



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 8 March 2021

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
Supporting Officer:	Liz Beighton Planning Manager 07775 406370 liz.beighton@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

- 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 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

- 2.1 The breakdown for Q3 (October 2020 to 31 December 2020) is reported as follows:

	Q3 Percentage	Q3 Total	Targets
Major Development	85%	11/13	60% national 65% stretched
Minor Development	76%	106/139	65% national 75% stretched
Other Development	92%	430/466	80% national 90% stretched

- 2.2 The rolling statistics for the reporting year are as follows:

	Q1 – Q3 Percentage	Q1 – Q3 Total	Targets
Major Development	86%	24/28	60% national 65% stretched
Minor Development	83%	365/441	65% national 75% stretched
Other Development	90%	1159/1283	80% national 90% stretched

- 2.3 The following table is a comparison with the end of Q3 (rolling figures) in the 2019/2020 rolling year.

	Q1 – Q3 Combined Percentage	Q1 – Q3 Combined Total	Targets
Major Development	84%	47/55	60% national 65% stretched
Minor Development	74%	323/438	65% national 75% stretched
Other Development	88%	1126/1277	80% national 90% stretched

- 2.4 The figures for Q3 of the financial year are promising and show a continued intent to issue decisions in a timely manner. The national performance indicators and the stretched East Suffolk Council performance indicators have been met in all categories.
- 2.5 All members of the Development Management Team continue to work from home but undertake site visits in a Covid secure manner. All meetings are 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.
- 2.6 When comparing with the same three quarters from 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. 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.

- 2.7 Of all decisions made, 584 were delegated decisions with the remainder being determined by the Planning Committee.
- 2.8 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. With regards to Q3 statistics, of the major applications the approval rate was 92% (12/13 applications), minor applications had an approval rate of 85% (118/139 applications) and with the other applications the approval rate was 95% (445/466 applications).
- 2.9 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 75% of all planning appeals which is significantly higher than the national average.
- 2.8 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 submission.

3 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 This report is for information only.

RECOMMENDATION

That the contents of the report be noted.

APPENDICES – None

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None