

# **Report to Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel**



**Date of meeting: 2 September 2010**

**Subject: Setting of 2010-11 performance target for LPI 45  
and NI 157(b)**

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the following performance indicator target be agreed:**

- 1. LPI 45: Planning Appeals – 25%**
- 2. NI 157(b): Processing of “Minor” Planning Applications – 81%**

## **Report:**

The purpose of this report is to seek an agreed percentage targets for Local Indicator 45 and National Indicator 157(b).

## **Background:**

As Members are aware, the Council each year adopts a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which are regarded as crucial to the Council's core business and its corporate priorities.

At its meeting on 23 February 2010, the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel considered a raft of new indicators and agreed to adopt LPI 45 (The number of appeals allowed against refusal of planning permission applications, as a percentage of the total number of appeals against refusal of planning permission applications) and NI 157(b) (The percentage of 'minor' planning applications determined in a timely manner where a timely manner is defined as within 8 weeks for 'minor' applications) as indicators with a view to achieving top quartile performance for district authorities.

The minutes of this meeting state that in the case of LP 45 (Appeals), to leave the target it as it is (25%) and review again in June 2010 depending on the government and policies in place at the time.

In the case of NI 157(b) (Minor planning applications), the same Panel concluded that the target be set when it comes to “Scrutiny”.

## **Reason for decision:**

In the case of LPI 45, there has been no policy change so far since the new coalition Government was formed. It was not reported to June PSSSP as it was felt to be too soon into the term of the new Government, but further delay now would be unreasonable and too far into the current financial year to be a realistic target, or indeed, possibly be viewed that there is perhaps deliberate delay to seek current performance before setting a more realistic target.

25% target continues to be a high target, but until its abolition as a national Best Value

Performance Indicator in 2008, 25% was the top quartile performance for District authorities for the previous 3 years. The Government has not produced any benchmarking data since to test what the present top quartile figure is, but it is likely to be running at the same level. Retaining a 25% target would therefore be a challenging performance level for officers and Members to attain.

In the case of NI 157(b), the performance over the last few years has been 78% (2007/08), 79.64% (2008/09) and 79.67% (2009/10). A small change to delegated powers was agreed in June 2010, but without greater changes to allow greater delegated powers for senior officers to decide and turn these planning applications around within 8 weeks, rather than report to planning committees, the previous year targets of 84% is not going to be achievable.

Officers are therefore suggesting a more achievable target would be 81%. Last years target of 79.64% was the best yet attained, so 81% would still be a very challenging target to attain.

### **Conclusion**

That the target of 25% be set for LPI 45 and a target of 81%, rather than 84% as in previous years, be set for NI 157(b).

### **Options considered and rejected:**

Setting lower targets for LP 45 up to 30% would be more achievable, but may not been seen as challenging for top quartile performance.

Setting the target for NI157(b) to lower than 81% would be closer to previous performance, but again not be seen as challenging. Setting the target higher, then this would need changes to delegation and/or more regular Area Plans Committee meetings which has already been rejected by Members and in any case, would be too late for performance outturn in this financial year.

### **Consultation undertaken:**

Discussions at Development Control Management Meeting.

### **Resource implications:**

Budget provision: As existing  
Personnel: Planning Officers and Members  
Land: Nil

Community Plan/BVPP reference: LPI 45 and NI 157(b).

Relevant statutory powers: Communities and Local Government (Housing Markets and Planning Analysis Division) based on information supplied by local planning authorities

Background papers: None  
Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Nil  
Key Decision reference: (if required)