

PLANNING TURNAROUND UNITARY ANALYSIS For the period up to September 2014 (Q2)

The attached spreadsheets, 'RSN Development Control Analysis' set out our latest analysis of Planning Turnaround statistics for local unitary authorities across England. This analysis compares your authority to other rural authorities and family authorities. All information is taken from the Department for Communities and Local Government at www.gov.uk.

There are two analyses attached:

1. RSN Development Control Analysis QE September 2014 – showing performance for the quarter July to September 2014.
2. RSN Development Control Analysis YE September 2014 – showing performance for the year ending September 2014.

What does it show?

By selecting your authority in the top left yellow box, you can see your performance in relation to three indicators, Turnaround time for Major, Minor and Other Applications.

Why these measures?

These traditional performance measures, long collected by the Government to measure success in the planning system, are lagging indicators; they measure what has already happened in the system and are not necessarily an indicator of a good experience for the customer.

Turnaround time from the date of a valid application being received to a decision may only be 5 or 6 weeks, but from the customers perspective the clock starts when they hand in their application to the council, or their agent whether it is a valid application or not.

Planning will always be a contentious subject as the outcomes can affect so many individuals and organisations, a 'good' decision could differ for the applicant, neighbour, parish council or community as a whole and a range of factors should be considered by an authority to determine the successful performance of their planning department.

This analysis however focuses on the turnaround time indicators as these are readily available for every authority. We would be interested to hear from authorities that are using alternative indicators to manage their performance or who would like to share their improvement stories with the rural planning community.

The top performing unitary authorities are continuing to perform well, for the year ending September 2014, top quartile performance for Minor Applications was 79% and for Other applications, this was 92%.

Who is doing well?
Focus on Southend-On-Sea

Southend-On-Sea is the top performing unitary authority for the year ending September 2014 in processing Minor Applications. It is in the top 5 for processing Other Applications during this period and achieves 88% of Major applications processed within specified timescales at this time.

It was named Development Management team of the year in Autumn 2014 at the Planning Awards. The team was praised by judges at the Planning Awards 2014, held in London's West End, for the way they "juggled a wide range of demands in handling 2,000 planning and related applications in the last year". They went on to say that they were "impressed with how a development management team can be dynamic, engaging and make a difference"

Its Head of Planning and Transport is Peter Geraghty, the ex-President of the RTPI. The service can be accessed at

http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200128/planning_and_building

Top 10 performing Unitary councils Year ending September 2014		Top 10 performing Unitary councils Year ending September 2014	
MINOR APPS	% within 8 weeks	OTHER APPS	% within 8 weeks
Southend-on-sea	92	Thurrock	99
Stoke on Trent	92	Stockton on Tees	98
Thurrock	92	North East Lincolnshire	97
Stockton on Tees	90	Plymouth	96
Plymouth	89	Southend On Sea	95
Nottingham	87	Central Bedfordshire	94
North East Lincolnshire	86	Stoke On Trent	94
Middlesbrough	85	Medway	94
Central Bedfordshire	84	Warrington	94
Bournemouth	83	Poole	93
		Windsor and Maidenhead	93
		York	93