

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMITTEE

Agenda Item	6
Report No	PDI 40/14

5 NOVEMBER 2014

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Report by Director of Development & Infrastructure

Summary

This report advises Members on the delivery of the Development Management, Building Standards, and Development Plan services for the 2nd Quarter of 2014/2015. The report also updates Committee on progress being made on the Service Improvement commitments which are set out in the Planning Performance Framework, submitted annually to Scottish Government.

1. Introduction

1.1 Key performance indicator information is reported to Committee every Quarter and the outturn figures for the second Quarter of 2014/15 are now available.

2. Development Management

2.1 The total number of applications of all types received during quarter 2 was 1,109. Fee income was £828k.

2.2 During Q2, 70% of all local planning applications were determined within 2 months, taking an average time of 11.7 weeks. The year to date figure for all planning applications now stands at 69% determined within 2 months, against a target of 70%.

2.3 Five major planning applications were determined during this period, including Glen Kylachy, Spittal and Carn Gorm wind farms. Three out of the five planning applications dealt with during this period had Processing Agreements – all of which were determined within the timescales agreed with the developers.

2.4 The pre-application advice service for both major and local planning applications has continued to operate well over the last three months. The major developments pre-application advice service continues to deliver 100% of packs within four weeks. The local pre-applications advice service has also been performing well, with 81% of the packs being delivered within the target 6 week period.

- 2.5 Enforcement information is shown in Appendix 2. For Quarter 2, 83 cases were taken up, with 9 formal notices having been served.
- 2.6 Scottish Government benchmark information for local planning applications is provided for Member interest for the previous quarter for all of the local authorities within the same benchmark group and for Scotland as a whole. A meeting is to be held between authorities before the end of the year to discuss areas of best practice.

3. Building Standards

- 3.1 Key targets are shown in Appendix 2. Performance for responding to an application for building warrant dropped during Q2 down to 80% (target 85%). The reasons were mainly due to summer holidays, difficulty in attracting a qualified and experienced person to fill a vacancy and staff illnesses. The other internal KPIs remain constant and above target.
- 3.2 The number of building warrant applications received during Q2 was 803. An increase of 8% when compared to Q1, and a 7% increase when compared to Q2 last year.
- 3.3 The number of building warrant applications determined during Q2 was 759; this is an 11% (90 applications) increase on Q1 output and a 23% (223 applications) increase when compared to last year.
- 3.4 The number of completion certificates accepted during Q2 was 759. This represents a 27% (212 applications) increase when compared to Q1, and a 7% (52 applications) increase on last year. The value of work submitted for building warrant during Q2 was £261m. This is comparable to that reported last quarter.
- 3.5 Building Warrant fee income for Q2 was £585k. This represents a 7% (£45k) drop in fee income when compared to last quarter; which was very high, but a 15% (£90k) increase when compared to last year.
- 3.6 The number of applications for building warrant is increasing by each quarter and is almost at the levels experienced prior to the recession. This is certainly evident by the number of applications received for new housing, particularly within the Inverness & Nairn area.

4. Development Plans

- 4.1 During Q2, the Main Issues Report for the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan was prepared, and the Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee approval gained for publication and consultation.
- 4.2 The team has also finalised and published the Cumulative Landscape and Visual Assessment of Wind Energy in Caithness, and briefed the Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee on it. The Inshes and Raigmore Development Brief was prepared and approved for consultation by the City of Inverness and Area Committee and public consultation commenced.

4.3 A co-ordinated Council response to the A9-A96 Transport Scotland route corridors consultation was prepared and submitted and work continues in engaging with Transport Scotland.

4.4 Significant progress has also been made in preparing the first draft of Aquaculture Supplementary Guidance, preparing for the review of the Highland wide Local Development Plan and supporting other Council projects with analysis carried out by the Information and Research team.

5. Service Improvement Plan Update

5.1 The Service Improvement Plan was submitted to Scottish Government, following agreement at the last Planning Development & Infrastructure Committee. A summary of progress against the actions contained within it is shown in Appendix 3.

5.2 The actions contained within it are being progressed, but Members may wish to note the following projects:

- The process for involving Members in pre-application advice has been implemented.
- A community council newsletter covering planning issues has been prepared and issued.
- Surveys of community councils and customers are being carried out, and action plans will be generated from the outcomes.

6. Implications

6.1 There are no direct Resource, Legal, Equalities, Climate Change/Carbon Clever Rural, Gaelic or Risk Implications arising from this report.

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the performance updates across the Development Management, Building Standards and Development Plans teams.

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Date: 22 October 2014

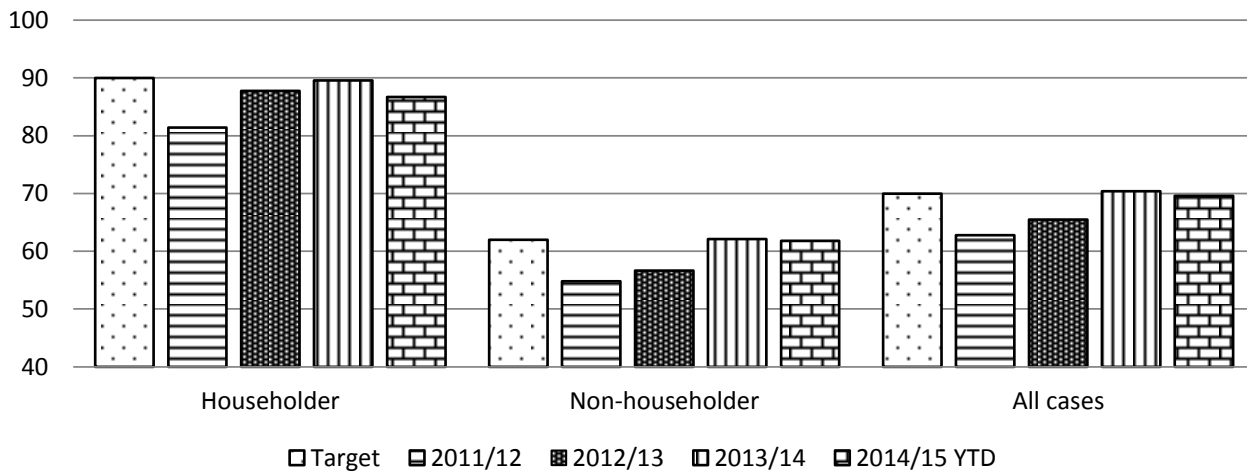
**Appendix 1
Performance Statistics**

**Highland
Quarter 2 2014/15**

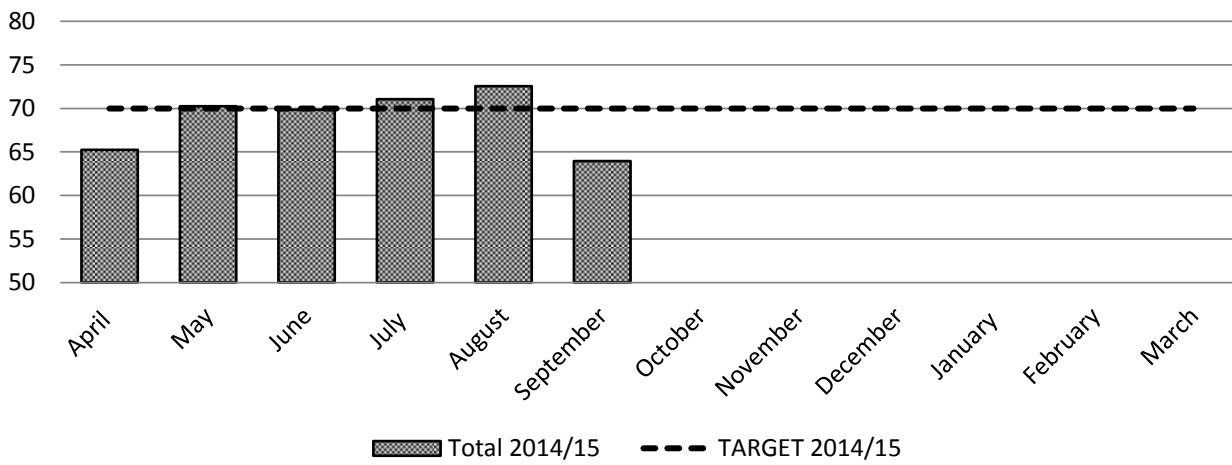
Planning Applications			
Category	Total Number of Decisions	% Within Agreed Timescales	
Processing Agreements			
Major Applications	3	100.0%	
Local Applications			
EIA developments			
Other Applications			
	Total Number of Decisions	% within timescales*	Average Time (Weeks)
All Major Developments	5	20.0%	32.4
All Local Developments	632		11.7
Local: less than 2 months	444	70.2%	
Local: more than 2 months	188	29.8%	
Local developments (non-householder)	427		13.6
Local: less than 2 months	268	63.0%	
Local: more than 2 months	157	37.0%	
Local developments (householder)	205		7.1
Local: less than 2 months	176	85.9%	
Local: more than 2 months	29	14.1%	
Other Consents	66		11.5
Other : Less than 2 months	39	59.1%	
Enforcement Activity			
	Number		
Cases Taken Up	83		
Notices Served	9		
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0		
Prosecutions	0		
Pre-Application Advice			
Major Packs within 4 weeks	100.0%		
Local Packs within 6 weeks	81.0%		

* 4 months for major developments and 2 months for local developments and other consents

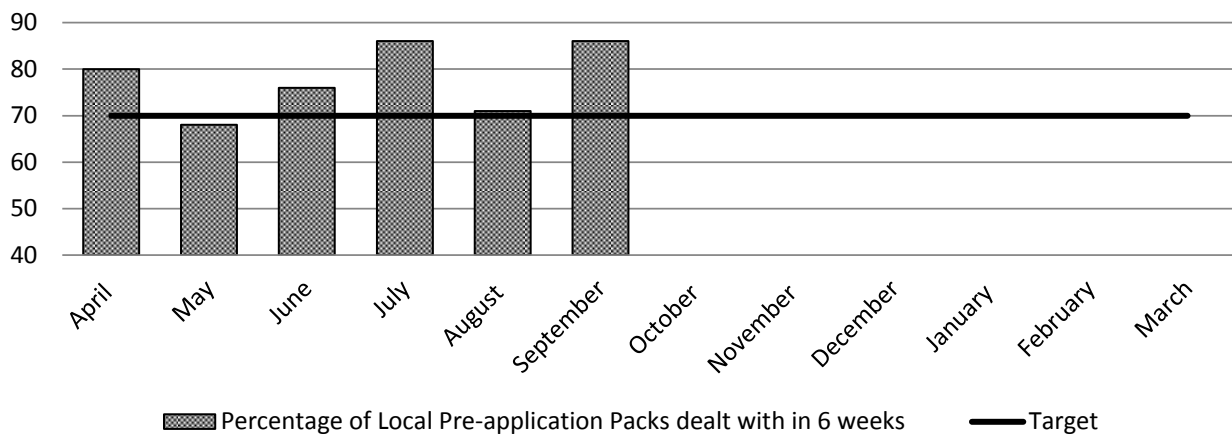
Development Management Performance - % of local planning applications dealt with in 2 months (Year to Date)



Development Management Performance - % of all planning applications dealt with in 2 months



Development Management Performance - Local Pre-application



Benchmark Performance Figures for 2014/15 Q1 for Local Planning Applications

All Applications				
Planning Authority	2014/2015 Q1			
	No. Applications	Average Time Without Legal Agreement (weeks)	Average Time With Legal Agreement (weeks)	Overall Average Time (weeks)
Aberdeenshire	717	11.5	24.3	12.4
Argyll & Bute	282	9.2	-	9.2
Dumfries & Galloway	536	9.8	67.9	10.3
Eilean Siar	75	10.4	-	10.4
Highland	640	10.0	45.0	10.4
Orkney Islands	95	9.9	-	9.9
Scottish Borders	242	10.7	60.2	15.0
Shetland Islands	69	9.8	-	9.8
SCOTLAND	2,656	10.3	37.4	11.2

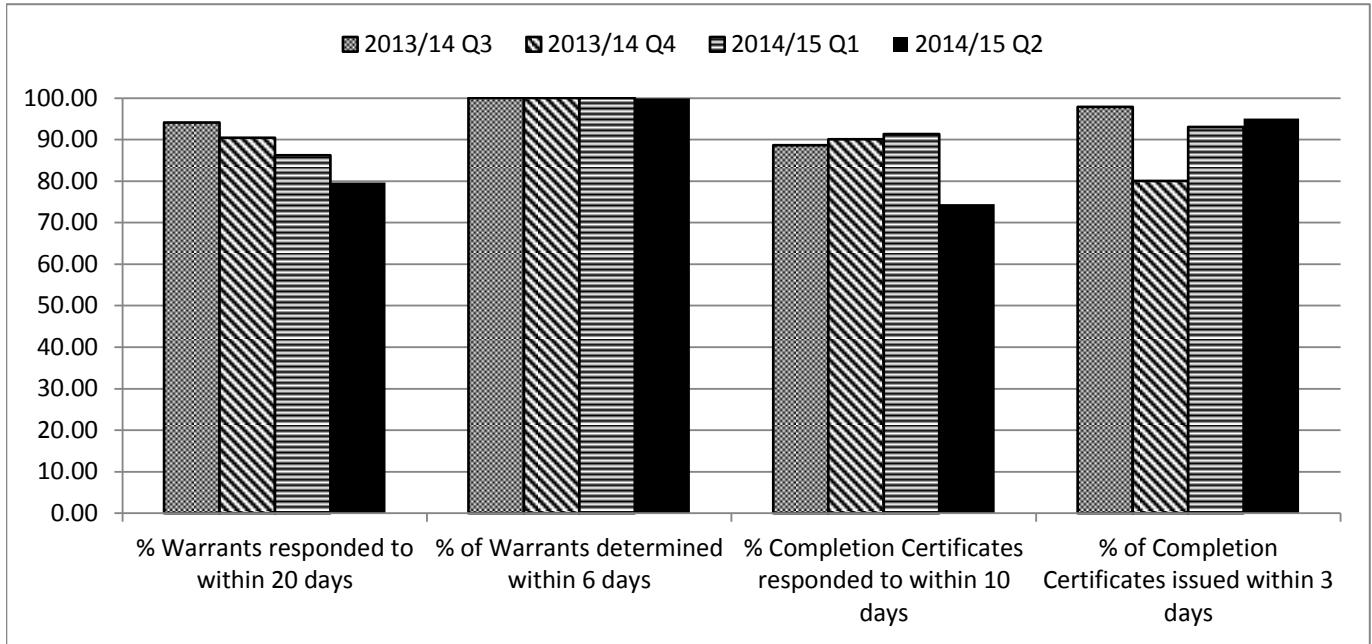
Source: Scottish Government

A full publication is available at the following link:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/Publications>

Appendix 2
Building Standards Performance 2014/15 Quarter 2

	% Warrants responded to within 20 days	% of Warrants determined within 6 days	% Completion Certificates responded to within 10 days	% of Completion Certificates issued within 3 days	Target
2013/14 Q3	94.12	100.00	88.60	97.84	80
2013/14 Q4	90.40	100.00	90.10	80.00	80
2014/15 Q1	86.22	100.00	91.32	93.00	80
2014/15 Q2	79.70	99.90	74.50	95.10	80



Building Standards Volumes and Income (Last 4 Quarters)

	2013/14 Q3	2013/14 Q4	2014/15 Q1	2014/15 Q2
Warrants Decided	782	775	669	759
Compl. Certs	586	509	717	759
Income (£000)	378	554	630	585

Appendix 3 - Service Improvement Plan Actions
Planning Performance - Service Improvement Plan 2014/15

High Quality Development on the Ground	Quarter 2 Update
We will prepare and publicise a presentation of high quality developments supported by the Service by March 2015 .	This is ongoing and on target.
Financial Management and Local Governance	
We will put in place a process for involving Members in providing input to pre-application advice for major developments by September 2014	Complete.
Communications, engagement and customer service	
We will deliver Focus Groups for Planning and Building Standards across the Highland area during 2014/15.	Plans are being developed to ensure that these are carried out this financial year.
We will implement improvements to our means of engagement with Community Councils during 2014/15	Community Council newsletter complete and issued. It is available on the Council web-site at www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/12040/planning_matters_newsletter
We will put in place a refreshed social media presence covering all aspects of planning and building standards and provide more engaging ways to communicate through our website during 2014/15.	This is ongoing and on target.
We will carry out a range of comprehensive customer surveys during 2014/15 and prepare an action plan from the results.	Community Council survey issued - responses due end November 2014. All customers receiving decision notices will be also be asked to complete a customer feedback survey.
Effective Management Structures	
We will ensure that all staff have Employee Review and Development Plans delivered and the Service Training Plan produced by end August 2014 .	ERDs and Service Training plan complete. Training has involved bespoke training on conditions and adverts, attendance at EIA training, and working with SNH to hold two sessions on landscape impact assessment.
Culture of Continuous Improvement	
We will put in place a managed hosted service for UNIFORM and the Document Management System during 2014/15.	This is ongoing and on target. The new system is due to go -live in february 2015.
We will deliver improvement to the project management of consents required for Council projects to assist with the delivery of the overall Capital Programme during 2014/15	This is ongoing and on target. A capital programme monitoring group now meets regularly and will raise issues about regulatory matters as part of this process.
We will put in place new arrangements for the handling and storage of planning application documents during 2014/15.	This is ongoing and on target.
We will fully implement Development Management for Enterprise by March 2015	This is ongoing and on target.
We will carry out further benchmarking exercises with our benchmark family authorities during 2014/15.	This is ongoing and on target.
We will introduce performance management measures to monitor the delivery of Development Plans and associated audits and projects against timescales in the Development Plan Scheme and report progress through its annual review.	This is ongoing and on target.
We will put in place new project management arrangements for Development Plans to ensure delivery against timescales set out in the Development Plan Scheme	This is ongoing and on target.