

| BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL | |
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| Report to: | Chair & Members of Planning Committee |
| Report Subject: | Development Management Quarterly Performance Information Quarter 4 – January to March 2023 |
| Report Author: | Service Manager Development & Estates |
| Directorate: | Regeneration and Community Services |
| Date of Meeting: | 6 th July 2023 |
| Key Words: | Performance Management Speed and quality of decision making Welsh Government Performance Monitoring |

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Every local planning authority in Wales collates performance information regarding the speed and quality of decision making on all types of planning and related applications. This is submitted to Welsh Government on a quarterly basis.
- 1.2 Welsh Government publishes this data on its website. It is a useful source of comparative information where the Council can not only scrutinise its own performance, but benchmark the data against the 25 other Local Planning authorities (22 unitary authorities and 3 National Parks)
- 1.3 Following a delay in Welsh Government publishing data, the June 2023 cycle of this Committee considered a report that covered the data for the entire calendar year of 2022.
- 1.4 This report deals with new performance data for Q4 2022/23 which is January to March of this year.
- 1.5 The data used in this report was published on the WG website on 21st June 2023 at this [LINK](#).

2.0 Performance Information

- 2.1 The figures reveal...
- 2.2 i. We decided **90%** of applications “in time”. This compares to an all-Wales average of 84%.
- 2.3 ii. On average, it took **84** days to decide each application against an all-Wales average of 123 days.
- 2.4 iii. **0%** of applications in this quarter decided by Planning Committee were contrary to officer recommendation. The Wales average was 6%.

3.0 Evaluation of Performance and Conclusions

- 3.1 The figure of 90% of applications determined in time is broadly in line with historical returns for this indicator.
- 3.2 On average, it takes 84 days to decide each application. Whilst this compares favourably to the all-Wales average, it is higher than I would like and falls short of pre-covid returns.
- 3.3 Members may be aware that we are currently in the process of implementing a new software system and one planning officer has been seconded to manage the process. This will inevitably impact on performance. We have again instructed an external consultancy to take on a limited caseload of applications and this will be closely monitored.
- 3.4 Finally, for the second consecutive quarter we had a nil return for Planning Committee decisions contrary to officer recommendation.
- 3.5 It is pleasing that this puts us above the Welsh average. Overturns are now becoming an exceptional event rather than the norm.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 No decision is required.
- 4.2 Planning Committee is invited to scrutinise the performance returns and officers will address any issues or questions at the meeting.

Table 1:

January to March 2023
Percentage of Planning Applications Determined “On Time”

| Welsh Local Planning Authority | | Percentage of All Applications Determined On Time |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | % Decided in Time |
| 1 | Vale of Glamorgan | 98 |
| 2 | Swansea | 96 |
| 3 | Pembrokeshire | 95 |
| | Merthyr Tydfil | 95 |
| | Caerphilly | 95 |
| 6 | Isle of Anglesey | 94 |
| 7 | Neath Port Talbot | 93 |
| | Powys | 93 |
| 9 | Monmouthshire | 92 |
| 10 | Blaenau Gwent | 90 |
| | Gwynedd | 90 |
| 12 | Carmarthenshire | 87 |
| 13 | Denbighshire | 86 |
| | Conwy | 86 |
| 15 | Rhondda Cynon Taff | 84 |
| 16 | Ceredigion | 83 |
| 17 | Wrexham | 82 |
| 18 | Newport | 72 |
| 19 | Torfaen | 70 |
| 20 | Cardiff | 69 |
| 21 | Pembrokeshire Coast NPA | 67 |
| 22 | Bridgend | 63 |
| 23 | Bannau Brycheiniog NPA | 57 |
| 24 | Snowdonia NPA | 33 |
| 25 | Flintshire | <i>no return</i> |
| WALES AVERAGE | | 84% |

Table 2:

January to March 2023

Average Days to Decide Each Application

| Welsh Local Planning Authority | | Average No. of Days Taken to Decide an Application |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Rhondda Cynon Taff | 68 |
| 2 | Swansea | 72 |
| 3 | Neath Port Talbot | 80 |
| 4 | Blaenau Gwent | 84 |
| 5 | Gwynedd | 85 |
| 6 | Conwy | 86 |
| 7 | Merthyr Tydfil | 90 |
| 8 | Bridgend | 94 |
| 9 | Vale of Glamorgan | 95 |
| | Cardiff | 95 |
| 11 | Isle of Anglesey | 97 |
| 12 | Monmouthshire | 103 |
| 13 | Pembrokeshire | 112 |
| 14 | Denbighshire | 117 |
| 15 | Caerphilly | 121 |
| 16 | Torfaen | 129 |
| 17 | Powys | 134 |
| 18 | Pembrokeshire Coast NPA | 137 |
| 19 | Wrexham | 155 |
| 20 | Snowdonia NPA | 158 |
| 21 | Newport | 165 |
| 22 | Bannau Brycheiniog NPA | 202 |
| 23 | Carmarthenshire | 225 |
| 24 | Ceredigion | 236 |
| 25 | Flintshire | <i>no return</i> |
| WALES AVERAGE | | 123 Days |

Table 3:

January to March 2023
Decisions Contrary to Officer Recommendation

| Welsh Local Planning Authority | | % Planning Committee Decisions Contrary to Officer Recommendation |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Bannau Brycheiniog NPA | 0 |
| | Blaenau Gwent | 0 |
| | Bridgend | 0 |
| | Cardiff | 0 |
| | Carmarthenshire | 0 |
| | Isle of Anglesey | 0 |
| | Merthyr | 0 |
| | Monmouthshire | 0 |
| | Neath Port Talbot | 0 |
| | Pembrokeshire | 0 |
| | Pembrokeshire Coast NPA | 0 |
| | Snowdonia NPA | 0 |
| | Swansea | 0 |
| | Torfaen | 0 |
| | Vale of Glamorgan | 0 |
| 16 | Caerphilly | 9 |
| 17 | Ceredigion | 10 |
| 18 | Rhondda Cynon Taff | 11 |
| 19 | Powys | 13 |
| | Wrexham | 13 |
| 21 | Gwynedd | 17 |
| 22 | Conwy | 22 |
| 23 | Newport | 25 |
| 24 | Denbighshire | 29 |
| 25 | Flintshire | <i>no return</i> |
| Wales Average | | 6 % |
