



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 07 June 2021

Subject	Planning Performance Report – January to March 2021
Report of	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
Supporting Officer	Liz Beighton Planning Manager (Development Management) 01394 444778 Liz.beighton@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
-------------------------------	------

Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

This report provides an update on the planning performance of the Development Management Team in terms of the timescales for determining planning applications.

Options:

N/A

Recommendation/s:

That the content of the report be noted.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Not applicable.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

Not applicable.

Environmental:

Not applicable.

Equalities and Diversity:

Not applicable.

Financial:

Not applicable.

Human Resources:

Not applicable.

ICT:

Not applicable.

Legal:

Not applicable.

Risk:

Not applicable.

External Consultees:	None
-----------------------------	------

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected?			
To provide information on the performance of the enforcement section			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts

- 1.1 This report provides details on the determination timescales for all planning applications at East Suffolk Council when tested against the government set timescales as well as the East Suffolk Council stretched targets.
- 1.2 The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are reported on a quarterly basis and included within the East Suffolk Council performance report and tested against the Council's Business Plan.

2 Current position

2.1 The breakdown for Q4 (December 2020 to 31 March 2021) is reported as follows:

	Q4 Percentage	Q4 Total	Targets
Major Development	76%	13/17	60% national 65% stretched
Minor Development	71%	95/133	65% national 75% stretched
Other Development	89%	465/523	80% national 90% stretched

2.2 The end of year statistics for the reporting year are as follows:

	Q1 – Q4 Percentage	Q1 – Q4 Total	Targets
Major Development	82%	37/45	60% national 65% stretched
Minor Development	80%	460/574	65% national 75% stretched
Other Development	90%	1624/1806	80% national 90% stretched

2.3 The following table is a comparison with the end of Q4 in 2019/2020.

	Q1 – Q4 Combined Percentage	Q1 – Q4 Combined Total	Targets
Major Development	88%	60/68	60% national 65% stretched
Minor Development	75%	430/571	65% national 75% stretched
	87%	1435/1652	80% national

	Other Development			90% stretched
2.4	<p>The figures for Q4 of the financial year show a continued trend to issue decisions in a timely manner. The national performance indicators have been met in all instances, although there is a slight underperformance in respect of the internal stretched targets in respect of both minor and other developments. However, when considering the year as a whole, both the national and stretched targets have been met.</p>			
2.5	<p>All members of the Development Management Team continue to work from home but undertake site visits in a Covid secure manner. All meetings have been held virtually, and the figures presented to Members demonstrates that the pandemic has not had a negative effect on either the quality of timeliness of decision making albeit there are a number of challenges which have been faced. In January 2021, the team welcomed four new additions to the team who have integrated extremely well and already making quality decisions for the benefit of our customers.</p>			
2.6	<p>When comparing with the previous year (2019/2020), Members will note that performance has increased across all sectors and with the exception of major planning applications. The numbers of applications received is similar to that of last year, which is positive considering the effects that Covid-19 has had on the economy.</p>			
2.7	<p>The Development Management Team have also been appropriately using the extension of time mechanism to ensure that appropriate discussions can take place with applicants/other parties to secure high quality sustainable developments.</p>			
2.8	<p>The Council maintains a high approval rate across all types of applications and proactively look to support development where policy permits and work proactively with applicants and agents to secure appropriate schemes.</p>			
2.9	<p>Where applications are refused Officers seek to defend those refusals strongly. Members will note the separate appeals report on the agenda which demonstrates confidence that applications are being refused correctly and those decisions are for the most part upheld at appeal. Members will note that in respect of the same quarter the Council defended 88% of all planning appeals which is significantly higher than the national average.</p>			
2.10	<p>Officers continue to work proactively with agents to promote the pre-application service to seek to ensure that where applications are submitted they have the right level of information accompanying them to enable swift decisions on applications to be made. The planning service has recently updated both the Local Validation Requirements and also the Fees and Charges Schedule giving greater confidence to all customers on what information is required to support an application and also the benefits of engaging with the council prior to formal</p>			

	submission.
2.11	Members of the Committee are further advised that there has been some incorrect performance reporting to MHCLG, the result of which showed East Suffolk Council towards the bottom of the league table in respect of the speed of determination of major planning applications. This matter has been rectified by the team and the correct figures (those which have been consistently reported to the Strategic Planning Committee and also contained with the Strategic Plan) have now been supplied which shows a very healthy position in respect of major application determination.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	Quarterly monitoring
-----	----------------------

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	That the report concerning the performance of the Development Management Team in terms of the speed of determining planning applications is noted.
-----	--

Appendices

Appendices:

None.

Background reference papers:

None.