

# Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Development Control Committee	
MEETING DATE:	19 November 2014	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
TITLE:	Quarterly Performance Report July - Sept 2014	
WARD:	ALL	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>		
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 July – 30 September 2014.

The Council is intending to implement the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in April 2015, subject to council decision in February. CIL is a new tariff system that will allow the council to raise funds from development to contribute to the costs of providing some of the infrastructure needed, like new or safer road schemes, education contributions or park improvements. Therefore CIL levy is expected to have a positive economic effect on communities and development across the area. Development Management will shortly be starting a communication programme to inform developers of potential future CIL liability. This means that any applications approved after April 1st 2015 may be subject to CIL. Because some of the lead times for deciding applications are 13 weeks, we will start to let developers know if an application they submit after 1st January 2015 may incur CIL. Further information can be found at [www.bathnes.gov.uk/cil](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/cil).

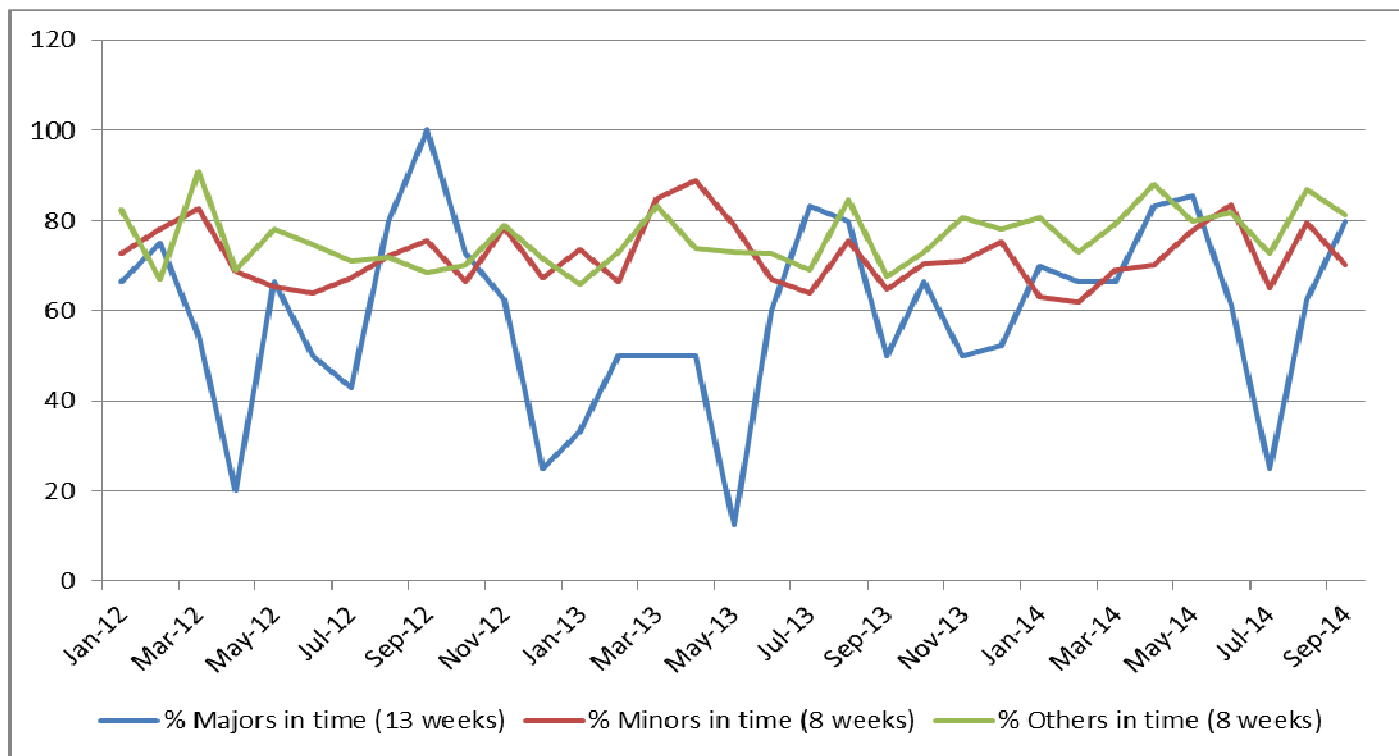
## 2 RECOMMENDATION

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

## 3 THE REPORT

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%	64%		
% Minors in time	78%	68%	75%	65%	77%	72%		
% Others in time	73%	74%	78%	78%	83%	80%		

The table above shows there has been above target performance on all planning application types in Jul – Sep 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	589		
Withdrawn	62	58	63	66	43	45		
Delegated no. and %	538 (95%)	556 (96%)	528 (95%)	527 (95%)	532 (96%)	540 (95%)		
Refused no. and %	71 (13%)	62 (11%)	60 (11%)	64 (12%)	52 (9%)	76 (13%)		

Table 2 highlights include:

- The number of new applications received and made valid is 3% down on the same period two years ago and 3% down on three years ago. National trend indicates a small increase over the last 12 months to June (up 3% on the year to June 2013). The same 12 month period for this authority saw a 4% increase trend on 2013.
- The current delegation rate is in line with the last published England average of 95% (April to Jun 2014).
- Percentage of refusals on applications still remains low when compared with the last published England average of 12% (Year ending Jun 2014).

**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	9		
Major residential decisions granted	3	2	8	6	7	2		
Number of dwellings applied for on Major schemes			617	698	543	463		
Number of dwellings permitted on Major schemes			417	929	212	120		
Number of dwellings refused on Major schemes			166	389	299	292		

**Table 3** highlights include:

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

**Table 4 - Planning Appeals summary**

	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014	Jul – Sep 2014
Appeals lodged	25	22	30	24
Appeals decided	30	38	24	22
Appeals allowed	7 (26%)	5 (17%)	9 (45%)	6 (35%)
Appeals dismissed	20 (74%)	25 (83%)	11 (55%)	11 (65%)

Highlights:

- Recent appeal costs in association with applications overturned at committee amount to £39,512 for the financial year so far. This was mainly spent on legal & consultants fees
- In the year to 30 Sept 2014 there has been a 22% drop in appeal numbers
- Over the last 12 months our performance on appeals allowed is better than the national average at 29% (national average approx. 35%)

**Table 5 - Enforcement Investigations summary**

	Oct – Dec 2013	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014	Jul – Sep 2014
Investigations launched	123	318	273	114

Investigations on hand	227	275	275	220
Investigations closed	120	293	253	150
Enforcement Notices issued	2	3	0	0
Planning Contravention Notices served	3	1	6	2
Breach of Condition Notices served	0	0	0	0

The figures shown in **Table 5** indicate a 58% 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. 2 planning contravention notices have 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 2013 figures.

### **Table 6**

	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014	Jul – Sep 2014
Other types of work	567	541	547

### **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 Jul - Sep 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**

	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014	Jul – Sep 2014
Number of applications for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	22	15	17
Percentage of applications for works to trees subject to	73%	93%	100%

a TPO determined within 8 weeks			
Number of notifications for works to trees within a Conservation Area (CA)	157	158	173
Percentage of notifications for works to trees within a Conservation Area (CA) determined within 6 weeks	97%	99%	98%

### **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 steadily 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 been significant since the beginning of the year. However, recent changes to the automated voice response selection options for incoming calls have increased calls handled by the Planning Officers and Planning Administration. This further ensures that calls reach the correct team in the first instance without being transferred via the Planning Information Officers.

### **Table 8**

	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014	Jul – Sep 2014
Planning Information Officers	3234	3266	2724
Planning Officers	1680	1658	2061
Planning Administration	770	785	927
Planning & Conservation Team	462	506	295
Enforcement Team	607	435	495

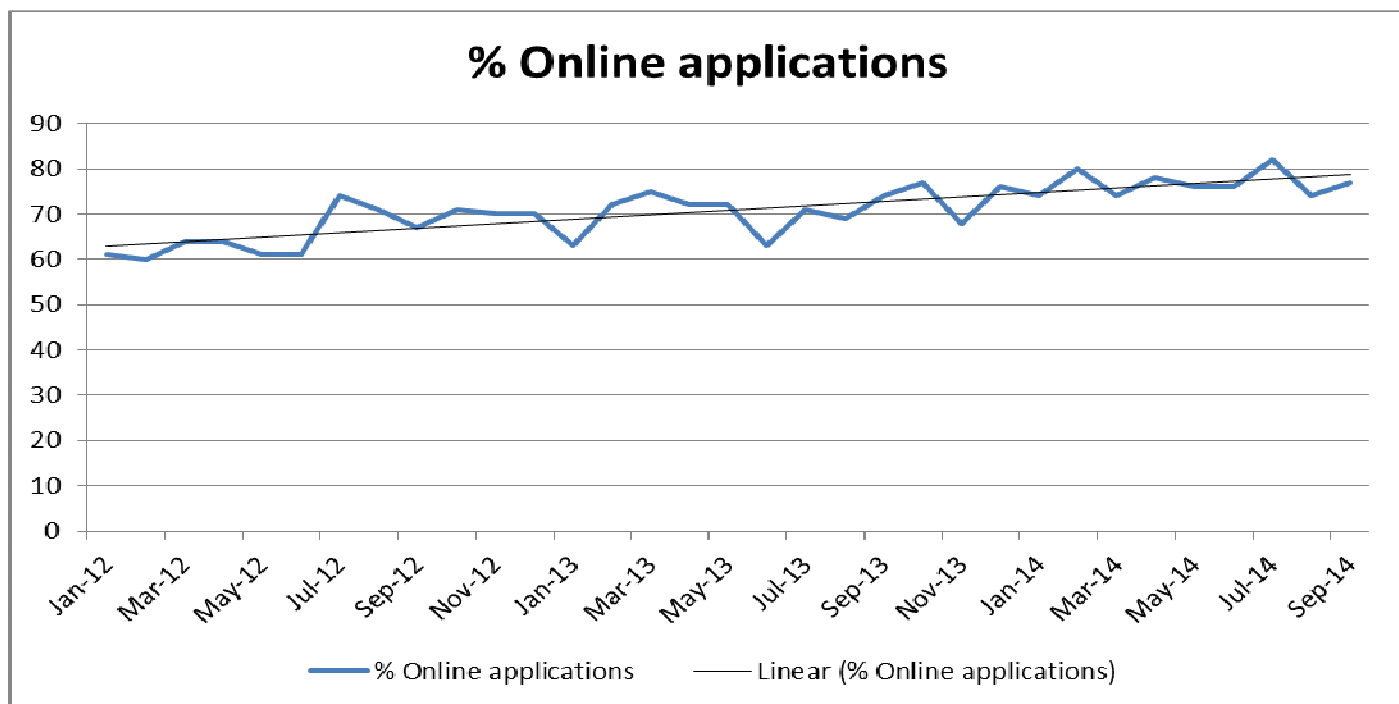
### **Table 9 - Electronic transactions**

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 75-80% of all applications are now submitted online through the Planning Portal link on the Council website, and **Table 9** below shows an upward trend and that the authority received in the region of **78%** of applications online during the Jul - Sep quarter. Nationally, approximately 86% of planning applications were submitted via the Portal in Q1 2014/15. 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 Jul - Sep 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	Jan – Mar 2014	Apr – Jun 2014	Jul – Sep 2014
Compliments received	6	6	5
Complaints received	9	9	12
Complaints upheld	0	0	0
Complaints Not upheld	5	7	12
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 has been one upheld complaint in the last year.

**Table 11**

<b>Ombudsman Complaints</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 13</b>	<b>Jan – Mar 14</b>	<b>Apr – Jun 14</b>	<b>Jul – Sep 14</b>
<b>Complaints received</b>	0	5	2	1
<b>Complaints upheld</b>	0	0	0	1
<b>Complaints Not upheld</b>	3	2	1	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 July and Sept. Also detailed is the outstanding balance for agreements signed between July 2009 and Sept 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**

<b>Section 106 Agreements</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 2013</b>	<b>Jan – Mar 2014</b>	<b>Apr – Jun 2014</b>	<b>Jul – Sep 2014</b>
<b>Funds agreed</b>	£564,310.33	£3,342,798.75	£175,000.00	£136,076.09
<b>Funds received (may include monies received for agreements made prior to Jul '09)</b>	£364,722.89	£108,493.75	£169,684.06	£28,700.61
<b>Outstanding funds balance (Jul '09 – Sep '14)</b>	£14,081,186.82	£17,518,176.54	£17,933,575.36	£17,593,552.42

**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**

	<b>Oct – Dec 2013</b>	<b>Jan – Mar 2014</b>	<b>Apr – Jun 2014</b>	<b>Jul – Sep 2014</b>

<b>Numbers of Accredited Agents</b>	17	19	23	23
<b>Numbers of householder applications submitted by Accredited Agents</b>	29	18	40	28

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