

## Report for Information

<b>Report to</b>	Planning applications committee 20 October 2011	<b>Item</b> <b>6</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Head of Planning Services	
<b>Subject</b>	Performance of the Development Management Service, July - September 2011 (Quarter 2, 2011-12)	

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### **Purpose**

To report the performance of the development management service to members of the committee.

### **Recommendations**

That the report be noted.

### **Financial Consequences**

The financial consequences of this report are none.

### **Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities**

The report helps to meet the strategic priority “Strong and prosperous city – working to improve quality of life for residents, visitors and those who work in the city now and in the future” and the implementation of the planning improvement plan.

### **Contact Officers**

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### **Background Documents**

None.

# Report

## Background

1. On 31 July 2008 planning applications committee considered a report regarding the improved working of the committee which included a number of suggested changes to the way the committee operates. In particular it suggested performance of the development management service be reported to the committee and that feedback from members of the committee be obtained.

## Performance of the development management service

2. Table 1 of the appendix provides a summary of performance indicators for the development management service. The speed of determining applications is National Indicator 157. Table 2 shows the numbers received, pending and on hand at the end of the quarter.
3. The National Performance Indicators (NI157) achieved in the second quarter of 2011-12 were 20% for major schemes, 64% for minors and 78% for others. The majors figure is anomalous because it only relates to a very few cases in this quarter (five in total). Many of these cases of over 10 dwellings are proving to be difficult to resolve with considerable periods of time spent negotiating s.106 agreements and undertaking viability assessments due to the current state of the market and the economy generally. The “minors” and “others” figures were just below minimum targets set by the previous government (set at 65% and 80% respectively) as well as the local targets of 85% and 90%.
4. From the very high performance levels in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter (October to December 2010) last year there was a significant drop in the early part of 2011. Measures were taken to re-organise staffing levels by switching resources from policy making to development management, the appointment of a planner for 12 month period and the filling of a vacant post. This was previously identified as providing the right level of resources to secure top quartile service standards by quarter 3 (October to December 2011). In addition a Lean Review of the application process is underway with the intention of speeding up receipt and registration processes and which will also benefit performance figure.
5. It is expected that performance will improve in the next quarter, however prospects for the previous high performance levels for major schemes are difficult due to the state of the housing market and the time spent undertaking viability work. Increasingly, in the future, this work will be undertaken prior to formal submission so that, in the medium term, this headline figure is expected to rise to former levels. NI157 is a lagging indicator and action taken to address performance necessarily takes time to work through in the outturn figures.
6. The number of pending applications on hand is slightly lower than the previous quarter, despite the number of new applications received being one third higher than the previous quarter. This shows that applications are being cleared through the system at a faster rate overall.

7. The planning applications committee met on 4 occasions over this quarter and determined 24 applications, all of which were determined in accordance with officer recommendations.
8. The percentage of decisions delegated to officers for the quarter was 87% (previous quarter 92%), marginally below the previous government's target of 90%. The total numbers of decisions recorded by the NI157 indicator was 232 (plus 21 withdrawals) together with a large number of other decisions including condition discharges and pre-application enquiries.

**Table 1 –  
Speed of determination of planning applications recorded by National Indicator 157**

	<b>2008 - 2009</b>	<b>2009 – 2010</b>					<b>2010 -2011</b>					<b>2011 - 2012</b>	
	<b>Year</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>
<b>Major % 13 wks</b>	<b>37%</b>	54%	90%	70%	86%	<b>72.5%</b>	70%	100%	88.9%	44.4%	<b>75.7%</b>	75%	20%
<b>Minor % 8 wks</b>	<b>75%</b>	90%	85%	81%	98%	<b>88.4%</b>	81.7%	89.0%	87.8%	51.9%	<b>78.9%</b>	50%	64.3%
<b>Others % 8 wks</b>	<b>80%</b>	92%	91%	90%	89%	<b>90.3%</b>	93.6%	94.3%	93.9%	73.1%	<b>89.6%</b>	70%	78.3%

**Table 2**  
**Numbers of planning applications recorded by National Indicator 157**

	2008 - 2009				2009 - 2010				2010 - 2011				2011 - 2012			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Received	302	250	199	222	185	211	188	196	212	222	197	255	184	245		
Withdrawn/called in	21	29	24	22	14	14	16	9	15	11	19	15	9	21		
On hand (pending) at end of quarter	229	228	193	166	155	143	129	144	144	132	136	206	169	160		
Decisions	306	222	210	225	180	209	185	172	197	222	174	169	212	232		