

<b>Local Members' Interest</b>
N/A

## **Planning Committee – 7 February 2019**

### **Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills**

#### **Planning, Policy and Development Control – Half Year Performance Report**

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To inform Members about our planning development control performance over the first six months (1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018); planning policy-making to the end of the year; and, related matters.

#### **Recommendation**

2. That the report be noted.

#### **Summary and Reasons for Recommendation**

##### **3. Planning policy-making performance:**

The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Local Plan was adopted in March 2013 and a review has now been completed. The review has concluded that there is no need to revise our Waste Local Plan at this time [the subject of an earlier report to this meeting].

The Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire was adopted in February 2017. In July 2018 the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A review of the Minerals Local Plan has concluded that our Minerals Local Plan continues to conform with the revised NPPF [also the subject of an earlier report to this meeting].

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Monitoring Report has confirmed that our Plans are performing well [also the subject of an earlier report to this meeting].

##### **4. Planning development control performance:**

###### **a) Speed of major development decisions**

The proportion of the minerals and waste applications determined within 13 / 16 weeks or within an agreed extension of time:

- National target 60% measured over the previous two years
- **Performance 98%** (51 out of 52)

Current year

- Local target 90% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **100%** (16 out of 16 after two quarters)

**b) Quality of major development decisions**

The proportion of the minerals and waste decisions overturned at appeal:

- National target 10% measured over the previous two years
- **Performance** **2%** (1 out of 51)

Current year

- Local target 5% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **Nil** (0 out of 16) after two quarters

**c) Speed of the County Council's major development decisions**

The proportion of the County Council's major development applications determined within 13 / 16 weeks or within an agreed extension of time:

- Local target 90% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **Nil** after two quarters

**d) Speed of the County Council's 'non-major development' applications**

The proportion of the County Council's non-major development applications determined within 8 weeks or within an agreed extension of time:

- Local target 90% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **100%** (7 out of 7) after two quarters

[\* For the definitions of 'major development' and 'non-major development' go to the end of the report.]

**e) Delegated decisions on all applications**

The proportion of all applications determined by your officers in accordance with delegated powers:

- Local target 80% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **83%** (19 out of 23) after two quarters

**5. Pre-application Advice Service:**

A customer satisfaction survey carried out in the summer of 2018 has confirmed that the level of satisfaction with the service is good or very good.

- 9 requests and fee income of £3,742 (inc VAT) (after two quarters)

6. **Staffing and workload:** A Principal Planning Officer left the authority on voluntary redundancy terms in July 2018; and, two Senior Planning Officers (one on secondment to the Planning Regulation Team and the other on a partial secondment to the Economic Regeneration Team at the time) left the authority in September 2018 and January 2019 respectively. Meanwhile, the total number of minerals, waste and county development applications is up on the same period last year (23 compared to 12). The overall number of cases received (applications, submissions and consultations) is slightly up (132 compared to 119). The paid for pre-application service is generating additional work and income. The review of the Waste Local Plan and production of our Annual Monitoring Report has now been completed releasing two officers to work full time on development control cases. Staffing will be kept under review in the context of the current spending restrictions.

### **Background**

7. Performance in planning policy-making and planning development control is reported on an annual basis with an update at six months. Quarterly performance updates are reported to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure and published on our Staffordshire Planning '[A to Z of Planning](#)' web page ('P' for Performance).
8. This is a report about planning development control performance over the first six months from 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018 and planning policy-making work up to the end of the year.

### **Planning policy-making performance**

9. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Local Plan was adopted in March 2013 and a review has now been completed. The review has concluded that there is no need to revise our Waste Local Plan at this time [the subject of an earlier report to this meeting].
10. The Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire was adopted in February 2017. In July 2018 the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A review of the Minerals Local Plan has concluded that our Minerals Local Plan continues to conform with the revised NPPF [also the subject of an earlier report to this meeting].
11. The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Monitoring Report has confirmed that our Plans are performing well [also the subject of an earlier report to this meeting].

### **Planning development control performance**

12. Appendix 2 provides a summary of performance after two quarters of 2018-19.
13. Appendix 3 provides a comparison with the same period in the previous two years.

14. The numbers and commentary on the major and non-major development decisions:

**a) Speed of major development decisions**

The proportion of the minerals and waste applications determined within 13 / 16 weeks or within an agreed extension of time:

- National target 60% measured over the previous two years
- **Performance** **98%** (51 out of 52)

Current year

- Local target 90% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **100%** (16 out of 16 after two quarters)

**b) Quality of major development decisions**

The proportion of the minerals and waste decisions overturned at appeal:

- National target 10% measured over the previous two years
- **Performance** **2%** (1 out of 51)

Current year

- Local target 5% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **Nil** (0 out of 16) after two quarters

*Commentary:* The proportion of the mineral and waste applications determined on time, or within an agreed extension of time, remains high and the proportion of those decisions appealed, let alone overturned on appeal, remains very low as we continue to try to resolve outstanding matters before reaching a decision. Notably the number of mineral and waste applications determined after two quarters is up on the same period last year and more like the number two years ago (16 compared to 7 and 15) (see Appendix 3). No appeals have been made against decisions so far this year.

**c) Speed of the County Council's major development decisions**

The proportion of the County Council's major development applications determined within 13 / 16 weeks or within an agreed extension of time:

- Local target 90% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** **Nil** after two quarters

**d) Speed of the County Council's 'non-major development' applications**

The proportion of the non-major development applications determined within 8 weeks or within an agreed extension of time:

- Local target 90% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** 100% (7 out of 7) after two quarters

*Commentary:* The proportion of County Council applications determined on time, or within within an agreed extension of time, remained at 100% as we continue to resolve outstanding matters with the applicant before reaching a decision. No County Council major development applications have been received so far this year, which is the same as last year (see Appendix 3). The number of non-major County Council development applications remains low (see Appendix 3).

[Note: The County Council's major development applications typically involve large projects such as new schools e.g. the Branston Road High School near Burton; and, major highway improvement schemes e.g. the Stafford Western Access Road and the Lichfield Southern Bypass. Non-major applications typically involve much smaller projects e.g. additional classrooms at schools and new barns on the County Farms.]

#### e) **Delegated decisions on all applications**

The proportion of all applications determined by your officers in accordance with delegated powers

- Local target 80% measured in the current financial year
- **Performance** 83% (19 out of 23) after two quarters

*Commentary:* The percentage of applications dealt with by your officers under delegated powers is just above the target. However, as the number of applications dealt with is small, one application either way has a significant effect on the percentage figure (e.g. 18 out of 23 = 78%). For more details refer to the 'Quarterly Performance Reports' published on our Staffordshire Planning ['A to Z of Planning'](#) web page ('P' for Performance).

[Note: The delegated powers apply to applications that do not involve a substantial new site or significant extension; applications for county developments; applications where there are no objections from a statutory consultee, district / parish council or local member; or applications where there are no more than 4 objections on material planning grounds.]

#### **Pre-application Advice Service**

15. A customer satisfaction survey carried out in the summer of 2018 has confirmed that the level of satisfaction with the service is good or very good.

- 9 requests and fee income of £3,742 (inc. VAT) (after two quarters)

#### **Staffing and workload**

16. A Principal Planning Officer left the authority on voluntary redundancy terms in July 2018; and, two Senior Planning Officers (one on secondment to the Planning Regulation Team and the other on partial secondment to the Economic Regeneration Team at the time) left the authority in September 2018 and January 2019.
17. The paid for pre-application service is generating additional work and income. The review of the Waste Local Plan and production of our Annual Monitoring Report has now been completed releasing two officers to work full time on development control cases.
18. Meanwhile, the total number of minerals, waste and county development applications is up on the same period last year and back to the same level it was 2 years ago (Appendix 3 - 23 compared to 12 last year). The overall number of cases received (applications, submissions and consultations) is slightly up (132 compared to 119).
19. The staffing requirement of the team will continue to be kept under review, having regard to the current spending restrictions.

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## Definitions

'Major development' is defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#)

In so far as it is relevant to applications determined by the County Council, a 'major development' means development involving the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits; waste development; the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.

A 'non-major development' is defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Section 62A Applications\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#) as an application which is not 'major development'

## List of Background Papers

- Planning Committee – 7 June 2018 - Planning, Policy and Development Control - Annual Performance Report ([see agenda item 6](#))
- 'Quarterly Performance Reports' published on our Staffordshire Planning '[A to Z of Planning](#)' web page ('P' for Performance).
- [MHCLG - Improving planning performance: criteria for designation \(November 2018\)](#)
- [MHCLG - Live tables on planning application statistics](#)
- [Town and Country Planning \(Section 62A Applications\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

### **Equalities implications:**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on Equal Opportunities.

### **Legal implications:**

Officers are satisfied that there are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **Resource and Value for money implications:**

Officers are satisfied that there are no direct resource and value for money implications arising from this report. Improvements in performance may require additional resources which would have financial implications. Decisions to refuse applications may lead to appeals being made. Funds to cover the cost of appeals would need to be found from the County Council's contingencies. The implications of the review of the Waste Local Plan were addressed in the earlier report to this meeting.

### **Risk implications:**

Officers are satisfied that there are no direct risk implications arising from this report.

### **Climate Change implications:**

The Staffordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans and the Staffordshire Borough and District Local Plans include policies to address climate change which are considered, where applicable, when determining planning applications for mineral and waste development and applications for the County Council's own developments.

Government planning policy in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (July 2018), which refers to climate change (section 14), is also a material consideration in reaching decisions.

### **Health Impact Assessment screening:**

The Staffordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans and the Staffordshire District / Borough Local Plans include policies to address health which are considered, where applicable, when determining planning applications for mineral and waste development and applications for the County Council's own developments.

Government planning policy in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (July 2018), which refers to healthy communities (section 8), is also a material consideration in reaching decisions.

**Planning Development Control - Quarterly Performance– 2018-19 (after two quarters)**

Target Description		Target (Local)	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Performance (final outturn)
National	Speed of 'major development' decisions*	60% (90%)	100% 8 out of 8	100% 8 out of 8			100% 16 out of 16
National	Quality of 'major development' decisions**	10% (5%)	Nil 0 out of 8	Nil 0 out of 8			Nil 0 out of 16
Local	Speed of the County Council's own 'non-major development' decisions	(90%)	100% 3 out of 3	100% 4 out of 4			100% 7 out of 7
Local	Speed of the County Council's own 'major development' decisions	(90%)	Nil	Nil			Nil
Local	Applications determined under delegated powers	(80%)	91% 10 out of 11	75% 9 out of 12			83% 19 out of 23

\* Speed is measured (in so far as it relates to applications dealt with by the County Council) by the proportion of major applications dealt with within 13 weeks, or within 8 weeks for non-major development decisions, unless the application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement when the target is 16 weeks, or within an agreed extension of time.

\*\* Quality is measured (in so far as it relates to applications dealt with by the County Council) by the proportion of major applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal.

Generally, a 'major development' (in so far as it relates to applications dealt with by the County Council) is defined as an application for the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits; and, waste development. A 'non-major development' is defined as an application which is not a 'major development'.

Appendix 3

Planning Development Control – Half Year Performance – 2018-19

Comparison with the previous two years

Year	National (Local Target)	Performance
<b>Speed of 'major development' decisions</b>		
<b>2018-19</b>	<b>60% (90%)</b>	<b>100%</b>
		<b>16 out of 16</b>
2017-18	60% (70%)	100%
		7 out of 7
2016-17	50% inc to 60% (70%)	93%
		14 out of 15
<b>Speed of the County Council's own 'non-major development' decisions</b>		
<b>2018-19</b>	<b>(90%)</b>	<b>100%</b>
		<b>7 out of 7</b>
2017-18	(80%)	100 %
		5 out of 5
2016-17	(80%)	100 %
		4 out of 4
<b>Speed of the County Council's own 'major development' decisions</b>		
<b>2018-19</b>	<b>(90%)</b>	Nil
		Nil
2017-18	80%	Nil
		Nil
2016-17	80%	100 %
		4 out of 4
<b>Applications determined under delegated powers</b>		
<b>2018-19</b>	80%	<b>83%</b>
		<b>19 out of 23</b>
2017-18	80%	75%
		9 out of 12
2016-17	80%	83%
		19 out of 23