

Agenda item	7
Report no	EDI 04/17

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee

Date: 8 November 2017

Report Title: Quarter 2 Performance Review

Report By: Director of Development and Infrastructure

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report advises Members on the delivery and performance of the Development Management, Building Standards and the Development Plan services for the second Quarter of 2017/2018. It also seeks Members approval to amend the charging mechanism for Street Naming and Numbering following a review of current fees.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- note the performance updates for the Development Management, Building Standards and Development Plans teams;
- note progress with the eRoad Construction Consent project; and
- agree to the amended schedule of charges for Street Naming and Numbering functions.

3 Development Management

- 3.1 Performance in dealing with planning applications still remains slightly below target (see **Appendix 1**). 59% of all local planning applications were determined within the two month period taking an average of 11 weeks. Efforts continue to improve performance, and a dedicated small applications team has been set up using seconded staff and will be operational during Q3 which it is hoped will lead to marked improvement in the performance statistics.

4 Building Standards

- 4.1 Performance for responding to a warrant applications (KPI1) indicates 69% first responses within 20 days during Quarter 2 (**Appendix 2**). This is down on last quarter but a significant improvement on last year. Work continues to improve this performance measure. Performance for responding to a completion certificate submission indicates 90% within 10 days. This is an improvement on last quarter (70%) and on last year (85%). Performance across the other 4 internal indicators is 98%. This is consistent with last quarter (97%) and an improvement on last year (94%).
- 4.2 The number of applications received during Q2 is 677; this is less than Q1 (839) and last year (857). The number of building warrants determined during Q2 is 682; this is less (767) than Q1 and last year (704). The number of completion certificates processed during Q2 is 941; this is more than Q1 (696) and last year (790). The value of work submitted for building warrants during Q2 is £114m; this is significantly more than Q1 (£82m) and more than last year (£104m). Building warrant fee income during Q2 is £515k; this compares with £554k last quarter and £533k from Q2 last year.

5 Development Plans

- 5.1 The preparation of our Area Local Development Plans is progressing well with additional information submitted for the examination of the Caithness and Sutherland LDP. We have also begun the analysis of comments for the West Highland and Islands LDP. A draft Development Brief for the Inverness East area has been prepared for presentation to the City Committee in Q3 and we continue to work closely with Transport Scotland on the design and route of the A9/A96 link road that is critical to this growth area and forms a vital part of the City Region Deal package of projects. There has been considerable work in updating our position on Developer Contributions with the Places Committee agreeing updated costs for the delivery of new schools to support development in Inverness. A new draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance is being considered for approval by this Committee elsewhere on the agenda. We have engaged with the development industry in reviewing this document and in preparing the annual Housing Land Audit.

6 Road Construction Consent Project (eRCC)

- 6.1 Over the course of this year, a LEAN project has been under way to review the Road Construction Consent process. A representative group of staff from Transport Planning Team (D&I), Area Senior Engineers (CS) and Policy and Programmes Team (CS) as well as staff from Business Support have all contributed to the review. This has involved attending and contributing to process redesign sessions on the various aspects of the process. At the end of April, there was also engagement on the current process with Agents and Developers. The project has now reached a stage where 'TO BE' processes are taking shape and new approaches are ready to be tested.

- 6.2 The new process effectively mirrors the ePlanning and the eBuilding Standards processes by putting in place an eRoad Construction Consent application process. Applicants will submit supporting documentation using the ePlanning.scot portal and the same back office system will be used to ensure that the management of the application process is as paper-free as possible. Highland is the first local authority in Scotland to implement such an approach.
- 6.3 Another focus of the project has been to review how road bonds and Inspections Fees are calculated. Staff representatives from both D&I and CS are working collaboratively on this. Guidance on what construction items should be included in Road Bond and Inspection fee calculations has been drafted and the team is currently working on a revised charging mechanism which will be subject to Committee approval. As part of arriving at a revised charging mechanism, the review Team has:
- benchmarked Highland Council's fees against other Local Authorities;
 - consulted with the development industry, including Homes for Scotland members;
 - considered costs incurred in resourcing and carrying out Inspections (or assessment of alternative evidence);
 - considered costs incurred in the administrative support relating to Inspections and the subsequent reduction of the Road Bond;
 - reviewed the construction items to be included in costings for determining road bonds and inspection fees; and
 - reviewed the payment arrangements for inspection fees.
- 6.4 Subject to progress made on this element of the project, a verbal update may be given to this Committee.

7 Street Naming and Numbering – Review of Charges

- 7.1 Following customer feedback on the operation of the Council's street naming and numbering processes, a review has been carried out and a number of changes are proposed to the fee structure. In carrying out a review of the service, a benchmarking exercise has been carried out, looking at what other local authorities in Scotland charge. Whilst we have considered what other authorities charge, our revised fees are based as far as possible on recovering costs incurred by this Council to deliver the service. It should be noted that service delivery costs will vary across all authorities and so benchmarking alone would not be appropriate.
- 7.2 One particular area of concern raised by customers was the fixed cost per address and whether the Council should consider moving back to a sliding scale. In carrying out a review, it is acknowledged that other authorities are taking this approach (sliding scale) either on a cost per property or fixed 'bundle' cost - this provides consistency for users of the service, particularly developers who are accessing this service across multiple authorities. It is recognised that the effort required where multiple addresses are concerned results in a reduction in time taken. The Council deals with approximately 780 (average of 3 per day) house name changes over the course of a year, for which it does not currently charge. Again reflecting on practice elsewhere, it is proposed to put in place a new charge to cover the admin costs involved. The revised fee scale as shown in **Appendix 3** sets out the proposed new charges and Member approval is sought for these to be implemented immediately, although following approval some lead in time will be required to make the necessary changes to the online form and

associated guidance on our web pages. The legal basis for charging and justification for the charge (to cover the cost of delivering it) will be included within the guidance.

8 Implications

- 8.1 Resource – the delivery of the services outlined within this report are contained within the overall Service budget.
- 8.2 Legal – none
- 8.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – none
- 8.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever - none
- 8.5 Risk – none
- 8.6 Gaelic – none

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 31 October 2017

Author: Malcolm Macleod, Head of Planning and Environment

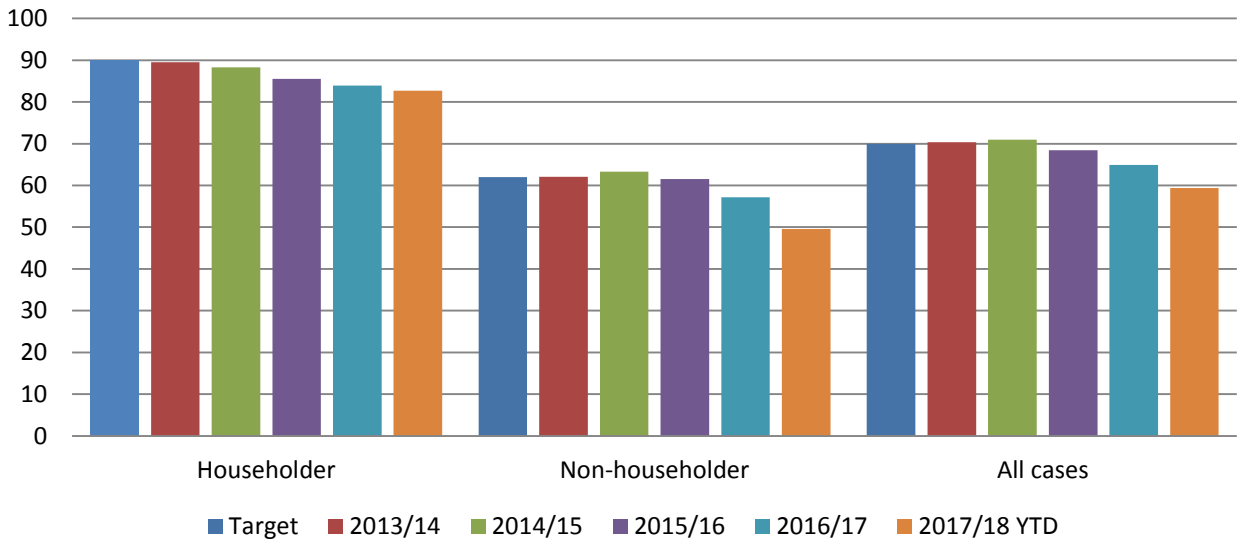
**Appendix 1
Performance Statistics**

**Highland
Quarter 2 2017/18**

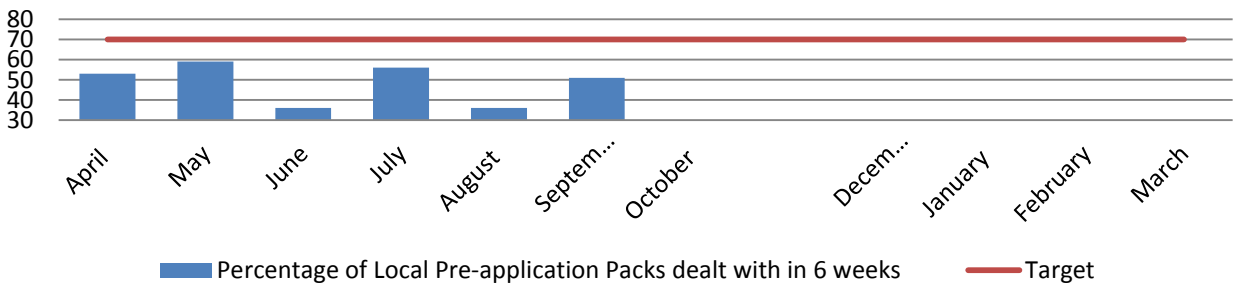
Planning Applications			
Category	Total Number of Decisions	% Within Agreed Timescales	
	2	50.0%	
Major Applications	2	50.0%	
Local Applications			
EIA developments			
Other Applications			
	Total Number of Decisions	% within timescales*	Average Time (Weeks)
All Major Developments	4	50.0%	26.7
All Local Developments	642		11.0
Local: less than 2 months	379	59.0%	
Local: more than 2 months	263	41.0%	
Local developments (non-householder)	464		12.6
Local: less than 2 months	229	49.4%	
Local: more than 2 months	235	50.7%	
Local developments (householder)	178		6.9
Local: less than 2 months	150	84.3%	
Local: more than 2 months	28	15.7%	
Other Consents	76		10.5
Other : Less than 2 months	46	60.5%	
Enforcement Activity			
	Number		
Cases Taken Up	49		
Notices Served	20		
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0		
Prosecutions	0		
Pre-Application Advice			
Major Packs within 4 weeks	100.0%		
Local Packs within 6 weeks	48.0%		

* 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

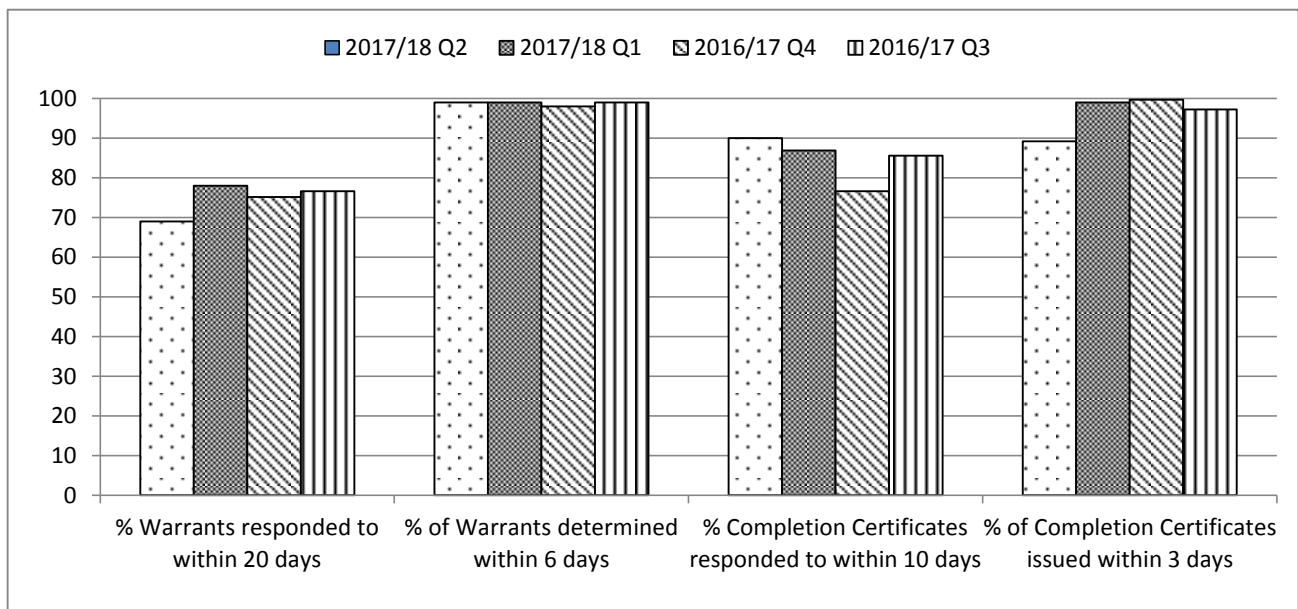


Percentage of Local Pre-application packs in 6 weeks



Appendix 2 Building Standards Performance 2017/18 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
2017/18 Q2	69	99	90	89.2	90
2017/18 Q1	78	99	86.9	99	90
2016/17 Q4	75.2	98	76.6	99.7	90
2016/17 Q3	76.6	99	85.6	97.2	90



Building Standards Volumes and Income (Last 4 Quarters)

	2016/17 Q3	2016/17 Q4	2017/18 Q1	2017/18 Q2
Warrants Decided	873	789	767	682
Compl. Certs	676	550	696	941
Income (£000)	491	521	554	515

APPENDIX 3

Review of CAG and SNN Charges – September 2017

Proposed Charges

No. total properties in application	Existing Charge	Proposed Charges
1	£150 per address (no sliding scale)	£100
2-5		£125
6-10		£150
11-25		£175
26-50		£250
51-100		£400
101 - 150		£750
151 – 200+		£1000
Naming a new Street	£195	£195
Advert Fee	£100	£120
Renaming a House	No Charge	£40
Renumbering an existing Street	£150	£150