

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Development Control Committee	
MEETING DATE:	3 September 2014	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
TITLE:	Quarterly Performance Report April - June 2014	
WARD:	ALL	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
None		

1 THE ISSUE

At the request of Members and as part of our on-going commitment to making service improvements, this report provides Members with performance information across a range of activities within the Development Management function. This report covers the period from 1 April – 30 June 2014. Starting from April onwards the DC Quarterly Performance Report will be updated as and when to include measures relevant and current to performance monitoring in the service today. In addition, some of the measures previously reported as tables will now be represented in graphical form for a more illustrative representation of trend. Further measures will also be introduced in subsequent months to reflect the statutory reporting changes being introduced by central government from April onwards.

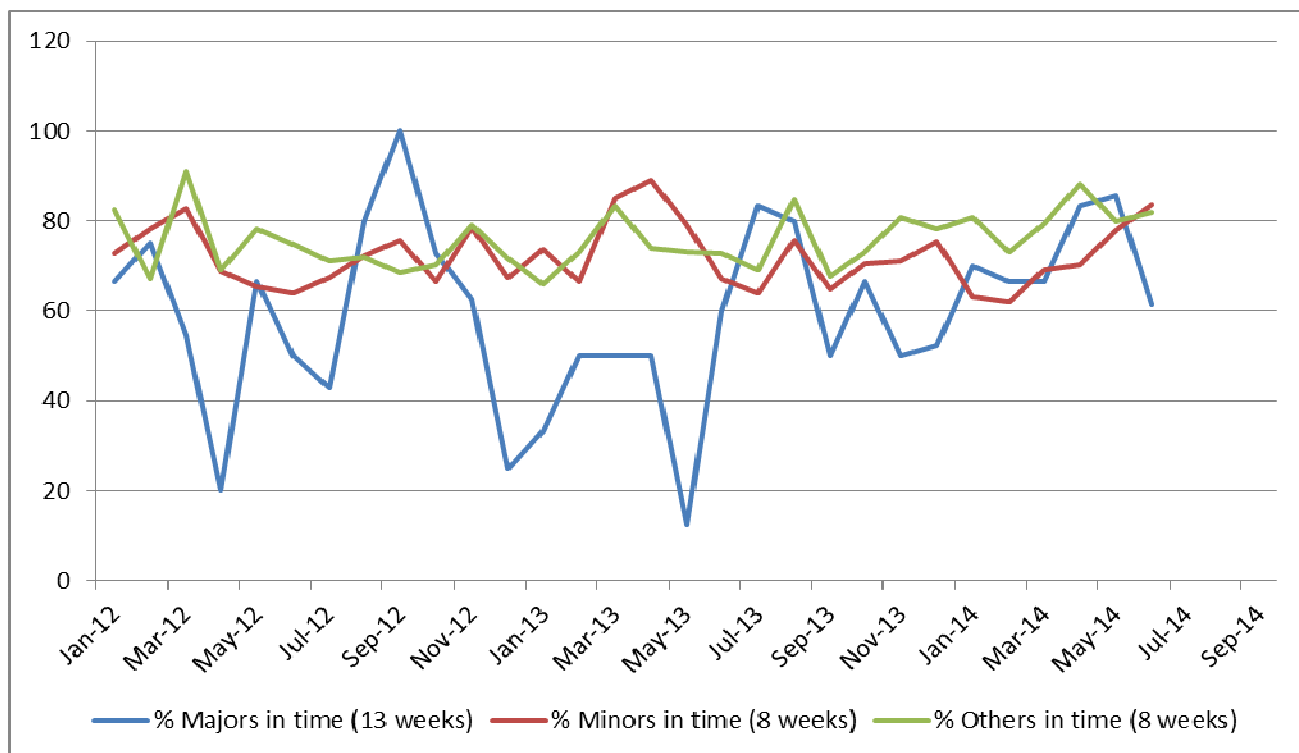
2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the performance report.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 Tables, charts and commentary

Table 1 - Comparison of applications determined within target times



% of planning applications in time	2013/14				2014/15			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
% Majors in time	32%	77%	52%	68%	73%			
% Minors in time	78%	68%	75%	65%	77%			
% Others in time	73%	74%	78%	78%	83%			

The table above shows there has been improvement in the performance of ‘Major’, ‘Minor’ and ‘Other’ applications in April – June 2014.

Note: Major (10+ dwellings/0.5 hectares and over, 1000+ sqm/1 hectare and over); Minor (1-10 dwellings/less than 0.5 hectares, Up to 999 sqm/under 1 hectare); Other (changes of use, householder development, adverts, listed building consents, lawful development certificates, notifications, etc).

Table 2 - Recent planning application performance statistics

Application nos.	2013/14				2014/15			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Received	650	600	614	650	645			
Withdrawn	62	58	63	66	43			
Delegated no. and %	538 (95%)	556 (96%)	528 (95%)	527 (95%)	532 (96%)			
Refused no. and %	71 (13%)	62 (11%)	60 (11%)	64 (12%)	52 (9%)			

Table 2 highlights include:

- The number of new applications received and made valid is 9% up on the same period two years ago and 7% up on three years ago.

- The current delegation rate is slightly above the last published England average of 91% (Year ending Mar 2014).
- Percentage of refusals on applications remains low when compared to the last published England average of 12%.

Table 3 – Dwelling numbers

Dwelling numbers	2013/14				2014/15			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Major residential (10 or more dwellings) decisions	8	3	9	14	13			
Major residential decisions granted	3	2	8	6	7			
Number of dwellings applied for on Major schemes			617	698	543			
Number of dwellings permitted on Major schemes			417	929	212			
Number of dwellings refused on Major schemes			166	389	299			

Table 3 highlights include:

- Numbers of major residential decisions (10 or more dwellings) were significantly up when compared to the same quarter a year ago. This is in line with the national trend.

Table 4 - Planning Appeals summary

	Jul – Sept 2013	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Appeals lodged	29	25	22	30
Appeals decided	24	30	38	24
Appeals allowed	6 (33%)	7 (26%)	5 (17%)	9 (45%)
Appeals dismissed	12 (67%)	20 (74%)	25 (83%)	11 (55%)

Highlights:

- Recent appeal costs in association with applications overturned at committee amount to £34,820 for the financial year so far. This was mainly spent on legal & consultants fees
- In the year to 30 June 2014 there has been a 17% drop in appeal numbers
- Over the last 12 months our performance on appeals allowed is better than the national average at 28% (national average approx. 35%)

Table 5 - Enforcement Investigations summary

	Jul – Sep 2013	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Investigations launched	182	123	318	273
Investigations on hand	241	227	275	275
Investigations closed	135	120	293	253
Enforcement Notices issued	6	2	3	0
Planning Contravention Notices	2	3	1	6

served				
Breach of Condition Notices served	1	0	0	0

The figures shown in **Table 5** indicate a 14% decrease in the number of investigations received this quarter, when compared with the previous quarter. This is mainly due to the tailing off of a new process to licence more HMOs which required an investigation by our enforcement team. This was a one-off exercise that took place earlier in the year. 6 legal notices having been served during this quarter.

Table 6 – Other areas of work

The service not only deals with formal planning applications and general enquiries, but also has formal procedures in place to deal with matters such as pre-application proposals, householder development planning questionnaires, procedures for discharging conditions on planning permissions, prior approvals, prior notifications and non-material amendments to list a few. **Table 6** below shows the total number of these types of procedures that require resource to action and determine.

During the last quarter the volume of these procedures received in the service is still significantly above the Oct – Dec 13 quarter figure.

Table 6

	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Other types of work	437	567	541

Table 7 – Works to Trees

Another function that the Planning Service undertakes involves dealing with applications and notifications for works relating to trees. **Table 7** below shows the number and percentage of these applications and notifications determined. During Apr - Jun 2014, performance on determining applications for works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and performance on dealing with notifications for works to trees within a Conservation Area remained excellent.

Table 7

	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Number of applications for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	26	22	15
Percentage of applications for works to trees subject to a TPO determined within 8 weeks	96%	73%	93%
Number of notifications for works to trees within a	219	157	158

Conservation Area (CA)			
Percentage of notifications for works to trees within a Conservation Area (CA) determined within 6 weeks	98%	97%	99%

Table 8 - Customer transactions using telephone

Table 8 below details the number of incoming calls to the service for the Development Management function. Calls to the Planning & Conservation Team have decreased since last year. This could be partly due to a degree of self-serve by the public on the listed buildings map layer published in January which averages 300 web hits per month. Calls handled by the Planning Information Officers have seen a significant and sustained increase since the beginning of the year.

Table 8

	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Planning Information Officers	2070	3234	3266
Planning Officers	1462	1680	1658
Planning Administration	916	770	785
Planning & Conservation Team	717	462	506
Enforcement Team	552	607	435

Table 9 - Electronic transactions

The Planning Services web pages continue to be amongst the most popular across the whole Council website, particularly 'View and Comment on Planning Applications' (an average of 16,000 hits per month) and 'Apply for Planning Permission' (average of 1,000 hits per month). The former is the most popular web page after the council's home page.

Around 75% of all applications are now submitted online through the Planning Portal link on the Council website, and **Table 9** below shows that the authority received in the region of **77%** of applications online during Apr – Jun 2014. The benefits to agents and applicants include an online help function, immediate delivery and acknowledgement, and savings on printing and postage costs. Secure fee payments can also be made online through the Planning Portal facility.

Table 9 - Percentage of planning applications submitted electronically (through the national Planning Portal)

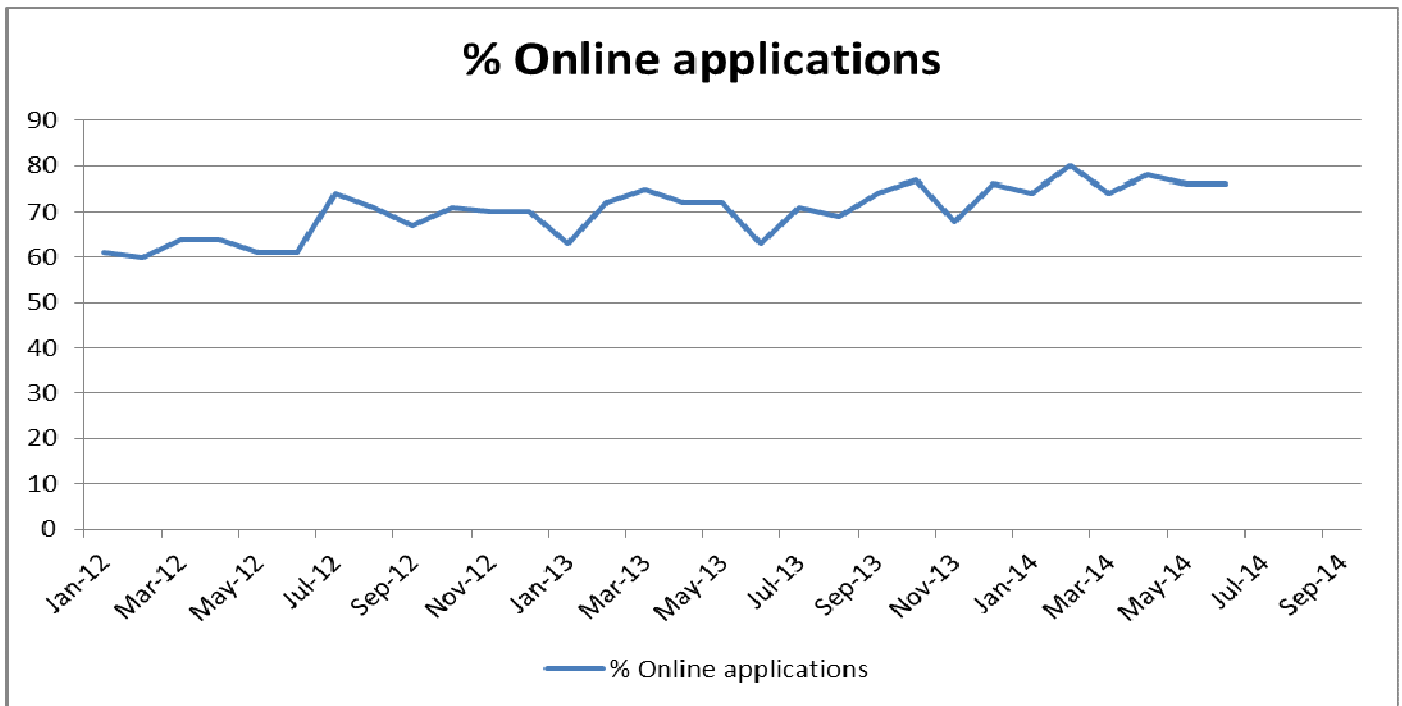


Table 10 - Customer Feedback

During the quarter April - June 2014, the Council has received the following feedback in relation to the planning service. The number of complaints **not** upheld remains good.

Table 10

Customer Feedback	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Compliments received		6	6
Complaints received	11	9	9
Complaints upheld	0	0	0
Complaints Not upheld	10	5	7
Complaints Partly upheld	1	1	1

Table 11 - Ombudsman Complaints

The council has a corporate complaints system in place to investigate matters that customers are not happy or satisfied about in relation to the level of service that they have received from the council. However, there are circumstances where the matter has been subject to investigation by officers within the authority and the customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation. When this happens, the customer can take their complaint to the **Local Government Ombudsman** for him to take an independent view. **Table 11** below shows a breakdown of Ombudsman complaints lodged with the Local Government Ombudsman for the previous four quarters. There have been no upheld complaints in the last year.

Table 11

Ombudsman Complaints	Jul – Sep 13	Oct – Dec 13	Jan – Mar 14	Apr – Jun 14
Complaints received	4	0	5	2
Complaints upheld	0	0	0	0
Complaints Not upheld	2	3	2	1

Table 12 – Section 106 Agreements

Members will be aware of the Planning Obligations SPD published July 2009. Planning Services have spent the last two years compiling a database of Section 106 Agreements. This is still a work in progress, but it has now enabled the S106 Monitoring Officer to actively progress in monitoring delivery of agreed obligations. **Table 12** below shows a breakdown of S106 Agreement sums agreed and sums received between April and June. Also detailed is the outstanding balance for agreements signed between July 2009 and June 2014. Members should be aware that the figures are for guidance only because of the further work still being undertaken in the S106 monitoring operation.

Table 12

Section 106 Agreements	Jul – Sep 2013	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Funds agreed	£433,463.77	£564,310.33	£3,342,798.75	£175,000.00
Funds received (may include monies received for agreements made prior to Jul '09)	£34,154.93	£364,722.89	£108,493.75	£169,684.06
Outstanding funds balance (Jul '09 – Jun '14)	£13,454,038.54	£14,081,186.82	£17,518,176.54	£17,933,575.36

Table 13 – Accredited Agents

A list of current Accredited Agents is displayed on the council website. These agents have shown they fully understand how to submit a properly prepared planning application which means they are easier for us to process and reduce the potential of any delays.

Table 13

	Jul – Sep 2013	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014
Numbers of Accredited Agents	12	17	19	23
Numbers of householder applications submitted by Accredited Agents	13	29	18	40

Contact person	John Theobald, Project/Technical and Management Support Officer, Development 01225 477519
Background papers	CLG General Development Control statistical returns PS1 and PS2 + Planning applications statistics on the DCLG website: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-applications-statistics
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	