

Select Committee Agenda



Governance Select Committee Tuesday, 6th October, 2015

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Governance Select Committee**, which will be held at:

**Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping
on Tuesday, 6th October, 2015
at 7.30 pm .**

**Glen Chipp
Chief Executive**

Democratic Services Officer M Jenkins mjenkins@eppingforestdc.gov.uk (01992 56 4607)

Members:

Councillors T Church (Chairman), Y Knight (Vice-Chairman), D Dorrell, L Hughes, S Jones, H Kauffman, M McEwen, B Sandler, S Watson, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

SUBSTITUTE NOMINATION DEADLINE:

18:30

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Director of Governance) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Director of Governance) To declare interests on any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview and Scrutiny members are asked to pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub-Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a

member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

4. NOTES OF THE LAST SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING (Pages 3 - 10)

To agree the notes of the last select committee meeting held on 7 July 2015 (attached).

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 14)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Select Committee. This is attached along with an on-going Work Programme. Members are asked to review both documents at each meeting.

6. SECTION 106 REPORT (Pages 15 - 20)

(Director of Governance) To consider the attached report.

7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2015/16 - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE (Pages 21 - 42)

(Director of Governance) To consider the attached report and appendices.

8. ANNUAL EQUALITY INFORMATION REPORT 2015 (Pages 43 - 58)

(Director of Governance) To consider the attached report and appendix.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next scheduled meeting of the Select Committee will be held on Tuesday 1 December 2015 at 7.30p.m. in Committee Room 1 and thereafter on the following dates:

(a) Tuesday 2 February 2016; and

(b) Tuesday 5 April.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF GOVERNANCE SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 7 JULY 2015
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 9.00 PM**

- Members Present:** T Church (Chairman), D Dorrell, L Hughes, S Jones, H Kauffman, M McEwen, S Watson, J H Whitehouse and D Wixley
- Other members present:** J Philip (Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder)
- Apologies for Absence:** Y Knight, B Sandler and J M Whitehouse
- Officers Present** G Chipp (Chief Executive), N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), W MacLeod (Elections Officer), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), B Copson (Senior Performance Improvement Officer) and M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant)

1. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was advised that Councillor J H Whitehouse was substituting for Councillor J M Whitehouse.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made pursuant to the Member's Code of Conduct.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE/WORK PROGRAMME

(a) Terms of Reference

The new draft Terms of reference were submitted to the Select Committee. Members agreed for them to be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

RECOMMENDED:

That the draft Terms of Reference for the Governance Select Committee be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

(b) Work Programme

The following items for the Work Programme were agreed:

(i) The Assistant Director of Development Management suggested that Item 6 of the Work Programme, Probity in Planning, should be re-titled Planning Appeals Performance. It would be scheduled for the 6 October 2015 Select Committee.

(ii) It was suggested that a new item should be added, Development Management Chair and Vice Chair's meeting. This would concern receiving feedback

from the meeting of Chair and Vice Chair's of Area Planning and Development Management Control Committees. The Select Committee agreed to a report being scheduled for the 1 December 2015 meeting.

(iii) It was advised that there should be new items for S106 Monitoring on 6 October and Planning Enforcement on 1 December meetings.

4. REVIEW OF ELECTIONS 2015 - LESSONS LEARNT

The Select Committee received a report regarding the Parliamentary and Local Elections 2015 – Lessons Learnt from the Returning Officer for the District Council.

The report discussed planning processes and implementation for the elections held on 7 May 2015, the results of which were the election of a Member of Parliament for the Epping Forest Constituency, one Councillor was returned for each of eighteen District Council wards and ten Parish Council elections took place with six contested wards.

This election followed the first year when the Council was required to implement Individual Electoral Registration (IER). Work undertaken to encourage further registration had prompted some 5,000 changes to the IER register, published in 2014.

Staffing

The levels of staffing for polling stations, verification and counts were adequate, it was noted that Service Directors were helpful in making officers available for all the processes.

Ballot Paper Printing

All of the election papers were printed by the Council's Reprographics Section, which, as before, provided an excellent service. The proofs of all District Council and Parish Council ballot papers were scrutinised carefully and all ballot papers were printed correctly. Manual checks were also made of each printed ballot paper, no errors were subsequently detected or reported at polling stations.

It was advised that nationally, there was an issue regarding a late change made to the logo of the Green Party. The Electoral Commission had agreed the change but had not transmitted this information effectively to Returning Officers. The Acting Returning Officer decided not to print new ballot papers and informed the agent so there was no confusion created for voters.

Due to the number of ballot papers required for the Parliamentary election it was necessary to engage an external printer for the 75,000 ballot papers. The split between internal printing for local elections and external for national ones worked well, it was recommended to continue with this for the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner election where 100,000 ballots would be required.

Postal Votes

During the run up to the election, both Harlow and Brentwood Councils informed the District Council that they would not be issuing Postal Voting Packs for District and parish elections falling in their Parliamentary areas. This meant that postal voters in those areas received postal packs from two different issuing authorities at different

times. Although it was found that voters were able to deal with having two sets of papers, the District Council did get complaints that Brentwood postal packs had not arrived until shortly before the election.

The issue of postal votes for Epping Forest went smoothly. Nearly 10,000 postal voting packs were sent out, the most ever. Although there was no evidence of any postal vote fraud, 150 postal votes were rejected for various reasons. Regulations brought in recently required the Electoral Registration Officer to inform electors, after a poll, that their postal vote identifiers had been rejected.

Election Day Issues

All polling stations opened on time with no access issues. This year, four polling stations were changed due to unavailability of previous locations, no issues were raised in connection with these stations.

In Epping, where there were both District and Town Council elections, it was discovered at poll opening that Town Council ballot papers had been issued to transposed stations in the Hemnall and St. John's wards. Immediate action was taken to suspend the issuing of these ballots and corrected papers were taken to the polling stations. Those ballots issued incorrectly were subsequently rejected at the count and were shown as being rejected on the results sheets published. This situation was due to human error and the following revised processes had been agreed:

- (a) All ballot paper books would have labels on their front covers saying which ward and election they were for;
- (b) All ballot papers issued would be systematically double checked against issue lists for boxes generated by the computer system; and
- (c) All presiding officers would double check their allocations and also be reminded of the need to double check their ballot papers on collection.

The Returning Officer reiterated his apologies for this error which could have had an effect on the results in the Hemnall Town Council ward, however no appeal had been forthcoming within the statutory timescales and the result was therefore beyond challenge.

This year the ARO had taken the decision to continue with local conventions relating to tellers and issued instructions via presiding officers ensuring consistent practice across the stations. Additionally "meet and greet" staff were used at barrier stations, these arrangements worked well with only minor issues.

It was advised that as part of the national election the Government opted to fund Post Office sorting centre sweeps on the evening of the poll. Only a handful of packs were delivered (six) through this process and twenty-six were delivered in the normal post on the Friday. At a cost of approximately £600, this did not constitute a good use of public funds.

Verification and Counts

Verification and counting of parliamentary ballot papers took place at Debden Park High School enabling a larger number of count staff to be employed. Counting

started as soon as the polling finished, the process going smoothly. The final declaration of the Parliamentary seat was made at around 3.45p.m.

Appropriate publicity was made available at all stages with links to the Council's website. There was significant media interest and the Council provided effective media facilities at the count.

The District Council and the Parish Council election counts were undertaken from 1.00p.m. on Friday 8 May 2015. These counts were completed very quickly.

Arrangements were made with the North Essex Parking Partnership to relax the enforcement of parking restrictions on single yellow lines in the vicinity of Theydon Bois Village Hall, additionally refreshments were made available at the Count, which were well received by those attending.

Police Liaison

Discussions were held with Essex Police prior to the election. Polling stations received visits during the day and there were no instances requiring immediate police presence outside of the regular visits. Police support was also provided at the Count Centres on both Thursday evening and on Friday at Theydon Bois. The Returning Officer thanked Sergeant A Alcock from the Epping Forest and Brentwood Local Policing Hub and his officers for their help and assistance.

Complaints and Queries Received in the Elections Office

There were few telephone calls made to the Elections Office on 7 May, these concerned a few software issues sorted out by polling station staff enabling voters to vote, confusion around Government website wording regarding postal votes for overseas electors, some people had failed to update their registration in time and requests for emergency proxy votes, many of which did not fit the medical criteria.

Post-Election Consultations/Comments

Every agent had been written to asking for comments in relation to the running of the election. Only one response had been received by the time of agenda publication which concerned Budworth Hall Chipping Ongar polling station. Tellers there had experienced difficulties there as the gap between departing voters and tellers made number collection difficult. Officers had advised that Budworth Hall had no inside area for tellers to sit and use of the main entrance would mean difficult access for those with disabilities. There had otherwise been no comments in relation to the use of this station.

The Candidate's Evening, held on 16 April, was better attended than last year. All parties were encouraged to attend as it provided essential information about the running of the election.

Future Elections/Canvass

In May 2016 the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Election would be held, in addition, elections for a third of the district council seats and approximately half of the parish/town councils. The timing of the PCC election would be determined by the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO), however it was advised that the election was likely to be held on Friday 6 May 2016.

The Canvass for 2015 posed a significant challenge to deliver a level of accuracy and registration similar to this year. Officers were aware that going forward, there would be a number of local planning referendums, an EU referendum and a combined election in 2016.

Members advised officers that the current polling stations in Buckhurst Hill were inadequate for some voters as they were at extreme ends of their respective wards. Officers replied that there was a periodic review of polling stations undertaken by the Council, one had been completed last year. Any concerns could be discussed there, however officers were also reliant on local knowledge regarding the feasibility of buildings that could be used as polling stations.

Members extended their thanks to the Electoral Team for their hard work on the elections.

RESOLVED:

That the review of the Parliamentary and Local Elections held on 7 May 2015 be agreed.

5. CONSULTATION REGISTER 2014/15 AND 2015/16

The Select Committee received a report regarding the Consultation Register 2014/15 and 2015/16 from the Public Relations and Marketing Officer.

The District Council carried out a wide variety of consultations, both externally for public participation and internally for staff opinions. A list of these were compiled and published as a register on the Council's website, they set out the issues on which individual services would be consulting on or engaging with residents and customers during the year. They summarised the purpose, start and completion dates, service area administering the surveys, location of results and key findings. The register also set out the overall objective for consultation exercises yet to be undertaken.

Community Engagement and Involvement

Amongst the larger surveys carried out by the Council in the last 12 months were the Car Parking Review and the Tenant Participation Survey. It was advised that a further district – wide Community Safety Survey was being planned for the summer and autumn.

Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan were set to dominate much of the consultation agenda over the next 12 - 36 months. Five separate Local Area Neighbourhood Plans of Epping, Theydon Bois, Buckhurst Hill, Loughton and North Weald Bassett were at various points of progress.

Members felt that consultations which relied heavily on electronic media and responses would miss key groups within the public. Parish Councils could be advised of these consultations in advance and be persuaded to display them on their local notice boards. It was suggested that the Local Council's Liaison Committee would be the best place for advising Parish and Town clerks of current or future consultations.

Internal Consultation

Human Resources would be carrying out further employee “Pulse” consultation to compare and measure staff attitudes against previous survey results. Staff consultation would also ascertain preferred methods of engagement and how budgeted resources for staff projects could be spent.

Cost

The majority of public consultation were carried out in-house and costs kept low within current budgets. The total cost of consultations in the current Register was £97,200. The most significant item of planned consultation expenditure was the Local Plan, the Preferred Options consultation, due to commence in July 2016, was budgeted for £90,000.

Appreciative Enquiry

There were new public and staff consultations being undertaken with new techniques aimed at creating better communication with the public and also enhancing response rates for the workforce.

RESOLVED:

That the report and Consultation Register 2014/15 and 2015/16, setting out issues on which public consultation is being undertaken and those consultations completed during 2014/15, be noted.

6. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2014/15 - QUARTER 4 (OUTTURN) PERFORMANCE

The Select Committee received a report from the Assistant Director (Development Management) regarding Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 – Quarter 4 (Outturn) Performance.

The Local Government Act 1999 required local authorities to make arrangements for securing continuous improvement in the way in which its functions and services were exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. As part of this duty, a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relevant to the Council’s services and key objectives were adopted each year. Performance against the majority of KPIs was monitored on a quarterly basis, there were thirty six KPIs 2014/15 adopted in March 2014. From 2014/15 Select Committees (formerly Scrutiny Panels) became responsible for the review of quarterly performance against specific KPIs within their areas of responsibility. This particular report included in detail those indicators which fell within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee.

Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 – Quarter 3 Performance

The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance for all of the KPIs at the end of the year (31 March 2015) was as follows:

- (a) Twenty six (72%) indicators achieved the cumulative end of year target;
- (b) Ten (28%) indicators did not achieve the cumulative end of year target; and
- (c) One (3%) of these KPIs performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator.

Six of the KPIs for 2014/15 fell within the Governance Select Committee's area of responsibility. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance at the end of the year for these six indicators was as follows:

- (i) Three (50%) indicators achieved the cumulative end of year target;
- (ii) Three (50%) indicators did not achieve the cumulative end of year target; and
- (iii) One (17%) of these KPIs performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator.

The Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder advised that this report should be under his portfolio and not the Planning Portfolio Holder, as indicated on the agenda report.

The Select Committee requested more information on appeal decisions being upheld by the inspector. The Chairman felt that in their consideration of individual cases, the inspectors applied the same principles irrespective of local conditions. The Assistant Director of Development Management informed Members that all appeals information was posted in the Bulletin, it was helpful for Members of Area planning Sub-Committees to attend hearings to advise on their reasons for the decision taken. He added that there was a substantial workload connected with pre-application work which as well as generating an income for the authority, also assisted planning application development before final submittal and decision.

The Assistant Director of Development Management suggested that the select committee receive a report on pre-application work.

RESOLVED:

That the review of Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 – Quarter 4 (Outturn) be agreed.

7. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2012-2016 - QUARTER 4 PROGRESS 2014/15

The Select Committee received a report from the Senior Performance Improvement Officer regarding the Equality Objectives 2012 – 2016 Quarter 4 Progress for 2014/15.

The Equality Act 2010 placed a number of responsibilities on the Council in having regard to equality in the exercise of its functions, this included a Public Sector Equality Day (PSED). It aimed to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons sharing relevant characteristics and those who did not. Further specific responsibilities required the adoption of objectives for improving equality for service users and employees.

In March 2012, the Cabinet agreed four equality objectives for the four years from 2012-16, designed to assist the Council meeting the needs of the PSED. The objectives supported by an Action Plan, focused on key areas where improvement in relation to equality had been identified as follows:

- (a) Objective 1 Equality information;
- (b) Objective 2 Equality ownership;

(c) Objective 3 Engagement; and

(d) Objective 4 Equality in workforce development.

Members received a schedule detailing progress against individual actions, the reporting progress followed status indicators applied to individual actions. The actions delivering Objectives 1 and 2 were largely completed with progress being made across all actions for the remaining objectives. The Corporate Equality Working Group (CEWG) would continue to monitor progress.

It was advised that the current set of equality objectives would reach the end of their lifetime in March 2016, therefore CEWG would identify equality objectives for 2016-20.

The Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder informed the Select Committee that his aim was to embed equality into the Council's ethos, permeating everything the authority did. The Performance Improvement Officer added that developing staff understanding of equality was very important.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the review of progress against the Council's Equality Objectives 2012-16 up until March 2015, and other work in meeting its statutory equality duties, be agreed; and

(2) That the ongoing development of the equality objectives for 2016-20 be agreed.

8. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Select Committee would be held on Tuesday 6 October at 7.30p.m. in Committee Room 1.

SELECT COMMITTEES

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2015/16

Title: Governance Select Committee

Status: Select Committee

1. To undertake the overview and scrutiny, utilising appropriate methods and techniques, of services and functions of the Governance Directorate, excluding those matters within remit of the Audit and Governance Committee, the Standards Committee or the Constitution Working Group;
2. To develop a programme of work each year, informed by relevant service aims and member priorities, to ensure that the services and functions of the Governance Directorate are appropriate and responsive to the needs of residents, service users and others;
3. To consider any matter referred to the Select Committee by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
4. To identify any matters within the services and functions of the Governance Directorate that require in-depth scrutiny, for referral to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
5. To establish working groups as necessary to undertake any activity within these terms of reference;
6. Where requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to examine and review call-in requests and the implementation of executive decisions;
7. More service specific proposals to be determined by the relevant lead officer.
8. To consider the effect of Government actions or initiatives on the services and functions of the Governance Directorate and any implications for the Council's residents, service users and others, and to respond to consultation activities as appropriate;
9. To undertake pre-scrutiny through the review of specific proposals of the Council and its partner organisations or other local service providers, insofar as they relate to the services and functions of the Governance Directorate, to help develop appropriate policy;

Performance Management

10. To undertake performance monitoring in relation to the services and functions of the Governance Directorate, against adopted key performance indicators and identified areas of concern;
11. To review relevant Key Performance Indicator (KPI) outturn results for the previous

year, at the commencement of each municipal year;

12. To identify on an annual basis, subject to the concurrence of the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee:
 - (a) a basket of KPIs important to the improvement of the relevant to the service areas for which the Panel has scrutiny responsibility Council's services and the achievement of its key objectives,; and
 - (b) the performance targets for those KPIs for each year;
13. To review performance against the KPIs on a quarterly basis throughout each year, and to make recommendations for corrective action in relation to areas of slippage or under performance.

Equality

14. To review six monthly progress towards the achievement of the Council's equality objectives for 2012/13 to 2015/16, and progress in relation to other equality issues and initiatives.

Public Consultation and Engagement

15. To develop arrangements as required, for the Council to directly engage local communities in shaping the future direction of its services, to ensure that they are responsive to local need;
16. To annually review details of the consultation and engagement exercises undertaken by the Council over the previous year;

Chairman: Councillor T Church

Governance Select Committee (Chairman – Councillor T Church)

Work Programme 2015/16

Item	Report Deadline/Priority	Progress/Comments	Programme of Meetings
(1) Review of the Elections 7 May 2015	7 July 2015	Review of the processes for the General, District Council and Parish Council elections. COMPLETED	7 July 2015; 6 October 2015; 1 December 2015; 2 February 2016; and 5 April 2016
(2) Review of Public Consultations	7 July 2015	Annual Review COMPLETED	
(3) Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 – Outturn	Outturn KPI performance (Governance indicators only) considered at first meeting in each municipal year;	Outturn KPI performance report for 2014/15 to be considered at meeting on 7 July 2015. COMPLETED	
(4) Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 – Quarterly Performance Monitoring	Quarterly KPI performance (Governance indicators only) considered on a quarterly basis;	Quarterly KPI performance reports for 2015/16 to be considered at meetings on: 6 October 2015 (Q1) On this agenda 1 December 2015 (Q2) 5 April 2016 (Q3)	
(5) Proposed Governance Key Performance Indicators 2016/17	Draft indicator set considered alongside review of third quarter KPI performance for 2015/16;.	Proposed Governance KPIs for 2015/16 to be considered at meeting on 5 April 2016.	
(6) Planning Appeals Performance	6 October 2015	This item has been held over to the next Select Committee meeting. The Assistant Director (Development Management) will discuss with Members at this meeting, an outline of how this report will be presented.	

(7) Development Management Chair and Vice Chair's Meeting	1 December 2015	To receive feedback from this meeting of Chair and Vice Chair's of the Area Planning and Development Management Control Committees
(8) Equality Objectives 2012-2016 – 6 monthly reporting	7 July 2015	Review 6 monthly performance: 7 July 2015 COMPLETED 1 December 2015
(9) Proposed Equality Objectives 2016-2020	2 February 2016	Proposed Equality Objectives 2016-2020 to be considered at meeting 2 February 2016
(10) S106 Monitoring Report	6 October 2015	On this agenda
(11) Planning Enforcement Report		This item has been referred onto the Resources Select Committee.
(12) Review the budget for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council	TBA	Referred from Council on 28 July 2015
(13) Annual Equality Information Report 2015	6 October 2015	On this agenda



Report to Governance Select Committee

Date of meeting: 6 October 2015

Subject: Section 106 Agreement Annual Report for 2014-15

**Officer contact for further information: Nigel Richardson
Assistant Director Governance x4110**

SCRUTINY



Committee Secretary:

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Annual Section 106 Agreement Report be noted.

Report:

1. Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a land owner/developer over a related issue. The planning obligation is often termed simply as a 'Section 106 Agreement' (other common terms used are developer contributions, planning contributions or planning agreements).
2. Section 106 agreements can act as a main instrument for placing restrictions on developers, often requiring them to mitigate on-site and site specific impacts. Recent changes to legislation now limit the pooling of no more than 5 contributions from a number of developments that have previously been used to minimise the impact of their development on the local community and to carry out tasks providing community benefits.
3. Such agreements may be sought when planning conditions are inappropriate to ensure and enhance the quality of development and to enable proposals that might otherwise have been refused planning permission to go ahead in a sustainable manner. They are not to be used simply to take a share of the developers' profits into the public purse for that can result in the accusation that the Council is 'selling' planning permissions, nor are they to be used to gain a benefit that is unrelated to the development. Local Authorities should ensure that the combined total impact of such requests for contributions does not threaten the viability of the site and scale of development. Contributions may, for example, be secured by:
 - Work in-kind provided or constructed by the developer;
 - A financial payment (which may be decided using a formula - as in the case of an educational facility);
 - The transfer of land for a facility.
4. The eligibility criteria for Section 106 contributions secured through the planning system are defined by legislation and set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paras 203-205 of the NPPF state that Section 106 planning obligations should meet the following three tests:
 - (a) Be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - (b) Be directly related to the proposed development;
 - (c) Be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.

Planning obligations should always be relevant to and proportionate to the scale and

kind of the development in question. Unrelated or unnecessary planning obligations are not a means of securing planning permission for unacceptable development, as case law as established. A formal assessment of Section 106 contributions is made on a case-by-case basis, but having clear planning policies and evidence on what is required helps to reduce uncertainty.

What are Planning Obligations?

5. Section 106 Agreements are deeds drawn up by legal professionals and have traditionally taken some months to bring to a conclusion. There is no substitute for such a legal document when the benefit being sought is of a complex nature such as affordable housing, or when it is anticipated that the enforcing of the provisions need might be especially robust.
6. They are used to deliver, for example, the following:
 - affordable housing,
 - requiring highway works to be carried out
 - requiring land to be dedicated and equipped as public open space
 - the restoring of a listed building
 - sums of money to be paid for the provision of off-site infrastructure or for the long-term maintenance of open space.

Affordable Housing and other requirements relevant to EFDC

7. One area where Section 106 Agreement prevails, is in respect of Affordable Housing. Under the current adopted Local Plan, affordable Housing is required where a certain threshold (15 dwellings or more or where the site is 0.5 of a hectare or above) is reached in a single development proposal where the population of the settlement is greater than 3,000 people. The requirement in this case would be 40% of all houses would be affordable and the only way to secure this is through a legal agreement. In smaller settlements outside the Green Belt, up to 50% would be sought. There are policies in the Council's Local Plan that state this (H5A - H8A) and therefore make it clear to developers what is the Council's requirement.
8. Where negotiation becomes more complex and delays the determination of planning application's, is where the developer argues that the level of affordable housing requirement threatens the viability of the proposed development. Applicants are required to submit evidence on scheme viability, which the Council assesses through the use of consultants. A payment rather than in-situ affordable housing may be more appropriate, for example, in respect of elderly person's apartments.
9. Basically, an affordable housing contribution should cover the difference between the value of a residential unit on the open market and the amount a housing association could pay for it to charge affordable rents. We therefore need a valuation for each unit and, in order to understand what a housing association would pay, a development appraisal based on a cash flow of a housing association managing the units over 30 years netted back to the present value.

Performance for the Year 2014/15

10. The appendix to this commentary is divided into two parts:
Part 1 lists all those agreements (or obligations) entered during the past year. There are 5 in total.

Part 2 provides a list of benefits actually realised through the year, including monies received where work has commenced on site. There are 11 in total.

11. Benefits negotiated through the year (**from Part 1 below**) will provide:
- a total of £456,674 to be received into the public purse
 - Improvements to bus-stops in Epping
 - Footpath and other community benefits in Stapleford Abbots
 - Funding for a local bus service for Chigwell
12. Benefits actually realised through the year (**from Part 2 below**) have provided:
- a total of £1,195,557 received into the public purse
 - 69 affordable houses delivered on site

PART 1

Section 106 Agreements concluded between April 2014 and March 2015

1. **EPF/0282/14 – 5 x 2 Bedroom Flats** granted 11/04/2014
212 Manor Road, Chigwell
Benefit – £40,000 Affordable Housing contribution
2. **EPF/0987/14 - 14 flats** granted 25/07/14
54A Centre Drive, Epping
Benefit - £22,749 Primary School Education Contribution and improvements to 2 bus-stops.
3. **EPF/0910/14 – 2 houses** granted 22/08/14
White House, Epping Road, Epping Upland
Benefit – £10,000 Affordable Housing Contribution
4. **EPF/0604/14 – 8 houses and a parish room** granted 13/10/14
High House Farm, Stapleford Road, Stapleford Abbots
Benefits - £100,000 Affordable Housing Contribution, footpath improvements, lease village green land and new parish room building to local parish council.
5. **EPF/0853/14 – Autism spectrum school, playing fields and enabling development of 60 houses** granted 26/03/15
Tottenham Hotspur Training Ground, Luxborough Lane, Chigwell
Benefits - £120,000 Affordable Housing, £50,000 Chigwell Bus Service, £66,701 Early Years & Childcare Education contribution, £27,484 Secondary School Education, £19,740 NHS contribution and requirement for contamination work to be carried on infill land site.

PART 2

Benefits Carried Out between April 2014 and March 2015

1. **EPF/0631/02** agreement concluded 25/03/2002
Former Mother Hubbard PH Valley Hill Loughton
Street Lighting upgrade with £10,000 highway safety funding and remaining £9,657 Education contribution towards new class-bases at Buckhurst Primary School.
2. **EPF/0856/01** agreement concluded 28/03/2003
ECC Shelley Depot, Epping Road, Ongar
£35,000 enhanced highway facility – pedestrian crossing at Great Lawns in March 2015.

3. **EPF/1832/03** agreement dated 19/01/2004
Burtys PH, Lower Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill
£22,000 Education contribution towards new class-bases at Buckhurst Primary School
4. **EPF/1244/05** agreement dated 20/11/2006
Epping Forest College (Upper Site) Borders Lane Loughton
Highway works contribution – £10,000 Emergency only vehicular gate installed at Newmans Lane site entrance.
5. **EPF/1008/11** agreement concluded 15/11/2011
Millrite Engineering 151-153 London Road, Stanford Rivers
£37,000 affordable housing contribution received.
6. **EPF/0739/10** agreement concluded 29/09/2011
Threshers, Hastingwood Road, Hastingwood
£100,000 affordable housing contribution received.
7. **EPF/2664/10** agreement concluded 06/12/2011
Woolston Manor Golf Club, Abridge Road, Chigwell
£877,000 affordable housing contribution received.
8. **EPF/1907/10** agreement concluded 02/01/2013
Oakley Hall, Hoe Lane, Nazeing
£40,000 NHS payment made.
9. **EPF/2256/12** agreement concluded 20/03/2013
Railway Homes, Station Approach, Theydon Bois
£43,000 community facility contribution received and transferred to Buxton trust to pay for changing rooms at Theydon Bois Cricket Club; £9,800 education contribution and £2,100 secondary transport contribution received.
10. **EPF/1399/09** agreement concluded through a deed of variation on 21/01/2013
Jennykins Nursery Manor Road, Chigwell
52 affordable houses completed on site.
11. **EPF/2361/09** agreement concluded on 14/08/2012
212 Manor Road, Chigwell
17 affordable housing units completed on site.

Reason for decision:

Options considered and rejected:

None -. Annual Report required for Audit purposes.

Consultation undertaken: Assistant Director of Resources (Accountancy)

Resource implications:

Budget provision: None

Personnel: None

Land: None

Community Plan/BVPP reference: None

Relevant statutory powers: Town and Country Planning Act 1990; Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Background papers: Summary spreadsheet of all Section 106 Agreements held by the Section 106 Monitoring Officer.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key Decision reference: None

Impact Assessment:

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues arising from the recommendations of this report. All Section 106 Agreements including deadlines are monitored by the S.106 Monitoring Officer and by a Section 106 Monitoring Group made up of senior officers of the Council.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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Report to: Governance Select Committee

Date of meeting: 6 October 2015

Portfolio: Governance and Development Management (Councillor J. Philip)

Subject: Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 - Quarter 1 Performance

Officer contact for further information: B. Copson (01992 564042)

Democratic Services Officer: M. Jenkins (01992 564607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Select Committee review performance against the Key Performance Indicators within its areas of responsibility, at the end of Quarter 1 (Q1).

Executive Summary:

The Local Government Act 1999 requires that the Council make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions and services are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of the duty to secure continuous improvement, a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relevant to the Council's services and key objectives, are adopted each year by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee. Performance against the KPIs is monitored on a quarterly basis by Management Board and overview and scrutiny to drive improvement in performance and ensure corrective action is taken where necessary.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The KPIs provide an opportunity for the Council to focus attention on how specific areas for improvement will be addressed, and how opportunities will be exploited and better outcomes delivered.

It is important that relevant performance management processes are in place to review and monitor performance against the key performance indicators to ensure their continued achievability and relevance, and to identify proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of slippage or under performance.

Other Options for Action:

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review KPI performance and to consider corrective action where necessary could have negative implications for judgements made about the Council's progress, and might mean that opportunities for improvement are lost.

Report:

1. A range of thirty-six (36) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2015/16 was adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in March 2015. The KPIs are important to the improvement of the Council's services, and comprise a combination of some former statutory indicators and locally determined performance measures. The aim of the KPIs is to direct improvement effort towards services and the national priorities and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district.
2. Progress in respect of each of the KPIs is reviewed by the relevant Portfolio Holder, Management Board, and overview and scrutiny at the conclusion of each quarter. This report includes in detail only those indicators which fall within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee
3. A headline Quarter 1 performance summary in respect of each of the KPIs falling within the Governance Select Committee's areas of responsibility for 2015/16, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report together with details of the specific three-month performance for each indicator. In response to feedback from the former scrutiny panels, some of the indicator dashboards now include more detail in the chart and the 'Additional Information' fields.
4. Improvement plans are produced for all of the KPIs each year, setting out actions to be implemented in order to achieve target performance, and to reflect changes in service delivery. In view of the corporate importance attached to the KPIs, the improvement plans are agreed by Management Board and are also subject to ongoing review between the relevant service director and Portfolio Holder over the course of the year. The Improvement Plans for the suite of indicators which fall within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee are attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 – Quarter 1 Performance

5. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance for **all** of the KPIs at the end of Q1, was as follows:
 - (a) 22 (61%) indicators achieved target at the end of Q1;
 - (b) 14 (39%) indicators did not achieve the Q1 target; although
 - (c) 3 (8%) indicators performed within their tolerated amber margin.
 - (d) 27 (75%) indicators are currently anticipated to achieve their cumulative year-end target.
6. Five (5) of the Key Performance Indicators fall within the Governance Select Committee's areas of responsibility. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance at the end of Q1 for these 5 indicators, was as follows:
 - (a) 3 (60%) indicators achieved the Q1 target;
 - (b) 2 (40%) indicators did not achieve their Q1 target; and
 - (c) 1 (20%) indicators performed within its tolerated amber margin.
 - (d) 4 (80%) indicators are currently anticipated to achieve their cumulative year-end target.
7. The 'amber' performance status used in KPI reports identifies indicators that have missed the agreed target for the quarter, but where performance is within an agreed tolerance or range (+/-). The KPI tolerances were agreed by Management Board when targets for the KPIs were set in February 2015.

8. The Select Committee is requested to review first quarter performance in relation to the KPIs for 2015/16 within its areas of responsibility.

Resource Implications:

Resource requirements for actions to achieve specific KPI performance for 2015/16 will have been identified by the responsible service director/chief officer and reflected in the budget for the year.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific KPI performance for 2015/16 will have been identified by the responsible service director.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific KPI performance for 2015/16 will have been identified by the responsible service director.

Consultation Undertaken:

The performance information and targets set out in this report have been submitted by each appropriate service director and have been reviewed by Management Board. The individual KPI improvement plans for 2015/16 will be agreed by the Board.

Background Papers:

First-quarter KPI submissions held by the Performance Improvement Unit. Detailed performance data is held by the responsible service director.

Impact Assessments:






Risk Management

There are no risk management issues arising from the recommendations of this report. Relevant issues arising from actions to achieve specific KPI performance for 2015/16 will have been identified by the responsible service director.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific KPI performance for 2015/16 will have been identified by the responsible service director.

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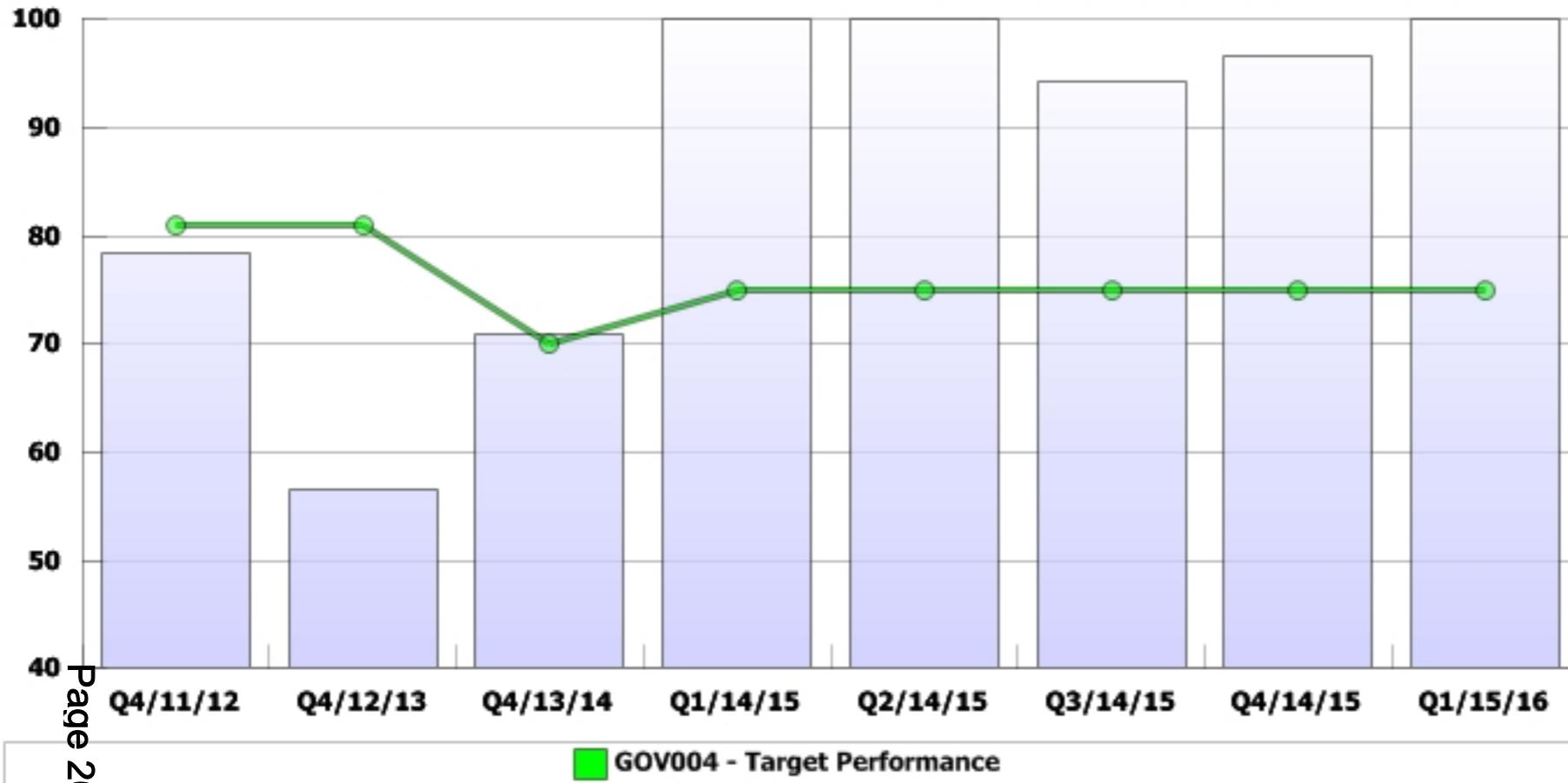
Quarterly Indicators		Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Is year-end target likely to be achieved?
		Tgt	Actual	Tgt	Actual	Tgt	Actual	Tgt	Actual	
Governance Quarterly KPIs										
GOV004	(Major planning) (%)	75.00%	100.00%		75.00%		75.00%		75.00%	Yes
GOV005	(Minor planning) (%)	90.00%	84.62%		90.00%		90.00%		90.00%	Uncertain
GOV006	(Other planning) (%)	94.00%	93.96%		94.00%		94.00%		94.00%	Yes
GOV007	(Appeals - officers) (%)	19.00%	0.00%		19.00%		19.00%		19.00%	Yes
GOV008	(Appeals - members) (%)	50.00%	50.00%		50.00%		50.00%		50.00%	Yes

GOV004 What percentage of major planning applications were processed within 13 weeks?

Additional Information: This indicator ensures that local planning authorities determine major planning applications in a timely manner (within thirteen weeks).

For enquiries regarding this indicator contact the Performance Improvement Unit by email on performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or by telephone on 01992 564042.

Current and previous quarters performance



Quarter	Target	Actual
Q1/15/16	75.00%	100.00%
Q4/14/15	75.00%	96.60%
Q3/14/15	75.00%	94.40%
Q2/14/15	75.00%	100.00%
Q1/14/15	75.00%	100.00%



Annual Target: 2015/16 - 75.00%
Target: 2014/15 - 75.00%

Indicator of good performance: A higher percentage is good

↑ is the direction of improvement

Is it likely that the target will be met at the end of the year?

Yes



Comment on current performance (including context):

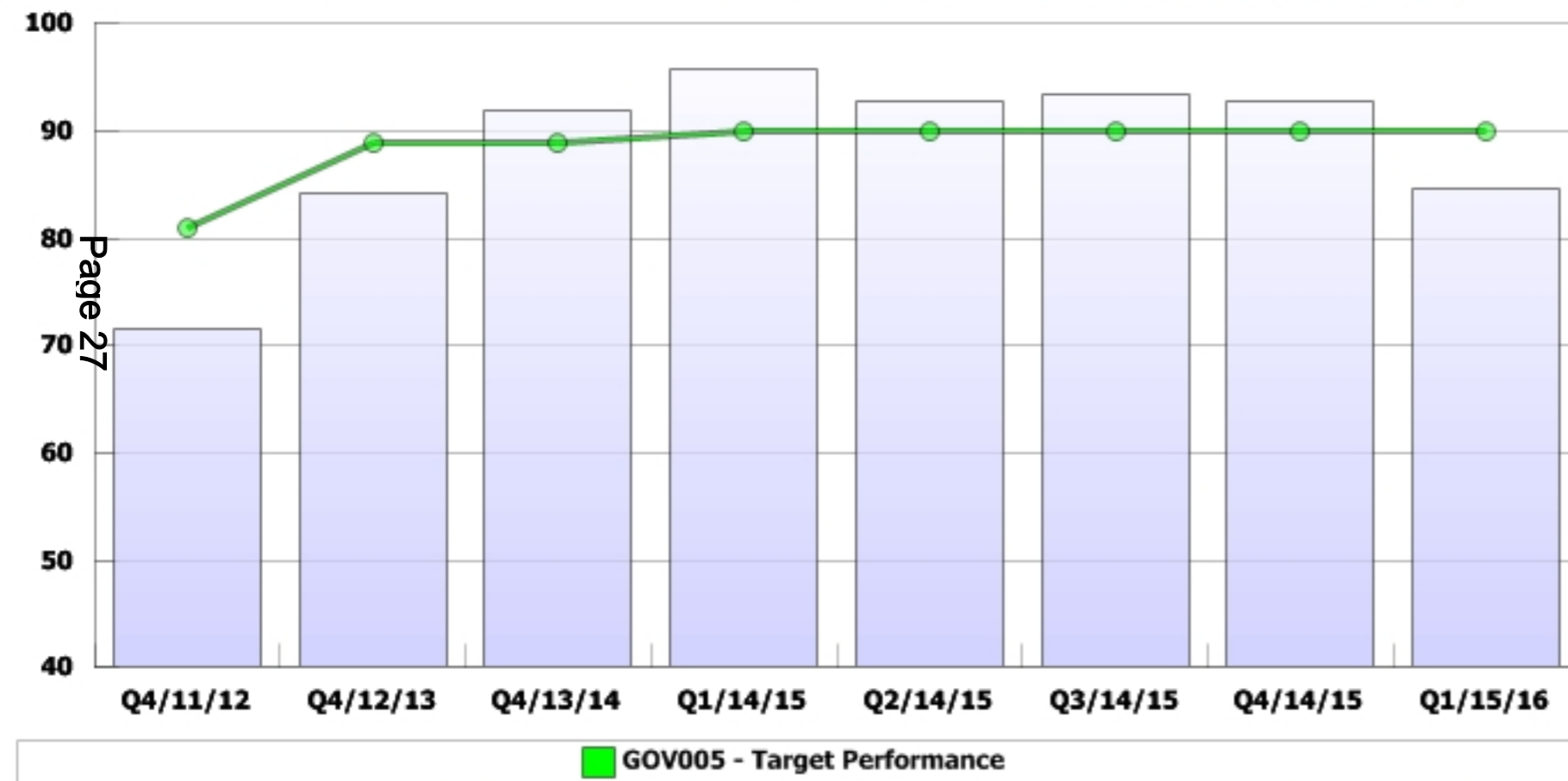
(Q1 2015/16) Major type applications represent only a small number of the overall number of planning applications received, but they are more complex and generally are reported to planning committees, so deadlines for decisions are tight. Because of this, the performance can be volatile, but with 10 out of 10 decided in time, the target has been achieved.

Corrective action proposed (if required):

Additional Information: This indicator ensures that local planning authorities determine 'minor' planning applications in a timely manner (within eight weeks).

For enquiries regarding this indicator contact the Performance Improvement Unit by email on performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or by telephone on 01992 564042.

Current and previous quarters performance



Quarter	Target	Actual	Status
Q1/15/16	90.00%	84.62%	✗
Q4/14/15	90.00%	92.90%	✓
Q3/14/15	90.00%	93.46%	✓
Q2/14/15	90.00%	92.90%	✓
Q1/14/15	90.00%	95.83%	✓

Annual 2015/16 - 90.00% (delegated)
 Target: 2014/15 - 90.00% (delegated)
 Indicator of good performance:
 A higher percentage is good
 ↑ is the direction of improvement

Is it likely that the target will be met at the end of the year?
 Uncertain



Comment on current performance (including context):

(Q1 2015/16) This covers planning applications that include 1 to 9 dwellings/ pitches per application as well as offices, light industry, general industry, storage, warehousing or retail floorspace under 10,000sq m or 1 hectare and other minor developments. 77 out of 91 applications were made in time. The figure now includes committee decisions as well as delegated decisions, which is a reflection of the lower performance at this stage where committee meetings are 4 weekly, whereas delegated decisions are daily.

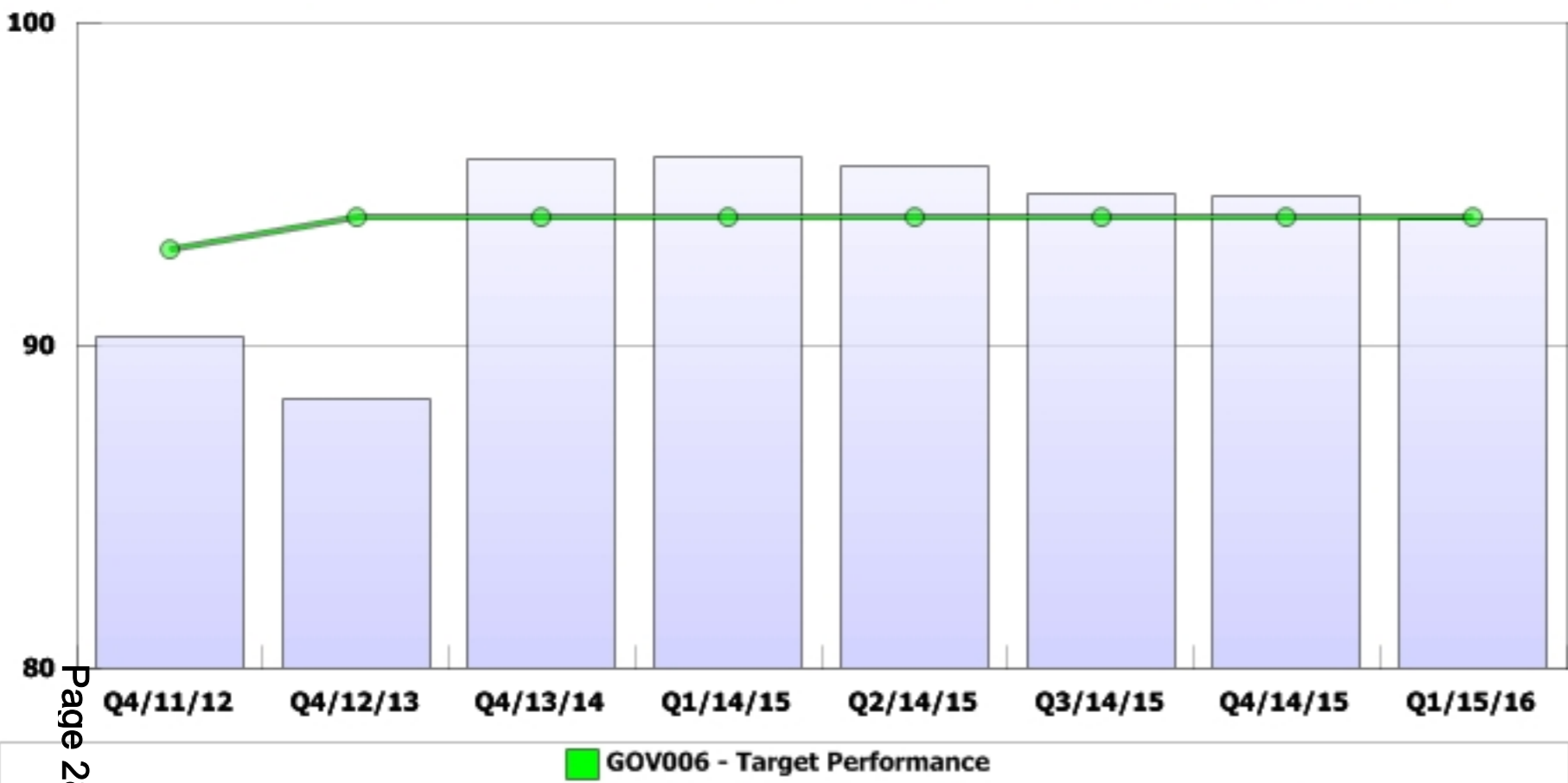
Corrective action proposed (if required):

(Q1 2015/16) Planning Officers are getting accustomed to requesting extension of times for committee cases from applicants, which is bedding in, but performance at Q1 does include applications submitted in 2014-15, before the extension of time was being used. The performance over the next quarters therefore is expected to rise.

Additional Information: This indicator ensures that local planning authorities determine 'other' planning applications in a timely manner (within eight weeks).

For enquiries regarding this indicator contact the Performance Improvement Unit by email on performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or by telephone on 01992 564042.

Current and previous quarters performance



Quarter	Target	Actual	Status
Q1/15/16	94.00%	93.96%	✗
Q4/14/15	94.00%	94.69%	✓
Q3/14/15	94.00%	94.78%	✓
Q2/14/15	94.00%	95.62%	✓
Q1/14/15	94.00%	95.90%	✓

Annual Target: 2015/16 - 94.00% (delegated)
 2014/15 - 94.00% (delegated)
 Indicator of good performance: A higher percentage is good
 ↑ is the direction of improvement

Is it likely that the target will be met at the end of the year?
 Yes

Comment on current performance (including context):

(Q1 2015/16) GOV006 represents the highest number out of all planning application types decided, which now includes committee decisions. 311 out of 331 applications were decided in time in this category, which very marginally is just out target, but within tolerance.

Corrective action proposed (if required):

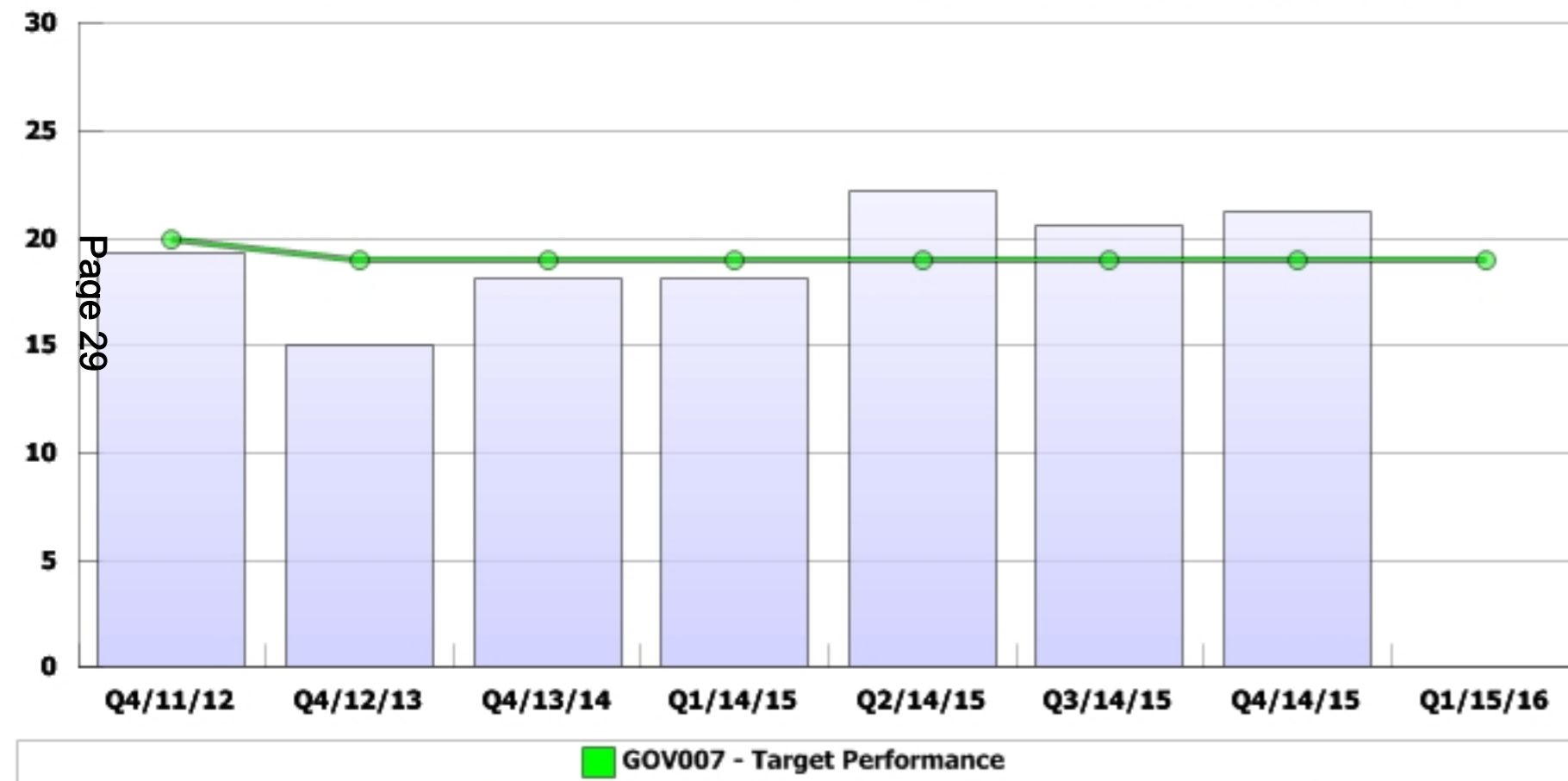
(Q1 2015/16) The target was only just missed, but greater use of the extension of time, as accepted by Dept of CLG, should bring an improvement for the next quarter.

GOV007 What percentage of planning applications recommended by planning officers for refusal were overturned and granted permission following an appeal?

Additional Information: This indicator is expressed as a percentage of the no. of appeals determined and seeks to assess the levels of applications that may be refused in order to meet development control performance targets. It measures the performance of only Officer Recommendations for refusal of planning permission

For enquiries regarding this indicator contact the Performance Improvement Unit by email on performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or by telephone on 01992 564042.

Current and previous quarters performance



Quarter	Target	Actual	Status
Q1/15/16	19.00%	0.00%	✓
Q4/14/15	19.00%	21.28%	✗
Q3/14/15	19.00%	20.59%	✗
Q2/14/15	19.00%	22.22%	✗
Q1/14/15	19.00%	18.20%	✓

Annual Target: 2015/16 - 19.00%
 Target: 2014/15 - 19.00%
 Indicator of good performance: A lower percentage is good
 ↓ is the direction of improvement

Is it likely that the target will be met at the end of the year?
 Yes

Comment on current performance (including context):

(Q1 2015/16) Of the 3 appeal decisions resulting from officer recommendations to refuse planning permission, all 3 have been dismissed on appeal. The target is easily therefore being achieved at this stage, however, the number of appeals was very low but it does indicate that Officers professional judgement on planning application is generally in line with national planning guidance.

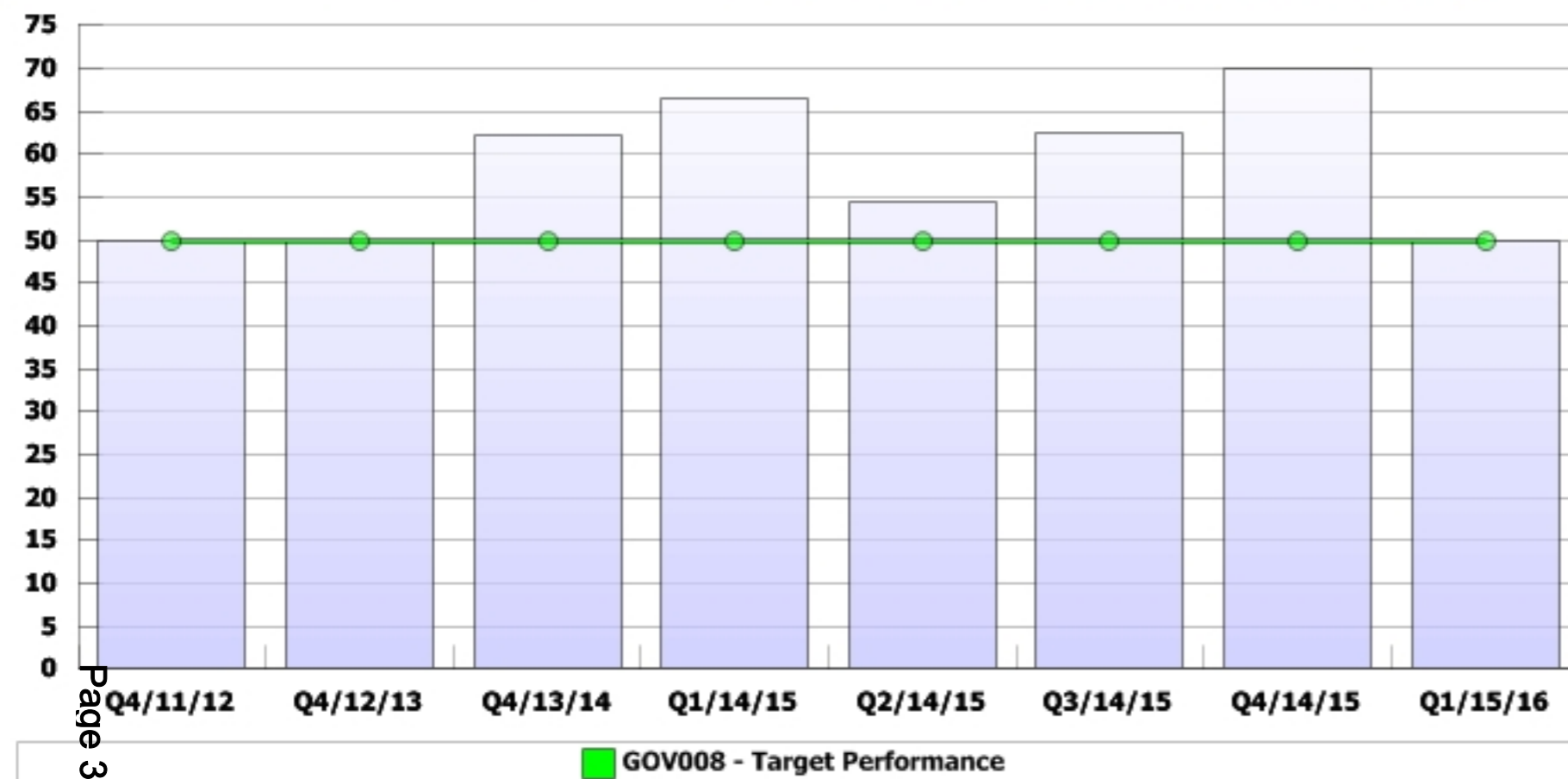
Corrective action proposed (if required):

GOV008 What percentage of planning applications, refused by Council Members against the planning officer's recommendation, were granted permission on appeal?

Additional Information: This indicator is expressed as a percentage of the no. of appeals determined and seeks to assess the levels of applications that may be refused in order to meet development control performance targets. It measures the performance of only Officer Recommendations for refusal of planning permission

For enquiries regarding this indicator contact the Performance Improvement Unit by email on performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or by telephone on 01992 564042.

Current and previous quarters performance



Quarter	Target	Actual
Q1/15/16	50.00%	50.00%
Q4/14/15	50.00%	70.00%
Q3/14/15	50.00%	62.50%
Q2/14/15	50.00%	54.55%
Q1/14/15	50.00%	66.67%

Is it likely that the target will be met at the end of the year?

Yes

↓ is the direction of improvement

Annual Target: 2015/16 - 50.00%
 2014/15 - 50.00%

Indicator of good performance: A lower percentage is good

Comment on current performance (including context):

(Q1 2015/16) Members decisions to refuse planning permission by reversing officer recommendations on planning applications were supported on appeal in 2 out of 4 cases, so that 50% (2) were allowed and therefore in target.

Corrective action proposed (if required):

GOV04 What percentage of major planning applications were processed within 13 weeks or extension of time date?

Outturn			Target
2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
56.67%	70.97%	96.6%	75.00%

Responsible Officer

Colleen O'Boyle
Director of Governance

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
Given complexity of most of these types of applications and particularly where amendments are made to plans requiring further consultation with third parties, case officer to seek agreement from applicant/agent to extend the time beyond 13 weeks to a new agree date. Presenting officer to check this is done where applications are reported to planning committees.	Specific to each planning application and therefore as and when required.	Final decision made in 13 week target time or by the new date.
Planning Officer report part prepared in advance of planning application, where advice already given on paid pre-planning application submission.	As and when required	Speed up process of decision making so that the final decision is made in target time.
Planning case officers to have regular up date with Principal Planning Officer on planning application progress towards committee or, where relevant, the delegated date target and to aid decision making.	Fortnightly	Target achieved.

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
Prevent deferral at planning committees by anticipating need for Member site visit through consultation with relevant planning committee chairman.	As and when required	Hit earliest possible committee meeting in order to achieve target date.
Senior Management in Development Management to regularly check and sign off delegated decisions made by case officers.	Daily	Delegated target date achieved.
AD Governance (Development Management) to keep record of applications that miss their target and seek out reasons why.	On going, but as and when required	Prevent repeated failure so that target next time is achieved.

Please detail any budget or resource implications of the improvement actions you have listed overleaf. Please quantify any additional resources which will be required to implement the improvements and detail how the additional resources will be allocated.

Reliance on existing resources through the recent Development Management restructure which has increased resourcing at planning application registration stage and professional case officer level. Given current high planning application submissions, there is a need for an additional temporary planning case officer to help maintain achieving the targets, which can be offset against higher Development Control income.

Please describe any contextual factors, internal or external, which may impact upon the ability to deliver the improvements listed.

Full complement of staff, particularly at planning application registration, assessment, recommendation and decision making stages, so as to limit any delay.

Further increase in planning applications and paid pre-planning application submissions.

Applicant/agent refuses to agree extension of time beyond the 13 week date and in addition, if it goes beyond 26 weeks, the applicant/agent has a right to have the full planning application fee returned.

GOV05 What percentage of minor planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?

Outturn			Target
2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
84.17%	91.97%	92.90%	90.00%

Responsible Officer

**Colleen O'Boyle
Director of Governance**

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
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Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
<p>Some of these applications can be complex and particularly where amendments are made to plans requiring further consultation with third parties, case officer to seek agreement from applicant/agent to extend the time beyond 8 weeks to a new agree date. Presenting officer to check this is done where applications are reported to planning committees.</p>	<p>Specific to each planning application and therefore as and when required.</p>	<p>Final decision made in 8 week target time or by the new date.</p>
<p>Planning Officer report part prepared in advance of planning application, where advice already given on paid pre-planning application submission.</p>	<p>As and when required</p>	<p>Speed up process of decision making so that the final decision is made in target time.</p>
<p>Planning case officers to have regular up date with Principal Planning Officer on planning application progress towards committee or, where relevant, the delegated date target and to aid decision making.</p>	<p>Fortnightly</p>	<p>Target achieved.</p>
<p>Prevent deferral at planning committees by anticipating need for Member site visit through consultation with relevant planning committee chairman.</p>	<p>As and when required</p>	<p>Hit earliest possible committee meeting in order to achieve target date.</p>
<p>Senior Management in Development Management to regularly check and sign off delegated decisions made by case officers.</p>	<p>Daily</p>	<p>Delegated target date achieved.</p>
<p>AD Governance (Development Management) to keep record of applications that miss their target and seek out reasons why.</p>	<p>On going, but as and when required</p>	<p>Prevent repeated failure so that target next time is achieved.</p>

Please detail any budget or resource implications of the improvement actions you have listed overleaf. Please quantify any additional resources which will be required to implement the improvements and detail how the additional resources will be allocated.

Reliance on existing resources through the recent Development Management restructure which has increased resourcing at planning application registration stage and professional case officer level. Given current high planning application submissions, there is a need for an additional temporary planning case officer to help maintain achieving the targets, which can be offset against higher Development Control income.

Please describe any contextual factors, internal or external, which may impact upon the ability to deliver the improvements listed.

Full complement of staff, particularly at planning application registration, assessment, recommendation and decision making stages, so as to limit any delay.
Further increase in planning applications and paid pre-planning application submissions.
Applicant/agent refuses to agree extension of time beyond the 8 week date.

GOV06 What percentage of other planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?

Outturn			Target
2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
88.38%	95.84%	94.69%	94.00%

Responsible Officer

**Colleen O'Boyle
Director of Governance**

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
Case officer to seek agreement from applicant/agent to extend the time beyond 8 weeks to a new agree date. Presenting officer to check this is done where applications are reported to planning committees.	Specific to each planning application and therefore as and when required.	Final decision made in 8 week target time or by the new date.
Planning Officer report part prepared in advance of planning application, where advice already given on paid pre-planning application submission.	As and when required	Speed up process of decision making so that the final decision is made in target time.
Planning case officers to have regular up date with Principal Planning Officer on planning application progress towards committee or, where relevant, the delegated date target and to aid decision making.	Fortnightly	Target achieved.
Prevent deferral at planning committees by anticipating need for Member site visit through consultation with relevant planning committee chairman.	As and when required	Hit earliest possible committee meeting in order to achieve target date.
Senior Management in Development Management to regularly check and sign off delegated decisions made by case officers.	Daily	Delegated target date achieved.

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
AD Governance (Development Management) to keep record of applications that miss their target and seek out reasons why.	On going, but as and when required	Prevent repeated failure so that target next time is achieved.

Please detail any budget or resource implications of the improvement actions you have listed overleaf. Please quantify any additional resources which will be required to implement the improvements and detail how the additional resources will be allocated.

Reliance on existing resources through the recent Development Management restructure which has increased resourcing at planning application registration stage and professional case officer level. Given current high planning application submissions, there is a need for an additional temporary planning case officer to help maintain achieving the targets, which can be offset against higher Development Control income.

Please describe any contextual factors, internal or external, which may impact upon the ability to deliver the improvements listed.

Full complement of staff, particularly at planning application registration, assessment, recommendation and decision making stages, so as to limit any delay.
Further increase in planning applications and paid pre-planning application submissions.
Applicant/agent refuses to agree extension of time beyond the 8 week date.

GOV07 What percentage of planning applications recommended by planning officers for refusal were overturned and granted permission following an appeal?

Outturn			Target
2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
15.10%	18.18%	21.28%	19.00%

Responsible Officer

Colleen O'Boyle
Director of Governance

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
At monthly Team Meeting of Development Control, assess why any appeal was allowed and whether judgement call by officers in refusing planning permission should next time be different.	November 2015	6 monthly report to members of Area Plans Cttees. Reduce number of appeals allowed.
Planning officer's refusal report state a way forward, if there is one, so as to encourage a resubmission under a new planning application rather than appeal.	Ongoing, review quarterly	Reduction in the number submitted and proportion of those appeal submitted being allowed.
Finely balanced planning applications decisions to be recommended for approval rather than refusal, particularly those decisions taken at officer delegated level.	As and when required.	Reduction in the number submitted and proportion of those appeal submitted being allowed.

Please detail any budget or resource implications of the improvement actions you have listed overleaf. Please quantify any additional resources which will be required to implement the improvements and detail how the additional resources will be allocated.

The current level of staffing and resources should be sufficient.
In respect of more complex planning appeal hearings or a public inquiries, there is a Professional Fees annual budget of £24,640, which, when required, pays for specialist advice to help the Council defend appeals. Such examples include, gypsy and traveller appeals, agricultural related cases and highway refusals where there is no highway objection from Essex County Council. Each year, there has been a need to use this consultancy resource, including, where necessary, helping Legal Services pay towards barrister fees.

Please describe any contextual factors, internal or external, which may impact upon the ability to deliver the improvements listed.

Full staff resource within the Development Control section is required to produce appeal statements on a strict time limit and attend hearing etc. All senior planning officers in Development Control have had hearing and public inquiry training. Where external consultants are required to defend the Council's appeal, we use consultants who are familiar with Epping Forest District and despite the narrow time parameters set by the Planning Inspectorate, this has proved invaluable in helping to defend the appeal.
The reliance on internal staff, again in specialist areas across the Council and Essex County Council, is invaluable.

GOV08 What percentage of planning applications refused by Council Members against the recommendation of the planning officers were granted permission following an appeal?

Outturn			Target
2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
50.00%	62.20%	70.00%	50.00%

Responsible Officer

Colleen O'Boyle
 Director of Governance

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
At monthly Team Meeting of Development Control, assess why any appeal was allowed and whether judgement call by officers in refusing planning permission should next time be different.	November 2015	6 monthly report to members of Area Plans Cttees. Reduce number of appeals allowed.
Planning Committee's do state a way forward in the Minutes if there is one, so as to encourage a resubmission under a new planning application rather than appeal.	Ongoing, review quarterly	Reduction in the number submitted and proportion of those appeal submitted being allowed.
Member Training - clarity over what is and is not a material planning considerations, policy support versus local opposition, defending planning appeals with a good, sound case.	19 June 2015 Training day for Members.	Reduce number of appeal allowed and potentially, award of costs.

Improvement Action	Target Dates	Key Measures / Milestones
<p>Improved engagement with Planning Officers before meetings to understand more fully the planning issues of a particular case by using in good time the contact reference on each application report in the committee agenda.</p>	<p>19 June 2015 Training day for Members. July and November report to Members of Area Plans Cttees</p>	<p>Avoid unnecessary refusal of planning permissions and ensure there is a case for defending successively on appeal in what are usually balanced, contentious applications, thereby reducing the number of appeals allowed and potential award of costs.</p>

Please detail any budget or resource implications of the improvement actions you have listed overleaf. Please quantify any additional resources which will be required to implement the improvements and detail how the additional resources will be allocated.

The current level of staffing and resources should be sufficient. In respect of more complex planning appeal hearings or a public inquiries, there is a Professional Fees annual budget of £24,640, which, when required, pays for specialist advice to help the Council defend appeals. Such examples include, gypsy and traveller appeals, agricultural related cases and highway refusals where there is no highway objection from Essex County Council. Each year, there has been a need to use this consultancy resource, including, where necessary, helping Legal Services pay towards barrister fees.

Please describe any contextual factors, internal or external, which may impact upon the ability to deliver the improvements listed.

Full staff resource within the Development Control section is required to produce appeal statements on a strict time limit and attend hearing etc. All senior planning officers in Development Control have had hearing and public inquiry training. Where external consultants are required to defend the Council's appeal, we use consultants who are familiar with Epping Forest District and despite the narrow time parameters set by the Planning Inspectorate, this has proved invaluable in helping to defend the appeal.

The reliance on internal staff, again in specialist areas across the Council and Essex County Council, is invaluable.

Ward Member attend hearings and public inquiries to help defend the Council's case.



Report to: Governance Select Committee

Date of meeting: 6 October 2015

Portfolio: Governance and Development Management (Councillor J. Philip)

Subject: Annual Equality Information Report 2015

Officer contact for further information: B. Copson (01992 564042)

Democratic Services Officer: M. Jenkins (01992 564607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Select Committee review the Equality Information Report for 2015.

Executive Summary:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that authorities subject to the public sector equality duty publish equality information annually to demonstrate compliance with the duty. The Council published its last equality information report in July 2014, and the 2015 report sets out the progress made since then to improve the Council's services and employment practices for people with protected characteristics.

The Council's progress against the public sector equality duty is monitored bi-annually by Management Board and overview and scrutiny to ensure compliance and drive improvement in performance.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The broad purpose of the public sector equality requires that the Council integrates a consideration of equality and good relations into its day-to-day business. It must consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and fairness, and reflect equality considerations into the design of policies and the delivery of services; and keep these issues under review.

The review and monitoring of performance against the equality duty helps the authority to comply with its legal requirement; and to provide services and employment practices which meet the diverse needs of its customers and employees.

Other Options for Action:

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review progress against the public sector equality duty and to consider corrective action where necessary, could mean that opportunities for improvement are lost.

Report:

1. The Equality Act 2010 requires that public bodies, including the Council, which are subject to the public sector equality duty, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between different groups, and
- (c) foster good relations between different groups.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- (a) removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- (b) taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
- (c) encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The equality duty covers: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination also covers marriage and civil partnerships.

2. The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public bodies. Understanding how services affect different groups makes it more likely that the services have the intended effect and this can lead to greater equality and better outcomes. Organisations which provide services which meet the needs of their customers and workforce are likely to carry out their core business more efficiently and have a more productive workforce.

3. Public bodies are also subject to a specific duty which requires that they publish information at least annually demonstrating compliance with the equality duty. The Council last published information in July 2014 and the Equality Information Report 2015, attached at Appendix 1, sets out the work it has undertaken in the last 12 months to improve equality for its customers and employees.

4. The annual Equality Report translates technical action plans for the year into an accessible outcome led report setting out how people have actually benefited from the work undertaken. The report will be published on the Council's website alongside other equality information.

5. Work to take forward the Council's equality duty is coordinated by the Corporate Equality working group and routinely monitored by Management Board and the Governance Select Committee bi-annually at quarters 2 and 4, with other specific reports as required. The Equality Information Report was reviewed by Management Board on 30 September 2015.

6. The Select Committee is requested to review the Equality Information Report for 2015.

Resource Implications:

Resource requirements for the production of the Equality Information Report 2015 have been met from existing resources within the Performance Improvement Unit.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Publishing this report will help the Council comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district. Relevant implications arising from initiatives set out in this report will have been identified by the responsible service director.

Consultation Undertaken:

The Equality Information Report has been reviewed by Management Board on 30 September 2015. Consultation required in connection with any of the initiatives set out in this report will have been identified by the responsible director.

Background Papers:

Equality Information reports for, 2012, 2013 and 2014 are available on the Councils website.

Impact Assessments:***Risk Management***

There are no risk management issues arising from the recommendations of this report. Relevant issues arising from specific activities set out in this report will have been identified by the responsible service director.

Equality:

The production and publication of this report helps people interested in the work of the authority to see the progress being made to improve equality in its services and employment practices. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Relevant implications arising from activities set out in this report will have been identified by the responsible service director.

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Equality Information Report

2015



**Epping Forest
District Council**

www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Contents

Introduction	3
Statement: Commitment to equality	4
Equality Act	5
Equality initiatives and progress	6
Going Forward	12

If you would like a copy of this Equality Report in another format, for example large print or Braille, please contact: Epping Forest District Council on 01992 564042 or email: equality@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

More information:

For more information about this report or any aspect of the Council's equality work contact us:

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Introduction

About this report

This report provides an overview of our work over the last 12 months, to bring greater equality to our residents, service users and employees. It provides information about the equality related developments we have made to our services, and our achievements since we published our last report in July 2014. This report builds upon previous reports and should be read in conjunction with them. These reports are on the Council's website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

This report meets the specific duty to publish information to show the progress we are making towards meeting the requirements of the public sector equality duty (more information on page 5).

Equality at Epping Forest

Equality is about fairness, recognising that people are different and that all individuals have the right to have those differences respected. Equality is also about recognising that inequality exists and that it can mean that some individuals are unable to reach their full potential or access services because of their individual characteristics. Whilst equality is morally right it also brings benefits to the Council and the whole community. Equality of opportunity helps to create an environment whereby everyone can contribute thereby maximising the value of the talent and skills available. It also helps the Council to attract, motivate and retain the best staff. Embedding equality into service provision allows for resources to be targeted where they are needed and for services to be provided in ways which allow all customers to access them.

An integrated approach

We plan our work to ensure it takes forward the Council's Corporate Plan and medium term aims for innovation, involvement and transparency, and to provide clear community leadership. It reflects corporate values of fairness and the provision of services tailored to the different needs of our communities. We are committed to delivering equality for all those who use our services, and our employees. Equality, therefore, is an integral part of our work.

Statement of commitment to equality

Short Statement:

‘Epping Forest District Council is committed to treating everyone equally and fairly according to their needs’

Full statement:

Epping Forest District Council is committed to ensuring that all individuals and groups are treated with respect and are valued equally;

We will endeavour to make our services accessible to everyone;

We will endeavour to eliminate discrimination against people who are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic;

We will consult and involve relevant people and groups from our community where appropriate in the design and monitoring of our services;

We will collect information about our customers to ensure our services are accessible and provided equally to all in our community;

Where necessary we will take positive action through our service provision to meet the particular needs of disadvantaged groups in our community;

We will endeavour to promote understanding and good relations between communities;

We will consider taking positive action to address under-representation and promote diversity in our workforce profile;

We will publish sufficient information to demonstrate how we have complied with the general equality duty;

We will use our procurement opportunities to drive equality, for example, by working proactively with key suppliers to promote equality and positive practices in their operations and in the provision of services;

We will ensure appropriate resources are available to meet our statutory equality responsibilities;

We will make sure that appropriate equality and diversity training is provided for all Members and staff of the Council.

The Equality Act 2010

...sets an expectation that public services must treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Protected Characteristics:

...are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

Public sector equality Duty:

Also known as the general equality duty and s149

The specific Duties:

Whilst the Council has always been fully committed to equality and its leadership role in the community, legislation guides much of our equality work. Existing anti-discrimination legislation was harmonised and strengthened in 2010 by the introduction of The Equality Act providing stronger protection against discrimination, and greater clarity for employers, businesses and public service providers about their responsibilities.

Evidence shows that some groups of people are repeatedly disadvantaged in society by the way their needs are overlooked or ignored. These groups of people are now identified by their characteristics under the Equality Act and offered protection. The Equality Act requires us to consider their needs and requirements when carrying out our business as an employer and service provider. Some characteristics are common to everyone. For example, everyone has a race or sexual orientation. There are also some characteristics which do not apply to everyone, such as disability.

The Equality Act 2010 places a number of responsibilities and requirements on the Council. We have a general duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- Foster good relations between different groups

The purpose of the general duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into our day-to-day business. Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the three general duty aims as part of the process of our normal business and decision making, removing disadvantage, and encouraging participation and success. The term 'foster' means tackling unlawful discrimination and promoting good relations between different groups of people.

We have two additional and specific duties:

1. We have to set equality objectives at least every four years that will help us to further the aims of the general duty; and
2. We must publish information annually to show the progress we are making to deliver the general duty.

Equality initiatives and progress

Equality Framework for Epping Forest District Council

We have produced a new tool to help employees build equality into their work. All our equality policies, forms and systems have been brought together within a framework making it easier to see what employees have to do and to access the tools they need to do it. The framework provides structure to our equality agenda and the systems to deliver it and is a useful reference document to answer any queries about what the Council is doing about equality, and why it does what it does.

LGBT History Month

In February this year the Rainbow flag was once again flown above the Civic Offices for a day in recognition of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender history month. The Portfolio Holder for equality invited staff to join him by the flag pole outside the Civic Offices to hear him deliver a short message on the importance of tolerance and diversity.

Member training

A thorough understanding of equality is important at every level of the authority. The Council's elected members have received training, learning about when and how equality is relevant to the work the Council does. They also familiarised themselves with some of the Council's report formats and where to find equality information so they can take it into account when they make decisions on behalf of the Council. This training was received well by Councillors and will continue to be a part of the Member Development Programme.

International Women's Day

International women's Day has been celebrated in many countries around the world on 8 March since 1913. It is a day when women are recognised for their achievements throughout history and across nations. The Council has a number of high achieving women employees who have addressed challenges and taken different routes to progress their careers and achieve success. Ruth Rose, Senior Lawyer for the Council, described the path she took in the first of a series of interviews with staff published in the Council's staff newsletter District Lines

Improved access to our buildings

Manoeuvrable desks have replaced the old furniture in the Committee Rooms to provide greater flexibility as to how the room is used and to make it more accessible for people with disabilities.

Text messaging alerts

A text messaging service has been put in place to alert visitors and employees who have hearing difficulties or are deaf in the case of fire in the Civic Offices. Details are located at main reception and visitors and employees are required to send a text to activate this service so that they are alerted in the event of a fire.

Helping children make considered choices

Every year we help to provide a range of specialist workshops through the Crucial Crew programme to year six pupils who are ten years old, and through the Reality Roadshow programme to year nine pupils who are 14 years old. The workshops are designed to encourage them to make considered choices and understand the consequences of their actions. Every child in these year groups takes part in interactive scenarios focussing on personal safety, emotional well-being and crime prevention.

Baby changing table

Recognising that pregnancy and maternity are protected characteristics under the Equality Act, the Council adapted a disabled toilet on the first floor to include a baby changing table for any visitors to the Civic Offices who may require baby changing facilities.

Polling Stations

Polling Stations are reviewed annually to make sure they are accessible. We are pleased to announce at this years General and Local Elections we had no negative feedback about the accessibility of our polling stations.

More inclusive image

Disabled, black and multi ethnic and gay people are all part of our community yet sometimes they are not routinely included in images illustrating our general publications. We are exploring ways to develop a library of images to use in our leaflets, news items or posters, to show that our services are inclusive and open to all.

Six for all

The Council was successful in applying for Sport England's Inclusion Fund. The Six for All project will run for three years and the aims of the project are to increase the number of competitive sporting opportunities for young people and adults (14 plus) who have a disability. The project will focus on six projects over the three years, boccia (a seated inclusive sport), table tennis, judo, trampolining, swimming and athletics. Working closely with local clubs the project will look to set up sustainable disability sections of these clubs and will offer training to coaches and volunteers. The 'Six for All' project was launched in November 2014 at Ongar Leisure Centre. The launch event saw 30 young people with various disabilities/ Special Educational Needs take part in trampolining, boccia, judo and athletics. Since the launch event the project has set up a new trampolining session at Ongar as well as a 'bounce and swim' session.

New Horizons

A new brochure of activities for anyone aged 50+ was produced in April. It covers a range of sporting, social and leisure opportunities. In addition to the Council's own sessions, details of activities and courses provided by Everyone Active, private clubs and other organisations are included. In this year's brochure you will find everything from athletics, badminton, bowls and cycling to dancing, netball, swimming and tea dances. New Horizons activities take place across the District. A qualified coach or supervisor is on hand and equipment is provided at most sessions. Everyone aged 50+ is welcome with absolutely no restrictions regarding fitness or ability.

Boccia

"The Jubilee Court group in Waltham Abbey really enjoyed their afternoon of boccia".

The Council works with several key organisations like Volunteer Action Epping Forest (VAEF), Resident Associations and Age UK to deliver boccia sessions, a seated inclusive sport. Working across a variety of sites qualified coaches deliver boccia which engages older people in low level physical activity through a variety of challenges and games. Adaptations to the game can be made to ensure it is fully inclusive like using a ramp, shortening game space and being able to throw or kick the boccia balls depending on their level of ability. Julie Bristow, VAEF Befriending Scheme Co-ordinator, gave feedback at one particular session "The Jubilee Court group in Waltham abbey really enjoyed their afternoon of boccia".

Looking after our vulnerable citizens

We have appointed a Vulnerable Persons Officer within Local Taxation. With the advent of Local Council Tax Support a lot more potentially vulnerable people now receive a Council Tax bill and it became evident that we needed a new way of co-ordinating these cases. There is now a new process whereby a formal step has been put into the recovery process whereby those who are potentially vulnerable and have debts with us are referred to this vulnerable persons officer for assessment, and further action will be appropriate to the individual's circumstances. This officer will also act as a conduit for signposting and liaising with agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Mental Health teams., and liaise with the Corporate Safeguarding team where cases may be identified within the section's work.

The aim is to enable a person's vulnerability to be properly identified, to help them access services and to assist them to manage their debts.

Warmer homes in rural areas

Many of our older tenants live in rural areas which may not have gas supplied. This year we carried out major energy efficiency improvements including installing insulation to external walls, and air source heating to a number of our rural homes to improve warmth, comfort, and energy efficiency. During 2014/15 approximately 40 properties benefited from this initiative with a further 40 planned for 2015/16.

Adapting council homes for older tenants and residents with disabilities...

Every year we adapt some of our council properties to help people with disabilities to get up and down stairs, or to use their bathroom, or otherwise get the benefit of their home.

This year we have:

- installed a further five stair lifts,
- 165 level access and over bath showers,
- constructed six hard standings and vehicle crossovers; and
- adapted four kitchens,

Mental health

The Council is working with authorities from across Essex to deliver mental health training to all our managers and Human Resources (HR) team. The objectives of the training are to assist our managers and HR staff when dealing with mental health issues, to increase understanding, to spot the signs and advise them on the appropriate support to consider.

Apprenticeships

In 2013 the Council employed seven Business Administration and two Construction Apprentices to its Corporate Apprenticeship Programme. All the apprentices were young adults from the District. Six of the nine apprentices have found permanent employment with the Council. This year (2015) we are looking to recruit the same number of apprentices. This has been achieved, in part, by working in partnership with a group of preferred Housing Associations, which will fund up to three of the apprenticeship places.

The Apprenticeship programme provides a wide range of work experience and the opportunity to gain a work based qualification. The aim of the Programme is to find them permanent employment with the Council.

Understanding our residents

The Council recognises that we have an ageing population and this year the Council has adopted a corporate aim that specifically targets meeting the needs of older people.

Policy review

The Council has introduced a new Medical Health – Incapacity Policy which includes a robust Redeployment Policy. This is to assist employees, in particular circumstances, to remain in employment.

The Council has also implemented a new Recruitment Policy which provides managers with a thorough scoring system for both the short listing and interview stages of recruitment exercises. In addition it supports the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, whereby disabled applicants are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria for a post and they identify themselves as having a disability.

Accessible services

As a Council we want to be as accessible as possible and are taking steps so that our Customers can contact us in a range of ways that is appropriate to them. This year we have increased the opening hours of our Council Offices at the Limes Centre, Chigwell as well as introducing a web based and smartphone application that enables our tenants to report repairs online.

The Local Plan

As of March 2015 the Council has 121 permanent authorised pitches for Gypsies and Travellers as well as six temporary pitches and 16 unauthorised caravans with an assessed need for increasing this provision by an additional 112 pitches in the period up to 2033.

Planning for the future

We supported the planning application for a state of the art Autism centre and Autism School proposed by the Anderson Foundation. The Council received positive feedback for the way in which officers dealt with the planning application which has the potential to be a beacon of excellence.

Get Active Epping Forest

During the period March to May 2015, 20 workshops were run with 247 elderly residents of some of our sheltered housing schemes in a project called 'Dance'. The aim of the project is to encourage healthy and active lifestyles and reduce the number of inactive people in the district. Further funding has been received to deliver themed activity workshops to enhance the health and well-being of residents at Jubilee and Jessops Court in Waltham Abbey. The sessions will increase their physical activity through creative dance bringing both health and social benefits to those involved.

Inclusive theatre performances

In August 2014 28 participants attended the 'Charlie Bear and his Smelly Socks' event aimed at children under five with additional needs, and their families. 'Bangers and Mash theatre company' performed a new play written from personal experience of severe learning disability, and from working closely with carers and teachers, and a wide range children with disabilities and from different age groups, over the last ten years. It was a relaxed performance prioritised for children with additional needs and their families in a fully accessible arts centre.

In the same period the theatre company ran a similar event, 'Jack and the Beanstalk' for children under ten with additional needs and their families.

Big Draw

“Good fun was had by all. It was a novel experience and very entertaining. We were all impressed with the artistic conclusion at the end of the day”.

The 'Big Draw' was an international drawing festival which took place throughout October. Eight adults from Voluntary Action Epping Forest's group for adults with learning disabilities were in attendance. They were invited to draw around each other's shadows projected on to the gallery wall. During the course of the exhibition this created a network of outlines that overlapped making other shapes and connections in the drawing.

Richard Ford, a volunteer for the charity, said 'Good fun was had by all. It was a novel experience and very entertaining. We were all impressed with the artistic conclusion at the end of the day'.

Limes Street Dance

Between March and May 2015, 17 young people aged between five and seven years, attended the Limes Street Dance project. The aim of the project was to encourage them to be more physically active and build a greater sense of community identity.

Going Forward

We will publish more equality information in July 2016 and annually in July thereafter.