

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Second Quarterly Report on Planning Performance</b>		
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28 January 2026</b>		
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Information</b>		
<b>To be discussed In Committee YES/NO</b>	<b>No</b>		
<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>			
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership		
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them		
Lead Officer	Head of Planning		
<b>Estimated Timescale for Completion</b>			
Date to be Completed	N/A		
<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>			
Cost of Proposal	Nil		
Included in Current Year Estimates			
Capital/Revenue			
Code			
Staffing Costs			
<b>Legal Considerations</b>			
Input of Legal Services Required	<b>NO</b>		
Legal Opinion Obtained	<b>NO</b>		
<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

## 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a quarterly update on Planning performance against the Planning Department Business Plan 2025/26.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Schedule 4 of The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out the statutory performance targets for the Planning Department for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases. The Planning Department Business Plan 2025-26 sets out the key performance indicators to progress towards improving Planning performance against these targets.

- 2.2 The statutory targets are:

- Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks
- Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks
- 70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.

- 2.3 The Northern Ireland Planning Statistics is an official statistics publication issued by Analysis, Statistics & Research Team within Department for Infrastructure. It provides the official statistics for each Council on each of the statutory targets and is published quarterly and on an annual basis. The First Quarter 2025/26 Statistical Bulletin was published on 25 September 2024 providing provisional planning statistics for this period.

## 3.0 Details

**Website link 1** <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-planning-statistics-july-september-2025> provides the link to the published bulletin.

### ***Business Plan Objective 1: Improve performance in relation to the processing of planning applications and enforcement cases***

- 3.1 Table 1 below provides a summary of performance in relation to the statutory targets for major development applications and local development applications for the second quarter of 2025-26 business year and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils and against Business Plan KPIs.

**Table 1: Planning Applications**

2025/26	Major		Local		Total		Live	
Q1	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Total	Over 12mths
Planning Applications	3	2	238	251 (24 w/d)	241	253 (24 w/d)	725	260 (35.9%)
Rank	4 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> (%)
Average Processing Times	77.1 weeks		23 weeks					
Rank	8 <sup>th</sup>		8 <sup>th</sup>					
Business Plan Target	Major Category – 30 weeks - Not met		Local Category – 25 weeks - Met		Over 12 month applications – reduce by 10% - Not Met			

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: First Quarter 2025/26 Statistical Bulletin (provisional figures) and Planning Department Business Plan 2025-26

2025/26	Major		Local		Total		Live	
Q2	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Total	Over 12mths
Planning Applications	2	1	233	204 (10 w/d)	235	205 (10 w/d)	753	244 (32.4%)
Rank	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> (%)
Average Processing Times	27.2 weeks		19 weeks					
Rank	3rd		6th					
Business Plan Target	Major Category – 30 weeks – Met		Local Category – 21 weeks - Met		Over 12 month applications – reduce by 10% - Met			

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2025/26 Statistical Bulletin (provisional figures) and Planning Department Business Plan 2025-26

2025/26	Major		Local		Total		Live	
YTD	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Rec'd	Dec'd/ W/D	Total	Over 12mths
Planning Applications	5	3	471	455 (34w/d)	476	458 (34w/d)	753	244 (32%)
Rank	2nd	7th	5th	4th	5th	4th	5th	6th (%)
Average Processing Times	34.6 weeks		21.4 weeks					
Rank	5 <sup>th</sup>		8 <sup>th</sup>					
Business Plan Target	Major Category – 30 weeks - Ongoing (year end target)		Local Category – Q1 and Q2 targets met		Over 12 month and over 24 month applications – reduce by 10% - Ongoing (year end target)			

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2025/26 Statistical Bulletin (provisional figures) and Planning Department Business Plan 2025-26

- 3.2** In the Q2, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council issued 1 major planning application (variation of noise condition for windfarm at Broad Road, Limavady (29 weeks) resulting in an average processing time of 29 weeks, meeting the statutory target or Business Plan target during this period. In addition, we received 2 major planning applications (changes to consented Smulgedon Wind Farm, Limavady and redevelopment of the Showgrounds, Ballycastle Road, Coleraine) during Q2.
- 3.3** Over the same period 233 local applications were received, which is the same number of applications compared to the same period last year. Over Q2, 194 local category applications were decided, with 10 local applications withdrawn, a decrease in decisions issued of 30 applications when compared to the same period last year. Although not meeting the statutory target, there was an increase of 14.5% of applications that were processed within the 15 week statutory target (40.7%) when compared to the same period last year. In addition, the Business Plan target of 21 weeks was met with 19 weeks, 0.2% below the average of the 11 Councils. The average processing times were 4.8 weeks faster when compared to the same period last year.
- 3.4** At the end of Q2, there was a total of 244 applications in the system over 12 months, a decrease of 10% when compared to the beginning of this business year, meeting the Business Plan target of 10% reduction by end of Q4. This equates to 32% of the total number of live applications and is the 6<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of live applications out of the 11 Councils.
- 3.5** In terms of over 24 month applications, progress continues to reduce the number of these older applications in the system. At the end of Q2 the number of 24 month plus application have reduced by 11 from the same time last year. They have reduced by 3 from the start of the business year and

moving closer to meet the business plan target of 10% reduction (78 applications) by the end of this business year.

- 3.6** In addition, in Q2 Council received the joint highest number of government and civic applications, the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest agricultural applications and the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of residential applications.
- 3.7** Overall, the statistics evidence the improvement in performance in the processing of planning applications, with processing times improving and older applications reducing.

### Enforcement

- 3.8** Table 2 below shows statistics in relation to enforcement for Q2 of the 2025/26 business year. Work has been ongoing to reduce the number of older cases in the system (over 2 years) and these have reduced by 3.6% since the start of the 2025/ 26 business year. The statutory target for bringing to conclusion enforcement cases of 70% within 39 weeks has been met over Q2. In addition, the Business Plan target of 65% has been achieved.
- 3.9** Of the cases closed, 21% were remedied/resolved, 19% had planning permission granted; 23% were closed as not expedient; 27% were closed as no breach identified and; 10% were immune from enforcement action.

**Table 2: Enforcement**

2025/26	Open	Closed	Concluded	Conclusion Times	Live	Court Action	
Q1						Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	94	75	74	60.8%	439	2	0
Rank	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	-	-
Business Plan Target				Conclude 60% within 39 weeks			

2025/26	Open	Closed	Concluded	Conclusion Times	Live	Court Action	
Q2						Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	56	48	56	75%	447	0	0
Rank	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	-	-
Business Plan Target				Conclude 65% within 39 weeks			

2025/26	Open	Closed	Concluded	Conclusion Times	Live	Court Action	
YTD						Prosecutions	Convictions
Cases	150	123	130	66.9	447	2	0
Rank	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	-	-
Business Plan Target				Conclude 65% within 39 weeks			

Source: Northern Ireland Planning Statistics: Second Quarter 2025/26 Statistical Bulletin (provisional statistics)

- 3.10** In Q2, there were 10 enforcement notices issued, 2 enforcement appeals heard and 17 court appearances.

Implement Statutory Planning Application Checklist – Timescale Q3

- 3.11** The new statutory Planning Application Checklist was agreed at Planning Committee on 28 May 2025 with implementation date of 09 June 2025. This Business Plan KPI target is met.

Implement Standing Advice from NI Water – Timescale Q1

- 3.12** NI Water Standing Advice has been implemented in this Council Area since 01 May 2025. This Business Plan KPI target is met.

Develop an action plan to manage and reduce the number of over 12 month applications in the system – Timescale Q2

- 3.13** The over 12 month action plan has been developed and implemented. This Business Plan KPI target is met.

Reduce the number of over 12month and over 24month applications in the system by 10% - Timescale Q4

- 3.14** At end of Q2 progress is being made on reducing the number of over 12 month and over 24 month applications in the system to 244 and 78 respectively by end of Q4. This Business Plan KPI target is in progress to be met by Q4.

Average processing times for major applications of 30 weeks for the business year – Timescale Q4

- 3.15** At the end of Q2 the median processing time for major applications was 27.2 weeks. This Business Plan KPI target is met.

Average processing times for local category of applications 21 weeks – Timescale Q2

- 3.16** At the end of Q2 the average processing time for local applications was 19 weeks. This Business Plan KPI target was met.

Processing times for case conclusion for enforcement cases – 65% in 39 weeks – Timescale Q2

- 3.17** At the end of Q2 the processing time for enforcement cases concluded within 39 weeks was 75%. This Business Plan KPI target was met.

***Business Plan Objective 2: preparation of Council's draft Plan Strategy***

Receipt of independent research to establish the most up-to-date housing requirement for the Borough – Timescale Q4

- 3.18** The Final report has been received. Ulster University will present the report to members at a Full Council Deputation Workshop on 3rd February 2026. Business Plan KPI is met.

Award contract for Retail and Leisure Capacity Study – Timescale Q1

- 3.19** The contract was signed with Nexus Planning on 12 June 2025. This Business Plan KPI target is met.

Receive Retail and Commercial Leisure Capacity Study – Timescale Q3

- 3.20** The Final report has been received. Nexus Planning will present the findings at the 28th January 2026 Planning Committee. Business Plan KPI target is met.

Consider impact on planning policies of Retail and Commercial Leisure Capacity Study – Timescale Q4

- 3.21** This work will commence once Members approve the Study (at both the 3rd February 2026 Deputation Workshop and subsequent Planning Committee). This Business Plan KPI target has not yet commenced.

Housing Monitor interactive map viewer operational and accessible by the public – Timescale Q3

- 3.22** The Housing Monitor interactive map is now live. This Business Plan KPI target is met

***Business Plan Objective 3: to manage finance, staff, information and other resources effectively and efficiently within corporate governance framework***

Review Planning Fraud Risk Self Assessment Checklist – Timescale Q2

- 3.23** The review of the Planning Fraud Risk Self Assessment Checklist was complete commenced in Q1. This Business Plan KPI target is likely to be met.

Ensure Authorisation to recruit form completed and sent for agreement to SMT

- 3.24** No authorisation to recruit required at this time. This Business Plan KPI target is ongoing and has been met for Q1.

Recommendations from outstanding Audit/Ombudsman recommendations implemented – Timescale Q4

- 3.25** There have been no cases of maladministration determined in Q2 and therefore no further audit recommendations to implement. This Business Plan KPI target is ongoing and is met for Q2.

**4.0 Recommendation**

- 4.1 IT IS RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Committee note the Planning Department's Quarterly Report.