

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMITTEE

Agenda Item	7
Report No	PDI 28/15

3 JUNE 2015

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Report by Director of Planning and Development

Summary

This report provides an update on performance against the actions set out within the Planning Service Improvement Plan. This report also advises Members on the delivery of the Development Management, Building Standards and the Development Plan services for the last Quarter of 2014/2015.

1. Introduction

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

2. Planning Performance Framework - Service Improvement Plan (SIP)

2.1 As Members will be aware, a number of service improvements were identified last year within the Planning Performance Framework submitted to Scottish Government. Progress on these over the course of 2014/15 was good, and a number of key improvements delivered:

- a process for involving Members in providing input to pre-application advice for major developments was established and training carried out;
- our social media presence was enhanced with more regular updates provided through Twitter and Facebook;
- a community Council survey was carried out and a newsletter prepared for Community Councils on planning matters;
- a full range of training was provided to teams covering a whole range of different topics identified through the Employee Review and Development process;
- a hosted managed service for UNIFORM and the Document Management System was put in place;
- benchmarking meetings were held with other rural planning authorities to discuss performance and other improvement issues; and
- a new system for carrying out Local Development Plan Consultations was put in place, which will deliver time savings.

2.2 The Scottish Government expects this year's Planning Performance Framework to be submitted by the end of July 2015. On that basis a number of service improvements have been identified for the year ahead. Members are asked to agree the key priorities for the year ahead, as follows:

- implement new mobile working arrangements through the eDevelopment project;
- review restoration bond arrangements for minerals and other developments and ensure that procedures are fit for purpose;
- deliver e-templates for delegated reports and decision notices;
- put in place a Project Board for the delivery of Development Plans and associated documents; and
- deliver a programme of targeted training and career development events.

3. Development Management

3.1 The Uniform System was successfully moved to a managed hosted service arrangement with IDOX. This has resulted in the most up-to-date software version, and additional storage capacity, the new functionality was delivered on time and without significant issues. The Systems Support Team in Development and Infrastructure, and the project manager from Corporate Development deserve huge credit for the successful delivery of the project.

3.2 Performance was generally good during Q4, with the pre-application service continuing to operate well (see **Appendix 1**). Average times continue to compare well with the annual targets, except for major planning applications, which given their complexity tend to take longer. That said, all three major planning applications last quarter were accompanied by a Processing Agreement, and all three met the timescale specified within them.

3.3 The implementation of the new IDOX system did impact slightly on performance towards the end of the quarter, given the training and testing that was required by all of the team. However, the annual target of dealing with 63% of all planning applications within 2 months was met (see **Appendix 2**).

4. Building Standards

4.1 The total number of building warrant applications received during Q4 was 741. This is 11 (1.5%) more applications when compared to Q3, but, 12 (1.6%) fewer when compared to Q4 last year. The number of building warrant applications determined during Q4 was 606.

4.2 The number of completion certificates accepted during Q4 was 623; this is 6% more when compared to Q4 last year. The value of work submitted for building warrants during Q4 was £30m; this is £62m (60%) less when compared to Q3, and £39m (56%) less than when compared to Q4 last year.

4.3 Performance for responding to an application for a building warrant (KPI1) fell to 75% during Q4 (see **Appendix 3**). The target for KPI1 is 85%. Other KPIs remain above target level (85%)

- 4.4 Building Warrant fee income for Q4 was £421k. This represents a 2% (£10k) drop in fee income when compared to last quarter; and a 24% (£132k) drop when compared to last year. Last year's fee income was unusually high due to a number of major school projects being submitted.
- 4.5 There were 7 new applications received in Q4 where the value of the proposed work was in excess of £1m. The type of work varies, from erecting warehousing for whisky storage (2 applications), a new Police Station in Aness, construction of flatted developments (2 applications), a car showroom, and the refurbishment and extension to a Children's Ward at Raigmore Hospital. This is in addition to 6 other applications to amend work where the value exceeds £1m.
- 4.6 The biggest challenge for the Council and the Building Standards team for 2015 and 2016 is preparing for e-building standards, expected to launch in June 2016. This will see the biggest and most significant change to the way customers and the Council interact. We anticipate building standards will see in excess of 60% of applications being submitted in electronic form. E-building standards can also realise savings in efficiency and costs.

4. Development Plans

- 4.1 The Examination Report for the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan was received in late Q4, and the modifications required will be reported to Full Council in June to be included in the final adopted Plan. The Examination Report has favoured the Council's position in a number of cases, with only a handful of sites to be removed or new sites added.
- 4.2 Final consultation events were held for the Main Issues Report for the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan), and the consultation closed in February with comments now being considered. There was a good response to the Call for Sites exercise for the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan with details of 250 sites received, and numerous comments on a new vision for the area.
- 4.3 Good progress is being made in preparing options and evidence for the new Highland-wide Local Development Plan, to be discussed with Members in May.
- 4.4 Draft Town Centre Action Plans were published for Tain, Nairn, and Fort William, with community workshops held in each town as part of the consultation process. The final Action Plans will be presented to Local Area Committees later in the year. Significant progress was made in bringing together disparate groups agreeing the priorities for their town centres, and enabling communities to play a proactive role in seeking funding opportunities for proposals.

5. Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct resource, legal, equality, Climate Change/Carbon Clever, Gaelic, rural, or risk implications arising from this report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- note the progress made against the Service Improvement Plan actions, and the performance updates for the Development Management, Building Standards and the Development Plans teams; and
- agree the service improvement priorities for the year ahead.

Designation: Director of Development & Infrastructure

Author: Malcolm Macleod, Head of Planning and Building Standards (Ext: 2506)

Date: 20 May 2015

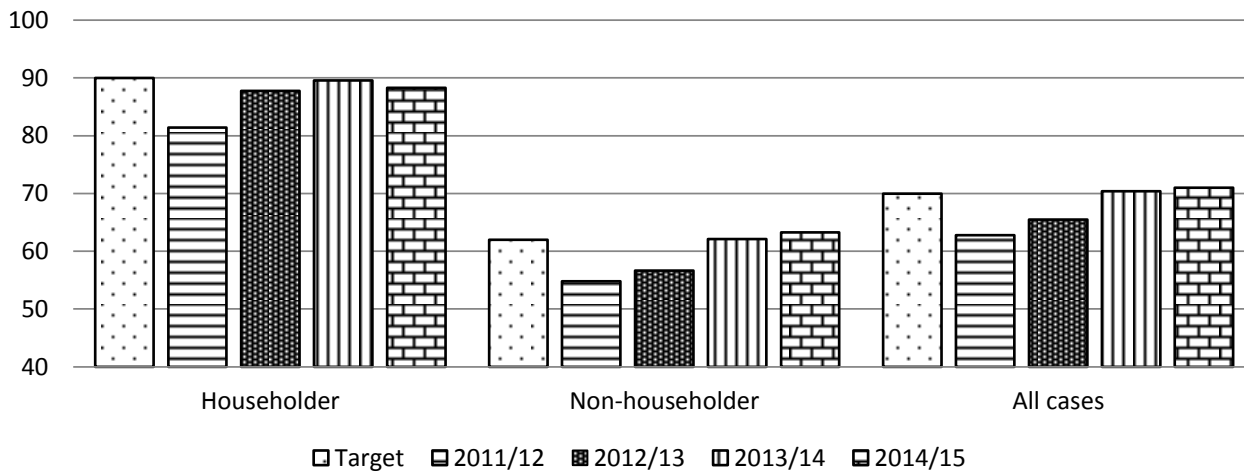
**Appendix 1
Performance Statistics**

**Highland
Quarter 4 2014/15**

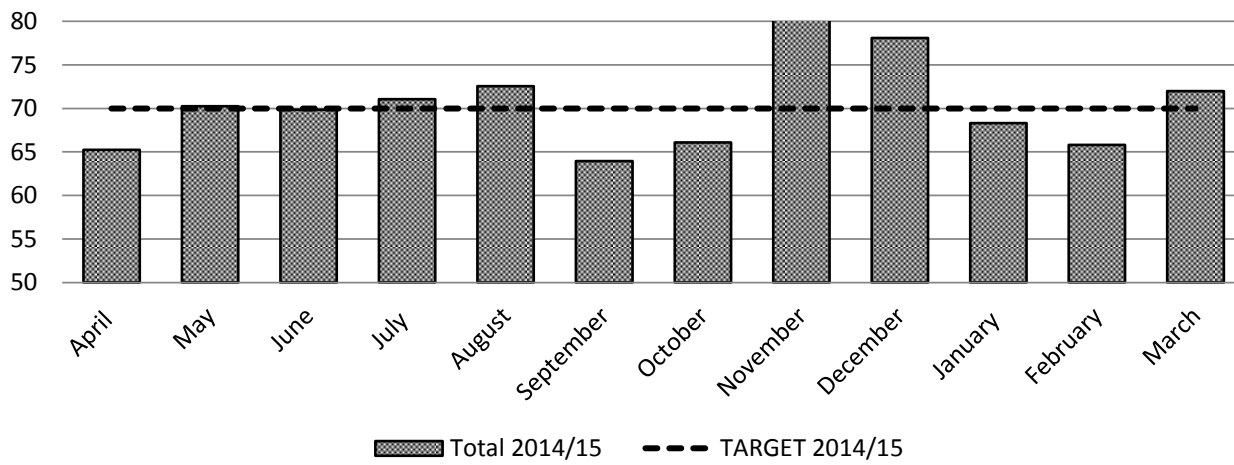
Planning Applications			
Category	Total Number of Decisions	% Within Agreed Timescales	
Processing Agreements	3	100.0%	
Major Applications	3	100.0%	
Local Applications			
EIA developments			
Other Applications			
	Total Number of Decisions	% within timescales*	Average Time (Weeks)
All Major Developments	3	33.3%	39.6
All Local Developments	481		10.8
Local: less than 2 months	336	69.8%	
Local: more than 2 months	145	30.2%	
Local developments (non-householder)	328		11.9
Local: less than 2 months	198	60.4%	
Local: more than 2 months	130	39.6%	
Local developments (householder)	153		6.5
Local: less than 2 months	138	90.2%	
Local: more than 2 months	15	9.1%	
Other Consents	45		10.4
Other : Less than 2 months	26	57.8%	
Enforcement Activity			
	Number		
Cases Taken Up	21		
Notices Served	12		
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0		
Prosecutions	0		
Pre-Application Advice			
Major Packs within 4 weeks	100.0%		
Local Packs within 6 weeks	77.0%		

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

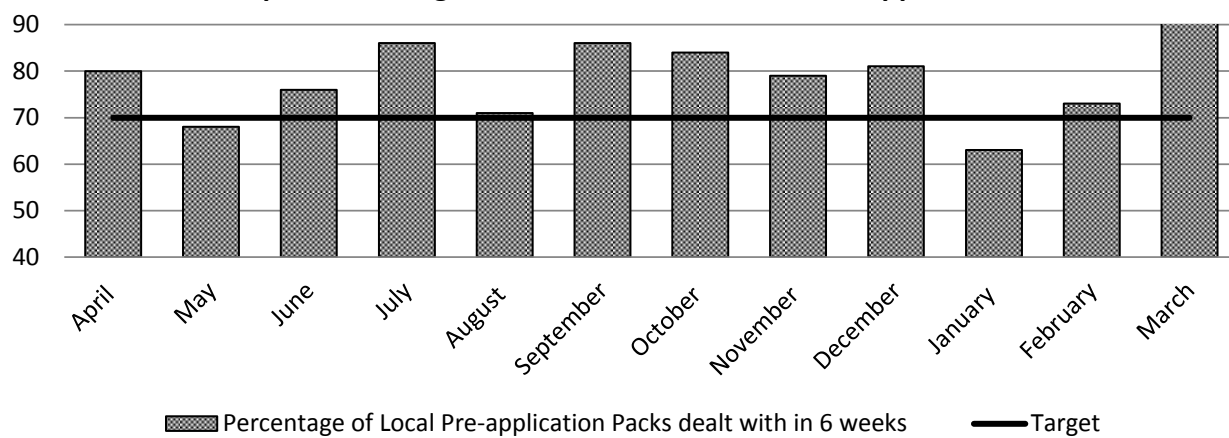
Development Management Performance - % of local planning applications dealt with in 2 months (Year to Date)



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



Development Management Performance - Local Pre-application



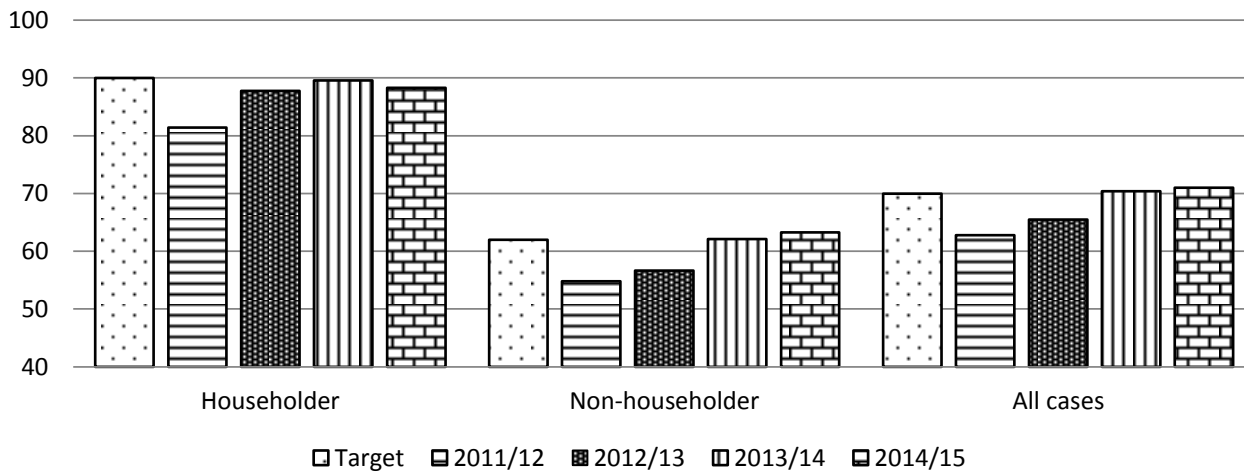
**Appendix 2
Performance Statistics**

**Highland
2014/15**

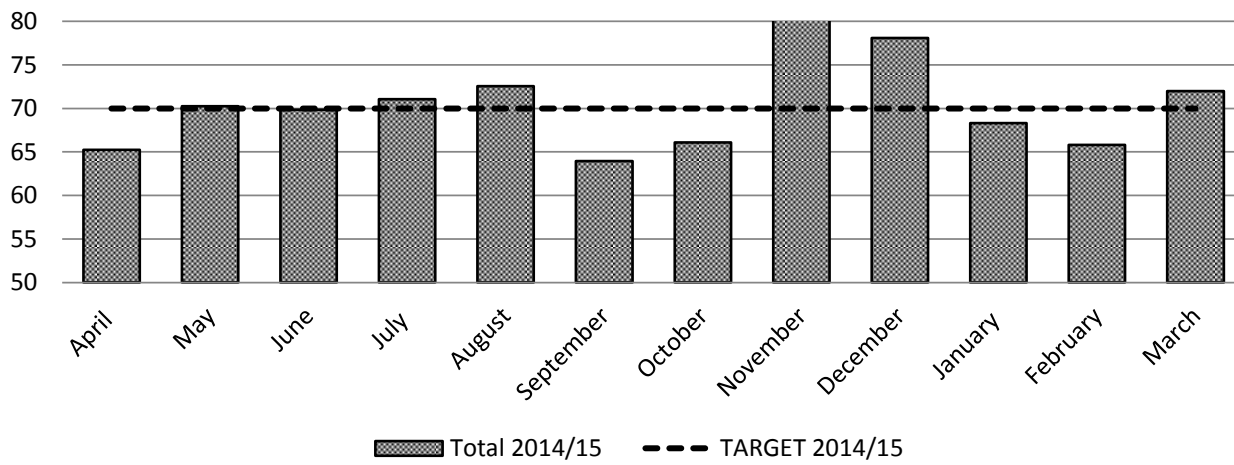
Planning Applications			
Category	Total Number of Decisions	% Within Agreed Timescales	
Processing Agreements	15	87.0%	
Major Applications	15	87.0%	
Local Applications			
EIA developments			
Other Applications			
	Total Number of Decisions	% within timescales*	Average Time (Weeks)
All Major Developments	21	33.3%	35.5
All Local Developments	2,296		10.3
Local: less than 2 months	1,631	71.0%	
Local: more than 2 months	665	29.0%	
Local developments (non-householder)	1,587		11.9
Local: less than 2 months	1,005	63.3%	
Local: more than 2 months	582	36.7%	
Local developments (householder)	709		6.5
Local: less than 2 months	626	88.3%	
Local: more than 2 months	83	11.7%	
Other Consents	244		9.9
Other : Less than 2 months	160	65.6%	
Enforcement Activity			
	Number		
Cases Taken Up	289		
Notices Served	68		
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0		
Prosecutions	0		
Pre-Application Advice			
Major Packs within 4 weeks	100.0%		
Local Packs within 6 weeks	78.0%		

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

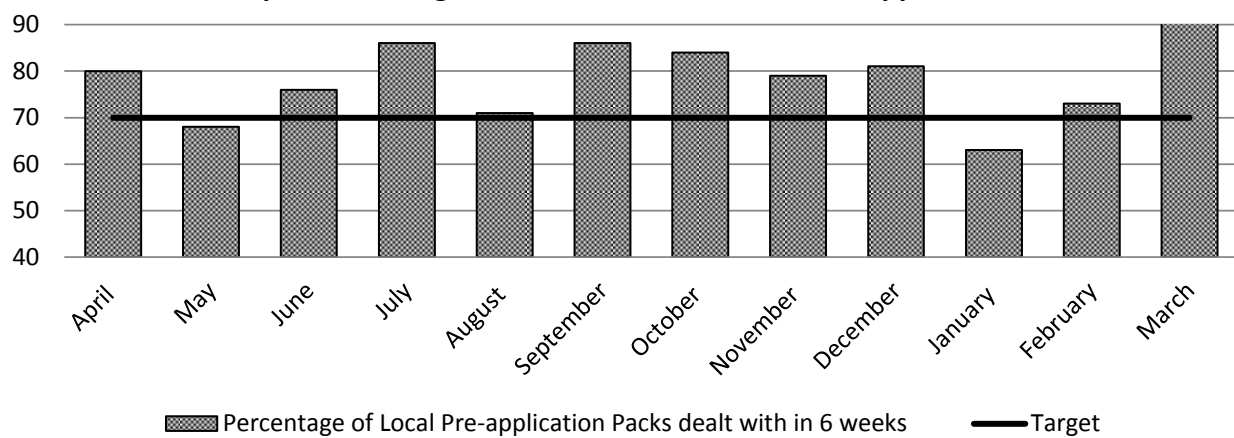
Development Management Performance - % of local planning applications dealt with in 2 months (Year to Date)



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

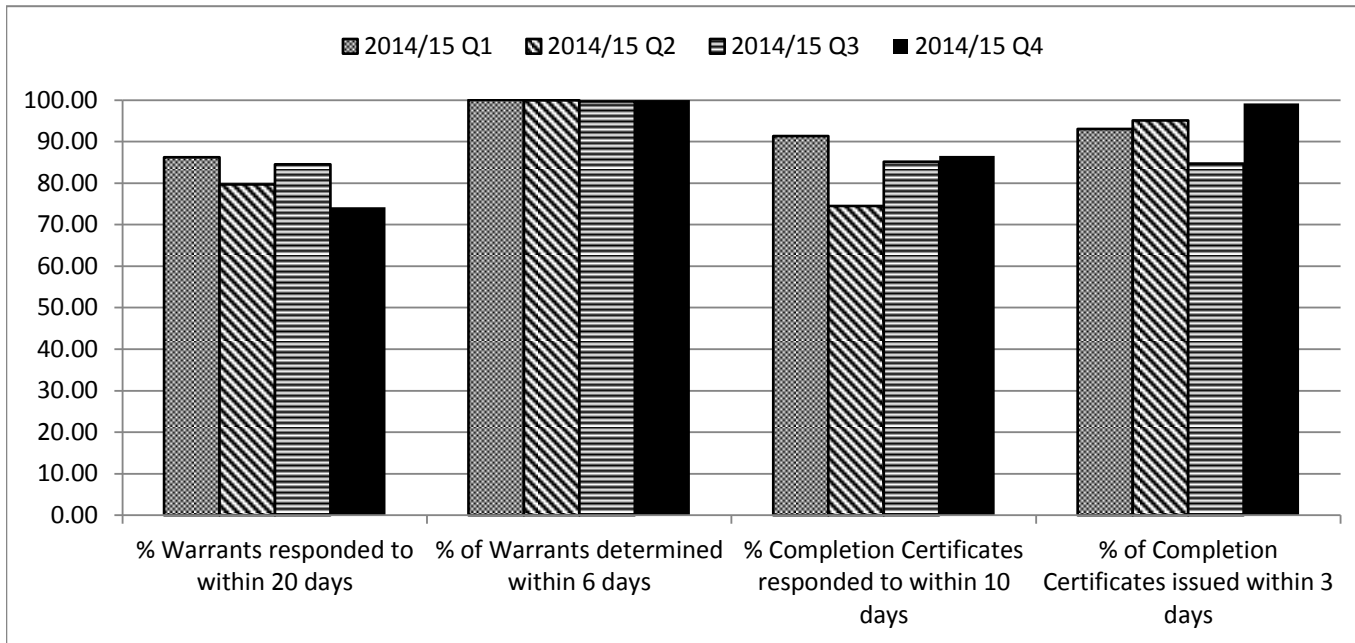


Development Management Performance - Local Pre-application



Appendix 3
Building Standards Performance 2014/15 Quarter 4

	% 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
2014/15 Q1	86.22	100.00	91.32	93.00	85
2014/15 Q2	79.70	99.90	74.50	95.10	85
2014/15 Q3	84.50	99.70	85.10	84.70	85
2014/15 Q4	74.17	100.00	86.60	99.20	85



Building Standards Volumes and Income (Last 4 Quarters)

	2014/15 Q1	2014/15 Q2	2014/15 Q3	2014/15 Q4
Warrants Decided	669	693	763	606
Compl. Certs	717	707	671	623
Income (£000)	630	585	392	421