
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

Title: PLANNING SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

**Prepared by: Gavin Miles, Head of Strategic Planning
Nasim Mehrabi, Graduate Planner**

Purpose

To update and inform the Committee on the statistical performance of the CNPA planning service to Quarter 2 of 2021/22 (and where available statistics for Q3 and Q4 of 2021/22) and wider planning service work delivery, including the feedback on the last Planning Performance Framework submission from Scottish Ministers.

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 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 2020. There has been a delay in reporting since the last report to the Committee, however this will resume on a 6 monthly basis going forward.

Complete Planning Service Performance Update to Quarter 2 2021/22

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. 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

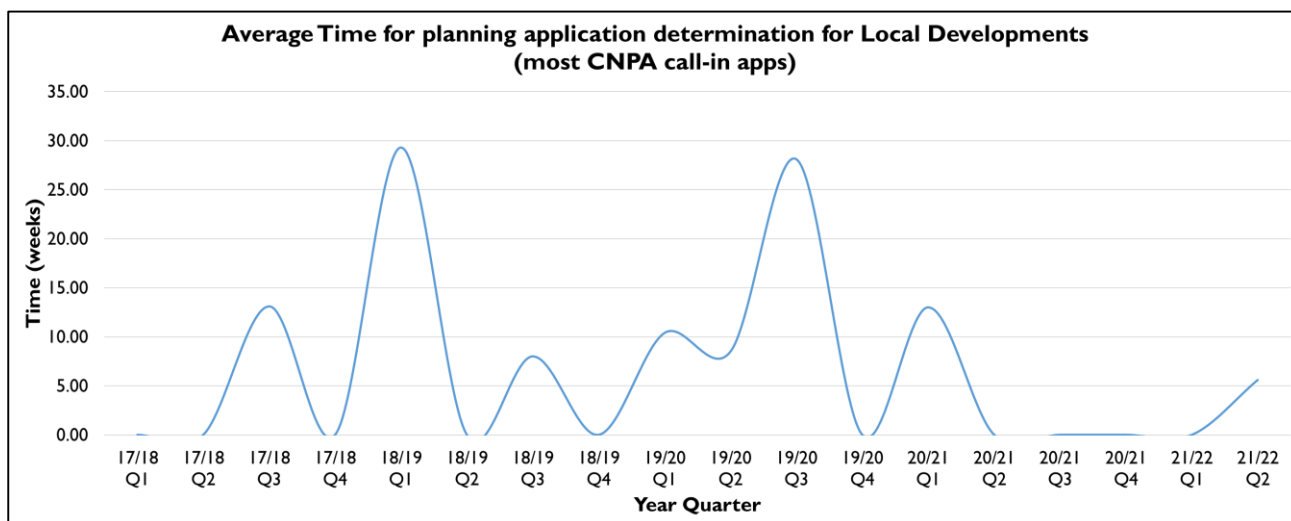
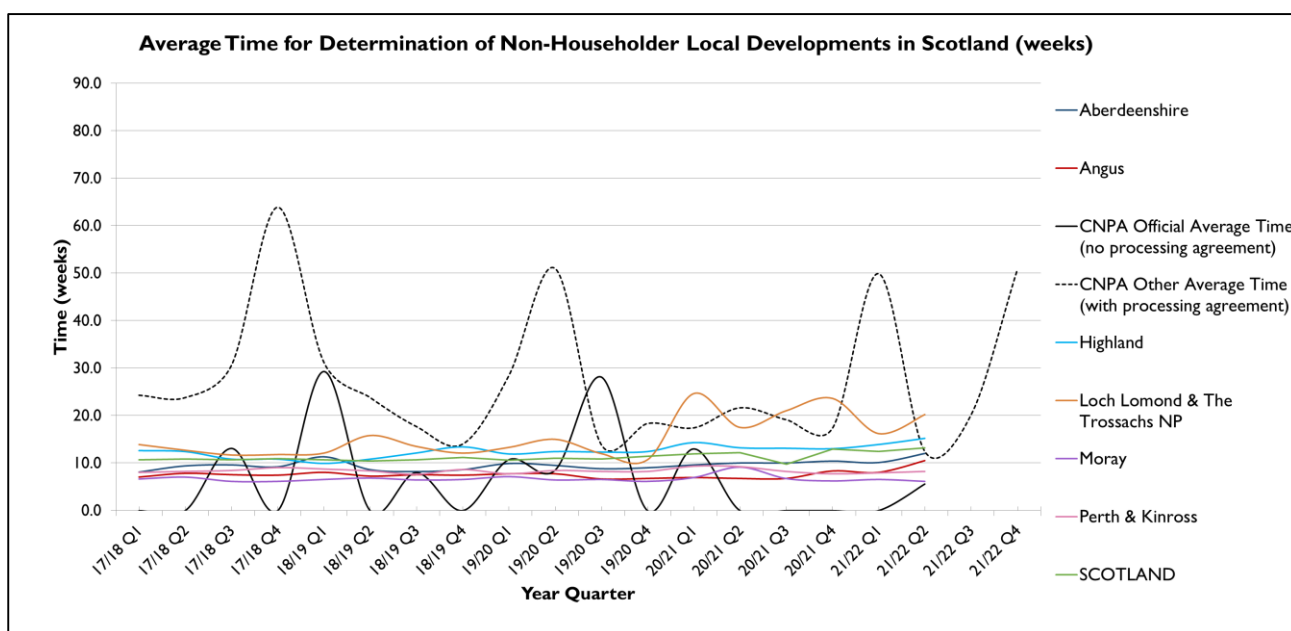


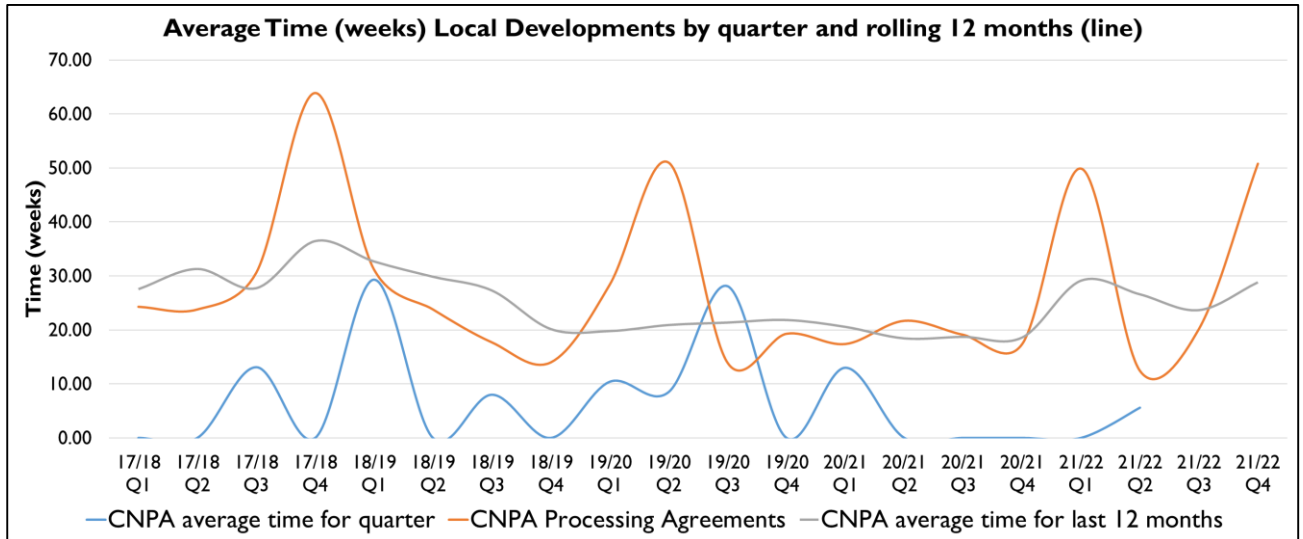
Figure 2



3. 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.
4. 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.

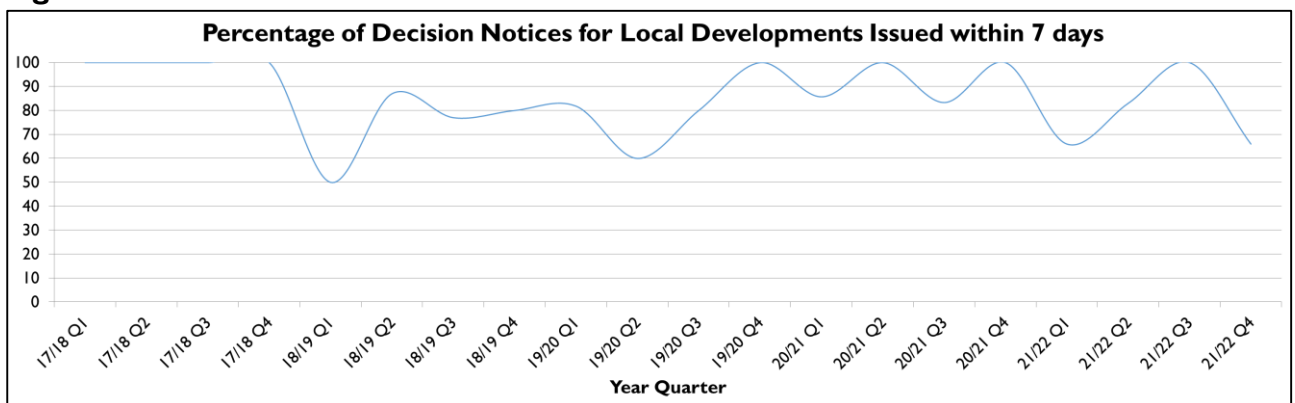
Figure 3



Issuing decision notices

- The planning service has continued to maintain a pattern of swift decision notice production following planning committee decisions. Figure 4 (below) shows a continued overall upward trend in the percentage of decision notices for local developments issued within 7 days.

Figure 4



Planning Service Improvements 2021/22

- In the Planning Performance Framework 2020/21 the CNPA set out the following Planning Service Improvements for 2021/22. The CNPA Planning team are pleased to report work has begun and is ongoing to meet all of the listed service improvements. A project plan for the third Cairngorms National Park Design Awards has been

drafted and a marketing and engagement plan will be produced to ensure maximum public engagement ahead of the planned program for 2023.

After a very successful public consultation on the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP), the consultation responses have been analysed and the final plan is now in preparation. Once adopted the NPPP will act as the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the Cairngorms National Park area. Specialist training for committee members on landscape in relation to wind farm developments has been scheduled for later this year, in part due to a need to focus and complete the delivery of the NPPP first. Work is ongoing to continually monitor and deliver training to the Committee on matters of clarification where additional training/ or information is deemed necessary.

2021/22 Planning Service Improvements		Status
1	Continue to simplify mechanisms for securing planning obligations and reduce the need for planning agreements.	Simplified arrangements with Highland Council now in place.
2	Plan for the third Cairngorms National Park Design Awards.	Plan ready for 2023
3	Continue to make the planning process more accessible – enhancing our use of technology to increase accessibility and engagement in the planning process. We will also be trialing the use of the new software (commonplace) to increase engagement in public consultations by making the material more accessible to a wider audience.	Commonplace trialed in National Park Partnership Plan.
4	Continue our monitoring of hill tracks development and increase awareness of policy amongst estates and land managers - Our monitoring and enforcement of unauthorised hill tracks has increased in recent years. During 2021/2022 we will continue work on completing a monitoring project using aerial photography and to provide further guidance for estates and land managers.	Work ongoing
5	Prepare the next National Park Partnership Plan incorporating the Regional Spatial Strategy for the National Park.	Work nearing completion
6	Deliver specialist training to committee members on landscape in relation to wind farm developments – and continue to monitor gaps in members knowledge to deliver suitable additional training as required	Work ongoing/ Scheduled for delivery
7	Consolidate past improvements and procedures – embedding changes and improvements	Work ongoing

Scottish Government feedback on the Planning Performance Framework 2020/21

7. The feedback from the Planning Minister on the CNPA's tenth Planning Performance Framework (2020/21) was again positive. The table below shows the CNPA has retained its minimum performance against key markers in all categories, with an improvement in the CNPA's continuous improvement marker.

2020/21 CNPA Performance against Key Markers

MARKER	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
1 Decision-making	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow
2 Processing agreements	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
3 Early collaboration	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
4 Legal agreements	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
5 Enforcement charter	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
6 Continuous improvement	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green
7 Local development plan	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
8 Development plan scheme	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
9 Elected members early engagement	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
10 Cross sector stakeholders engaged early	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
11 Regular and proportionate policy advice	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
12 Corporate working across services	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
14 Stalled sites / legacy cases	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
15 Developer contributions:	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

Next Report

8. The next planning service monitoring report will be produced in Quarter 3 of 2022/23

Gavin Miles

gavinmiles@cairngorms.co.uk