

# Report to Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel

**Date of meeting: 6 January 2009**

**Subject: Effect of Change in Committee Cycle on Development Control Performance**

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**Committee Secretary: M Jenkins (Tel: 01992 56 4607)**



## Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To consider the impact of the change to the committee cycles on development control performance.

## Report:

1. On 19 February 2008 the Council had agreed to change the 4-week planning committee cycle to a 3-week cycle. It was felt that losing 1 week in the committee cycle would save a week in time taken to determine applications decided at the committee. The change began effectively after the 21 May 2008 committee.

2. The data below covers the period from 22 May to December 2008.

	Before Determined	Before Expiry	%	Area Cttee	Before Expiry	%	Dev Cttee	Before Expiry	%
May 22 - June 30	191	160	83.77%	25	4	16.00%	1	0	0.00%
July 1 - September 30	571	488	85.46%	54	26	48.15%	2	0	0.00%
October 1 - December 31	407	340	83.54%	66	25	37.88%	9	1	11.11%
	1169	988	84.52%	145	55	37.93%	12	1	8.33%

3. The total number of planning applications determined under delegated authority, or by committee, during this period, was 1169. The number of applications determined by committee was 145 and the number determined by the District Development Control Committee was 12.

4. If these applications were moved to the next available date, on a four week cycle, it could be estimated that this number would fall as low as 19 cases reaching a planning committee before their expiry date (13.1%). This figure was probably an under estimate as some of these cases would have gone before a committee at an earlier date than the date under the four week cycle. As such a comparison to 2007/08 would be more instructive. In the period 2007/08, 185 cases had gone before a planning committee, of these only 43 cases (23.2%) were considered before their expiry date.

5. It could be argued that by comparing 2007 to 2008, the percentage of cases considered by a planning committee prior to expiry date, had increased by 63% as a result of this change. 55 of these cases reached committee before their expiry date, which is equivalent to 37.9%.

6. If this percentage was applied to this period in 2007, an additional 27 cases would have reached committee before their expiry date. For the full year this could have reached around 60 cases (based on the figures for the sample period).

7. Given that around 2150 cases were determined in 2007/8, these 60 cases would be equivalent to 2.7% of all applications determined. Given the closeness of the performance figures to the top quartile targets, it is conceivable that had this change been in place in 2007/08 then all three top quartile targets could have been achieved.