



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD IN MOSSLEY MILL ON MONDAY 19 JULY 2021 AT 6.00 PM**

- In the Chair** : Alderman F Agnew
- Committee Members Present** : Aldermen - P Brett, Campbell and J Smyth
Councillors - J Archibald-Brown, R Lynch, M Magill, N Ramsay, R Swann and B Webb
- Non-Committee Members Present** : Councillors – J Gilmour and V McWilliam
- Public Speakers** :
- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Councillor J Gilmour | In Objection (Items 3.2 & 3.3) |
| Mr Ashley Haslett | In Objection (Item 3.2) |
| Mrs Jenny Campbell | In Objection (Item 3.2) |
| Mr Gary McElvogue | In Support (Agent, Item 3.2) |
| Mr Thomas Whiteside | In Support (Item 3.3) |
| Mr William Kennedy | In Support (Applicant, Item 3.7) |
| Mr Ivan McClean | In Support (Agent, Item 3.7) |
| Mr Sean O'Kane | In Support (Item 3.6) |
- Officers Present** : Deputy Chief Executive of Economic Growth - M McAlister
Head of Planning - J Linden
Deputy Director of Planning (Interim) - S Mossman
Borough Lawyer & Head of Legal Services - P Casey
Principal Planning Officer - B Diamond
Senior Planning Officer - K O'Connell
ICT Helpdesk Officer – C Bell
ICT Helpdesk Officer - D Mason
Member Services Officer - S Boyd

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Vice Chairperson, Alderman Agnew, welcomed Committee Members to the July Planning Committee Meeting, congratulated the Chairperson Councillor Flanagan and his wife on the recent birth of their daughter and advised Members that, in Councillor Flanagan's absence, he would be Chairing this month's meeting.

The Chairperson reminded all present of the protocol for speaking, timeframes accorded and of the audio recording procedures.

In order to protect public health during the current COVID-19 emergency it was not possible to allow the public or the press to physically attend the Planning Committee

meeting. The public and the press can access those parts of the meeting which they are entitled to attend via livestream (a link to which is on the Council website). The meeting minutes and audio recording will be published on the Council's website.

The Chairperson further advised Members that Addendum reports relating to Items 3.4 and 3.6 and Site Visit Report had been circulated to Members with a hard copy being made available in the Chamber.

The Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services reminded Members about a number of issues in relation to their role as Members of the Planning Committee and their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

1 APOLOGIES

Councillors H Cushinan and S Flanagan
Chief Executive J Dixon

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.2 Alderman T Campbell

PART ONE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

ITEM 3.1 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2021/0402/F

PROPOSAL:	Extension to terminal building to accommodate enhanced security area and external facade re-cladding
SITE/LOCATION:	Belfast International Airport, Airport Road, Belfast BT29 4AB
APPLICANT:	Belfast International Airport

Barry Diamond, Principal Planning Officer, introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to grant planning permission.

The undernoted public speakers were available to respond to any enquiries from Members –

Chris Horner	In Support (Applicant) for questions
Adam Larkin	In Support (Agent) for questions

Proposed by Alderman Campbell
Seconded by Councillor Webb and unanimously agreed

that planning permission be granted for the application subject to the conditions set out in the Planning Report.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

Alderman Brett joined the meeting.

Alderman Campbell left the Chamber having declared an interest in the following item.

ITEM 3.2 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2020/0891/O

PROPOSAL: Site for 1 no. detached dwelling (one and a half storey and single bay detached garage)

SITE/LOCATION: Garden to rear of 16 Lenamore Drive, Jordanstown, Newtownabbey

APPLICANT: G McNabb, J Robinson, J Cochrane, L Fielden, J Thomas

Barry Diamond, Principal Planning Officer, introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to grant outline planning permission.

The undernoted Elected Member and public speakers addressed the Committee and responded to enquiries from Members as requested –

Councillor Julie Gilmour	In Objection
Ashley Haslett	In Objection
Jenny Campbell	In Objection
Gary McElvogue	In Support (Agent)

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Alderman Smyth that outline planning permission be refused

on the proposal being put to the meeting 9 Members voted in favour, 0 against and 0 abstentions

In favour: Aldermen Agnew, Brett and Smyth
Councillors Archibald-Brown, Lynch, Magill, Ramsay, Swann and Webb

and it was unanimously agreed that outline planning permission be refused due to a loss of amenity and noise that would arise as a result of the proposed development, the precise detail of which being delegated to Officers.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

Alderman Campbell returned to the Chamber.

ITEM 3.3 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2021/0175/A

PROPOSAL: Retention of digital advertising panel

SITE/LOCATION: 450 – 456 Shore Road, Newtownabbey, BT37 0AA

APPLICANT: Omega Outdoor

John Linden, Head of Planning, introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to refuse advertisement consent.

The undernoted Elected Member and public speaker addressed the Committee and responded to enquiries from Members as requested –

Councillor Julie Gilmour	In Objection
Mr Thomas Whiteside	In Support (consultant)

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Councillor Archibald-Brown that advertisement consent be granted

on the proposal being put to the meeting 7 Members voted in favour, 3 against and 0 abstentions

In favour: Aldermen Brett, Campbell and Smyth
Councillors Archibald Brown, Lynch, Magill and Swann

Against: Alderman Agnew
Councillors Ramsay and Webb

and it was agreed that advertisement consent would not have a detrimental impact to the visual amenity of the local area and should therefore be granted subject to the imposition of relevant conditions, to include the following matters, the detail of which was delegated to Officers

- (a) the level of luminance of the advertisement is to be appropriately controlled**
- (b) a restriction on the night-time operation of the advertisement be imposed**

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

ITEM 3.4 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2020/0480/O

PROPOSAL:	2 No. sites for proposed new dwellings and garages
SITE/LOCATION:	50m North of 85 Old Ballyrobin Road, Antrim
APPLICANT:	Maurice McBride

Kieran O'Connell, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the Planning Report and associated Addendum Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to refuse outline planning permission.

There were no public speakers to address this item.

Proposed by Alderman Campbell

Seconded by Alderman Brett and unanimously agreed

that outline planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY1 of PPS 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location and could not be located within a settlement and it**

fails to meet the provisions for a dwelling within a cluster in accordance with Policy CTY2a of PPS21.

2. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY 14 of PPS 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the proposed development, if permitted, would result in a detrimental change to the rural character of the countryside by way of build-up.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

ITEM 3.5 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2020/0512/F

PROPOSAL:	Infill 2 No. dwellings and garages/stores
SITE/LOCATION:	50m SE of 192 Portglenone Road, Randalstown
APPLICANT:	Mr G Crawford

Kieran O'Connell, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to refuse planning permission. In making his presentation the Officer advised Members that a minor amendment was required to the third Reason of Refusal to reference Policy CTY 8.

There were no public speakers to address this item.

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Alderman Campbell and unanimously agreed

that planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY 1 of Planning Policy Statement 21 `Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location and could not be located within a settlement;
2. The proposal is contrary to the provisions contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and fails to meet with the provisions for an infill dwelling in accordance with Policy CTY 8 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the application site does not comprise a small gap within a substantial and continuously built up frontage;
3. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policies CTY 8 and CTY 14 of Planning Policy Statement 21, in that the two dwellings would, if permitted, result in a suburban style build-up of development; and the creation of ribbon development along the Portglenone Road.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

The Chairperson took Item 3.7 at this point of the meeting.

ITEM 3.7 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2021/0221/F

PROPOSAL:	Proposed milk vending station (Agricultural farm gate diversification)
SITE/LOCATION:	Approx 80m south east of 44 Calhame Road, Ballyclare
APPLICANT:	Mr William Kennedy

Kieran O'Connell, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to refuse planning permission. In making his presentation the Officer advised Members that a minor amendment was required to the second Reason of Refusal to reference Policy CTY 8.

The undernoted public speakers addressed the Committee and responded to enquiries from Members as requested –

Mr William Kennedy	In Support (Applicant)
Mr Ivan McClean	In Support (Agent)

Proposed by Alderman Campbell
Seconded by Alderman Brett and

on the proposal being put to the meeting 7 Members voted in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention, it was agreed

that planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal is contrary to the provisions contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policies CTY 1, CTY 11 and CTY 13 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the proposal does not involve the re-use or adaption of an existing farm building and the building if permitted on the site proposed, would not be satisfactorily integrated with an existing group of buildings, rather it would constitute a prominent feature in the rural landscape with consequent adverse impact on the character and appearance of the locality;**
- 2. The proposal is contrary to the provisions contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policies CTY 1, CTY 8 and CTY 14 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the building, if permitted, would result in the creation of a ribbon of development that would adversely affect the character and appearance of this rural area;**
- 3. The proposal is contrary to the provisions contained within the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and within Policy FLD 3 of Planning Policy Statement 15 in that it has not been demonstrated that the proposal, if permitted, would not result in an unacceptable increase in flood risk due to an increased level of surface water run-off.**

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

Alderman Brett left and returned to the Chamber during the following Item and was therefore unable to vote.

ITEM 3.6 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2021/0360/O

PROPOSAL:	Two no. dwellings & garages
SITE/LOCATION:	Lands 30m North West of 2 Derryhollagh Lane, Randalstown BT41 3HT
APPLICANT:	Mr T McKeever

John Linden, Head of Planning, introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to refuse outline planning permission.

The undernoted public speaker addressed the Committee and responded to enquiries from Members as requested –

Mr Sean O’Kane In Support (Consultant)

Proposed by Councillor Archibald-Brown

Seconded by Alderman Smyth and unanimously agreed

that outline planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY 1 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location and could not be located within a settlement.**
- 2. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY 2a of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that it fails to meet with the provisions for a new dwelling in an existing cluster.**
- 3. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and fails to meet with the provisions for an infill dwelling in accordance with Policy CTY 8 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the application site does not comprise a small gap within a substantial and continuously built up frontage.**
- 4. The proposal is contrary to the policy provisions of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policy CTY 13 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that two dwellings and their associated garages on this site, if permitted, would be prominent, represent skyline development and fail to integrate into the countryside.**
- 5. The proposal is contrary to the provisions contained in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Policies CTY 8 and 14 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside, in that the building would, if permitted, result in ribbon development resulting in a suburban style build up**

when viewed with the existing dwellings along Derryhollagh Lane.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

Alderman Campbell left the Chamber.

ITEM 3.8 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2020/0532/F

PROPOSAL: Retrospective application for an outdoor ice-cream kiosk and bar servery to existing beer garden, including low level wall and new steps

SITE/LOCATION: 129 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT36 7QS

APPLICANT: Bellevue Arms Ltd

John Linden, Head of Planning, introduced the Addendum Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to grant planning permission for a temporary period of two (2) years.

There were no public speakers to address this item.

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Councillor Lynch and unanimously agreed

that planning permission be granted for the application for a temporary period of two (2) years subject to the conditions set out in the Addendum Report.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

ITEM 3.9 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2020/0797/F

PROPOSAL: Reinstatement of fire damaged building (Council Offices)

SITE/LOCATION: Steeple House, 16 Steeple Road, Antrim

APPLICANT: Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim), introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to grant planning permission.

There were no public speakers to address this item.

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Alderman Smyth and unanimously agreed

that planning permission be granted for the application subject to the conditions set out in the Planning Report.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

ITEM 3.10 APPLICATION NO: LA03/2020/0798/LBC

PROPOSAL:	Reinstatement of fire damaged building (Council Offices)
SITE/LOCATION:	Steeple House, 16 Steeple Road, Antrim
APPLICANT:	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim), introduced the Planning Report to the Committee and made a recommendation to grant listed building consent.

There were no public speakers to address this item.

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Alderman Smyth and unanimously agreed

that listed building consent be granted subject to the conditions set out in the Planning Report.

ACTION BY: Sharon Mossman, Deputy Director of Planning (Interim)

PART TWO OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

Alderman Campbell returned to the Chamber.

ITEM 3.11

P/PLAN/1 DELEGATED PLANNING DECISIONS AND APPEALS

A list of planning decisions issued by Officers during June 2021 under delegated powers together with information relating to planning appeals was circulated for Members information.

Two appeals were dismissed during June by the Planning Appeals Commission in relation to (a) a dwelling adjacent to 108 Glenview Park; and (b) the infilling of land at Toome and copies of these decisions were also circulated.

Proposed by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Alderman Smyth and unanimously agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

ITEM 3.12

P/FP/LDP/1 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: QUARTERLY UPDATE APRIL TO JUNE 2021

The Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) Timetable advises that progress reports will be submitted on a quarterly basis to the Planning Committee. This report covered the first quarter of the 2020-2021 business year (April to June 2021).

Submission of the Draft Plan Strategy to the Department for Infrastructure and Preparation for Independent Examination

Following the submission of the Council's Local Development Plan – Draft Plan Strategy to the Department for Infrastructure on 8 March 2021 to cause an Independent Examination in accordance with Section 10 (i) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the Act) and Regulation 20 of The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (the LDP Regulations), the Department subsequently requested some minor additional information for clarification. As a result, a number of new documents were submitted to DfI and made publically available including an updated Soundness Report, Soundness Addendum and Inventory lists.

All persons required to be notified under Regulation 21 of the LDP Regulations were duly notified in relation to the additional information submitted. The information was also duly advertised, published online and made available for inspection (by appointment only due to COVID 19 Regulations).

Upon receipt of this additional information, the Department subsequently asked the Planning Appeals Commission to cause an Independent Examination into the Local Development Plan – Draft Plan Strategy. The Commission duly advised on 3 June that the documentation had been received, a Programme Officer had been appointed and that a Commissioner would be appointed once the Commission is satisfied that all the relevant information is in place.

No date has yet been set by the Planning Appeals Commission for Independent Examination and Members will be notified in due course.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Magill and unanimously agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

ITEM 3.13

FP/FP/55 MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL - SUBMISSION OF DRAFT PLAN STRATEGY AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS TO DEPARTMENT

Neighbouring Councils are one of the main statutory consultees within the Local Development Plan (LDP) process and several have been progressing their LDP Draft Plan Strategy documents in recent months.

Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC) had written to the Council (copy circulated) to advise that it has now submitted its Draft Plan Strategy and associated documents to DfI for the purposes of causing an Independent Examination to be carried out.

The LDP submission documents for MUDC can be viewed on their website at <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/planning/mid-ulster-development-plan>

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Magill and unanimously agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

ITEM 3.14

P/FP/114 DAERA/DfI COASTAL FORUM

Following a significant delay caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic, the most recent meeting of the Coastal Forum took place virtually on 24 June 2021 and was hosted by DAERA/DfI. Items for discussion included the following:

- an update on the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment;
- a revised draft TOR for the Coastal Forum;
- an update on the Coastal Forum Work Programme;
- a Position Paper on Local Development Plans; and
- an update on baseline coastal data.

A copy of the Minutes of this meeting, once agreed, will be circulated. The minutes of the last Coastal Forum meeting held on 19 November 2019 were circulated for information.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Magill and unanimously agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

ITEM 3.15

TPO/2021/0006/LA03 - CONFIRMATION OF PROVISIONAL TPO ON LAND DIRECTLY SOUTH OF NEILLS COURT, NORTH OF RATHCOOLE DRIVE AND WEST OF SHORE ROAD (SITE OF FORMER NEWTOWNABBEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL)

Section 122 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 empowers the Council to make provision for the preservation of trees or woodlands where it appears that it is expedient in the interests of amenity through a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The purpose of such an Order is to preserve the trees on a particular site and to prohibit the cutting down, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage or wilful destruction of the trees.

Members recalled that at the March 2021 meeting of the Planning Committee Officers reported the service of a Provisional TPO on lands directly south of Neills Court, North of Rathcoole Drive and West of Shore Road (the site of the former Newtownabbey Community High School) on 19 February 2021 in accordance with Section 123 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

In accordance with Section 123 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 the TPO must be confirmed on or before 19 August 2021, being 6 months from the date of service of the Provisional TPO, should the Council wish to do so.

In making a TPO, The Planning (Trees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires the Council to identify the trees, group of trees or woodland which are subject to the Order. In this instance, the Council considered the trees to be of individual merit and accordingly commissioned a survey of the site, undertaken by M. Large Tree Services Ltd.

The Council invited representations from those with an interest in the land and impacted properties adjoining the land, which were to be received within 28 days of the date of the Order. No representations were received. Officers considered the trees encompassed within the provisional TPO have significant local amenity value and Members were therefore requested to confirm the TPO.

Proposed by Councillor Webb

Seconded by Councillor Archibald-Brown and unanimously agreed

that the Tree Preservation Order be confirmed.

ACTION BY: Steven McQuillan, Planning Officer

ITEM 3.16

P/PLAN/1 - NORTHERN IRELAND PLANNING STATISTICS – ANNUAL STATISTICAL BULLETIN FOR 2020-2021

The Northern Ireland Planning Statistics 2020-21 Annual Statistical Bulletin (circulated), was released on 1 July 2021 by the Department for Infrastructure's Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch. This is the sixth annual statistical report on activity and performance since the transfer of planning powers to Councils in 2015.

As previously reported to Members the Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch has advised that planning activity throughout 2020/21 was impacted by the restrictions put in place due to the coronavirus pandemic. It has indicated that this should be borne in mind and caution taken when interpreting the published figures and when making comparisons with previous years and the performance across Councils.

The figures show that during 2020-21, the total number of planning applications received in Northern Ireland was 12,833, an increase of 5% on the previous financial year. The figures also highlight that 10,483 decisions were issued across Northern Ireland, a decrease of over 10% on the previous year.

Whilst there was an increase in applications received across Northern Ireland during 2019-20, the local figures for the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough show a decrease of some 6% from 778 applications received in 2019-20 to 730 received during 2020-21. During the year 543 decisions were issued by the Planning Section, a decrease of over 25% from 2019-20. Of the decisions issued, the Council recorded an overall approval rate of 95.6% which broadly tallies with the Northern Ireland average of 95.7%.

There were 378 live cases in the Borough at 31st March 2020 considerably above the number (221) recorded at 31st March 2019 and representing an increase of over 70%. The number of applications more than 12 months old also increased to 16 applications, although this equated to some 4.2% of the Council's live planning applications which remains the lowest proportion of all 11 Councils.

Performance against statutory targets

In relation to performance against targets the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) figures show that the Council met the statutory targets this year for local applications, one of only three Councils to do so. The Council was also one of six Councils that met the target for enforcement. Members should however also note that no Council met the statutory target for major applications during 2020-21.

Major Applications

The Council took on average 113.4 weeks to process and decide **Major** planning applications during 2020-21 against the target of 30 weeks. As a consequence, the Council did not meet the major target and this performance ranks the lowest of the 11 Councils and compares with the NI average of 61.4 weeks.

This represented a significant drop from the position recorded last year. However as reported to the April Planning Committee the Council's performance related to a very small number of Major applications. Five such applications were determined during the year, all of which were approved. This included the determination of three applications which were over 2 years old (including the Asda application on the Doagh Road) and this has clearly impacted significantly on the year-end figures.

Members noted, notwithstanding that the Council recorded the longest average processing time for 2020-21, at the same time the Council recorded the highest proportion of major applications processed within target at 40%, compared to an average across all Councils of 13.4%, and thus ranked first on this measure out of the 11 Councils.

The above results demonstrated the small margins involved in measuring Major application performance. More importantly, given the strategic and economic importance of the Major application caseload to the Borough and to assist recovery from COVID-19, Members noted that the Planning Section continues to afford priority to this work area.

Local Applications

The DfI figures show that the Council took on average 12.4 weeks to process and decide **Local** planning applications during 2020-21 against the target of 15 weeks. Whilst this performance represents an increase in average processing time judged against the 2019-20 figure it again ranked second out of the 11 Councils where an average processing time of 17.8 weeks across all Councils has been recorded.

In relation to the proportion of cases processed within target Members should note that the Council also ranked second out of all 11 Councils with over 64.3% of cases processed within 15 weeks against an average of 41.1% across all Councils.

Enforcement

In relation to enforcement the DfI figures highlight that the Council's Planning Enforcement Team concluded over 90.8% of cases within 39 weeks against the

performance target of 70%. The team recorded an average time of 24.4 weeks, to process 70% of enforcement cases to target conclusion compared to an average of 39.2 weeks across all Councils. This maintained the Council's strong performance in processing enforcement cases recorded over the last 4 years and once again the Council ranked first and third respectively out of all Councils on the two processing targets.

Local Development Plan – Draft Plan Strategy

In addition to performance against the statutory performance measures on planning applications and enforcement outlined above, Members also noted the success of the Planning Section's Forward Planning Section during the business year in progressing work on the Council's Draft Plan Strategy which the Department for Infrastructure has agreed can now go forward to Independent Examination before the Planning Appeals Commission.

Summary

Whilst clearly performance had not been at the same level as witnessed in the previous two years Members noted that the Council continues to rank amongst the top three of the 11 Councils in Northern Ireland on five of the six statutory performance indicators. In addition, the Council still has the lowest proportion of backlog applications over 12 months old and read in their entirety, the statistics suggest that, through the hard efforts of all the staff in the Planning Section and the decisions taken by the Committee itself, the Council continues to be one of the top performing Local Planning Authorities in Northern Ireland.

During what has been a most difficult year due to the pressures experienced by the Planning Section as a result of COVID-19 the staff rose to the challenges faced and continued to perform excellently.

Members noted that the Planning Section has already begun to make strong inroads in reducing the enhanced live caseload of both applications and enforcement cases that has built up over the last year as a result of the impact of coronavirus. This work will help ensure that the Council's overall performance in recent years is maintained in the long term and that the Planning Section continues to play a strong role in promoting economic recovery to the benefit of our Borough's residents and businesses.

The Head of Planning commended Officers and Committee Members for their hard work over the past year despite the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic had brought.

Members thanked the Head of Planning for his service to Council and wished him well in his retirement.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Councillor Magill and unanimously agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

There being no further Committee business the Chairperson thanked Members, for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.50 pm.

MAYOR