

REPORT TO	DATE OF MEETING
Planning Committee	27 th July 2016

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SUBJECT	PORTFOLIO	AUTHOR	ITEM
PLANNING SERVICE QUARTER 1 2016/17 PERFORMANCE REPORT	Strategic Planning	Jonathan Noad	11

SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Planning Service continues to perform highly and is one of the top performing planning departments in the Country. The planning service has key performance measures against which it is judged. Central Government produce reports on the performance of planning authorities and have introduced specific measures whereby poor performing authorities can be placed in special measures. It is therefore important that the Planning Service continues to perform highly to deliver the future growth of the Borough and facilitate the implementation of corporate priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Planning Committee note the contents of the report.

DETAILS AND REASONING

Development Management

The Development Management function of the Planning Service focuses on the processing and deliberation of planning applications, advertisement and listed building consents. It also deals with planning enforcement matters and representing the Councils position at planning appeals.

Key performance targets are identified by central government regarding the speed of processing planning applications. For major developments the target is that these will be processed within 13 weeks of validation or less. For other developments this target is that they will be processed within 8 weeks of validation. The tables below summarise the performance to date.

Table 1 Major Applications Performance

	2014/15 Total	2015/16 Total	Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	2016/17 Total
Number of applications received	41	16	8				8
Number of applications decided upon	44	21	6				6
Number of applications decided within 13 weeks or agreed time extension	32	18	5				5
Percentage within 13 weeks	72.73	85.71%	83.33%				83.33%

Performance with regard to major applications continues to be strong. At the end of the first quarter 83.33% of major applications were dealt with within the 13 week target. This is slightly below the performance of the previous year, however the performance is still good when compares with other authorities. It still puts South Ribble in the top quarter of local planning authorities in the country with the national average being 77%.

Table 2 Minor and Other Applications Performance

	2014/15 Total	2015/16 Total	Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	2016/17 Total
Number of applications received	539	562	140				140
Number of applications decided upon	495	376	127				127
Number of applications decided within 8 weeks or agreed time extension	467	359	121				121
Percentage within 8 weeks	94.34%	95.27%	95.28				95.28

Performance on minor applications is even stronger with around 95% of applications begin dealt with within 8 weeks for the first quarter. This is comparable to previous whole year performance. This is exceptionally high performance compared to the national average of 70% and places South Ribble in the top ten of local planning authorities nationally. A recent report from DCLG shows that South Ribble's performance for the previous 2 years has been exceptionally high and was the subject of a recent press release attached as an appendix to this report.

Table 3 Percentage of Applications Made Online

	2014/15 Total	2015/16 Total	Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	2016/17 Total
Number of applications received	59.25%	54.7%	60.7%				60.7%

Applicants and agents are encouraged to submit planning applications online. Online submissions are more efficient and if valid tend to be registered sooner. The first quarter shows an increase on the previous year with over 60% of applications being submitted online. That said, it is considered that this figure can be boosted higher and that some further marketing of the online submission service is required.

Table 4 Percentage of Appeals Allowed Against Refusal

	2014/15 Total	2015/16 Total	Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	2016/17 Total
Number of appeals decided	4	5	0				0
Number of appeals allowed against refusal	3	2	0				0
Percentage of appeals allowed against refusal (a lower percentage = good performance)	75%	40%	0%				0%

The number of appeals in South Ribble is generally very low with no decisions being issued in quarter 1. The performance figures therefore need to be seen in the context of the low numbers of appeals in South Ribble which is an indication in itself that the right planning decisions are being made.

Forward Planning

Key activities during the first quarter have included:

- First brown field sites register prepared and published as part of DCLG funded pilot project.
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment call for sites undertaken to inform future Local Plan production
- On-going progress on Supplementary Planning Documents:
 - Employment and Skills SPD content scoped and discussions ongoing with Central Lancs Group
 - Green Belt Infill SPD scoped and drafted

- Parking Standards SPD content scoped
- Submission and progression to appointment of Examiner to assess Penwortham Neighbourhood Plan
- Central Lancashire Strategic Housing Market Assessment commissioned and study underway
- South Ribble Retail Study procurement undertaken
- Community Infrastructure Levy process successfully audited and secured best score possible with limited further actions.
- Published Housing and Employment Land position statement
- Enterprise Zone on going engagement – development of two buildings and access
- Ongoing support for City Deal programme

Conclusion

Overall performance in the Planning department continues to be very high and places South Ribble as one of the top performing authorities in the Country.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas listed below, and the table shows any implications in respect of each of these. The risk assessment which has been carried out forms part of the background papers to the report.

FINANCIAL	None		
LEGAL	None		
RISK	None		
OTHER (see below)	None		
<i>Asset Management</i>	<i>Corporate Plans and Policies</i>	<i>Crime and Disorder</i>	<i>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money</i>
<i>Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion</i>	<i>Freedom of Information/ Data Protection</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Health Inequalities</i>
<i>Human Rights Act 1998</i>	<i>Implementing Electronic Government</i>	<i>Staffing, Training and Development</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Appendix A - Press Release Relating to Performance on Minor and Other Planning Applications

▶ News Release ◀



30 June, 2016

When it comes to planning applications, South Ribble Council is ahead of the pack.

The authority turns around decisions on minor applications faster than any other authority in Lancashire, according to the Department for Communities and Local Government

It is also the best performing district/borough council in the North West, giving its decisions within eight weeks and being beaten only by large unitary authorities.

National rankings place South Ribble in 27th place, which means it is within the top 10 per cent of all authorities and in the top five per cent for district/borough councils.

Cabinet member with responsibility for strategic planning Councillor Cliff Hughes, said: “These results are a reflection of the hard work that is put in by our planning team to ensure a speedy decision is reached on every planning application.

“The fact that we are close to the top of the league table nationally is a credit to them, and our place at number one in Lancashire and the North West is cause for celebration.

“Our planning department offers advice and support to people submitting applications for minor projects through its development team and encourages applicants to consult them before submitting plans. By doing this they can be sure to iron out any problems before the application lands on their desk.”

Government targets require authorities to complete planning applications in eight weeks from validation. Further targets are soon to be introduced that will demand that at least 70 per cent of small applications are turned around in this eight-week window.

For the two years up to March 2016 South Ribble dealt with 931 minor application, 93.2 per cent of which were dealt with within eight weeks. During some three month periods over this time 100 per cent of applications met the target.

Minor applications are generally those dealing with small-scale residential projects such as conservatories and house extensions, but can also include plans for building up to nine properties, or those covering up to half a hectare.

NOTE TO EDITORS

For further information contact Caroline Taylor, Senior Public Relations Officer at South Ribble Borough Council, on 01772 625201 or email ctaylor@southribble.gov.uk

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