

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 10

meeting date: THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2016
 title: PLANNING APPLICATION STATISTICS REPORT
 submitted by: JOHN MACHOLC – HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Committee on key information in relation to determination of planning applications from 1 October 2015 – 30 June 2016.
- 1.2 The report covers three quarters – Quarter 3 (15/16) from 1 October 2015 – 31 December 2015, Quarter 4 (15/16) from 1 January 2016 – 31 March 2016 and Quarter 1 1 April 2016 – 30 June 2016.

2 APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND DETERMINED DURING QUARTERS 3 AND 4 (15/16) AND QUARTER 1 (16/17)

- 2.1 The table below shows the number of applications received and determined during the last two quarters of the year 2015/16 and the first quarter of the current year 16/17.

	QUARTER 3 15/16 01/10/15 – 31/12/15	QUARTER 4 15/16 01/01/16 – 31/03/16	QUARTER 1 16/17 01/04/16 – 30/06/16
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	163	166	188
APPLICATIONS DETERMINED	180	170	162
% OF DELEGATED DECISIONS	92%	95%	95%

3 CATEGORY OF APPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Applications are put into categories Major, Minor and Other. Below is a description of how the applications are categorised:

Major applications are applications which fall into the following categories:

Dwellings - 10+ dwellings or cover a site area of 0.5ha+

Offices/Retail & Distribution/Light Industry -cover over 1,000m² or floor space or a site area of 1ha+

General Retail Distribution and Servicing – 1,000m²+ or floor space or site area of 1ha+

Gypsy and Traveller sites – 10+ pitches

All other major developments – all other uses, whether in a use class or sui generis uses – 1,000m²

Minor applications are applications which fall into the following categories:

Dwellings – 1-9 dwellings. Or site area of less than 0.5ha

Offices/Retail & Distribution/Light Industry – less than 1,000m² floor space or less than 1 ha site area

General Industry and Distribution and Servicing – less than 1,000m² floor space or less than 1ha site area

Gypsy and Traveller sites – 1-9 pitches

All other minor developments – less than 1,000m² floor space or less than 1ha site area

Other Developments

Minerals Processing

Change of Use – going from one class use to another

Householder developments - extensions, conservatories, garages etc within the domestic curtilage of the property

Advertisements

Listed Building Consent

4 TARGETS

4.1 Performance has traditionally been measured in terms of time taken to determine a planning application. Targets (Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 157a, b, and c) were as follows:

'Major' developments: 60% within 13 weeks from valid submission to despatch of decision notice. 'Minor' developments: 65% within 8 weeks from valid submission to despatch of decision notice. 'Other' developments: 80% within 8 weeks from valid submission to despatch of decision notice. The Council's own determination targets for the year 2015/16 are as follows:

35% of Major Applications within 13 weeks

62% of Minor Applications within 8 weeks

80% of Other Applications within 8 weeks

The determination targets have been changed slightly for 2016/17 and are as follows:

40% of Major Applications within 13 weeks

60% of Minor Applications within 8 weeks

70% of Other Applications within 8 weeks

The Council has reviewed its own targets to ensure compliance with DCLG and will be mindful of future changes.

4.2 RIBBLE VALLEY DETERMINATION RATES

THIRD QUARTER 2015/16 – 1 October 2015 to 31 December 2015

Majors 75% determined within 13 weeks
Minors 31.74% determined within 8 weeks
Others 56.56% determined within 8 weeks

FOURTH QUARTER 2015/16 - 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2016

Majors 37.50% determined within 13 weeks
Minors 57.14% determined within 8 weeks
Others 63.95% determined within 8 weeks

FIRST QUARTER 2016/17- 1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016

Majors 100% determined within 13 weeks
Minors 70.90% determined within 8 weeks
Others 73.86% determined within 8 weeks

4.3 TREND

Members will see that although the targets for the Minor applications and Other applications were not achieved in quarters 3 and 4 year 15/16 the targets have all been achieved for the first quarter of year 16/17.

In the report to Planning and Development Committee 14 January 2016 the Head of Planning Services predicted a negative impact on performance figures due to a backlog of applications created during staff shortages being cleared. This is reflected in the above results. However, Members will note the improvement in the first quarter figures of year 16/17.

5 FEES RECEIVED

5.1 The fees received for planning applications are as follows:

Quarter 3 (01/10/15 – 31/12/15) - £109,847 included in this figure are fees generated by Major schemes – which amounted to £ 54435. This includes the major applications during the quarter - Holmes Mill, the Reserved Matters application for 45 houses at Standen and the reserved matters application at land off Milton Avenue.

Quarter 4 (01/01/16 – 31/03/16) - £135,149 included in this figure are fees generated by Major schemes – which amounted to £53434. This includes the major applications during the quarter Substitution of house types at Middle Lodge Road, Barrow, light industrial units at land at Barrow Brook Enterprise Park which was subsequently withdrawn and reserved matters application at land East of Chipping Lane, Longridge.

Quarter 1 (01/04/16 – 30/06/16) - £166,609 included in this figure are fees generated by Major schemes – which amounted to £86630. This includes major applications during the quarter – Reserved matters phase 1 at Land at Pendle Road, Clitheroe, 18 dwellings at Parker Avenue, Reserved matters at Accrington Road, Whalley, Outline application at Hammond Ground Read, Outline application at land adjacent to Greenfield Avenue, Clitheroe

6 INVALID APPLICATIONS

- 6.1 When an application is received into the Planning Office it is checked to make sure it is a complete application.
- 6.2 There is a national list and local list of requirements to ensure this which includes: the correct fee, a location plan, plans drawn to a recognised metric scale with external floor dimensions and elevational dimensions, bat and tree surveys. Dependent on the type of application other things may be required in order to have a valid application. Common reasons for invalidity include fee outstanding, bat survey required, heritage statement required (Conservation Areas, Barns and Listed Buildings, dimensions on plans (elevational) and plans that are not to scale. Most invalid applications are turned around fairly quickly.
- 6.3 Currently around 40% of applications received are invalid. The Administration team email the applicant or agent informing them, normally within a working day. In many cases and subject to the response from the applicant the application can be reinvalidated within 2 working days but when additional information such as a Bat Survey or Transport Assessment this can take between 3 and 4 weeks. After 3 months the applications are normally returned with the files removed.

7 APPEALS DETERMINED

- 7.1 There are three main types of planning appeals. These are written representations, Hearings and Inquiries.

7.2 WRITTEN REPRESENTATION

The majority of appeals are deterred as written representation. The appellant will put forward a written statement whilst the Local Planning Authority cannot send comments and so reliance is put on the officer's report (either delegated or committee) to justify the Local Planning Authority decision.

HEARING

A planning hearing is an appeal in which there is normally no legal representation. Statements are submitted by both parties and there is a discussion on the key issues.

INQUIRY

An Inquiry is more formal and there is normally legal representation formal close examination of witnesses.

7.3 APPEAL DECISIONS

Qtr3 15/16 (01/10/15-31/12/15)

Planning Appeals Determined	Number	Allowed	Dismissed	% Allowed
Written Representations	6	1	5	16.66
Hearings	0	0	0	0
Inquiry	0	0	0	0
Householder	6	3	3	50.00

Qtr4 15/16 (01/01/16-31/03/16)

Planning Appeals Determined	Number	Allowed	Dismissed	% Allowed
Written Representations	8	2	2	25.00
Hearings	1	0	1	0
Inquiry	0	0	0	0
Householder	2	0.5	1.5	25.00

Qtr1 16/17 (01/04/16-30/06/16)

Planning Appeals Determined	Number	Allowed	Dismissed	% Allowed
Written Representations	4	2	2	50.00
Hearings	2	0	2	0
Inquiry	0	0	0	0
Householder	1	1	0	100.00

7.4 COST AWARDS

It is important to emphasise that an application for costs can be made by either party if it is considered they have acted in an unreasonable manner. Guidance is available in the Planning Practice Guide. These can be for a Procedural award or a Substantive award. Although there has been no award during these quarters the Council has recently paid an award of costs from a previous appeal. There are currently 3 outstanding claims that need to be resolved or submitted.

7.5 QUALITY OF DECISIONS

DCLG has also imposed criteria in relation to planning appeals which will be used in assessing the performance of the LPA. The **measure** to be used is the percentage of decisions on applications for major development that have been overturned at appeal

The **threshold** for designation is 20% or more of an authority's decisions on applications for major development made during the assessment period being overturned at appeal.

Within these quarters there has been one Major development allowed on appeal that have been previously overturned by the Planning and Development Committee. This represents approximately 10% so at this point in time the Council is likely to be within this threshold.

8 PRE APPLICATION ADVICE

8.1 Fees generated between 1 October 2015 and 31 December 2015 (Quarter 3) were £4,372, between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 (Quarter 4) were £15,123 and between 1 April 2016 and 30 June 2016 £9,860.

8.2 Both Pre application advice requests and Planning applications cannot be easily predicted and therefore the incomes generated are subject to ongoing developments often dictated by market conditions and not easily controlled.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 It is evident the trend is one of improvement and that the targets in relation to determination rates are moving in a positive direction. It should be noted that the most recent quarter is above the target. This is a reflection of being fully resourced with the

historic backlog accounted for in previous quarters. There has also been a significant improvement in the administration procedures which has meant that the applications are being processed more quickly and arrive at the case officer at an earlier stage.

- 9.2 It is also important to emphasise that the Planning Officers frequently ask for Extension of Times on applications where there is need for negotiation or a delay in the consultation response which also assists the determination rates.
- 9.3 The Delegation rate of between 92%-95% is consistent with the national targets which not only enables Planning and Development Committee to focus on key or strategic applications but also allows the more minor applications to be determined in a more efficient and timely manner which assists the development process
- 9.4 It remains the fact that one of the biggest delays in the decision making process is when there is a need for a legal obligation, as this can often add 2 to 3 months to the process. However, in most of these cases the Department normally requests an Extension of Time on these applications, which currently means they do not form part of determination statistics. In overall terms I am satisfied with the significant progress that has been made regarding the service improvements and will continue to seek further improvements.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

For further information please ask for John Macholc, extension 4502.

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