



**GREAT YARMOUTH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 April 2016  
**Time:** 18:30  
**Venue:** Supper Room  
**Address:** Town Hall, Hall Plain, Great Yarmouth, NR30 2QF

## AGENDA

**Open to Public and Press**

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

You have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be discussed if it relates to something on your Register of Interests form. You must declare the interest and leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

You have a Personal Interest in a matter to be discussed if it affects

- your well being or financial position
- that of your family or close friends
- that of a club or society in which you have a management role
- that of another public body of which you are a member to a greater extent than others in your ward.

You must declare a personal interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

Whenever you declare an interest you must say why the interest arises, so that it can be included in the minutes.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

- 3      MINUTES      3 - 6**
- To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 25 February 2016.
- 4      MATTERS ARISING**
- To consider any matters arising from the above minutes.
- 5      TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP ACCOUNTS AND REPORT**
- To consider a presentation from the Town Centre Manager.
- 6      THE WINTERGARDENS**
- The Principal Conservation Officer will provide an update on this matter.
- 7      QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT      7 - 22**
- Report attached.
- 8      TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**
- An update will be given.
- 9      ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- To consider any other business as may be determined by the Chairman of the meeting as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

# Scrutiny Committee

## Minutes

Thursday, 25 February 2016 at 18:30

### PRESENT :

Councillor Williamson (in the Chair); Councillors M Coleman, Collins, Grant, Grey, Jeal, Jones, Lawn, Mavroudis, Sutton, T Wainwright and Walker.

Mr D Barker (Principal Conservation Manager), Mrs J Beck (Director of Customer Services), Mr A Carr (Group Manager - Tourism & Communications), Mr R Hodds (Cabinet Secretary), Mrs D Summers (Group Manager - Resources), Mrs K Watts (Transformation Programme Manager) and Mrs S Wintle ( Member Services Officer).

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Grant and Mavroudis declared a Non Pecuniary interest in the item relating to the Great Yarmouth Sport and Leisure Trust.

Councillors Williamson, M Coleman and Jeal declared a Non Pecuniary Interest in the item relating to the Winter Gardens in their capacities as Members of the Preservation Trust.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fox.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2015 were confirmed.

### **4 MATTERS ARISING**

A Member raised a question in relation to item 7 Transparency Code / Publication Scheme and asked for an update to be given at the next meeting from the HR Manager.

### **5 GREAT YARMOUTH SPORTS AND LEISURE TRUST**

Councillor Plant gave an update to Members on the current position and future plans for the Great Yarmouth Sport and Leisure Trust.

The Chairman raised a question in relation to the applications and asked would they be for both public and voluntary sectors, Councillor Plant confirmed that these would be for both sectors.

Councillor Sutton asked for an indication as to how the Sports and Leisure Trust were to use monetary balances to pursue assets, Councillor Plant advised that a business plan would be produced.

## **6 THE WINTER GARDENS**

The Committee received and considered the Principal Conservation Officers' report which informed Members of the current position and proposed programme for the Wintergardens.

A number of concerns were raised in regard to the restoration and redevelopment of the site.

The Principal Conservation Officer reported that the Winter Gardens is a dangerous structure and appears on Historic England's Buildings at Risk Register.

The Principal Conservation Officer advised Members that the last survey and cost report was produced by Morton Partnership in 2014 and at that time the estimated cost of repair was between £2.5 and £3m. He advised that it was likely that the cost would now have risen due to the continuing deterioration of the building.

It was reported that should an application for a Heritage Lottery Fund be successful the funding would be used to develop the application, and fund important elements such as the business plan, conservation plan and management plan.

Concern was raised over the previous leases of the site and a Member asked if copies of these were available, further concern was raised in regard to the annual cost to the Council for the building whilst standing empty.

A Member stated that the Wintergardens was a highly protected building and that officers working on the project would be governed by the law of the land. A suggestion was made in regard to obtaining a report from the English Heritage in regard to the dismantling of the premises and storing.

Members requested assurance from Morton Partnership and the Conservation Team and asked for a further update to be brought to the next meeting of Scrutiny.

RESOLVED :

1) That an update from the Conservation Team together with assurances from Morton Partnership be brought to the next meeting of Scrutiny.

2) That a report be sought from the English Heritage Association in regard to the disposal and storage of the Wintergardens.

## **7 BUDGET MONITORING PERIOD 9**

The Committee received and considered the Budget Monitoring report which compared the actual expenditure and income position at the end of December 2015 to the updated budget for 2015/16.

A question was raised in regard to the IT Services and whether IT services would be separated across departments.

A Member asked in relation to the Benefits Section whether the introduction of Universal Credit had been taken into account. The Director of Customer Services advised that a grant had been secured for 2016/17.

Concern was raised in regard to the calculation for car parking, it was advised that the calculation is based on an estimated income.

In relation to a question raised in regard to a secondment post to Sports England, Members were advised that this post had been extended and had been fully funded by Sports England.

A Member asked for clarification how footway lighting is charged to the Council, the Director of Customer Services advised that this was paid direct to the utility companies.

RESOLVED:-

That the Budget Monitoring Report (Period 9) be noted.

## **8 TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

The Transformation Programme Manager provided an update on the Transformation Programme.

Members were advised that the Transformation Board were meeting next week and a further update would be provided to Members at the next meeting of Scrutiny.

Concern was raised in regard to length of time in relation to the Asset Management database, although it was reported that all assets had now been plotted and that the database is available for members of the public to view.

## **9 TOWN HALL EVENTS**

The Committee considered the Transformation Programme Manager's report which provided an overview of the business case for the Town Hall and exploration of alternative delivery models.

The Transformation Programme Manager advised that the original business case figures for the development of the events were unrealistic, therefore this had resulted in changes to the 16/17 budget for these areas of work.

Members were advised that the catering contract was due for renewal in March 2016. Members were advised that this had presented an opportunity to see if a more cost effective way to run events could be sought by seeking a contractor who will manage the event in their entirety, from marketing, booking, setting of the venue, running the bar and catering elements and in return pay a fee to the Council. It was reported that an invitation to tender had been advertised.

A Member asked whether there were other plans in place if the tender process was unsuccessful. The Transformation Programme Manager advised that the Events

Team were reviewing the business case for the Town Hall events to further increase the forecasted income.

The Committee expressed their support for the Town Hall events although concern was raised in regard to expenditure and profit losses.

## **10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman advised Members that the next meeting would be held on the 7 April 2016.

## **11 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

The meeting ended at: 20:15

**Subject: Quarter 3 Performance Report**

**Information to: Cabinet Briefing Session (CBS) – 23 March 2016**  
**Cabinet – 4 April 2016**  
**Scrutiny – 7 April 2016**

**Report by: Transformation Programme Manager**

The following gives an update on current performance for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2015/16 (October 2015 – December 2015) for performance measures.

The report highlights some of the performance measures (with a detailed summary of performance in the planning and sickness measures) and gives an update to the position of key projects that are linked to the corporate priorities from 'The Plan 2015-2020' and recommends actions to be endorsed by Cabinet. The actions are:

- All corporate measures to be monitored during the next quarter
- Further investigation is undertaken by appropriate service lead in Planning and HR to work to improve performance for the next financial year.

## **Introduction**

During the last two years the performance reporting framework has detailed performance in relation to a number of agreed key projects and corporate measures. The majority of the key projects have now been completed and were derived from the old Corporate Plan 2013-15.

In September 2015 the Council agreed 'The plan' which sets out its strategic vision and priorities for up to 2020. This establishes the framework against which the Council should measure its performance at both officer meetings (through regular management reports) and Member meetings (through performance reports).

This framework is being considered as part of a review of the transformation programme, moving this programme into a business strategy, which maximises income streams, whilst at the same time meeting the Council's stated objectives in 'The Plan'.

The business strategy is to include a new set of key projects which will be reported separately from the measures to the appropriate committee.

## **Performance Measures – Highlights**

Performance measures are service specific and cover the full range of services delivered by the Council. The details in this report provide quantitative information about the performance of these services and provide useful trend data. A traffic light status easily identifies if improvement is required.

There are several areas across the Council where performance is showing a trend of continuous improvement. However, there are a few areas where performance has slipped, reasons for this are provided within the performance report.

The following areas of performance are brought to your attention:

### **Improved performance:**

#### **1. Collection Rates for NNDR (CM22)**

It is pleasing to report that the collection rate for Business Rates (NNDR) during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is slightly up on the same period during 2014/15. This is encouraging as more businesses opted to pay their Business Rates over twelve monthly instalments this year rather than 10 instalments and it was envisaged that collection would fall similar to the first two quarters of 2015/16.

#### **2. Average Time to assess Housing & Council Tax: Benefit New Claims (CM09a)**

Performance has shown continuous improvement over the last three years as well as continuous improvement over the first three quarters of 2015/16. In the first quarter of 2012/13 32 days was the reported outturn, performance is now at 19 days this quarter, at a time when workload and overall caseload remain high.

### **Reduced performance:**

#### **3. Planning applications: Minor/Other applications determined within 8 weeks (CM29 b/c)**

The 2015/16 third quarter performance on both these measures are slightly down on the same period during 2014/15. There has been a continuous downward trend over the last few years, but during that time the team has become smaller. Although performance is down on previous years there has been an improvement in performance from quarter two when the section had experienced staff shortages, sickness and IT teething problems with the new system. (See Appendix 1 for more details)



**4. Sickness absence rates: The percentage of working hours lost due to sickness absence (CM24)**

The measure calculates the total number of working hours lost due to sickness absence as a percentage of the total number of working hours. The HR team are working on producing future sickness absence as the number of days off sick per Full Time Equivalent (FTE). (See Appendix 2 for more details)

For the third quarter this has been measured as 9.77 days per FTE, compared to 6.33 days per FTE for the second quarter. The third quarter has shown a significant increase, similar to the first two quarters of 2015/16, in sickness absence compared to the same period in 2014/15. This is largely due to long term absence rather than increased short term absences. HR Officers are currently working with Group Managers to discuss sickness management within their groups.

**Recommendations**

The following actions are recommended to be endorsed by Cabinet

- All corporate measures to be monitored during the next quarter.
- Further investigation is undertaken by appropriate service lead in Planning and HR to work to improve performance for the next financial year.







## CORPORATE MEASURES – SUMMARY REPORT QUARTER 3 2015/16 (OCT-DEC)

### Corporate Measures that impact on the Corporate Priorities 2013/15.

Detailed commentary from each measure lead is provided in the next section.

Measure	EMT Lead	Portfolio Holder	Previous Quarter	This Quarter	Q3 2014/15	Status
CM09a - Average time to assess Housing & Council Tax: Benefit new claims	Jane Beck	Cllr. H Thirtle	20 days	19 days ↑	22	
CM09b - Average time to assess Housing & Council Tax: Change in circumstances	Jane Beck	Cllr. H Thirtle	19 days	16 days ↑	11	
CM14 - No of households in temporary accommodation	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	73	59 ↑	95	
CM15 - Number of a) Homeless acceptances b) Homeless preventions	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	19 24	30 27 ↑	38 72	
CM16 - Number of a) Social housing applicants in allocation pool b) Social housing new applicants awaiting assessment	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	284 467	224 505 ↑	264 380 ↓	
CM18 - No of empty homes brought back into use	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	167	76 ↑	80	
CM19 - Total tonnage of waste recycled	Jane Beck	Cllr. C Smith	6,201.98	9,007.90 ↑	7,893.26	
CM21 - Tonnage of garden waste recycled	Jane Beck	Cllr. C Smith	1,702.92	2,282.98 ↑	1,739.78	
CM22 - Collection rates NNDR	Jane Beck	Cllr. H Thirtle	56%	83.4% ↑	83%	
CM23 - Collection rates Council Tax	Jane Beck	Cllr. H Thirtle	56.5%	83.9% ↓	85.5%	

Measure	EMT Lead	Portfolio Holder	Previous Quarter	This Quarter	Q3 2014/15	Status
CM24 - Sickness absence rates: The percentage of working hours lost due to sickness absence.	Kate Watts	Cllr. H Thirtle	4.76%	4.84% ↓	3.83%	
CM25 – Great Yarmouth Community Housing rent a) GYCH rent arrears collection rate b) as a % of rent roll c) £ value	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	99.23% 1.25% £325,620	99.14% 1.13% £267,586 ↑ ↑ ↑	98.89% 1.4% £324,827	
CM28a - Number of events (including weddings, meetings, functions) used at Town Hall	Jane Beck	Cllr. B Coleman	52	45 ↓	44	
CM29 - Planning applications: a) Major applications determined within 13 weeks b) Minor applications determined within 8 weeks c) Other applications determined within 8 weeks	Jane Beck	Cllr. B Coleman	No applications 34.9% 43.7%	50% 40.3% 44.9% ↓ ↓ ↓	57.1% 44% 46%	
CM31 - Percentage of Land Charges search returns sent within 10 working days.	Jane Beck	Cllr. B Coleman	87.53%	90.11% ↓	97%	
CM32 - Average Time to Re-let Local Authority Housing	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	41 days	53 days ↑	59	
CM33 - Time taken for Housing Options to match property	Robert Read	Cllr. P Carpenter	11 days	15 days ↑	30 days	
CM34 - Contact centre telephone calls: Percentage of Contact Centre calls answered as a % of all calls offered	Jane Beck	Cllr. H Thirtle	55%	60% ↓	74.52%	
CM35 - Building Control: The percentage of building regulation applications where a decision notice is issued within the eight week statutory period.	Jane Beck	Cllr. B Coleman	92.4%	94.5% ↑	New measure	

Key	
Trend/Status	
	 Improving/on track
	 No Change/within tolerance and/or projected range
	 Action required/monitoring






Subject: **Corporate Measures**

Information to: **Cabinet Briefing Session (CBS) – 23 March 2016**  
**Cabinet – 4 April 2016**  
**Scrutiny – 7 April 2016**

The following refers to corporate measures for 2015/16. It summarises performance in the first 9 months of 2015/16 (1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> December inclusive).

Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
CM09a	Average time to assess Housing & Council Tax: Benefit new claims	2014/15	26 days	26 days	22 days	22 days	Year to date, cumulative	↗
	Corporate Priority: Protecting and supporting vulnerable people.	2015/16	21 days	20 days	19 days			
Commentary: Workloads and overall caseloads remain stable and average processing times for new claims has reduced by a further day as at the end of this quarter.								
CM09b	Average time to assess Housing & Council Tax: Change in circumstances	2014/15	12 days	12 days	11 days	11 days	Year to date, cumulative	→
	Corporate Priority: Protecting and supporting vulnerable people.	2015/16	23 days	19 days	16 days			
Commentary: Average time to process changes in circumstances continues to fall following the adverse impact of an issue with ATLAS records in Quarter 1.								
CM14	No. of households in temporary accommodation	2014/15	95	105	95	90	Snapshot at 31/12/15	↗
	Corporate Priority: Protecting and supporting vulnerable people.	2015/16	84	73	59			

Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.

Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
Commentary: The numbers in temporary accommodation are falling in line with the temporary accommodation reduction plan. The final leased flats will return to the freeholder in 2016/17, reducing overall costs for the Council.								
CM15	Number of a) Homeless acceptances b) Homeless preventions	2014/15	a) 43 b) 86	a)34 b)60	a) 38 b) 72	a) 155 b) 264 (Year-end)	Quarterly	 
		2015/16	a) 30 b) 48	a) 19 b) 24	a) 30 b) 27			
	Commentary: Both the acceptances and preventions continue to reduce year on year. The fall in homeless preventions reflect our robust approach to the use of deposits to secure private sector accommodation, limiting availability to applicants in need that are unable to be assisted in the public sector.							
CM16	a) Number of Social housing applicants in allocation pool b) Number of Social housing new applicants awaiting assessment	2014/15	a) 357 b) 441	a) 367 b) 431	a) 264 b) 380	a) 325 b) 429	Snapshot at 31/12/15	 
		2015/16	a) 308 b) 420	a) 284 b) 467	a) 224 b) 505			
	Commentary: There has been a steady reduction in the numbers in the allocation pool, with a corresponding rise in cases awaiting assessment. Analyses of pool numbers indicate that there are sufficient numbers in in each bedroom size category to occupy vacant properties. New procedures have been implemented and targets set via the Personal Development Review (PDR) process to reduce assessment times.							
CM18	No. of empty homes brought back into use  Corporate Priority: Creating and engaging with healthy, vibrant communities.	2014/15	112	126	80	438 (Year-end)	Quarterly	
		2015/16	81	167	76			

Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.

Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
Commentary: The figure above is open to change as people occupying properties will sometimes not inform us until much later and therefore missing the reporting window.								
CM19	Total tonnage of waste recycled	2014/15	2,578.50	5,229.58	7,893.26	10,451.38	Year to date, cumulative	⬆️
	Corporate Priority: Creating and engaging with healthy, vibrant communities.	2015/16	3,042.05	6,201.98	9,007.90			
Commentary: A continued increase is being seen as a result of residents being able to recycle extra materials in their recycling bins and the take-up of the garden waste service.								
CM21	Tonnage of garden waste recycled	2014/15	611.96	1,275.02	1,739.78	2,022.1	Year to date, cumulative	⬆️
	Corporate Priority: Creating and engaging with healthy, vibrant communities.	2015/16	826.54	1,702.92	2,282.98			
Commentary: Continued promotion around the garden waste ban in resident's residual bins is resulting in a steady rise of residents signing up to the garden waste service.								
CM22	Collection rates NNDR	2014/15	27.9%	57.3%	83%	97.7%	Year to date, cumulative	⬆️
	Corporate Priority: Being an enterprising and ambitious Council.	2015/16	28.7%	56%	83.4%			
Commentary: Business Rates collection is up by 0.4% compared to last year; this is encouraging as more businesses opted to pay by 12 instalments this year rather than 10 instalments which have had an impact on collection.								
CM23	Collection rates Council Tax	2014/15	30.2%	57.4%	85.5%	96.5%	Year to date, cumulative	⬆️
	Corporate Priority: Being an enterprising and ambitious Council.	2015/16	29.8%	56.5%	83.9%			
Commentary: Council Tax is down by 1.6%. However 0.9% of this is due to more Council Tax payers opting to pay this year by 12 months rather than 10 months which changes the collection profile from previous years. There had been a delay in actioning liability orders following court (to set up arrangements to pay and attachment of earnings/benefits and to send debts to the bailiffs) due to volumes of work and resource								

Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.

Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
issues, which has had an effect of collection rates. This work is now up to date but it will have an impact on the end of year collection rate, although performance is expected to improve on the quarter 3 difference of 1.6%.								
CM24	Sickness absence rates: The percentage of working hours lost due to sickness absence.  Corporate Priority: Being an enterprising and ambitious Council.	2014/15	3.51%	3.72%	3.83%	3.93%	Year to date, cumulative	↓
		2015/16	4.65%	4.76%	4.84%			
Commentary: This is significantly higher than quarter 3 of 2014/15. This is largely due to serious long term absence rather than increased short term absences. HR Officers are currently working with Group Managers to discuss sickness management within their groups.								
CM25	Great Yarmouth Community Housing: a) GYCH rent collection rate b) Arrears as a % of rent roll c) Arrears £ value  Corporate Priority: Being an enterprising and ambitious Council.	2014/15	a) 95.9% b) 1.42% c) £328,212	a) 98.17% b) 1.36% c) £316,060	a) 98.89% b) 1.4% c) £324,827	a) 99.55% b) 1.37% c) £317,835	Year to date, cumulative	↑
		2015/16	a) 95.21% b) 1.4% c) £333,849	a) 98.23% b) 1.25% c) £325,620	a) 99.14% b) 1.13% c) £267,586			
Commentary: Performance in rent collection has been excellent, particularly taking into account welfare reform. The team are preparing for the introduction of Universal Credit later in 2016 and further welfare reform that will produce fresh challenges.								
CM28a	Number of events (including weddings, meetings, functions) used at Town Hall  Corporate Priority: Being an enterprising and ambitious Council.	2014/15	46	63	44	190 (Year end)	Quarterly	↑
		2015/16	41	52	45			
Commentary: The number of events held during the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter is slightly up on the same period in 2014/15. By category the events between October and December 2015 were: Wedding Ceremonies 13; Conferences/Seminars 3; Business Breakfast 13; Internal events 12; Dinner								

Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.



Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
Dances 4.								
CM29	Planning applications: a) Major applications determined within 13 weeks b) Minor applications determined within 8 weeks c) Other applications determined within 8 weeks  Corporate Priority: Promoting economic growth and job creation.	2014/15	a) 50% b) 28.3% c) 31.3%	a) 62.5% b) 33% c) 44%	a) 57.1% b) 44% c) 46%	a) 62.5% b) 45% c) 54%	Year to date, cumulative	<div>→</div> <div>→</div> <div>→</div>
		2015/16	a) No applications b) 63% c) 50.9%	a) No applications b) 34.9% c) 43.7%	a) 50% b) 40.3% c) 44.9%			
Commentary: During the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter staff shortages, sickness and new IT teething problems have had an impacted upon performance. Performance has improved during the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter and the actual figure for quarter 3 for minor applications were 48.14% and 'other' applications 47.67%.								
CM31	Percentage of Land Charges search returns sent within 10 working days.  Corporate Priority: Promoting economic growth and job creation.	2014/15	97.39%	96.99%	97%	96.31%	Year to date, cumulative	<div>→</div>
		2015/16	91.15%	87.53%	90.11%			
Commentary: The small team has had teething problems with the new IT system and along with staff vacancies and sickness has had an								

Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.

Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
impact on performance throughout the year. The actual 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter outturn for this measure was 95.25%.								
CM32	Average Time to Re-let Local Authority Housing	2014/15	65 days	63 days	59 days	57 days	Year to date, cumulative	↖
	Corporate Priority: Creating and engaging with healthy, vibrant communities.	2015/16	37 days	41 days	53 days			
Commentary: 15 Long term voids were let in Quarter 3 which has led to this rise in the average void time. The number of long term void properties has significantly reduced which will lead to lower average void times from Quarter 4. We have calculated the average void times for all properties becoming void this financial year as 44 days for all voids and 42 days for minor voids. This demonstrates that the direction of travel is a reduction in void times.								
CM33	Time taken for Housing Options to match property	2014/15	30 days	25.7 days	30 days	29 days	Year to date, cumulative	↖
	Corporate Priority: Creating and engaging with healthy, vibrant communities.	2015/16	8.72 days	11 days	15 days			
Commentary: 15 Long term voids were let in Quarter 3 which has led to this rise in the average nomination time. The number of long term void properties has significantly reduced which will lead to lower average void times from Quarter 4.								
CM34	Contact centre telephone calls: Percentage of Contact Centre calls answered as a % of all calls offered	2014/15	70.81%	75.66%	74.52%	73%	Year to date, cumulative	↗
	Corporate Priority: Being an enterprising and ambitious Council	2015/16	54%	55%	60%			

Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.

Ref	Description		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Frequency	Trend
Commentary: The year to date service level performance has increased at the end of Quarter 3, but more significantly since the additional staff resource performance for Quarter 3 (October to December) has improved to 71%.								
CM35b	Building Control: The percentage of building regulation applications where a decision notice is issued within the eight week statutory period.	2014/15	New measure				Year to date, cumulative	N/A
	Corporate Priority: Promoting economic growth and job creation.	2015/16	100%	92.4%	94.5%			
Commentary: Cumulative total for the year to date is 94.5% but performance of 100% was achieved over the last Quarter								

#### Key to Trend 'Arrows'

The arrows reflect current quarter's performance trends compared to same period in 2014/15, if available.



Trend – measures current quarter's performance against performance over same period in 2014/15, if available.

## **Appendix 1 - Planning Performance**

Planning performance has declined in the past two years in part due to vacant posts, sickness and IT teething problems. A new Planning Assistant was recruited last June but returned to his old authority lured by an improved recruitment package towards the end of last year. The post remains vacant following a poor response to the advertised post. The post is to be re-advertised following further discussion with HR on the method. In terms of application numbers these have remained steady with an increase in the number of major residential applications.

It is clear that performance improves when posts are filled but in comparison to earlier years we still fall short of the higher standards achieved.

The performance figures as reported are purely based on the period of the determination 8 weeks or 13 weeks. What the figures do not reflect is the fact that on many applications, extensions of determination period have been agreed with applicants in order to reach a satisfactory outcome for an application where possible rather than refuse the application. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act and is recognised by the Government to whom we report on a quarterly basis for statistical returns.

In addition in terms of registration and validation of applications we adhere rigidly to the guidance in the Town and County Planning Management Procedures with no manipulation of time scales.

### **Speed of Decision**

Section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows certain applications to be made directly to the Secretary of State where the local planning authority for the area has been designated for this purpose.

A 'designated' authority is one which has been identified by the Secretary of State as not adequately performing their function of determining major planning applications<sup>1</sup>. As a consequence, applicants may choose to submit applications, for major development, directly to the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate.

The Government considers 'Timely and well-considered decisions on planning applications are a key part of delivering an effective planning service'. The Government in June 2013 set out two separate and independent measures against which the performance of local planning authorities would be assessed:

- 1) the speed with which applications for major development are dealt with and
- 2) the extent to which such decisions are overturned at appeal (as an indicator of the quality of the decisions made by local planning authorities)

The threshold for designation was set at 30% or fewer of an authority's decisions made within the statutory determination period (or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant); for the quality measure the threshold was set at 20% or more of an authority's decisions on applications for major development being overturned at appeal. In 2014 the threshold was raised to 40% applications determined followed by 50% last July. The % determined is over a rolling two year period.

At present we remain above those thresholds for designation on both accounts with 55.5% applications determined over 2 year period – this without applying the agreed extensions of time applied – and 100% of major application appeals dismissed. .

The challenge for us is that in February this year again to improve planning performance the Government is consulting on reducing the appeals threshold to 10% on major applications and introducing a threshold on determination of both minor and other applications. The threshold that is being proposed is failure to determine at least 60-70 per cent of applications for non-major development on time, again over a rolling two year assessment period.

In terms of appeals where authorities have had more than 10-20 per cent of their decisions on applications for non-major development overturned at appeal, they would also be a risk of designation.

Measured against these thresholds for non - major applications we would currently be at risk of designation on both accounts based on the figures as presented in the report.

At present, prior to any initial designations, the Housing and Planning Bill will need to be enacted, regulations made and the criteria for designation laid before Parliament. The earliest that the first designations would be made is therefore the final calendar quarter of 2016. Therefore it is imperative that in order to avoid designation we both improve performance in all areas and ensure that agreed extensions of time in determining applications are properly recorded and are shown in statistical returns.

## **Appendix 2 – Sickness Absence**

Absence between April to December 2015 (Quarters 1-3) is reported as 4.84% which equates to 9.77 days per full time equivalent (FTE). 17% of the absence was due to long term sickness (11 staff with over 28 days) and 83% due to short term absence. Long term sickness is normally case managed with Human Resources.

Between April to December 2015, 197 staff were absent and the main reasons for absence were:

- Stress related (non-work)
- Stomach problems
- Muscular
- Mental Health
- Colds
- Hospital appointments/tests

HR Officers continue to work with Group Managers to discuss sickness management within their groups. A report went to EMT in October 2015 with proposed changes to the Attendance & Health Policy and recommendations to better manage and reduce sickness absence. The actions listed below will help to address those issues.

### **Moving forward:**

To ensure that absence is managed in a consistent and timely manner, the following activities are scheduled to be carried out:-

- Review of the absence policy
- Training for managers on the absence policy/procedure, management of absence both long and short term
- Updating absence paperwork ensuring return to work interviews take place for each incident of absence
- Training for managers on managing change within their teams including stress management and intervention
- Regular absence information will be reported to the Group Managers and EMT