

## Select Committee Agenda



### **Governance Select Committee Tuesday, 6th February, 2018**

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 February, 2018**  
at **7.15 pm** .

**Glen Chipp**  
Chief Executive

**Democratic Services  
Officer**

J Leither  
Tel: (01992) 564756 Email:  
democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

#### **Members:**

Councillors N Avey (Chairman), G Chambers (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett, N Bedford, L Hughes, S Jones, H Kauffman, M McEwen, L Mead, B Rolfe, D Stallan, B Surtees and D Wixley

**SUBSTITUTE NOMINATION DEADLINE BY 7.15 pm**

#### **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. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 8)**

(Director of Governance) To agree the notes of the meeting of the Select Committee held on 5 December 2017.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

In considering whether to declare a pecuniary or a non-pecuniary interest under the

Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 9 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a 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 9 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.

**5. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 9 - 14)**

(Chairman / Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Committee. This is attached along with an ongoing work programme. Members are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

**6. REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME (Pages 15 - 28)**

(Director of Governance) To consider the attached report.

**7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2017/18 - QUARTER 3 PROGRESS (Pages 29 - 36)**

(Director of Governance) To consider the attached report.

**8. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN 2017/18 - QUARTER 3 PROGRESS (Pages 37 - 44)**

(Director of Governance) To consider the attached report.

**9. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

To consider which reports are ready to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

**10. FUTURE MEETINGS**

To note the next date of the Governance Select Committee:

27 March 2018.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF GOVERNANCE SELECT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2017  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.15 - 8.08 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	N Avey (Chairman), G Chambers (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett (Vice Chairman of the Council), N Bedford, L Hughes, H Kauffman, B Rolfe, D Stallan (Chairman of the Council) and D Wixley
<b>Other members present:</b>	J Philip
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	L Mead and B Surtees
<b>Officers Present</b>	N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)), S Hill (Assistant Director, Governance) and J Leither (Democratic Services Officer)

---

**27. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

There were no substitute members at the meeting.

**28. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the notes of the last meeting of the Select Committee held on 3 October 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

**29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**30. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME**

The Select Committee received a report from the Assistant Director (Development Management) regarding the Governance Select Committee's Terms of Reference and Work Programme 2017/18.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Terms of Reference and the Work Programme of the Select Committee for 2017/18 be noted.

**31. PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW**

The Select Committee received a report from S Hill, Assistant Director, Governance regarding the Parliamentary Boundary Review which was being carried out in England. He advised that the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) had been tasked to carry out a review of constituencies and report to Parliament in September 2018. The brief from Parliament was to reduce the number of constituencies and

therefore MPs in England from 650 to 600. The aim for the new constituencies in England was to ensure that every new constituency had approximately the same number of electors, with no fewer than 71,031 and no higher than 78,507.

On 17 October 2017 the BCE had published their revised proposals and all of the representations received during the secondary consultation. The final consultation on the revised proposals would end on the 11 December 2017, this was the final consultation before the BCE report to Parliament in September 2018. The changes would not take effect until the next General Election in 2022.

### Essex

In the County of Essex the BCE proposed changes across the County, in particular to the constituencies in South Essex. The BCE had made revisions to seven of the seventeen constituencies in the County and an additional change of name to one further constituency. The existing constituencies of Chelmsford, Epping Forest and Thurrock remain unchanged as in the initial proposal.

### Epping Forest

Epping Forest remained unchanged.

### Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar

In order to meet the new equitable elector numbers, the seats of Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar had been suggested to change and the new constituency would include the Epping Forest wards of Hastingwood, Matching and Sheering Village, Moreton and Fyfield, North Weald Bassett, Roydon, Lower Sheering and Lower Nazeing.

Members were asked to consider if they would:

- (i) support the proposals for no change to the Epping Forest Constituency;
- (ii) wish to submit any other observations on the proposals affecting residents; and
- (iii) authorise officers to submit comments to the BCE before the deadline. The BCE have specifically asked that where proposals were supported that those representations were made to the BCE.

Councillor Stallan stated that these changes were very confusing to residents as in 1997 North Weald Bassett (NWB) was a part of the Epping Forest parliamentary constituency, then in 2010 the parliamentary boundary changed and NWB then became a part of Brentwood and Ongar, now it would seem there are proposals for another boundary change and North Weald Bassett would be a part of the parliamentary constituency of Harlow even though the district was in Epping Forest.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Assistant Director, Governance be authorised to submit the following comments to the Boundary Commission for England, supporting the no change proposals relating to the Epping Forest Parliamentary Constituency:

“That the proposals seek to transfer an area which currently sits in the Ongar and Brentwood constituency to the Harlow constituency. This area includes North Weald Bassett. Residents of this area were subject to change during the last boundary review when they moved from Epping Forest to Brentwood and Ongar. This time they are being linked to Harlow, and whilst they understand the reasons why the commission have made this change in relation to the latest proposals, members of the Select Committee are of the view that this area does not have the connection to Harlow and that the town looks to Epping as its associated community and administrative centre; and

That members of the Select Committee noted the enlargement of the Harlow constituency and changes to the boundaries generally in this administrative district and have asked for it to be noted and conveyed to the BCE that they hope these proposals were not the precursor to changes to the Districts administrative boundaries at any point in the future.”

### **32. SUBMISSION TO DECISION ON PLANNING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

The Select Committee received a report from N Richardson, Assistant Director (Development Management) who advised that at the last meeting of the Select Committee on the 3 October, the Committee received a report regarding the Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 – Quarter 1, in respect of planning application turnaround times, which showed that the targets set were being achieved

Councillor Knapman, who was a substitute at the meeting of the Governance Select Committee on the 3 October, asked if these statistics were accurate, as he understood more to be instances of applications getting near to the 8 week deadline, withdrawn then re-submitted a few weeks later and the 8 week deadline would start again.

The Committee asked for a report to be brought to this meeting with further detail from Officers, as the Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) was not present at the meeting on the 3 October.

Mr Richardson advised that there were 1,714 planning application decisions issued over the last year and it was noted that 40 of these had been withdrawn by the applicant with no resubmission made, 24 had been refused planning permission and 32 had been withdrawn and then a revised/new planning application had been submitted which represented just over 1.4% of the total. Therefore the instances of applications getting near to the 8 week deadline, withdrawn and then resubmitted were very low.

However, running through all the planning applications in this time period, the grounds for refusal, some of which have been committee reversals made by members, have then been the subject of negotiation with officers and in most cases a more positive decision on a resubmission was made through a fresh planning application.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Select Committee noted those planning applications resubmitted following a previous application being withdrawn or refused planning permission were a very small percentage of all planning decisions made; and

- (2) That the quarterly return of the three planning application type Key Performance Indicator (KPI) was accurate and in line with the KPI criteria and measures set by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

### 33. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2017/18 - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS

The Select Committee received a report from the Assistant Director (Development Management), regarding the Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 – Quarter 2 Performance.

The Local Government Act 1999 requires that the Council make arrangements to secure 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 the duty to secure continuous improvement, a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relevant to the Council's services and key objectives, were adopted each year by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee. Performance against the KPIs was monitored on a quarterly basis by Management Board and Overview and Scrutiny to drive improvement in performance and ensure corrective action was taken where necessary.

A range of thirty-two (32) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2017/18 were adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in March 2017. The KPIs are important to the improvement of the Council's services and the achievement of its key objectives and comprised of a combination of some former statutory indicators and locally determined performance measures. The aim of the KPIs were to direct improvement effort towards services and the national priorities and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district, that are the focus of the key objectives.

The overall position for all 32 KPIs at the end of Quarter 2 were as follows:

- (a) 25 (78%) indicators achieved target;
- (b) 3 (9%) indicators did not achieve target,
- (c) 4 (13%) indicators performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator; and
- (d) 26 (82%) of indicators were currently anticipated to achieve year-end target, 3 (9%) were uncertain whether they would achieve year-end target and a further 3 (9%) were anticipated not to achieve year-end target.

There were 5 KPIs which fell within the Governance Select Committee's areas of responsibility. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance at Q2 for these 5 indicators were as follows:

- (a) 4 (80%) indicators achieved target;
- (b) 1 (20%) indicators did not achieve target;
- (c) 0 (0%) performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator; and
- (d) 4 (80%) indicators were currently anticipated to achieve year-end target and a further 1 (20%) indicator was uncertain whether it would achieve year-end target.

The 'amber' performance status used in the KPI report under agenda item 7, appendix 1, identified indicators that had missed the agreed target for the quarter, but where performance was within an agreed tolerance or range. The KPI tolerances

were agreed by Management Board when targets for the KPIs were set in March 2017.

The Select Committee was requested to review Q2 performance for the KPIs within its areas of responsibility. The full set of KPIs was also considered by Management Board on 15 November 2017 and the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 16 November 2017.

Councillor N Avey advised that he had concerns regarding GOV008 and the percentage of planning applications refused by Council Members against the recommendation of the planning officers and were then granted permission on appeal. He stated that this needed to be looked at more closely by the Select Committee and requested that a report including examples of recent appeal decisions issued by the Planning Inspectorate be brought to the Select Committee at its meeting on the 27 March 2018.

S Hill, Assistant Director, Governance advised that he was writing a report regarding a review of the planning processes due to the Local Plan which would go to a future meeting of the Constitution Working Group.

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 for Quarter 2 Progress Report be noted; and

(2) That a report of the Planning Appeals Performance be brought to the Governance Select Committee at its meeting on the 27 March 2018.

**34. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN 2017/18 - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS**

The Select Committee received a report regarding the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2016/17 – Quarter 2 from the Assistant Director, Governance.

The Corporate Plan was the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out its priorities over the five year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The priorities or Corporate Aims were supported by Key Objectives which provided a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for these five years.

The Key Objectives were delivered by an annual action plan with each year building upon the progress against the achievement of the Key Objectives for previous years. The annual action plans contained a range of actions designed to achieve specific outcomes and were working documents and therefore subject to change and development to ensure the actions remained relevant and appropriate and to identify opportunities to secure further progress or improvement.

The Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 was adopted by Council at its meeting on 27 September 2016. Progress in relation to all actions and deliverables was reviewed by the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the appropriate Select Committee on a quarterly basis.

There were 50 actions in total for which progress updates for Quarter 2 were as follows:

- (a) 42 (84%) of these actions had been Achieved or were On Target;
- (b) 2 (4%) of these actions were Under Control;

- (c) 6 (12%) were Behind Schedule; and
- (d) 0 (0%) were Pending.

There were 8 actions that fell within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee. At the end of Quarter 2 these were:

- (a) 8 (100%) of these actions had been Achieved or were On Target;
- (b) 0 (0%) of these actions were Under Control;
- (c) 0 (0%) of these actions were Behind Schedule; and
- (d) 0 (0%) of these actions were Pending.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2017/18 Quarter 2 Progress Report be noted.

**35. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no reports for recommendation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**36. FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that the future meetings of the Governance Select Committee for this municipal year would be on:

06 February 2018; and  
27 March 2018.



## GOVERNANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE 2017/18

**Title:** Governance Select Committee

**Status:** Select Committee

1. To undertake overview and scrutiny, utilising appropriate methods and techniques, of the services and functions of the Governance Directorate;
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, the Cabinet or a relevant Portfolio Holder, and to report and make recommendations directly to the Committee, the Cabinet or such Portfolio Holder as appropriate;
4. 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;
5. To establish working groups as necessary to undertake any activity within these terms of reference;
6. 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;
7. 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;
8. 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; and
9. To recommend the establishment of task and finish panels to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as necessary, in order to undertake any activity within these terms of reference.
10. Transformation Projects relevant to this Committee:  
Details of relevant new transformation projects to be submitted to the relevant SC for scrutiny.

- |  |
|--|
| 11. Transformation Projects closure and benefits reports:<br>That any Directorate appropriate project closure and benefits realisation reports to be submitted to this SC for information. |
| <b>Chairman:</b> Councillor N Avey   |

## Governance Select Committee (Chairman – Councillor N Avey)

### Work Programme 2017/18

Item	Report Deadline/Priority	Progress/Comments	Programme of Meetings
(1) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2016/17 - Outturn	04 July 2017	Governance indicators only - <b>Completed</b>	04 July 2017 <del>03 October 2107</del> <del>05 December 2017</del> 06 February 2018 27 March 2018
(2) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2017/18 - Quarterly Performance Monitoring	<del>Q1 – 03 October 2017</del> Q2 – 05 December 2017 Q3 – 06 February 2018	Governance indicators only.	
(3) Development Management Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen's Meetings	04 July 2017	Feedback from meeting of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Area Plans Sub-Committees and the District Development Management Committee – <b>Completed</b>	
(4) Building Control	04 July 2017	To be carried forward onto work programme for 2017/18. Building Control Officer to give a presentation - <b>Completed</b>	
(5) Equality Objectives 2016-2020 / (2018-2023) - 6 monthly reporting	<del>Q1 – 03 October 2017</del> Q3 - 27 March 2018	<del>6 monthly reporting</del> 6 monthly reporting	
(6) Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2015/16 - Outturn	04 July 2017	Governance actions only - <b>Completed</b>	

## Governance Select Committee (Chairman – Councillor N Avey)

### Work Programme 2017/18

(7) Review of Public Consultations	04 July 2017	Annual Review - <b>Completed</b>	
(8) Governance Directorate Business Plan 2017/18	04 July 2017	Portfolio Holders attended Cllrs J Philip, A Lion and G. Waller - <b>Completed</b>	
(9) Review of the Elections and General Election May and June 2017	03 October 2017	Review of the processes for the County and General elections - <b>Completed</b>	
(10) Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2016/17- Quarterly reporting	Q1 – 03 October 2017 Q2 – 05 December 2017 Q3 – 06 February 2018	Governance actions only.	
(11) Review of the operation of the Council's Petitions Scheme	06 February 2018	To be completed during the 2017/18 municipal year. ST/JL	
(12) Analysis of Compliments and Complaints information in identifying trends	06 February 2018	The Head of Customer Services has been invited to attend a future meeting. To identify trends, a period of time will need to elapse. <b>This is now going to the O&amp;S Committee on 27.02.18</b>	
(13) Annual Equality Information Report – 2016	03 October 2017	Combined with Item (5) - <b>Completed</b>	

## Governance Select Committee (Chairman – Councillor N Avey)

### Work Programme 2017/18

(14) Directorate Business Plans 2018/19 (NEW)	27 March 2018	Presentation by all relevant Portfolio Holders.	
(15) Planning applications submitted to time final decision is received	05 December 2017	NR to provide a report.	
(16) Transformation Projects relevant to this Committee	As Appropriate	Details of relevant new transformation projects to be submitted to the relevant SC for scrutiny.	
(17) Transformation Projects closure and benefits reports	As Appropriate	That any Directorate appropriate project closure and benefits realisation reports to be submitted to this SC for information.	
(18) Planning Appeals Performance	27 March 2018	To receive examples of recent appeals decisions issued by the Planning Inspectorate.	

This page is intentionally left blank



## SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

### **Report to Governance Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 6 February 2018**

**Portfolio:** Planning and Governance (Councillor J. Philip)

**Subject:** Petitions Scheme – Review of Operation

**Officer contact for further information:** S. Tautz (01992 564180)

**Democratic Services Officer:** J. Leither (01992 564756)

---

#### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Select Committee review the operation of the Council's current Petitions Scheme, with reference to the issues set out in this report.**

1. As the Committee will appreciate, petitions are an important part of the Council's ongoing commitment to listening to and acting on the views of those that live, work or study in Epping Forest District.
2. The Council's Petitions Scheme was originally adopted on 14 December 2010, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, as part of a duty to promote democracy. The Petitions Scheme was based on a model scheme contained in statutory guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), which also required the Council to implement facilities for the submission of 'ePetitions' through its website.
3. The duty on local authorities to operate a petitions scheme was abolished by the introduction of the Localism Act 2011, although the Council has continued to operate the previously adopted Scheme in order to provide an opportunity for residents to express matters of concerns and priority. Members have previously requested that a periodic review of the operation of the Petitions Scheme be undertaken to assess its effectiveness and the Scheme was last reviewed by the former Constitution and Members Services Scrutiny Panel in September 2012.
4. The requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 provided that petitions with a significant level of support must trigger a debate by the full Council. Whilst it was for the authority itself to set the threshold for the appropriate level of support, the model scheme issued by DCLG set a minimum threshold of 1% of the local population for this. At the time of the Council's original adoption of the Petitions Scheme in December 2010, the population for the District was in excess of 120,000, although the Council agreed that a percentage threshold of 2% of the population (2,400 signatories) be required to trigger debate of a petition by the full Council and that a percentage threshold of 1% of the population (1,200 signatories) be required to trigger attendance of a 'Senior Officer' at an overview and scrutiny meeting to give evidence on a matter.

5. For the purposes of the Petitions Scheme, the Council regards a petition as any communication signed by or sent to the authority on behalf of a number of people. The Petitions Scheme provides that a petition may be submitted or signed by anyone who lives, works or studies in the district. However, the Committee may wish to consider whether the Scheme should also provide for the acceptance of petitions from people who live, work or study outside the district, as it is presumed that the Council would take equally seriously a petition from, for example, visitors to the District on the subject (for example) of facilities at one of its leisure centres.
6. The views of members with regard to the operation of the Council's current Petition Scheme were also sought through the Council Bulletin in December 2017. No feedback has been received from members with regard to the current or future operation of the Scheme.

### **Petitions Scheme**

7. A copy of the current Petitions Scheme is attached as Appendix 1 to this report and is also contained within the Council's [Constitution \(Part 4 – Council Rules\)](#). The following types of petition do not fall within the scope of the Scheme:
  - (a) petitions submitted by email, as email systems are not secure. Petitioners must use either paper-based petitions or the Council's ePetitions system;
  - (b) petitions that are considered to be vexatious, abusive, anonymous or otherwise inappropriate;
  - (c) petitions relating to a planning decision, including applications, development plan documents or the community infrastructure levy;
  - (d) petitions relating to a licensing decision;
  - (e) petitions relating to an individual or entity in respect of which they have a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal;
  - (f) any matter for which the Standards Committee has powers for determining complaints received under the local assessment process;
  - (g) any complaint made against an employee of the Council;
  - (h) any matter which is substantially the same as a petition submitted in the previous twelve months;
  - (i) issues where the subject matter is subject to ongoing legal proceedings; and
  - (j) petitions in response to formal consultation processes instigated by the Council.

### **Written Petitions**

8. During the period from September 2012 to December 2017, the Council received 21 written (paper-based) petitions. All submitted petitions are reviewed by the Director of Governance to ensure that they meet the criteria set out in the Petitions Scheme.
9. It is suggested that the following issues be considered in the review of the operation of the Petition Scheme, with regard to written petitions.



## **Signature Threshold**

10. The Petitions Scheme makes provision for written petitions containing more than 2400 signatures to be debated by the Council at its next ordinary meeting. Petitions containing more than 1200 signatures are subject to report by the relevant Portfolio Holder for debate by the Cabinet at its next available meeting.
11. Petitions with fewer than 20 signatures are normally be dealt with by the appropriate service directorate as ordinary or 'business as usual' type correspondence, unless the Service Director considers that the subject matter is sufficiently important or contentious to warrant the referral of the matter to the relevant Portfolio Holder. Petitions containing more than 20 but fewer than 1200 signatures are considered and dealt with by the relevant Portfolio Holder, who may take appropriate action if they have delegated powers to act alone, or prepare a report to the Cabinet or a Sub-Committee of the Cabinet for decision if required.
12. None of the petitions received during the period from September 2012 to December 2017 met the thresholds for debate by either the Cabinet or the Council. The Committee might therefore consider that these thresholds are discouraging the submission of petitions.
13. Members could choose to reduce the current signature thresholds for petitions. However, this approach could greatly increase the number of valid petitions received. To enable members to consider this aspect of the Petitions Scheme, the following comparative information has been obtained from several neighbouring authorities with regard to the handling of petitions, in terms of signature thresholds (for which statutory levels no longer apply):

### **Brentwood Borough Council (Population (mid-2016) 76,400)**

1,500 signatories - considered by full Council

500 signatories - considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### **Broxbourne Borough Council (Population (mid-2016) 96,800)**

No signature threshold. All petitions received reported to the Cabinet

### **Chelmsford City Council (Population (mid-2016) 174,100)**

2,000 signatories - considered by full Council

### **Harlow District Council (Population (mid-2016) 86,000)**

650 signatories - considered by full Council

50-650 signatories - considered by Cabinet or appropriate Committee

### **Uttlesford District Council (Population (mid-2016) 86,200)**

3,600 signatures - considered by full Council

14. Where petitions, although otherwise valid, do not achieve the required number of signatures to reach the minimum threshold for consideration as a petition. They are passed to the relevant service area to be dealt with as normal correspondence.

## **Signature Requirements**

15. The Petitions Scheme requires that written petitions must include contact details, (including an address) for the petition organiser and the name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition.

16. This element of the Scheme has caused operational difficulties in a number of recent instances, where details of the name, address and signature of persons supporting the petition has not been provided.
17. On some occasions when written petitions have been submitted, the lead petitioner has failed to collect the correct information (i.e. a name, address and signature) from petitioners, thereby resulting in the petition being rejected. There have also been a number of occasions where it has been difficult to ascertain who the petition organiser is, as contact details have not been made clear on the petition. If no details for the lead petitioner are submitted, an acknowledgement is sent to the first signatory to the petition. This can cause confusion if the first signatory does not know who organised the petition therefore no further action is taken as there is no lead petitioner.
18. To address these issues, a pro-forma has previously been developed for the completion of written petitions. Whilst use of the pro-forma is not compulsory, it was designed to assist those members of the public who are unsure of the information required and help to reduce the number of petitions where doubtful or unclear information is provided. Although the pro-forma template is clearly available on the Council's website, it has not been used for any petition submitted during the period from September 2012 to December 2017. It is therefore proposed to review the template and its online location, to ensure its visibility within the petitions area of the website.

#### **Scanned or Photocopied Petitions**

19. As the Petitions Scheme requires the signature of all persons supporting a petition, the Council does not accept 'scanned' copies or photocopies of petitions submitted by email, post or handed-in.
20. The Council also does not accept as a written petition, information that has been downloaded from a third-party petition host and presented as a paper-based petition. It is suggested that this approach to scanned, copied and downloaded petitions should be maintained.

#### **Service Functions**

21. A majority of the petitions received since the last review of the Petitions Scheme did not meet some of the acceptance criteria specified by the Scheme. In the main, such petitions related to planning or licensing matters or services provided by other authorities, including highway maintenance (Essex County Council) and parking enforcement (North Essex Parking Partnership).
22. It might therefore be helpful for details of the services provided by the Council and those key functions of other local authorities, to be published in the Petitions Scheme and on the Council's website, in order to assist petition submissions to be directed appropriately.
23. It may also be helpful for arrangements to be made to increase member and officer awareness of the Petitions Scheme and the Council's procedures, as it often the case that petitions are submitted directly to ward councillors or officers outside the Governance Directorate, which currently administers the Petitions Scheme.

#### **Electronic Petitions (ePetitions)**

24. The ePetition process is intended to be a more convenient alternative to the traditional paper-based approach to the collection of signatures and, by making petitions available

online, a greater number of people can contribute to local democracy. A copy of the Council's guidance in relation to ePetitions is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

25. During the period from September 2012 to August 2017, 6 active ePetitions were added to the Council's website. It is suggested that the following issues be considered in the review of the operation of the Petition Scheme, with regard to electronic petitions.

### **Signature Threshold**

26. The provisions of the Petition Scheme for petitions containing more than 2400 signatures to be debated by the Council and for petitions containing more than 1200 signatures to be subject of report and debate by the Cabinet, apply equally to ePetitions. To ensure consistency in approach, it is suggested that the signature threshold for electronic petitions should continue to match that provided for written petitions.

### **Third-Party Petition Hosting**

27. The Council only accepts e-petitions which are created and submitted through its website and does accept petitions hosted by third parties. Although a number of public bodies and commercial organisations provide opportunities for the creation of online petitions, it is not generally possible to verify whether signatories to such hosted petitions live, work or study in the District. The Council does not monitor third-party petitions systems.
28. If the Committee continues to hold the view that there must be an assurance that ePetitions are submitted and signed only by people who live, work or study in the local area, the only means of ensuring this is currently through the Council's e-petitions website facility. The Committee is therefore requested to consider whether petitions hosted by sites which do not enable verification of the signatories' relevant email address should continue to be ruled as invalid under the terms of the Council's Petitions Scheme.
29. All ePetitions must follow the same guidelines as for written (paper-based) petitions. When an ePetition is submitted, it does not automatically go 'live' and proposed petitions are reviewed by the Director of Governance to ensure that they meet the Council's criteria. The Council reserves the right to review proposed petitions that are inappropriate or do not relate to a matter over which it has responsibility or influence over, or matters where there is an existing right of appeal or may require the disclosure of confidential information.
30. All ePetitions available for signature are published on the [petitions pages](#) of the Council's website. The ePetitions process requires that persons wishing to sign a petition must 'register' on the website for this purpose and provide their name, address, postcode and a valid email address. Once this step is complete, their 'signature' will be added to the petition. Any person can 'sign' an ePetition and an individual email address provides the unique signature used to 'sign' a petition. Although some families' etc. may share an email address, the portal will only accept an email address once. A maximum period of three months is currently allowed for the collection of valid signatories to an ePetition. However, a shorter time-frame may be set by the lead petitioner to reflect time-sensitive issues.
31. The term 'ePetition' may be confusing, as it is considered that when visiting the Council's website, people are likely to search for the term 'petition' rather than 'ePetition'. It may therefore be helpful for the Petitions Scheme and the ePetitions guidance to be combined into one document to reflect the availability of a written and electronic based approach to the submission of petitions.

## **Recommendations**

32. The Select Committee is requested to review the operation of the Council's current Petition Scheme, including its approach to ePetitions and to make any appropriate recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
33. The content of this report has been subject to consultation with the Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Governance Group. Any views expressed by the Corporate Governance Group will be reported at the meeting.

## **Resource Implications:**

The recommendations of this report seek to enable the Council's Petitions Scheme to more effectively meet current requirements.

## **Legal and Governance Implications:**

None. The duty for local authorities to operate a formal petition scheme was abolished by the Localism Act 2011.

## **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.

## **Consultation Undertaken:**

The content of this report has been subject to consultation with the Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Governance Group. The views of members with regard to the operation of the Council's current Petition Scheme were also sought through the Council Bulletin in December 2017.

## **Background Papers:**

None

## **Impact Assessments:**

### ***Risk Management***

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

### ***Equality:***

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

## **Key Decision Y/N**

No

## **Petition Scheme – Epping Forest District Council**

### **1. Definition**

1.1 For the purpose of this procedure a petition is a request to the Council made either (i) in writing; or (ii) through the Council's e-petitions system on its website.

### **2. Scope of Scheme**

2.1 The Council will accept paper based petitions, e-petitions (but only those submitted on through its own petitions system) or a mix of paper and e-petitions. The proper officer for petitions is the Assistant Director of Governance and Performance Management.

### **3. Acknowledgement**

3.1 All petitions sent or presented to the council shall receive an acknowledgement from the council within seven days of receipt. This acknowledgement will set out what the Council plan to do with the petition. The Council shall treat something as a petition if it is identified as being a petition, or if it seems to the Council that it is intended to be a petition.

### **4. Exceptions to Petitions**

4.1 The following petitions do not fall within the scope of this petitions scheme:

(a) Emailed petitions, as email systems are not secure. Petitioners must use either paper or the Council's EPetitions system. The Council will not monitor third party petitions systems.

(b) Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive, anonymous or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted. In the period immediately before an election or referendum the Council may need to deal with a petition differently – if this is the case the Council will explain the reasons with the petitioner and discuss the revised timescale which will apply.

(c) Petitions relating to a planning decision; (as the Planning application process deals with objections to applications), including those about a development plan document or the community infrastructure levy.

(d) Petitions relating to a licensing decision; (as the Licensing scheme deals with objections to applications)

(e) Petitions relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal.

(f) Any matter for which the Standards Committee has powers for determining complaints received under the Local Assessment process.

(g) Any complaint made against an employee of the District Council.

(h) Any matter which is substantially the same as a petition submitted in the previous 12 months.

(i) Where the subject matter is subject to ongoing legal proceedings.

(j) Petitions made during formal Council consultations related to the subject matter of the consultations (these will be formally referred to that process as appropriate)

4.2 Where a petition submitted relates to one of the categories set out above the Council will write to the lead petitioner and explain why the matter is not covered by the authority's Petitions Scheme. In appropriate circumstances, the Council may advise how the public views can be considered via alternative means.

## **5. Submission guidelines/Signatory Requirements**

5.1 Petitions submitted to the council must include:

(a) A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the council to take.

(b) The name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition.

(c) Contact details, including an address (and a valid email address if submitted electronically), for the petition organiser

5.2 If the petitioner contacts the Council to start an e-Petition, then the Council and the Lead Petitioner will agree the period over which signatures will be collected and to agree the final wording of the petition. The petition will then be available to sign 'electronically' for the agreed period on the Council's website. On the expiration of that time, the Council will respond in accordance with Section 7 below.

5.3 Anyone who lives, works or studies in Epping Forest District is entitled to sign to support a petition. The supporters Name, Address, a valid email address and/or postcode are required to sign an e-Petition on the Council's website. For paper petitions signatories must provide their, name, address and signature

5.4 E-petitions will run on the Council website for a maximum of 3 months, but the Council and the lead petitioner can choose a shorter timeframe up to the maximum.

## **6. The procedure when the Council receives a petition**

6.1 The Council will send the lead petitioner an acknowledgement of the petition within 7 working days. Local ward councillors will be informed of the receipt of a petition.

6.2 If the Council is able to do what the petition asks for, the acknowledgement may confirm that the Council have taken the action requested and the petition will be closed.

6.3 If the petition needs more investigation, the Council will tell the lead petitioner the steps the Council plan to take.

6.4 If the lead petitioner has created an e-petition, the Council will check that the content of the e-petition is suitable before it is made available for signature. This will take a maximum of ten working days.

6.5 If the Council cannot publish an e-petition for some reason, the Council will contact the lead petitioner within ten working days to explain the reason for not publishing a petition based upon the exceptions in section 4 above.

6.6 A lead petitioner is able to change and resubmit their e-petition within 10 working days, if they fail to do so within that time, a summary of the e-petition and the reason why it has not been accepted will be published under the 'rejected petitions' section of the website.

## **7. How the Council considers petitions**

<b>Petition type</b>	<b>Response</b>
Correspondence with fewer than 20 signatures	This will normally be dealt with by the appropriate Directorate as ordinary correspondence, unless the Service Director concerned is of the opinion that the subject matter is sufficiently important or contentious to warrant referring the matter to the appropriate Portfolio Holder.
Petitions with more than 20 but fewer than 1200 signatures	These will be considered and dealt with by the relevant portfolio holder who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) take action if he or she has delegated powers to act alone;</li> <li>(b) prepare a report to the Cabinet or a Sub-Committee of the Cabinet for decision if appropriate.</li> </ul>
Petition containing at least 1200 signatures.	The relevant Portfolio Holder will prepare a report to the Cabinet for decision on the matter.
2400 signatures or more	These large petitions will be scheduled for a council debate and if this is the case we will let you know whether this will happen
e-petitions	When an e-petition has closed for signature, it will automatically be submitted to the relevant officer, portfolio holder or Council In the same way as a paper petition.

## **8. Decisions on petitions**

The Council's response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but may include one or more of the following:

- taking the action requested in the petition
- considering the petition at a council meeting

- holding an inquiry into the matter
- undertaking research into the matter
- holding a public meeting
- holding a consultation
- holding a meeting with petitioners
- referring the petition for consideration by the Cabinet or a Cabinet Committee
- writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition

In addition to these steps, the council will consider all the specific actions it can potentially take on the issues highlighted in a petition.

If a petition is about something over which the council has no direct control (for example healthcare or transport) the responsible body (under section 7 above) will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body.

If the Council are not able to meet the petitioners requests for any reason (for example if what the petition calls for conflicts with council policy), then the Council will set out the reasons for not taking the action requested in writing to the Lead Petitioner.

Decisions made by the Portfolio Holder will be recorded in writing and notified to the public, the lead petitioner and all members of the Council.

All received petitions will be reported to Council via regular Portfolio Holder reports.

## **9. Petitions received after a decision is made**

In cases where a petition is received after a decision has been made by the Council on any matter, the following steps will be taken by the Director unless the petition meets the threshold for a Council debate:

- (a) a letter of acknowledgement shall be sent to the lead petitioner, including a statement of the action already taken by the Council;
- (b) in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder, Committee or Sub-Committee Chairman a decision will be taken as to whether the petition raises new evidence requiring further consideration by the Portfolio Holder or Committee concerned;
- (c) if it is decided that no new matters are raised by the petition, the lead petitioner shall be advised accordingly;
- (d) if new matters are raised then the petition will be treated as 'new' under this scheme.

## **10. Full Council and Cabinet debates**

If a petition contains more than 2400 signatures it will be debated by the full council at its next ordinary meeting.

If a petition contains more than 1200 signatures it will be subject to report and debate by the cabinet at its next available meeting.

The petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by councillors.



The Council or Cabinet will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting.

The Council or Cabinet may:

- (a) decide to take the action the petition requests, and in the case of a Cabinet debate, report to Council if appropriate (see paragraph 11 below)
- (b) not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or
- (c) commission further investigation into the matter, for example by the Cabinet (if the matter was debated at Council) or a relevant Cabinet committee.

## **11. Council Referrals**

Where the issue is one on which the council executive are required to make the final decision (i.e. within the financial and policy framework), the council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision. This confirmation will also be published on our website.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Guide to E-petitions

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 requires all principal local authorities in England to establish an online scheme for handling petitions on the authority's website. This will be in force from 15 December 2010

The Council only accepts e-petitions which are created and submitted through our website, and they must follow the same guidelines as paper petitions:

[Clickable link to Council Petitions Scheme](#)

## ***How do I 'sign' an e-petition?***

You can see all the e-petitions currently available for signature here: [Current E-petitions](#)

When you sign an e-petition you will be asked to provide your name, address, postcode and a valid email address. Once this step is complete your 'signature' will be added to the petition.

People visiting the e-petition will be able to see your name in the list of those who have signed it but your contact details will not be visible.

## ***How do I create an e-petition?***

Once registered, you can create an e-petition by following this link:

[Clickable link to Create New E-Petitions](#)

Please ensure there are no existing petitions addressing the same issue.

As the petition organiser, you will need to provide us with your name, postal address and email address. You will also need to decide how long you would like your petition to be open for signatures (up to a maximum of 6 months).

When you create an e-petition, it may take up to 10 working days before it is published online. This is because we have to check that the content of your petition is suitable before it is made available for signature.

When an e-petition has closed for signature, it will automatically be submitted to Democratic Services. In the same way as a paper petition, you will receive an acknowledgement within 10 working days.

If we feel we cannot publish your petition for some reason, we will contact you within this time to explain. You will be able to change and resubmit your petition if you wish. If you do not do this within 10 working days, a summary of the petition and the reason why it has not been accepted will be published under the 'rejected petitions' section of the website.

## ***Further Information***

To find out more about the Council's petition scheme, please see:

[Clickable link to Council Petitions Scheme](#)

Any questions not answered on the website, please email:

[democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank



## SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

### **Report to: Governance Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 6 February 2018**

**Portfolio:** Governance and Development Management (Councillor J. Phillip)

**Subject:** Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 - Quarter 3 Performance

**Officer contact for further information:** Monika Chwiedz (01992 562076)

**Democratic Services Officer:** Jackie Leither (01992 564756)

---

#### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That the Select Committee reviews Q3 performance in relation to the key performance indicators within its areas of responsibility.

#### **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-two (32) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2017/18 was adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in March 2017. The KPIs are important to the improvement of the Council's services and the achievement

of its key objectives, 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, that are the focus of the key objectives.

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 provides an overview of all KPIs and includes in detail those indicators which fall within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee
3. A headline end of Q3 performance summary in respect of the KPIs falling within the Governance Select Committee's areas of responsibility for 2017/18, together with a detailed performance report for each of these indicators, is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

### **Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 - Quarter 3 Performance**

4. The overall position for **all** thirty-two (32) KPIs at the end of the Quarter 3, was as follows:
  - (a) 25 (78%) indicators achieved third quarter target;
  - (b) 7 (22%) indicators did not achieve third quarter target, although 4 (13%) of KPIs performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator; and,
  - (c) 25 (78%) indicators are currently anticipated to achieve the cumulative year-end target, 3 (9%) indicators are anticipated not to achieve year-end target and a further 4 (13%) are uncertain whether they will achieve the cumulative year-end target.
5. **Governance Select Committee indicators** – 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 Q3 for these five (5) indicators, was as follows:
  - (a) 4 (80%) indicators achieved target;
  - (b) 1 (20%) indicators did not achieve target, however
  - (c) 0 (0%) of these KPI's performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator
  - (d) 4 (80%) of indicators are currently anticipated to achieve year-end target, and a further 1 (20%) indicator is uncertain whether it will achieve year-end target.
6. The 'amber' performance status used in the KPI report 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 March 2017.
7. The Select Committee is requested to review Q3 performance for the KPIs within its areas of responsibility. The full set of KPIs was also considered by Management Board on 24 January 2018 and will be considered by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 9 March 2018.

**Resource Implications:** none for this report

**Legal and Governance Implications:** none for this report; however performance management of key activities is important to the achievement of value for money.

**Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:** none for this report

**Consultation Undertaken:** Relevant Select Committees and the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee.

**Background Papers:** KPI submissions held by the Performance Improvement Unit.

**Impact Assessments:**

***Risk Management:*** none for this report

***Equality:*** none for this report.

This page is intentionally left blank



# Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 – Quarter 3 Performance Report

Appendix 1

Governance Quarterly Indicators		Q1 2017/18			Q2 2017/18			Q3 2017/18			Q4 2017/18			Is year-end target likely to be achieved?
		Target	Value	Status	Target	Value	Status	Target	Value	Status	Target	Value	Status	
GOV004	What percentage of major planning applications were processed within 13 weeks or extension of time date?	90%	100%	✓	90%	100%	✓	90%	100%	✓	90%			Yes
GOV005	What percentage of minor planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?	90%	95.73%	✓	90%	93.67%	✓	90%	93.52%	✓	90%			Yes
GOV006	What percentage of other planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?	94%	96.37%	✓	94%	95.44%	✓	94%	95.8%	✓	94%			Yes
GOV007	What percentage of planning applications recommended by planning officers for refusal were overturned and granted permission following an appeal ?	20%	11.76%	✓	20%	12.5%	✓	20%	18%	✓	20%			Yes
GOV008	What percentage of planning applications, refused by Council Members against the recommendation of the planning officers, were granted permission on appeal?	50%	42.86%	✓	50%	68.75%	✗	50%	62.5%	✗	50%			Uncertain

## Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 Quarter 3 Performance

Report Author: Monika Chwiedz (Performance Improvement Officer)

### Reflecting on our performance:

There are 32 KPIs for this year

25(78%) achieved target and 7 (22%) missed target and 4 (13%) performed within their amber tolerance.

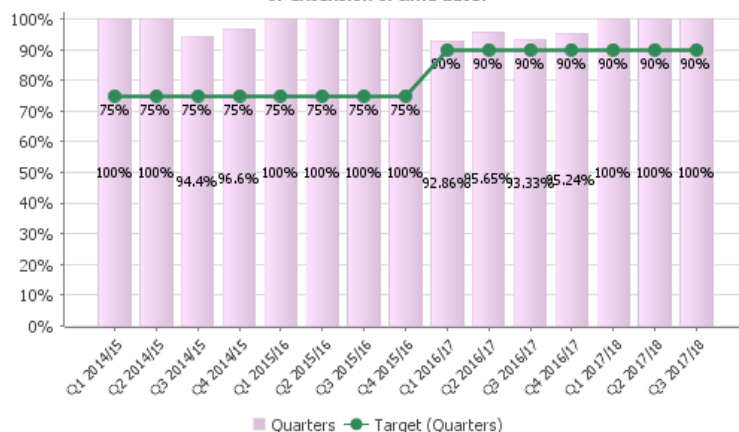
Five (5) of the Key Performance Indicators fall within the Governance Directorate.

### **GOV004** What percentage of major planning applications were processed within 13 weeks or extension of time date?

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



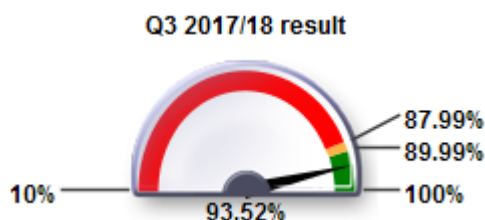
**GOV004 What percentage of major planning applications were processed within 13 weeks or extension of time date?**



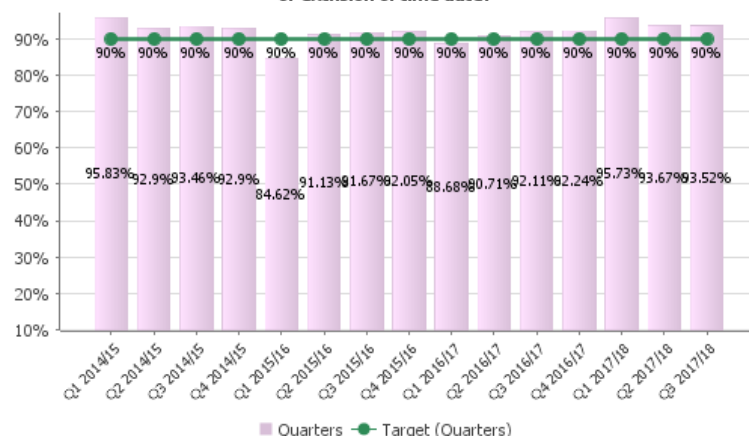
**Comment on current performance:** Major type applications represent only a small proportion of the overall number of planning applications the Council receives, but they are more complex and generally are reported to planning committees. All 24 were decided in time so the target has been achieved.

## **GOV005** What percentage of minor planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?

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



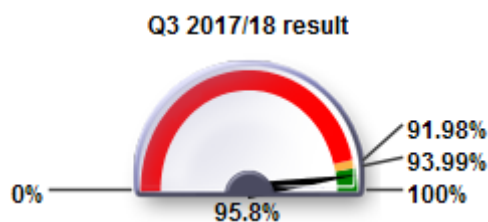
**GOV005 What percentage of minor planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?**



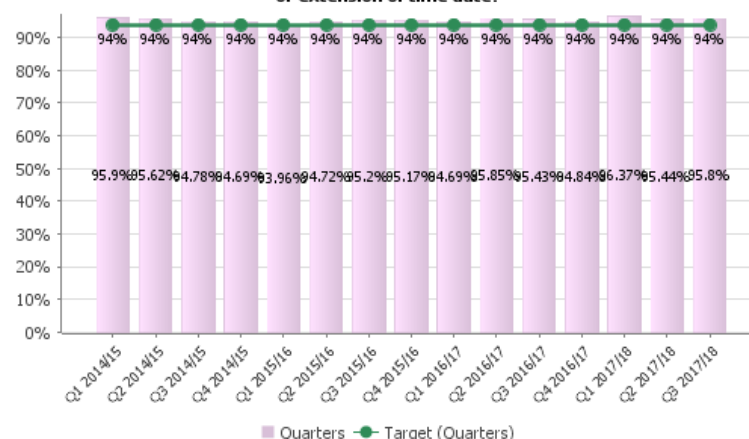
**Comment on current performance:** This covers planning applications that include 1 to 9 dwellings/ pitches per application as well as offices, light industry, general industry, storage, warehousing or retail floorspace under 10,000sq m or 1 hectare and other minor developments. 332 out of 355 applications were made in time.

## **GOV006** What percentage of other planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?

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



**GOV006 What percentage of other planning applications were processed within 8 weeks or extension of time date?**

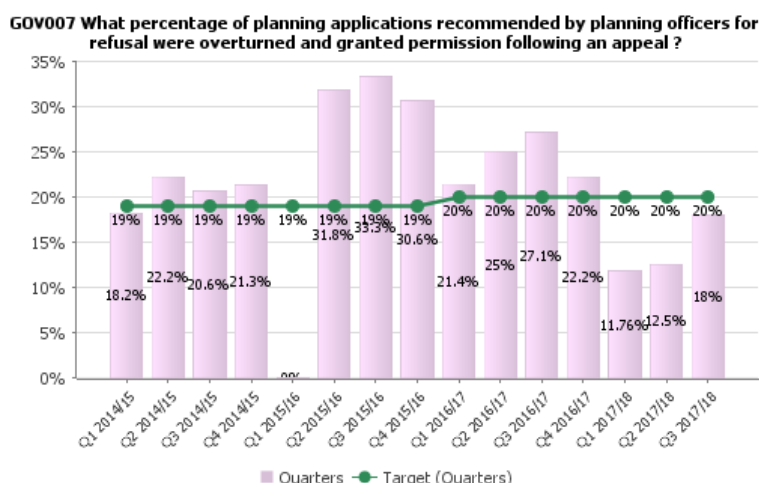
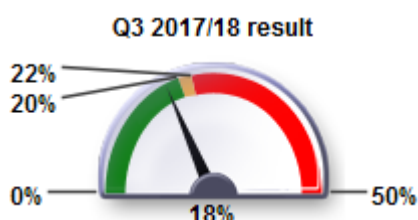


**Comment on current performance:** GOV006 includes the highest subject type applications received (householder extensions) and 980 out of 1023 applications were decided in time in this category, which meets the target.

What percentage of planning applications recommended by planning officers for

### GOV007 refusal were overturned and granted permission following an appeal?

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.

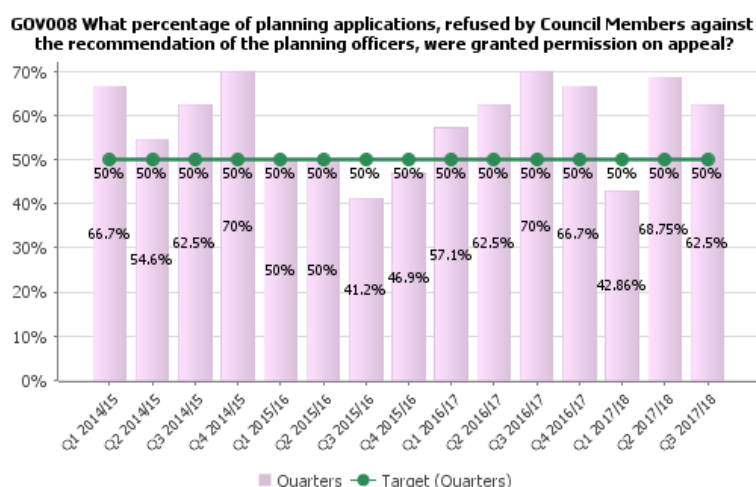


**Comment on current performance:** Of the 50 appeal decisions made by officers under delegated powers or resulting from officer recommendations to refuse planning permission, 9 were allowed on appeal (granted planning permission).

What percentage of planning applications, refused by Council Members against the recommendation of the planning officers, were granted

### GOV008 permission on appeal?

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 grant of planning permission, overturned by Members.



**Comment on current performance:** Members decisions to refuse planning permission by reversing officer recommendations on planning applications were supported on appeal in 9 out of 24 cases and therefore are not achieving the target. They were unsuccessful in 15 cases (appeals allowed).



## SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

### **Report to: Governance Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 6 February 2018**

**Portfolio:** Leader (Councillor C. Whitbread)

**Subject:** Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2017/18 – Quarter 3 progress

**Officer contact for further information:** Monika Chwiedz (01992 562076)

**Democratic Services Officer:** Jackie Leither (01992 564756)

---

#### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That the Committee review the first quarter (Q3) progress of the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 in relation to its areas of responsibility; and
- (2) That the Committee identifies any actions arising from the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 Q3 within its areas of responsibility, which require in-depth scrutiny or further report on current progress.

#### **Executive Summary:**

The Corporate Plan is the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out its priorities over the five-year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The priorities or Corporate Aims are supported by Key Objectives, which provide a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for these five years.

The Key Objectives are delivered by an annual action plan, with each year building upon the progress against the achievement of the Key Objectives for previous years. The annual action plans contain a range of actions designed to achieve specific outcomes and are working documents are therefore subject to change and development to ensure the actions remain relevant and appropriate, and to identify opportunities to secure further progress or improvement.

The Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 was adopted by Council at its meeting on 27 September 2016. Progress in relation to all actions and deliverables is reviewed by the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the appropriate Select Committee, on a quarterly basis.

#### **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

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

Some actions have cross directorate responsibility. Where this is the case the most appropriate Select Committee is requested to consider the action. This report presents progress against the Key Action Plan for 2017/18 for actions most appropriately considered by the Governance Select Committee.

### **Other Options for Action:**

Actions with cross directorate responsibility could be considered by an alternative Select Committee, or not considered by the Select Committees.

### **Report:**

1. The Corporate Plan 2015-2020 is the Council's highest level strategic document. It sets the strategic direction for the authority for the five year lifetime of the Plan. It focuses on a number of key areas that the Council needs to focus on during that time and helps to prioritize resources to provide quality services and value for money. These key areas are known as the Corporate Aims and are supported by a set of Key Objectives which represent the Council's high-level initiatives and over-arching goals to achieve the Corporate Aims. The Key Objectives are in turn, delivered via an annual Key Action Plan.
2. The Key Action Plan 2017/18 is populated with actions or deliverables designed to secure progress against each of the Key Objectives during 2017/18. During the subsequent years in the lifetime of the Key Objectives, annual action plans will be developed which build on progress achieved during preceding years.
3. The annual action plans are working documents are subject to change and development to ensure that the actions remain relevant and appropriate, and to identify opportunities to secure further progress or improvement. The Leader of Council, in consultation with the Chief Executive, is authorised to agree any further changes to Key Action Plans, following their approval by the Council.
4. Progress against the Key Action Plan is reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure the timely identification and implementation of appropriate further initiatives or corrective action where necessary. Quarter 3 progress against the individual actions of the 2017/18 Key Action Plan, is as below: In reporting progress, the following 'status' indicators have been applied to the to individual actions:

**Achieved (Green)** - specific deliverables or actions have been completed or achieved in accordance with in-year targets;

**On-Target (Green)** - specific deliverables or actions will be completed or achieved in accordance with in-year targets;

**Under Control (Amber)** - specific deliverables or actions have not been completed or achieved in accordance with in-year targets, but completion/achievement will be secured by a revised target date (specified) or by year-end;

**Behind Schedule (Red)** - specific deliverables or actions have not been completed or achieved in accordance with in-year targets and completion/achievement may not be secured by year-end; and

**Pending (Grey)** - specific deliverables or actions cannot currently be fully completed or achieved, as they rely on the prior completion of other actions or are dependent on external factors outside the Council's control.

5. There are 50 actions **in total** for which progress updates for Q3 are as follows:

• Achieved or On-Target:	40 (80%)
• Under Control:	5 (10%)
• Behind Schedule:	4 (8%)
• Pending:	<u>1 (2%)</u>
Total	50 (100%)

8 actions fall within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee. At the end of Q3:

- 8 (100%) of these actions have been 'Achieved' or are 'On-Target'
- 0 (0%) of these actions are 'Under Control'
- 0 (0%) of these actions are 'Behind Schedule'
- 0 (0%) of these actions are 'Pending'

6. The Committee is requested to review the Q3 progress against Key Action Plan for 2017/18 as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, and identify any actions that require more in-depth scrutiny or further progress reports.

7. This report will also be considered by the Cabinet on 8 March 2018 and by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 February 2018

**Resource Implications:** None for this report.

**Legal and Governance Implications:** None for this report. Performance monitoring contributes to the delivery of value for money.

**Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:** None for this report.

**Consultation Undertaken:** The performance information set out in this report has been submitted by each responsible service director.

**Background Papers:** Relevant documentation is held by responsible service directors.

**Impact Assessments:**

**Risk Management:** None for this report.

**Equality:** None for this report.

This page is intentionally left blank



**Aim 1. To ensure that the Council has appropriate resources, on an ongoing basis, to fund its statutory duties and appropriate discretionary services whilst continuing to keep Council Tax low**


**Objective 1.a. To ensure that the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) plans to meet the Council's financial and service requirements for any forward five year period, whilst minimising any reliance on Government funding**

Action	Lead Directorate	Target Date	.	Status	Progress notes
3. Deliver savings and generate income identified for 2017/18 as approved by the Cabinet	Management Board	31-Mar-2018		On Target	Q3 – Savings still on track
					Q2 - savings still on track
					Q1 (2017/18) Langston Road will open this quarter. Savings initiative on track.
4. Prepare to deliver savings and generate income for 2018/19 within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy	Management Board	31-Mar-2018		On Target	Q3 – Not yet due, will be addressed in budget process for 2018/19
					Q2 – Not yet due, will be addressed in budget process for 2018/19
					Q1 - Not yet due, will be addressed in budget process for 2018/19
5. Develop additional business cases, including the use of the 'Invest to Save' Fund, to address the need for net savings and income generation in subsequent years	Management Board	30-Sep-2017		On Target	Q3 – Invest to Save bids totalling £180k have been approved for a number of projects which will generate savings or additional income, e.g. replacement of LED lighting £70k, Lea Valley and Vere Road pay and display car parks £70k.
					Q2 – Not yet due
					Q1 - Not yet due.



**Objective 1.c. To explore appropriate opportunities to make savings and increase income through the shared delivery of services with other organisations, where such arrangements would provide improved and/or more cost effective outcomes**


Action	Lead Directorate	Target Date	.	Status	Progress notes
3. Evaluate the potential to expand the provision of legal services provided to other authorities, to generate income	Governance	31-Dec-2017		On Target	Q3 - Setting up those meetings has proved difficult over Christmas break but meetings with 2 neighbouring authorities are planned for early in the New Year.
					Q2 - meeting with senior managers of neighbouring councils to discuss the potential for a fully integrated partnership working or sharing of resources
					Q1 - Retained the Lexcel accreditation to assist the marketing of the legal service. Networked through attendance at various special interest groups within the public law partnership.

**Aim 3. To ensure that the Council adopts a modern approach to the delivery of its services and that they are efficient, effective and fit for purpose****Objective 3.a. To have efficient arrangements in place to enable customers to easily contact the Council, in a variety of convenient ways, and in most cases have their service needs met effectively on first contact**

Action	Lead Directorate	Target Date	.	Status	Progress notes
5. Deliver projects of legislative importance, to ensure our services for customers are fit-for-purpose.:	Management Board	31-Mar-2018		On Target	Q3 – as per Q2
					Q2 - as per Q1
					Q1 - Election and Accounts Closure ran smoothly. internal Audit Programme approved and progressing in line with plan.

**Objective 3.b. To utilize modern technology to enable Council officers and members to work more effectively, in order to provide enhanced services to customers and make Council services and information easier to access**

Action	Lead Directorate	Target Date	.	Status	Progress notes
1. Trial flexible working for Building Control and Development Control officers through the use of new technologies	Governance	31-Mar-2018		On Target	Q3 - In accordance with the ICT strategy discussions continue as to the appropriate mobile devices, which should be in place by the end of the year.
					Q2 - development management and building control senior officers have met with ICT colleagues i order to agree implementation plans and dates and raise any other issues arising.
					Q1 - Await initial feedback from 2 authorities who have gone live with the system we wish to trail and then ICT indicate that the commencement of the the in-building control is imminent.
4. Produce a plan to improve the management of information, to protect public data and comply with legislation	Governance	31-Mar-2018		On Target	Q3 - The work of the GDPR continues to coordinate directorate work to meet the requirements of the regulation by the 25th May 2018.
					Q2 - the working group has met on three occasions, developed an action plan and continues to report to CGG on progress towards implementation on 25 May 2018. Appropriate officers are being trained and cascading that training through leadership team and to individual management teams.
					Q1 - The Chief Internal Auditor chairing a group looking at our information asset register which will feed into the new working group on general data protection regulations, chaired by a director of governance on 24th July.

6. Deliver the Corporate Communications project, to increase customer recognition of our services and improve communications with our customers	Governance	31-Mar-2018		On Target	Q3 - Best practise standards for the authority are now in draft form and will be finalised by the due date. Further work will be undertaken, once this has been completed, to refresh our corporate design guide
					Q2 - PR has attended Management Board to agree a new format for reporting its work and for identifying communications needs throughout the years for significant projects.
					Q1 - The communications PR team has recently concentrated on both the election and the Local Plan and the future focus will be to produce audit and analysis of our communications.

This page is intentionally left blank