

Report of Planning Development Manager

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Development Management Performance

Recommendation to Planning Committee

To note the performance of Development Management for 2018 (calendar year).

Reason for recommendation:

To allow Councillors of the Planning Committee to be informed of the performance of our Development Management team.

1. Introduction

1.1 In agreement with our Portfolio Holder and both the Director for Planning and Regeneration and the Planning Development Manager it was felt opportune to provide an overview/report on performance for Development Management for the whole of 2018. The report will advise on:

- Workloads across Development Management
- Development Management statistics, performance & appeals data
- KPMG audit review of Development Management and Section 106 agreements
- Criteria for designating a planning authority for poor performance (2017/2018)
- Validation of work by the Development Management Support Team (DMST)
- Planning Enforcement
- Implications of the new local plan moving towards adoption in 2019
- Future improvements for 2019 and beyond and noteworthy matters from 2018

1.2 The statistics will cover 2018. The last time a report was taken to Planning Committee was on 3 January 2018.

2. Strategic Framework

2.1 In respect of our Corporate Plan, this report ties in with the fundamental theme of 'Developing our Council'.

3. Main considerations

Workloads across Development Management

3.1 To provide the context for performance, it is considered helpful to detail the broad work that the two Development Management teams undertake throughout the year. It is an obvious point but officer's process much more than just planning applications.

- 3.2 Other work includes processing prior approval applications, tree applications, non-material amendments and discharge of conditions. As to general letters these are broken down into two categories, the first being general enquiries that attract no fee, and then paid pre application advice. Officers also deal with a significant quantity of FOI requests, Environmental Information requests and Subject Access requests. It was particularly pleasing to note that in 2018 we were the only service to attain a 100% response rate within time for FOI responses.
- 3.3 In terms of the statistics tabled below it is worth noting that our overall numbers of applications received remain similar to the last two years, albeit slightly down on past years. A further noticeable difference is the amount of major applications we have received this year, which is down from previous years. We maintain this is primarily due to uncertainty over local plan progress. What is also noticeable is that pre application advice submissions remain high for us and in particular advice around 'majors' pre app. It is likely that we will see an increase in major application submissions and fee income as we move towards the adoption of the new local plan and certainty of sites comes forward.
- 3.4 Our complaints remain at a very similar level to last year, with the majority not upheld

Development Management Statistics, performance and appeal data

Calendar year (2018)	(1/01/18 to 10/12/18)
Planning applications	2195 (including 52 majors)
Prior approval applications	142
Discharge of condition	328
Non material amendments	145
Trees	321
General enquiries (officers)	316
Paid pre app advice	521
FOI requests	75
EIA screening & scoping	7
Formal Complaints	30

- 3.5 The Government sets targets for the processing of planning applications within a set timescale. These timescales are 13 weeks for majors and are 8 weeks for minors and other applications. Exceptions to this are EIA applications, which have 16 weeks.

Definitions

- Major applications
- 10 or more dwellings
 - +1000m2 floor space
 - +1ha site area

- Minor applications
 - 1-9 dwellings
 - up to 1000 m2 floor space
 - up to 1ha site area
- Other applications
 - Householder
 - Listed building consents
 - Advertisements
 - Change of use

3.6 The government sets national targets for determination of applications with significant emphasis on major applications. The national targets for determination are-

Major applications	60% (within 13 weeks)
Minor applications	65% (within 8 weeks)
Householders and others	80% (within 8 weeks)

3.7 The Development Management team report these statistics to government on a quarterly basis

3.8 Our performance is as follows for 2018:

2018 (01 January 2018 to 31 December 2018)

Major applications	98% (Including extensions of time)
Minor applications	94% (Including extensions of time)
Householder and others	88% (including extensions of time)

3.9 It is also worth comparing our performance with the previous three years to demonstrate how much progress has been made.

2017 (01 January 2017 to 31 December 2017)

Majors	96%	(Including extensions of time)
Minors	91%	(Including extensions of time)
Householders and others	91%	(Including extensions of time)

2016 (01 January 2016 to 31 December 2016)

Majors	94%	(Including extensions of time)
Minors	88%	(Including extensions of time)
Householders and others	85%	(Including extensions of time)

2015 (01 January 2015 to 31 December 2015)

Majors	88%	(Including extensions of time)
Minors	77%	(Including extensions of time)
Householders and others	74%	(Including extensions of time)

- 3.10 Officers across DM should be congratulated for these performance figures for 2018 and all their hard work. Our overall performance for 2018 is very similar to 2017. Householders and others performance is slightly down on where we were at the end of 2017. This is because the team had to cope with staff changes, primarily cover for maternity leave and getting new members of staff familiar with our processes.
- 3.11 Development Management remains increasing complex, with officers needing to balance a number of, sometimes, competing policy requirements. The NPPF was revised in July 2018, Neighbourhood Plans continue to be adopted and the Emerging Local Plan is now at an advanced stage therefore reports need to balance all these issues when reaching a decision.
- 3.12 There has been a significant shift in practices with the Regulations around the use of prior to commencement conditions now requiring developer agreement. As a result, our use of conditions has been reviewed to reduce the burden in line with Government requirements and also bring forward the point that conditions are drafted to ensure we can seek agreement where necessary. So far, this has been positive and we see it continuing this coming year.
- 3.13 As a result of European Court of Justice case we have had to adapt our approach to applications where there may be an impact on the Special Protection Areas. Case law has now established that all such applications require an Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken before they can be approved. We have introduced procedures alongside colleagues in policy and Natural England to have a streamlined consultation process. Again, this seems to be working well and has had a positive effect in bringing forward the point when our legal team are instructed to prepare a Section 106 agreement. This reduces delays in determining an application.
- 3.14 Changes in Government legislation have also seen the introduction in Permissions in Principle (PiP). We have received our first one at the start of the new year. The Government intends for these types of applications to be a form of a streamlined 'outline' permission. The LPA can only consider in principle issues and conditions/planning obligations cannot be imposed on these types of applications. We also only have five weeks to process with a reduced consultation deadline of 14 days as opposed to 21 days.
- 3.15 Within the statutory performance targets we are also working hard to improve the application process for customers. Moving forward the decision making point on smaller applications reduces costs and speeds up decision making all round. This also increases capacity across the team which will be important as the local plan moves forward and we see an expected increase in larger, more complex applications.
- 3.16 Priorities for us over the coming year include greater electronic working, especially at the sign off stages and decision making. If done correctly this could bring about significant efficiencies and savings.
- 3.17 We remain incredibly robust currently when it comes to staff resourcing in Development Management. It is recognised that there is a shortage of planners in the market place and on the whole we have had good retention rates for 12-18 months now. This assists performance and consistency of performance considerably.

- 3.18 It is also worth noting that our Arboriculturalist determined 321 tree applications throughout 2018, with 213 of those being in conservation areas (and time sensitive) and the remaining 108 being tree preservation order submissions. I am pleased to report that we determined 100% of the 6-week conservation applications within the allotted timescales and 94% of the TPO submissions within the 8-week time scales. The Tree Preservation applications are not time sensitive and the reason a small percentage go over is because often our Arboriculturalist will look to seek a compromise if the works are too excessive or unnecessary rather than refuse a submission and possibly end up in an appeal situation.

Appeals data

- 3.19 In terms of the number of appeals received up to 31 December 2018, this was 128 total appeals, with 115 of these being written reps appeals, 11 hearings and 2 public inquiries, one of which is an enforcement appeal. The first public Inquiry is non-determination of an application at 1-5 The Quadrant and the Casino nightclub, Onslow Street, Guildford for a 14 storey building comprising mixed uses and the second is Lynwood Nursery, Westwood Lane, Normandy.
- 3.20 In respect of decisions received in 2018 (up to 10/12/18) these are as follows: -
- Number of appeal decisions = 136
 - Number of appeals dismissed = 65
 - Number of appeals allowed = 57
 - Number of appeals withdrawn = 7
 - No further action = 2
 - Mixed appeal decisions = 5
- The percentage of appeals dismissed = 51%.
- 3.21 These figures for 2018 are very disappointing when compared to the 2016 & 2017. Senior managers have scrutinised the appeals that have been allowed and it is very apparent that the bar for maintaining a refusal on an application is now extremely high. This is across the board, both in rural areas and in urban areas. Inspectors seem to be more flexible in the way they approach percentage uplift; very special circumstances and more liberal in interpretation of policy, particularly when it comes to character arguments.
- 3.22 Officers have been scrutinising refusal very carefully for a large percentage of 2018 and we hope that there will be an adjustment and reflection of in appeal decisions in the middle to latter part of 2019. We have also noted that the number of applications we are approving has steadily increased towards where we should be, as it was noticeable that compared to national trends we have been refusing too many applications.

- 3.23 There have been a handful of appeals that officers have been particularly unhappy with and these have either been explored for potential challenge or we have written to the quality assurance unit of the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol. Officers are also scrutinising decisions for any particular patterns where we may need to adapt our approach on specific issues.

Cost awards in Planning appeals

- 3.24 There have been a number of costs awards both for and against the Council between 2017- 2018. The very nature of these matters means that in terms of actual costs agreed they can take a great deal of time to resolve and agree a final figure.

Against the Council

One Finglebridge Cottage, Woking Road, Jacobs Well – Erection of an outbuilding – written reps - partial award of costs

Send Hill Farm, Send – challenging conditions imposed on outline permission – written reps - partial award of costs

Manor Farm – Gleasons – outline application for 254 units – Public Inquiry - partial award of costs

Cut Mill House, Suffield Lane, Puttenham – Extension – written reps - full award of costs

For the Council

Woodruffe, Wyke Lane, Ash – 6 two beds – withdrawn – written reps - partial award of costs

Mountain Wood Farm, Green Dene, West Horsley – change of use from storage to mixed use building – withdrawn – written reps - partial award of costs

Ash Manor – residential development (95 units) - withdrawal of appeal late – Public Inquiry - partial award of costs

KPMG audit review of Development Management and Section 106 agreements

- 3.25 As the service approached the autumn in 2018 we were notified that the team had been earmarked for two comprehensive internal audits as part of a significant audit process across the whole Council. The first was on the Development Management processes and the second one on the section 106 processes. Both audits lasted two weeks each, including sample work, talking to many members of staff and scrutinising our practices and processes.
- 3.26 I am glad to report that both audits recommend KPMG's second highest rating 'amber green'. In terms of the DM audit, their team had the following comments:
- "We reviewed the operation of the Development Management department and provide **significant assurance with minor improvement opportunities (AMBER-GREEN)**. This is in line with management's expectations.

- The Council operates an effective and well-structured Development Management department. The department is split into two teams, validation and assessment, allowing the officers in each to become specialised in their areas of the process. Controls have been embedded into processes, and the whole system is governed by the development management software, Acolaid.
- The validation process has been streamlined through use of a validation checklist and a detailed geographic information system (GIS) which allows staff to identify neighbours and consultees based on the location of the site.
- Review of the validation process identified a risk of inconsistency in how applications are validated, which may have a knock-on effect on whether applications are assessed in a fair and consistent way. The validation checklist does not include the local validation list requirements imposed by the Council (which themselves depend on the nature of the application), and inquiries identified that not all staff are aware of what the local validation lists required. Consultation requirements, whilst easily identified via GIS, are dependent on staff training to understand how the flags raised become consultations. There is little guidance given to staff how to do this.
- The assessment process reflects areas of best practice, including an aim to allocate staff to assess planning applications consistent with the lifetime of the site. This helps to drive consistency of assessments when an applicant may submit multiple, revised applications over time.
- The Council has not properly retained internal authorisations to support time extensions. Whilst there is an audit trail of the mandatory agreement with the applicant or agent, the Council is unable to provide the internal sign-off, which is required before activating an extension on Acolaid. This prevents the Council from being able to ensure that this process, which is highly restricted, is appropriately used.
- We identified data quality issues with respect to appeals. Whilst appeals are heard by the Planning Inspectorate, it is necessary for the Council to make returns to the Inspectorate by specified deadlines to be successful.
- We saw on a number of occasions that this information was not recorded, preventing use of the workflow module in Acolaid. We also saw, on a number of occasions, that the decision was incorrectly recorded or conditions were omitted, which results in internal reporting being inaccurate.
- There is robust reporting produced by the Development Management department. Key performance indicators (KPIs) have been defined for most of its operations, with the key omissions being around the performance of the validation team, and compliance with the Government's performance targets on appeals. The methodology followed to produce the monthly report is onerous which increases the risk of figures being inaccurate, however the distribution of the report is appropriate and in line with best practice."

3.27 "In terms of the more recently completed section 106 audit, the audit team had the following conclusions and comments:

- We reviewed the operation of Section 106 funding arrangements at Guildford Borough Council (“the Council”) and provide an assurance opinion of **significant assurance with minor improvement opportunities (AMBER-GREEN)**. This is in line with management’s expectations.
- The Council has an established process for producing new Section 106 agreements, monitoring payment of contributions, and spending monies received. In producing a new agreement, there is a clear trail to support why the contribution was raised, and use of the Geographic Information System (GIS) makes it quick and straightforward to identify Special Protection Area (SPA) contributions. These form the majority of the Council’s Section 106 agreements.
- There is effective communication of agreements to the Council’s legal function, which has controls to ensure that agreements are finalised in an efficient and cost-effective manner. We noted segregation of duties for approving the agreements prior to issuing to the developer, in line with industry practice.
- We did note weaknesses in some of the communications between teams involved in the Section 106 agreement process;
- Agreements are monitored via Acolaid, which reminds the Section 106 Officer to assess whether triggers have been reached or payments are due. Officers advised that developers often do not notify the Council on a timely basis that commencement triggers are reached. Whilst the Section 106 Officer does review building control and land charges records, we noted that the process of chasing agreements is not focused on those where the application is close to expiry, which would be the ones at highest risk of having commenced. The Section 106 Officer does, however, follow up all un-commenced developments. The Council has appropriate controls over the release funds and ensures that funds are released to contribute to costs in line with that set out in the Section 106 deed. The Council maintains separate records of funds billed and funds received in order to mitigate against system weaknesses. The Council does not reconcile the two, generating a risk that spend decisions will be made based on inaccurate information, although all agreements in our sample reconciled correctly.
- There is limited internal reporting of Section 106 transactions or ongoing monitoring of the service. There is no ongoing monitoring to ensure that it is being complied with or that contributions are being collected and spent, and at present there is no specific reporting to, or oversight from any of the Council’s committees. Whilst this does not at present impair the day to day operation of the service, as performance is not reported, decision makers would be unable to promptly understand and take action on issues.”

Criteria for designating a planning authority for poor performance (2017/2018)

- 3.28 In August 2017, the Department for Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published some Experimental Statistics on the Quality performance measure for major and non-major applications for the period of July 2014 to June 2016.

- 3.29 This is in preparation for the process of potential designation of Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) that are losing more than 10% of all major applications (district & county matters separately) received at appeal or 10% of all non-major applications received at appeal over a two year period.
- 3.30 The performance of LPA's in determining major and non-major development will be assessed separately, meaning that an authority could be designated on the basis of its performance in determining applications for major development, applications for non-major development, or both.
- 3.31 The second two-year period of performance that MHCLG designated was April 2016 to March 2018. With appeal data there is a delay period of 9 months to allow appeals to be processed. This means that MHCLG approached LPAs in December 2018 to complete data sets and potentially designation in early 2019. The process of designation of LPAs by the Secretary of State (SoS) allows authorities with performance above the desired target (10% for quality) to make a case of why performance has been low and show that the necessary changes have occurred to improve present and future performance. If the case is evidenced then the SoS will not designate LPAs.
- 3.32 The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) have been in touch with the planning office and very much want to work with us to improve the 'Majors' appeal statistic. Having shared the most up to date figures with them, they have accepted that we have improved and there has been no further contact over this element, although we have had a recent approach about training for Councillors. It is worth pointing out that it is major applications appeals that pose the highest risk here, due to the relative small number that we deal with year in year out and currently.
- 3.33 Designated authorities have to give applicants the opportunity for PINS to undertake decisions on applications in their area – they are not taken by the LPA. It should be noted that DCLG would still expect LPA's to determine non-major development, householder applications and retrospective applications even if designated a standards authority.
- 3.34 To allow authorities as early an understanding of if they are likely to be close or over the quality performance level of 10% or more appeal losses, PAS have been unpicking the data available and seeing who might be close to designation. The data that PAS have will be used in conjunction with our own data so that ahead of December when MHCLG starts to formerly approach LPAs we will already fully understand our position.
- 3.35 With this in mind we can get ahead of any issues, embed changes and start to show improved performance if required to hopefully avoid being designated.

Methods of measuring LPA's potentially to be designated as Standards Authorities

- 3.36 As per the last performance report it is worth setting out the measuring criteria for assessing LPA's . These are:
- The speed of determining applications for major development
 - The quality of decisions made by the authority on applications for major developments;
 - The speed of determining applications for non-major development;

- The quality of decisions made by the authority on applications for non-major development

The Thresholds

- 3.37 The thresholds or minimum standards coming in to place in 2018 for which a LPA is at risk of designation are:
- a) **For applications for major development: less than 60 per cent of an authorities decisions** made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant;
- b) **For applications for non-major development: less than 70 per cent of an authorities decisions made** within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant.
- 3.38 The **threshold** for designation on applications for both major and non-major development, above which a local planning authority is eligible for designation, is **10 per cent** of an authority's total number of decisions on applications (not simply on the number of appeals) made during the assessment period being overturned at appeal. We will not assess local authorities' performance on the quality of their decisions on either major or non-major applications in 2017 but the threshold will apply from the 2018 designation round."

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- 3.39 Members will recall that when we last reported on performance in January 2018, there was some concern around major appeal decisions as we were on the 10% threshold, which soon after the report and some outstanding appeal decisions then exceeded the 10% threshold for acceptability at 13.3%.
- 3.40 I am glad to report that when running the most recent two years figures to be looked at (which is April 2016 to March 2018), the figures are much improved. Out of 122 appeals (just criteria appeals – major/minor); during this period, 45 were refused, resulting in 14 planning appeals. Of those appeals, seven were dismissed and seven were allowed. The figure for majors has dropped to 5.74%. In respect of non-majors we are in a very similar position to where we were when we last reported, we are currently at 1.98% with 4 appeal decisions pending. It is something that we are going to have to keep a careful eye on moving forward but for the time being we are out of the danger zone.

Validation of work by the Development Management Support Team (DMST)

- 3.41 2018 has seen our validation remain consistent and within very reasonable turnaround times. Our Development Management Support Team validate the majority of applications within 3-5 working days and often reduce this time to 1-2 working days if volumes decrease. We are usually working on 25-40 applications at any one time but again this remains under control by careful allocation of resources.

- 3.42 Our consistency in validation times has been aided by high levels of staff retention within the admin team and a positive approach where the team work quickly to engage with applicants and agents to resolve any issues. We are always looking to improve the way we process applications and to that end we revising our neighbour notification procedures and utilising greater automation of the consultation process to reduce errors.
- 3.43 2018 has seen a noticeable reduction in invalid applications, partly due to most fees being paid on submission but also through work by the admin team to make it clear what is expected to validate an application. We make good use of our Local Validation List that will be refreshed this spring in order to comply with the need to review it every two years. Any invalid applications are followed up on regularly with the aim to validate them as soon as possible. Our regular agents forums give us direct contact with our most frequent submitters of applications so that we can pass on important information and address any concerns they may have.
- 3.44 We have worked to steadily improve our efficiency in how we validate applications and through electronic working; we have made great progress in this area. We use electronic workflow to monitor all applications requiring input from the admin group and we now scan all documents on receipt. This makes publication for public viewing instant once an application is validated and we are working to further develop automated processes to make efficiency savings and improve our performance further.

Planning Enforcement

- 3.45 Planning enforcement had a very busy year in 2018. The statistics for the team are as follows:

Statistics for 2018 (1 January 2018 – 31 December 2018)

Number of cases received	460 cases
Number of notices served (excluding PCN)	11 notices
Number of breaches resolved without the need for formal action	468 cases
Number of unresolved breaches outstanding	220 cases
Number of enforcement appeals received in stated period	9 appeals

- 3.46 The Enforcement Team processes a significant amount of work each year, with cases split between high, medium and low priority cases in accordance with the adopted Local Enforcement Plan. It remains a high profile part of the Planning and Regeneration service. In 2018, the temporary officer assisting the Enforcement Team moved out of the team and became our new Compliance Officer within the Major Development Team. This was a loss of a resource within the Enforcement Team but, nonetheless, the Team remained focussed on moving forward cases and overall case numbers have stayed close to 200, which is positive news. We have made progress in terms of reducing the number of open historic cases and we continue with this as we enter 2019.

- 3.47 An external review of the Planning Enforcement service was conducted in the early part of 2018 and in April 2018 we received the report from this independent review. The Consultant's findings were that the Council demonstrates much good practice, which is to be commended. Nonetheless, the report noted there were improvements needed for the team to be a fully effective, proactive service and as such 53 recommendations were made which covered matters such as customer communication, corporate working and performance management. These recommendations have been considered and the majority have now been implemented or are in the process of being implemented.
- 3.48 A successful Parish Forum meeting was held in October 2018, attended by a number of Parish Councils, and this will become a recurring event in the calendar as we move forward.
- 3.49 In 2019 it is felt that the Team, under strong leadership will be able to continue with the successes of the tail end of 2018, with a continued focus on processing complaints efficiently, reducing the overall number of open cases and through the effective use of our enforcement tools to maintain public confidence in the service. We also continue to up our game around communication and ensuring that we do that as effectively as possible.

Implications of the new Local Plan

- 3.50 As the process moves forward towards adoption of the plan, it will without doubt have implications for Development Management and the work that we do. Certainty will be given to sites within the plan, and it is highly likely that some of the larger and strategic sites could come forward this calendar year. We will need to watch staffing levels carefully as it has the potential to impact on all areas, but we will also need to focus on the majors team and how that is staffed and able to cope with increased workloads. We strengthened the team mid 2018 by moving Jo Trask (senior planner) across to the team for a 12-month period.
- 3.51 Furthermore we appointed a new position of Compliance Monitoring officer in the majors team last year. The post was set up primarily to focus on key sites & major applications and sites of strategic importance. The officer's role is to check that what is being built accords with approved plans and that conditions are being discharged correctly and are properly addressed.
- 3.52 We are looking to promote a new Planning Performance agreement package to facilitate the submission of sound applications and to provide certainty. Conditions discharge on larger schemes and multiple reserved matters could potentially take significant time as well and will need to be reviewed as we progress through 2019. It is imperative that we have the staff with the experience and knowledge to deliver.
- 3.53 There is also a keenness both with officers and Councillors to establish Development Management policies. The DM DPD will follow hard on the heels of the strategy and sites local plan. This document will need to undergo a formal plan making process, which will include two consultation periods and an examination. Work is also ongoing on a suite of design supplementary planning documents. These documents do not need to wait for the emerging DM policies and can be linked to the existing 2003 policies.

Future improvements for 2019 and beyond

- 3.54 There are still many improvements that the team wishes to undertake to further improve overall performance and improve our processes and ways. These include the following:
- Introduce a new system for Planning Performance Agreements and review and increase our pre application charging
 - Start charging for tree pre application advice and survey of proposed housing site (10 dwellings plus) Use of templates for section 106 agreements, to speed up issuing of minor application decisions
 - Increase the speed of decision on major applications and get many more out the door within the 13 week period rather than relying on extensions of time
 - Further electronic working – electronic sign off of decision notices on Enterprise and reduce the reliance on paper decision notices
 - Continue to review delegated procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose and robust in decision making terms
 - Source a new all-encompassing, service wide operating system to replace the 1998 Acolaid system we have been relying on for the last 20 years, and to dovetail this to continuing work on alternative ways of working.

Noteworthy matters from 2018

- 3.55 There are some elements of our work that Councillors may not appreciate but are worth drawing attention to:
- Getting all Parish Councils to move across to electronic consultations only excluding major applications – this initiative has taken 3 years to achieve
 - Holding two Planning Agents Forums
 - Involved in the Ash Forums that occurred in 2018
 - Responding to government consultations
 - Working with our in house IT Manager to put out to tender a contract to scan our 230,000 microfiche. This project is underway and will take the best part of 12 months to complete
 - Making significant progress on the 53 recommendations of the external enforcement review
 - Gaining amber green accreditation on the external audit of DM and section 106 process
 - Completing the Planning Committee review process and reporting on it

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report as it is for information purposes only.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council must determine Planning applications in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.
- 5.2 The Council are required to determine applications pursuant to statutory deadlines. Such statistical data is reported to DCLG, where a league table of planning

authorities' performance is published, with a view to assisting Councils improve services and provide more certainty for local residents and local firms using the planning system.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Overall, 2018 has proved to be a very busy but strongly performing year for the Development Management team. Staffing remains constant and very robust compared to other Surrey authorities.
- 6.2 The performance of our determination rates is at a level not seen in many years and will hold us in good stead with government initiatives on performance and moving forward into 2019.

7. Background Papers and appendices

- 7.1 None.

I confirm that I have consulted with relevant Officers, where appropriate, in the following services:		
Financial Services	YES	Emma Parry
Legal and Democratic Services	YES	Sarah White
Human Resources	NO	No
PR and Marketing	YES	Carolyn Patterson