in particular, is vital to ensure a smooth transition to new operational procedures.

4.0 Development Control

4.1 The last six months has been particularly demanding with three large applications requiring detailed consideration and negotiation. Two of the applications for the Centre of Creative Excellence and Murton Network Village were determined in May and the third is still awaited. In addition to the continuing focus on performance improvement, new validation procedures have been introduced for the receipt of applications to accord with and develop the new Government regulations.

4.2 Robust tracking systems established last year to closely monitor the collection and expenditure of Section 106 monies are now routinely reported to the Development Control and Regulatory Panel and regular reminders are sent to the town and parish councils to generate appropriate schemes and enable the release of monies. The

new requirement for affordable housing provision is now routinely negotiated for appropriate applications.

5.0 Development Plan

5.1 The development of the various technical studies required to provide an evidence base for the Local Development Framework was reported in detail to the last meeting of the Committee. Further progress has enabled the publication of a draft LDF Core Strategy in May. This document is now out to public consultation for a period of six weeks.

5.2 The LDF document will provide an important policy context for the continuing delivery of Council priorities, a clear statement of development priorities for the new Council, and an important context for the consideration of planning applications. This will be the final stage of LDF for the Council and work is now underway to develop new arrangements for integrating the various planning policies across the County, to ensure that the substantial work already undertaken to develop both an evidence base and a policy framework, is not wasted.

6.0 Engineering and Countryside

6.1 Enhanced programmes of bus shelter replacement and verge hardening were successfully completed during 2007/08. Three local nature reserves were also declared on land owned by the Council to ensure the continued management of these areas for nature conservation purposes.

6.2 Investigations are continuing at Dalton-le Dale to determine the cause and preferred remedy to address the ground movement that originally caused the loss of the stream. The engineers are currently liaising with other statutory bodies to ensure that any remedial action satisfies the engineering requirement of these bodies.

Implications

6.1 Policy Implications

It is not considered that there are any implications resulting from this report.

Local Government Review

The implications for local government reorganisation experienced by the service since the last service update are outlined in this report.

Legal Implications

It is not considered that there are any implications resulting from this report.

Financial Implications

It is not considered that there are any financial implications resulting from this report.

Risk Implications

The report reflects the current situation and therefore there are no risks arising from this report.

Communications

Development Control staff meet on a regular basis and performance improvement is a key element of the agenda.

5.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities

Item no.

BVPI performance issues have been highlighted in the current plan.

Equality and Diversity

It is not considered that there are any implications resulting from this report.

E-Government & Procurement

The service is supported by recently purchased technology will is used maintain enhanced service levels relating to e-government.

6.0 Recommendations

7.1 That members note the content of the report.

Background Papers

- 1 Previous quarterly report
- 2 Best Value Performance Plan
- 3 Service Plan
- 4 Corporate Plan