

# **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

Thursday, 12th April, 2018  
at 5.30 pm

## **PLANNING PERFORMANCE ADDITIONAL INFORMANCE**

This meeting is open to the public

### **Contacts**

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## MEMBERS' ROOM DOCUMENT

Agendas and papers are now available via the City Council's website

### 8 **PLANNING ENFORCEMENT - UPDATE** (Pages 1 - 4)

Additional information tabled at the meeting:

- Update on OSMC Recommendations
- Planning Performance

Wednesday, 4 April 2018

SERVICE DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND  
GOVERNANCE

## Overview & Scrutiny 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018 – Planning Enforcement

	Recommendation	Initial Response	Update
Planning Enforcement	1) That opportunities are identified to make it easier for members of the public to access the planning use class of residential properties in Southampton.	This will be included in the service improvement plan	Planning Advisory service (PAS) have completed a 4 day programme of support which has resulted in a Development Management Improvement Plan being developed.
	2) That the Council employs a more robust use of warning letters, especially relating to Section 215 notices, and seeks to reduce the timescales for issuing formal warnings.	Enforcement team will take a more robust approach in moving towards issuing 215 notices	Enforcement team briefed on more robust approach following the OSMC recommendations
	3) That, recognising the importance of the Planning Service to the economic performance of the city and the Council's sustainability, the Executive prioritises the Planning Service, and improving the customer experience, when considering the next stages of the Council's transformation programme / digital journey.	The changes identified in the improvement plan will be considered alongside other calls on the Transformation and Digital resources	IT issues were identified during the PAS workshops and these will be included within the improvement plan.
	4) That, reflecting the recommendation above, steps are taken to improve access to information on current planning applications for councillors and members of the public as soon as possible.	This will be included in the service improvement plan	As above.

<p>5) That the Committee are provided with Planning metrics that outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current operational performance of the Planning Service against key indicators;</li> <li>• The performance of the IT system employed by Planning.</li> </ul> <p>It is recommended that this information is also considered by the Council's Senior Management Team.</p>	<p>The committee will be provided with the information at the end of February 2018</p>	<p>Currently the metrics for performance of the IT system are not able to be extracted from the system. The Service Leads for IPD and ICT are working together as set out above to establish whether this information can be provided.</p> <p>The current operational performance is summarised on attached sheet</p>
<p>6) That Planning Enforcement returns to the OSMC agenda in approximately 6 months' time to consider the findings from the review of planning enforcement procedures and the associated improvement plan.</p>	<p>To be scheduled into the programme</p>	<p>The external review of Planning Enforcement has not yet been commissioned pending the outcome of the PAS support. Now that has concluded the Enforcement review will take place.</p>

### Planning Application Performance (Quarterly)

<b>MINOR &amp; OTHER APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>Oct - Dec 15</b>	<b>Jan - Mar 16</b>	<b>Apr - Jun 16</b>	<b>Jul - Sept 16</b>	<b>Oct - Dec 16</b>	<b>Jan - Mar 17</b>	<b>Apr - June 17</b>	<b>Jul - Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct-Dec 17</b>	<b>Jan- Mar 18</b>
	82%	76%	76%	56%	42%	31%	20%	20%	32%	78%
<b>MAJOR APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>Oct - Dec 15</b>	<b>Jan - Mar 16</b>	<b>Apr - Jun 16</b>	<b>Jul - Sept 16</b>	<b>Oct - Dec 16</b>	<b>Jan - Mar 17</b>	<b>Apr - June 17</b>	<b>Jul - Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct-Dec 17</b>	<b>Jan- Mar 18</b>
	85%	84%	89%	93%	45%	45%	50%	46%	86%	83%

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government monitor local planning authorities performance in determining planning applications. The criteria are that 60% of major applications and 70% of minor and other applications need to be determined within designated timescales.

Southampton City Council has over the last few years consistently achieved high performance figures well in excess of these targets, and in summer 2016 we hosted a visit from Cabinet Office which concluded that, at that time, our model for planning performance was exemplary.

However, our performance on minor and other applications dipped significantly in the summer of 2016, when we lost a significant number of staff (6 FTE's). At the time there was a recruitment freeze, there were difficulties in attracting the right calibre of agency staff to cover these posts temporarily and there were issues with the implementation of the Digital Transformation programme in the planning service area. As a result it became difficult to maintain performance of minor and other applications since that time.

Our performance has improved enormously – from just under 20% in the April - June 2017 quarter to 77.73% in the most recent quarter from January – March 2018. This improvement to well above the target has led to the Secretary of State confirming that he will not be designating the Council for poor performance on minor and other planning applications. The latest quarter's (January – March 2018) performance for major applications was 83.33%, which is well above the 60% target.

Between February and March 2018 the Planning Advisory Service has undertaken a 4 day support programme with the Planning team and this has led to the service developing a detailed Development Management Service Improvement Plan. Accompanying this is a detailed IT Improvement Plan, both of which are now being implemented.

Furthermore the recently introduced 20% planning fee increase is being re-invested to create additional posts within the Development Management team. An additional Planning Enforcement Officer post is also being recruited. These posts will provide additional resource and resilience to ensure that our performance continues to be above government targets.

Sam Fox

Service Lead – Infrastructure, Planning & Development

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