
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

Title: PLANNING SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

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Purpose

To update and inform the Committee on the statistical performance of the CNPA planning service to Quarter 2 of 2020/21 and wider planning service work delivery.

Recommendation

That the Committee:

- i. Note the internal planning service monitoring results outlined in this report**

Background

1. The CNPA Planning Service and Management Team biannual performance reports to examine planning service performance and implement improvements and changes to the service. Officers take performance updates to the Planning Committee every six months for information and as a way of supplementing annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) reports and the Scottish Government's feedback on PPF reports. The Planning Committee's last planning service performance update was in December 2019.

Planning Service Performance Update to Quarter 2 2020/21

Determination timescales and processing agreements

2. The CNPA's use of processing agreements continues to be a good way to provide certainty for applicants and for CNPA staff. Over the past year since December 2019, only 2 applications did not have processing agreements because applicants did not agree one. Of the applications with processing agreements, the agreed timescales were met on 90%, though as members know, concluding the agreement of developer contributions or legal agreements following Planning Committee decisions can prolong timescales.

3. The use of processing agreements is reflected in the official statistics produced by the Scottish Government, which exclude timescales for applications with processing agreements. Figures 1 and 2 show the official statistics for applications that did not have processing agreements as well as the timescales for applications with processing agreements.

Figure 1

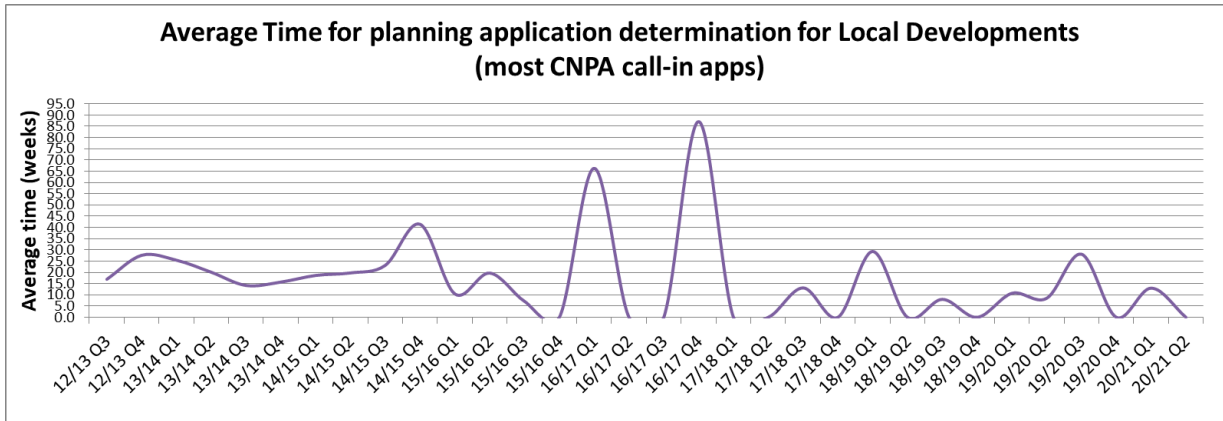
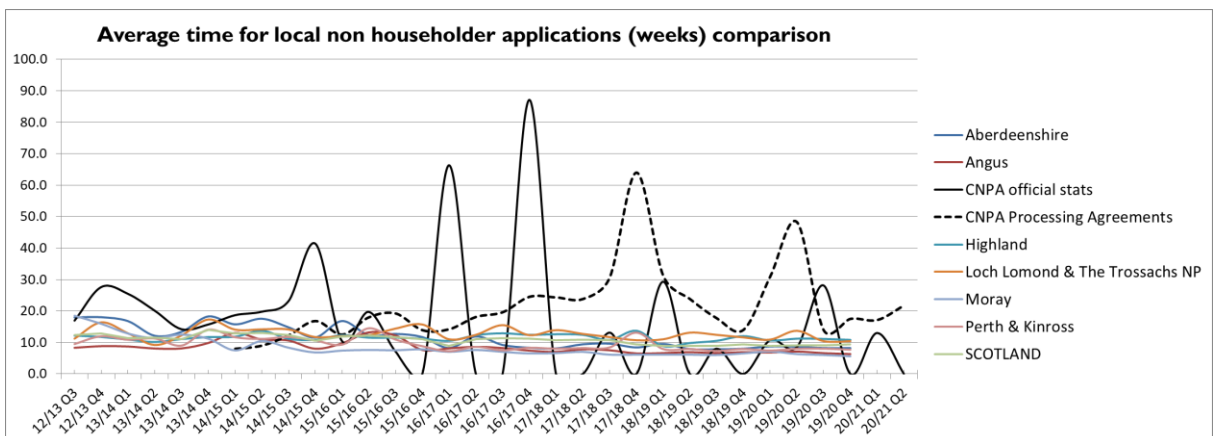
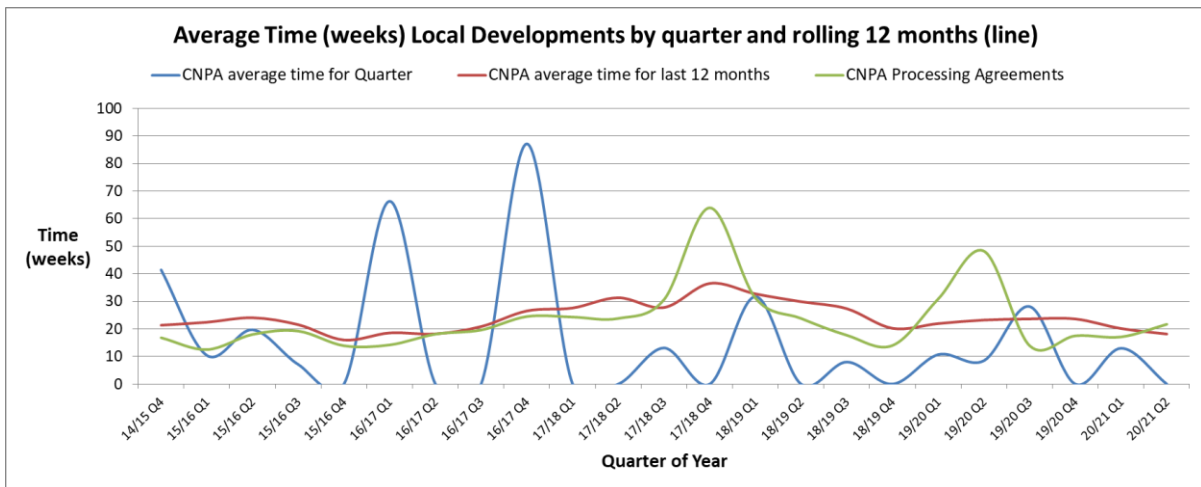


Figure 2



4. Members should be aware that the comparison with other planning authorities is a guide but not representative comparison. The CNPA’s statistics are based on the small numbers of the applications that are called in and determined via by the CNPA Planning Committee in any quarter, whereas the statistics for local authorities are based on the tens or even hundreds of applications that are mainly determined by officers under delegated powers.
5. The internal audit of the planning service that reported during 2015/16 recommended that the CNPA use a rolling annual average indicator for service performance monitoring. Figure 3 shows the CNPA’s quarterly average against a rolling annual average figure. In simple terms, if the average time for a quarter is lower than the rolling average figure, then performance should be improving, but given the small number of applications that are being recorded in this way, the data is easily misunderstood.

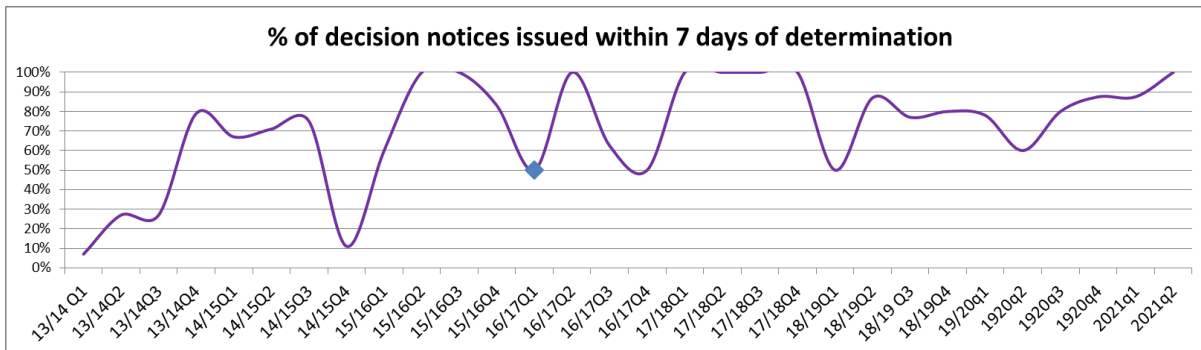
Figure 3



Issuing decision notices

- 6. The planning service has continued to maintain a pattern of swift decision notice production following planning committee decisions.

Figure 4



Planning Service Improvements 2020/21

- 7. The Planning Committee approved seven improvement priorities for the planning service during 2020/21 at the 25 August 2020 meeting. Work is underway on all of these priorities.

2020/21 Planning Service Improvements		Status
1	Simplify mechanisms for securing planning obligations and reduce need for planning agreements. Establishing simpler, cheaper and faster ways of securing necessary planning obligations	Work ongoing

2020/21 Planning Service Improvements		Status
2	Improve Monitoring of Planning Applications Improve data on existing consents to aid with monitoring and delivery of LDP	Work ongoing
3	Develop and deliver a youth engagement / involvement programme Roll out a program of work to engage young people, including the involvement of the Cairngorms Youth Action Group, in the planning system	Work ongoing
4	Make the planning process more accessible Use digital technology to provide better access to planning committee enabling more people to engage with the decision making process.	Work ongoing
5	Undertake a monitoring scheme on holiday and second home ownership, changes of use from residential property and impacts on communities. The development of the LDP has increased awareness of the changes in use of residential property to short term holiday letting property. The data available through council tax and non-domestic rates records requires some ground trothing for accuracy and the CNPA will undertake some additional monitoring of newly completed housing developments. We will also publish a Planning Advice Note to explain the rules on use and changes of use.	Work ongoing
6	Develop the Cairngorms National Park's approach to a Regional Spatial Strategy Building on the existing strategic framework provided by the National Park Partnership Plan.	Work ongoing
7	Consolidate past improvements and procedures Over the past few years, the planning team has set ambitious service improvement priorities. At a time when we have also recruited	Work ongoing

Next Report

8. The next planning service monitoring report will be in May 2021.

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