

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Newport LPA

PLANNING ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018-19

PREFACE

I am pleased to introduce the fifth Annual Performance Report for Newport City Council's development services.

We continue to see house building rates at a high level in Newport. I am particularly pleased that that out of the 711 new homes built this year, over 200 were affordable. This is the highest level of affordable housing completions since the start of the LDP Plan period in 2011. The recorded rates at Glan Llyn were also the highest since the start of the Plan period, demonstrating confidence in Newport's largest strategic housing site, which has also undoubtedly been boosted by the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls.

What is perhaps more satisfying, is that Newport is not just building homes, but we are building new communities where people will enjoy living and feel proud to belong. The record completions at Glan Llyn were also accompanied by the opening of the brand new onsite primary school. The Celtic Business Park, on the same Llanwern Steelworks regeneration site, also saw the completion of the CAF train and rolling stock assembly plant, which will provide 300 new jobs. The plant will manufacture new trains for the South East Wales Metro.

The City Centre continues to make positive strides to a better future. The conversion of the Chartist Tower to a four-star hotel is now well advanced. The completion is expected early next year and it will transform the city's skyline, as well as hopefully increasing footfall in the Centre. The recent completion of the International Convention Centre Wales is also a major achievement for the City, and the potential for hosting global events will help to confirm Newport's position as an up and coming centre for business and growth.

The publication of the draft National Development Framework recognises Newport's potential and Development Services obviously has a fundamental role in helping Newport realise its ambitions. Outstanding work has already been completed to regenerate parts of the City and attract development, growth and business, but this work is by no means complete. I look forward to working with the dedicated staff of Development Services to continue and build on the work already successfully achieved and make Newport into a thoroughly modern city.

Cllr Jane Mudd – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing

CONTEXT

Standing at the gateway between England and Wales, Newport covers a geographical area of almost 74 square miles and has a population of approximately 145,700. It is a multi-cultural city with its own unique atmosphere, where traditional industries sit alongside new high-tech and finance companies. The large labour market pool is one of Newport's major strengths and its physical and digital connectivity make it an attractive place to locate for business.

Following a decline in heavy industry in the late 20th Century, the economic makeup of Newport changed. However, rather than dwell on economic decline, the existence of empty industrial sites presented a huge opportunity for sustainable locations for new housing, employment and community facilities; an opportunity that Newport has seized.

By 2026, Newport will have created an additional 10,350 new homes predominantly on brownfield sites. In order to support sustainable growth, the City will also create an additional 7,400 jobs. These are the key overall aims of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026, which allocates sufficient land to ensure these ambitious but realistic objectives are achieved.

The Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in January 2015. Sustainability is at the heart of the Plan and Newport is very keen to support development, but it is crucial that it is the right development in the right location. The policies within the Plan will help to ensure this is achieved.

The foundations for many of the regeneration projects that are now coming to fruition in the City were set out in the Newport Unitary Development Plan 1996 -2011. The redevelopment of the Llanwern Steelworks site is evidence of this. The Unitary Development Plan allocated the site as part of the Eastern Expansion Area, and the LDP continues to promote this site as a key element in delivering the City's growth strategy.

The Newport Single Integrated Plan and Community Strategy have been superseded by the Newport Well-being Plan 2018-2023. It includes 13 priorities that the LDP and planning services are well-equipped to assist with. The 13 priorities are listed below:

- 1. Improve the perceptions of Newport as a place to live, work, visit and invest**
- 2. Drive up skill levels for economics and social well-being**
- 3. Support regeneration and economic growth**
- 4. Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life**
- 5. Long and healthy lives for all**
- 6. Ensuring people feel safe in their communities**
- 7. People have access to stable homes in a sustainable supportive community**
- 8. People feel part of their community and have a sense of belonging**

9. Participation in sports and physical activity is important for people's well-being

10. Participation in arts, heritage and history is important for people's well-being

11. Newport has a clean and safe environment for people to use and enjoy

12. Improve air quality across the city

13. Communities are resilient to climate change

Sitting below the Newport Well-being Plan is the Newport Corporate Plan. This Corporate Plan covers the period 2017 – 2022. It sets out 20 commitments which represent a step change in how the Council operates and aims to achieve Newport's well-being objectives and building a better Newport. The 20 commitments are grouped into four themes:

- **Resilient Communities**
- **Aspirational People**
- **Thriving City**
- **Modernised Council**

The LDP and planning services are well placed to help deliver these priorities, with particular emphasis on 'Thriving City'. The LDP seeks to enhance Newport's role as a major economic hub in the region by providing new sites for housing and employment use. The LDP targets an increase of 7,400 new jobs by 2026, which is a 9% increase on 2011 levels. The Plan ensures that adequate employment land is available to support job growth. In addition, the Plan is very much supportive of city centre investment and regeneration which will significantly contribute to the long term prosperity of Newport.

Existing and previous major influences on land use

The industrial revolution of the late 18th Century and 19th Century saw Newport prosper. The City grew substantially, firstly with the development of the canal network and then with the railways, enabling vast quantities of coal to be exported along with iron and steel products. In the 20th Century, steelmaking was a mainstay of the economy along with the port.

Following a decline in heavy industry in the latter years of the 20th Century, the economic makeup of Newport changed. The existence of large empty former industrial sites, such as the former Llanwern Steelworks and former Novelis Aluminium factory offered strong sustainable locations for new communities to be developed. Regeneration of industrial sites is a key focus of the LDP with 82% of housing in the LDP being allocated on brownfield sites.

Historic/Landscape setting of the area, including AONBs, conservation areas etc.

During the Victorian reign, Newport became the principal town of the region. Many of the fine Victorian buildings constructed in that period remain to this date, giving Newport a character which many other towns and cities have lost. In other areas, the built environment goes back to Roman and Medieval times with important remains surviving both above and below present ground level. Recognising and preserving the

historic landscape is an important part of the LDP, with 15 designated Conservation Areas located within the authority.

In terms of the natural environment, Newport has an important natural heritage rich in diversity and recognised at the international, national and local level, including the River Usk, the Gwent Levels, rolling hills, woodlands and hedgerows.

The River Usk has been important to Newport's growth throughout history and remains key in today's society, particularly with respect to environmental factors. The River is a Special Area of Conservation along with the Severn Estuary, which is also a Special Protection Area and a Ramsar site. A network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is also present in Newport, the Gwent Levels probably the most famous of these.

Urban rural mix and major settlements

Although Newport is often considered urban, the urban form within the City boundary is relatively compact, with 70% of the City classified as rural. The majority of the urban settlement is confined to the main city area with a handful of villages surrounding this. The Council recognises the importance of protecting the countryside both for its own sake and because it provides a vital landscape setting for the urban area and transport corridors.

Population change and influence on LDP/forthcoming revisions

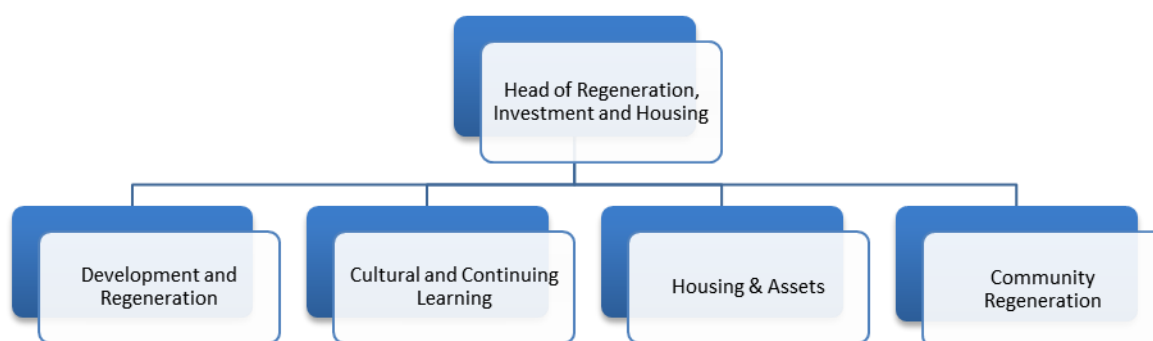
The Welsh Government 2011 Census projections predict a population increase of 15,588 in Newport between 2011 and 2026. This is in accordance with evidence submitted to support the LDP. However, the LDP housing projections are more ambitious than the Welsh Government (WG) 2011 Census projections. The WG 2011 Census household projections are based upon a continuation of conditions that were experienced during the recession, and fail to reflect the WG's objectives in respect of increasing the supply of housing. Newport has based its LDP housing projections with an assumption of economic growth rather than recession. Therefore, at LDP examination, the Planning Inspector and Welsh Government Plans Branch confirmed that the Newport housing requirement of 10,350 dwellings over the Plan period remains the most robust basis for planning for future housing demand in Newport.

PLANNING SERVICE

Setting within wider organisation

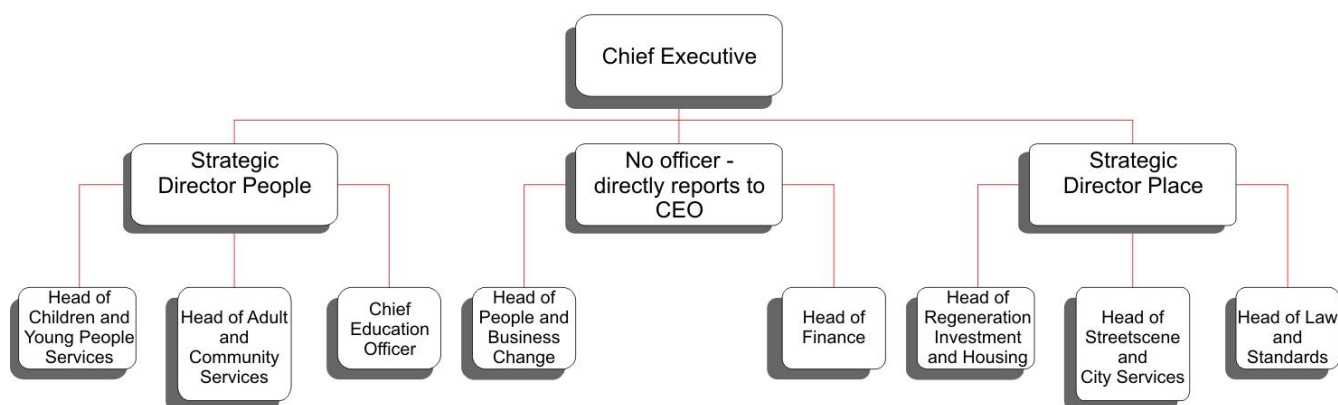
The statutory planning function in Newport sits within the Development and Regeneration section. The Development and Regeneration section is one of four business units within the Regeneration, Investment and Housing service; namely Development and Regeneration, Cultural and Continuing Learning, Housing and Assets, and Community Regeneration. The Development and Regeneration Manager reports to the Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing. This structure is shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Position of Development and Regeneration Manager within the Regeneration, Investment and Housing Service

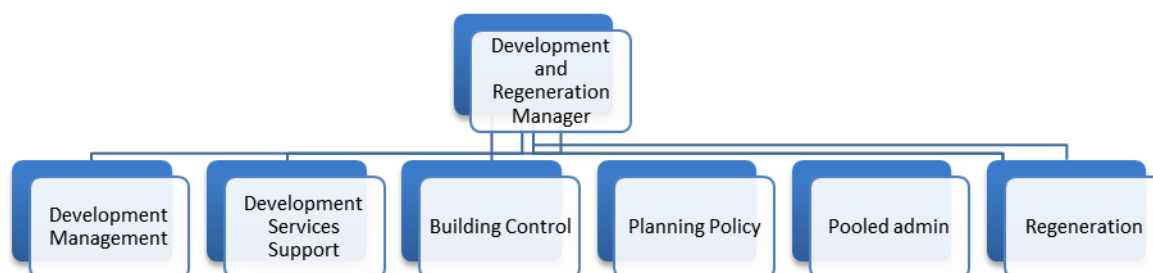


There are two Strategic Directors that report to the Chief Executive; Strategic Director for People and Strategic Director for Place. The Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing is one of 8 Heads of Services across the Council and one of three that report to the Strategic Director for Place. This structure is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2 – Council structure

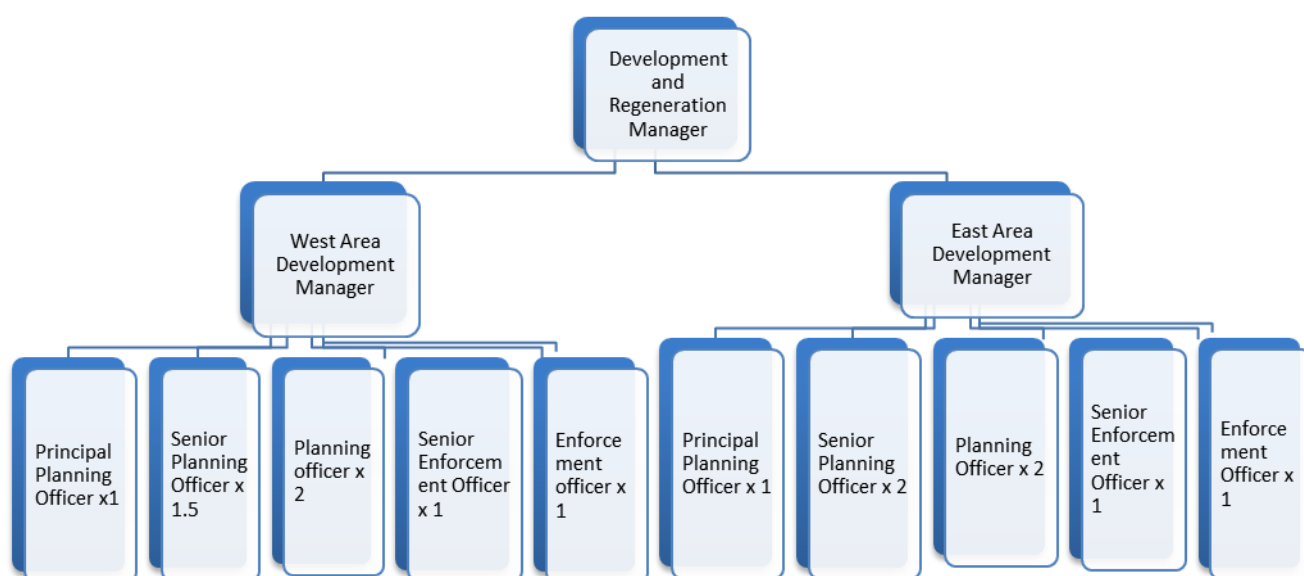


The Development and Regeneration Service comprises Development Management, Development Management Support (Technical Services), Pooled admin, Planning Policy, Building Control, Regeneration and Economic Development. The section has a total of 39.9 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff, of which Development Management has 20.5 (including Tech Support), Building Control has 6 (including Tech Support), Planning Policy 4.6, Pooled Admin has 2 FTE staff, Regeneration 6.8 (including Economic Development). The structure of the Development and Regeneration Service is shown in table 3 below.



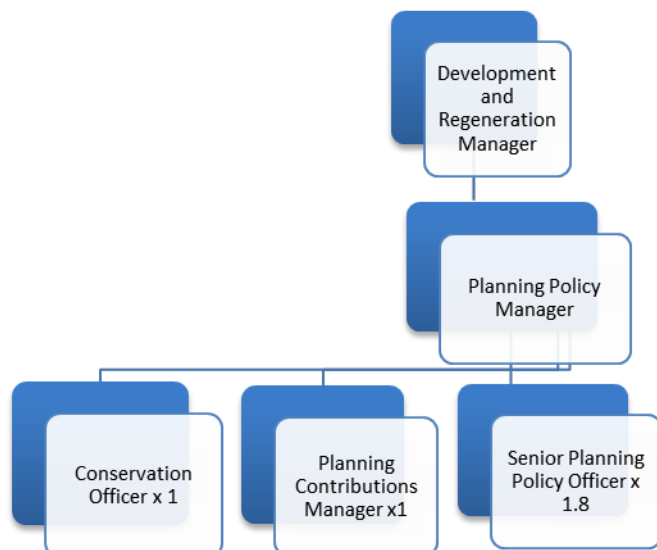
The Development Management Team is responsible for processing planning applications, appeals and exercising the planning enforcement function. It is split into two area teams headed up by two Area Managers that report to the Development and Regeneration Manager. Within each area team, there is 1 Principal Planning Officer, 2 Senior Planning Officers and 2 Planning Officers that deal with planning applications and their own appeals. There is also a Senior Enforcement Officer and an Enforcement Officer within each team. The structure is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4 – Development Management



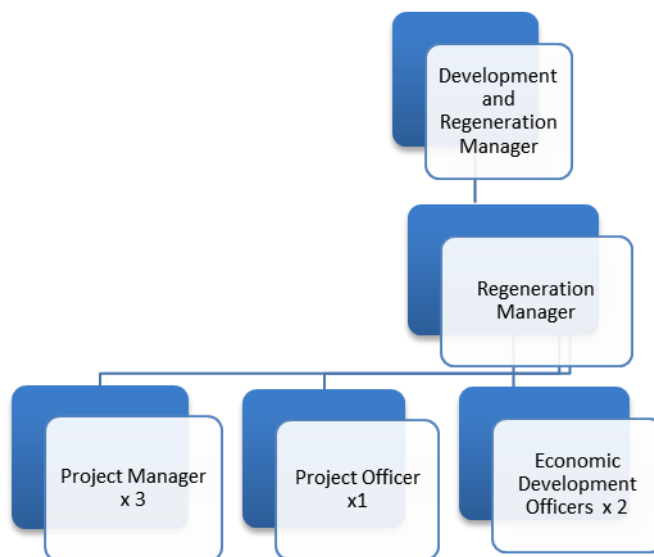
Planning Policy is headed up by a Planning Policy Manager whom also reports to the Development and Regeneration Manager. Planning Policy are responsible for the formulation and review of the Council's Development Plan and other local planning policy, historical building conservation, and Section 106 agreements. Reporting to the Planning Policy Manager are 1.8 senior policy officers, a conservation officer and the planning contributions manager. The structure is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5 – Planning Policy



The Regeneration Team has a similar structure with a Regeneration Manager reporting directly to the Development and Regeneration Manager. Two Economic Development Officers report to the Regeneration Manager. Their goal is to support and promote existing businesses as well as attracting inward investment to the City, with the overall objective of increasing economic prosperity and job numbers within Newport. A small project team also report directly to the Regeneration Manager. The structure is shown in table 6 below.

Table 6 – Regeneration



Wider organisational activities impacting on the service

The Department is continuously looking at efficiency and implementing new ways of working. These new innovations have principally involved the introduction of new IT systems including document management and bespoke Development Management systems. The Department works closely with other Sections to share information and avoid duplication of tasks and duties; for example Environmental Health Officers enforcing hours of work on construction sites rather than through the planning process, and sharing information regarding Gypsies and Travellers with the Housing and Assets Team.

Newport has not progressed any collaborative working with other Authorities in respect of Development Management but we do contribute to Strategic Policy and are a member of the South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG). We have recently commissioned a joint regional employment study with Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent. We also contribute to the South East Wales Regional Working Group and South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party which relates to cross boundary minerals and waste issues. Newport has also set up a joint venture with Norse to deliver asset management and maintenance on behalf of the Council.

Operating budget

The Development Management budget has historically decreased year on year since the financial year 2015/16, however the budget for 2018/19 was £29,320 more than the 2017/18 base line budget. This is mainly due to inflationary increases and standard incremental pay rises. Whilst there has been a baseline increase, there have been savings made within the service over the last few years. The biggest budget savings have historically been derived through employee costs as well as a smaller decrease in the budget for supplies and services. In comparison, fee income has increased by over £124,000 compared to 2017/18 whilst pre-application income has increased by around £3,000. Several large residential applications have been received in 2018/19, such as the Phase 1 of the Llanwern Village, Glebelands, Bankside Coverack Road, and Whitehead Works. The Planning Policy budget has remained the same subject to standard inflationary adjustments.

Fee income is retained by the Development Management Section and we use a fairly robust method of predicting fee income which tends to result in minimal or no shortfall from the figures predicted. Income does not influence future budgets as the expenditure to operate the Development Management and Policy Section is fixed by staff, supplies and services costs. However, any surplus income which exceeds what has been spent at the end of the financial year can be pooled to offset budget pressures elsewhere within the department and wider Authority.

Staff issues

The current structure of the Development Management Team was established following a restructure in 2012 which resulted in the loss of one enforcement officer post and a reduction in the number of managers. The service used to offer 2 student placement positions each year via the local University, but this is no longer the case due to budget pressures. The Development Services Manager post was also revised in 2016 when the regeneration and business support functions were added to the portfolio to create the Development and Regeneration Manager post.

There is a training budget allocated each year to develop staff. Annual reviews of staff help assess performance and identify training needs. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses and conferences in order to broaden and develop their skills and knowledge. The Service is also contributing towards the costs of post graduate qualifications.

As with all Authorities, Newport is under pressure to make savings and reduce budgets and it is possible that the Section will be subject to further review of processes and structures at some point in the near future.

YOUR LOCAL STORY

Workload

Newport continues to witness significant growth, not just in terms of housing, but employment land as well. 711 new homes were completed in Newport in 2018/19 and 5,311 new homes have now been built since the start of the Plan period in 2011. Out of these 5,311 homes, 956 have been affordable. In 2018/19, 213 affordable homes were delivered, which is the highest figure achieved so far within the Plan period.

Newport remains one of the few authorities in Wales to maintain a healthy five-year housing land supply. The completions being recorded are broadly in line with the requirements set out at LDP examination, which is a strong achievement. The 711 new homes recorded for 2018/19 are down on completion rates from previous years, but this is due to the completion of some major sites, such as Mon Bank Sidings which used to contribute close to 100 dwellings per annum. For 2019/20, Redrow Homes will have made their first completions at Llanwern Village and it is hoped that house building will have commenced at Whitehead Works, thus it is expected the completion figures will be back over 800 units for next year.

As noted above, it is not just residential development which is performing well. In 2018/19, over 9.5ha of employment land was build out in Newport. This is the highest figure for employment land recorded since the start of the Plan period. A significant proportion of this figure was the 6ha which was completed at Celtic Business Park for the CAF train and rolling stock manufacturing plant. This plant is assembling high-speed trains, light rail and carriages and is currently fulfilling an order for the South Wales Metro.

With regard to other major applications, permission was granted in May 2018 for a change of use of Newport's landmark Chartist Tower, to a hotel and ground floor coffee shop and restaurant. It is hoped that this major regeneration project for the City Centre will boost footfall and act as a catalyst for further improvements. The opening of the hotel is scheduled for early 2020. This hotel is expected to complement the Wales International Conference Centre at Celtic Manor which will open later this year and is capable of accommodating up to 5,000 delegates.

As a result of this activity, the caseload for a DM planning officer would typically be in the region of 45 applications at any given time, approximately 30 applications for senior officers and around 24 applications for a principal planning officer.

Enforcement officers carry a larger individual caseload, carrying from 60-80 per officer. Whilst caseloads are noticeable more than planning officers, cases are not comparable. Some enforcement cases can be closes following an initial site visit if no breach is found. However, Newport has historically dealt with, and continues to deal with a heavy caseload of enforcement cases, compared to many other Welsh authorities.

Economic viability continues to be a significant obstacle in getting legal agreements signed or developments delivered, especially on large sites. The Council has had to employ the services of the District Valuer on several occasions in order to assess the viability of the larger more complicated schemes. In terms of the

smaller sites, the Council has started to gain more success in achieving affordable housing contributions following a review of the sums sought in the Affordable Housing SPG.

With regard to the LDP, the Newport LDP was adopted in January 2015. The Council has recently completed its fourth AMR. The overall conclusion is that significant progress is being made in Newport, especially with regard to housing growth and employment land. The LDP Strategy, key aims and objectives are all still being fulfilled. However, the LDP will be five years old in January 2020. Welsh Government recommends a review should be performed every four years. Some of our major residential sites have now been built out or are coming to a conclusion. Consequently, there may be a need for new sites to come forward as part of an LDP review.

In addition, progress is being made on the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Once an SDP is in place, guidance states that an LDP should be reviewed. Therefore, the Council would not wish to be in a position where it starts to review its LDP and adopts it, only for the SDP to be adopted immediately afterwards, thus triggering an immediate LDP review.

The pros and cons of triggering an LDP review will need to be discussed with Members, senior officers, Welsh Government and the housing industry. These discussions will take place over the coming months and it is recommended that a decision should be made on whether to review the LDP or not prior to the fifth anniversary of the LDP.

Annual Monitoring Report

The Council has submitted its fourth AMR to Welsh Government. It can be viewed from 31 October 2019 at www.newport.gov.uk/ldp

In summary, as noted above, housing completion rates are still strong but are lower than the previous years. Record figures for the provision of employment land have also been recorded. The AMR recommended further research in certain areas, but the most concerning area is retail. Footfall in the City Centre continues to decline. Although not a problem exclusive to Newport, it is something that the AMR continues to highlight. With the pending opening of the Mercure Chartist Tower early next year, plus major regeneration projects in the City Centre and the opening of the International Convention Centre Wales, it is hoped that the City Centre will start to recover and footfall will increase.

Current Projects

The Council is currently working to complete a number of conservation area appraisals, including Caerleon. The work is considering boundary amendments to the current Conservation Areas, along with management plans that aim to improve the Areas. It will also include the introduction of Article 4 Directions. The draft conservation area appraisals have been out to public consultation and comments have been received. The documents are currently going through the Council's Cabinet Member process prior to adoption.

Work is also ongoing on the Newport City Centre Masterplan. The Masterplan builds on the City's track record of successful delivery of projects and the need to continue to shape and deliver positive changes for the City Centre.

In terms of Supplementary Planning Guidance, the Council has recently concluded a public consultation on its Waste SPG and is looking to adopt this soon. We have also recently drafted an SPG on Sustainable Travel which is due to go out to consultation. The document will complement that Council's Sustainable Travel Strategy and other work the Council is engaged with regarding climate change.

Projects are continuing through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and progress is being made with the delivery of a Strategic Development Plan. The Council continues to feed into this work stream and we have recently been involved with a joint employment study with Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly which will form part of the evidence base for LDPs and a future SDP.

Local pressures

Flooding

Dealing with applications in flood risk areas remains a significant local pressure. With large proportions of Newport within C1 and C2 flood risk areas, flood consequence assessments are regularly required as supporting documents with planning applications. The balance between an area in need of desperate regeneration and being in a flood risk area is one that planning officers often have to deal with.

Poor Design

This is a problem particularly with the volume housebuilders who very often provide 'off the shelf' designs. With no 'in-house' architect or design experts, it is difficult to make a stance. On the occasions a stance has been made and applications have been refused on design grounds, we are often not supported by the Planning Inspectorate. Reference to viability issues is the usual response for not improving design. Schemes have been referred to the Design Council for Wales in the past, but developers are often reluctant to engage as they consider that this incurs delays. Without the engagement of the developer, this process is not as effective.

Air Quality

The Council introduced an Air Quality SPG last year to try and assist planners and developers in mitigating the negative impacts of developments on air quality, particularly in Air Quality Management Area. There is currently a lack of national guidance from Welsh Government when it comes to traffic generating development within (or affecting) an Air Quality Management Area and what the appropriate mitigation measures might be.

Unauthorised gypsy/traveller encampments

This is becoming more of an issue in areas such as the Gwent Levels. Procedures to deal with the sites are in place, but processes are cumbersome. Local communities expect swifter action and better enforcement powers. The Council is pursuing the use of injunctions to address the problem.

Section 106 Viability Issues

Almost all major schemes are now subject to a viability assessment. The Council has a Section 106 Manager who is able to perform viability assessments to a certain level, but the more complicated and larger schemes will often require the services of the District Valuer. The Authority seek to recover the cost of the District Valuer from the applicant, but in some cases this financial pressure is borne by the Council. Challenging

Section 106 contributions pre and post decision is becoming more commonplace and the Council has dealt with a number of viability challenges on large schemes. It is starting to feel like large developers and housebuilders are using viability as a standard means of releasing them from affordable housing and other financial commitments. This has a significant knock on effect for Council's and communities when less affordable housing is delivered and less money is invested in schools, leisure facilities and infrastructure.

Major schemes

On 4th June 2019, First Minister Mark Drakeford announced that the Welsh Government would not build the £1.6bn relief road around Newport. Ministers decided that the scheme would not go ahead because of its expense and the impact it would have had on the Gwent Levels. The congestion on the M4, particularly around the Brynglas Tunnels remains a significant problem and obstacle to future growth.

City centre footfall and vacant units

Footfall in the City Centre continues to struggle. The numbers of vacant units remains high; however this is not unique to Newport as many high streets across the UK are also finding it difficult to survive as shopping habits continue to change. Newport has a very large defined retail area and a recent study has recommended the compaction of the retail area, which is something the LDP review will need to consider.

Regional working

Despite some progress in the preparation of creating a Strategic Development, there is still uncertainty with regard to regional planning and how this will look in the future. In order for regional planning to be a success, officers and members will need to work truly as a region and represent the region, rather than simply working within a larger group of people but ultimately continuing to represent their individual authorities. This will be difficult to achieve and will require strong leadership to establish.

Service improvement

The Regeneration, Investment and Housing Service Plan (2018/19) identifies the following planning related objectives for the next five years:

- 1) Encourage and support continued economic growth within the City, with particular focus on regeneration in the City Centre.
- 2) Regeneration investment and Housing will make Newport a 'Thriving City'.
- 3) Develop a collaborative approach to modernise service delivery to residents across the City.
- 4) Flexible Fund: Change the way in which a number of grants are delivered to streamline services and deliver better outcomes for residents and the City.
- 5) Enhance community wellbeing through improved housing offer.
- 6) Promote the decarbonisation of our operations and support sustainable travel and clean air measures in housing programmes.

Progress

- The City Centre Draft Masterplan has been approved by Cabinet and subject to an extensive public consultation.

- Some key projects are being delivered, including the 4-star Mercure Hotel at Chartist Tower and the former IAC building of Mill Street to Grade A office accommodation.
- TRI funding – New investment for shopfront improvements and new City Centre housing.
- Heritage Lottery Funding has been awarded for the regeneration of Market Arcade.
- A Business Development Fund which provides small grants for new businesses has been established.
- Newport has maintained a five-year housing land supply and is one of only a handful of authorities in Wales to do so.
- Significant development in employment land, including the CAF train plant at Celtic Business Park, Llanwern.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

On the basis of the performance indicators currently set, the Authority is performing well. The following summary highlights Newport's performance:

Plan Making:

- Newport has an Adopted Local Development Plan
- Newport is still within an acceptable time period following the triggering of Regulation 41.
- Newport had a 5.6 year Housing Land Supply during the review period and was one of six Welsh LPAs with the required 5 years supply.

Efficiency:

- The percentage of major applications determined within required timescales stands at 77%, compared to 68% across Wales.
- Average number of days taken to determine major applications was 209 days (30 weeks). This is better than the Welsh average of 232 days (33 weeks).
- 88% of all applications were determined 'within time'. The Wales average is also 88%.

Quality:

- Only 3% of decisions were made against officer advice, compared to the 9% Wales average.
- 73% of all appeals were dismissed. This is higher than the 68% Wales average, and a significant improvement on the 57% recorded last year.

Engagement:

- Newport welcomes public speaking at Planning Committee.
- Newport provides a duty officer service to the public.
- Newport provides an online register of planning applications which allows members of the public to view and track the progress of planning applications.

Enforcement:

- 83% of enforcement cases were investigated within 84 days, exceeding the Wales average of 77%.

Whilst the Authority has performed well against national indicators, there remain areas for improvement. These are summarised below:

- Average time taken to determine all applications in days – 80 days. The Wales average is 77 days and anything below 67 days is considered 'good' (Efficiency).
- Percentage of Listed Building Consent applications determined within time period required – 75%. The Wales average is 72% and anything above 80% is considered 'good' (Efficiency).
- One application for costs was awarded against the Council in connection with planning appeals (Quality).
- Average time taken to take positive enforcement action – 181 days. The Wales average is 167 day and anything below 100 days is considered to be 'good' (Enforcement).

WHAT SERVICE USERS THINK

In 2017-18 we conducted a customer satisfaction survey aimed at assessing the views of people (agents and members of the public) that had received a planning application decision during the year.

The survey was sent to 440 people, 12% of whom submitted a whole or partial response. The majority of responses (41%) were from members of the public. 16% of respondents had their most recent planning application refused.

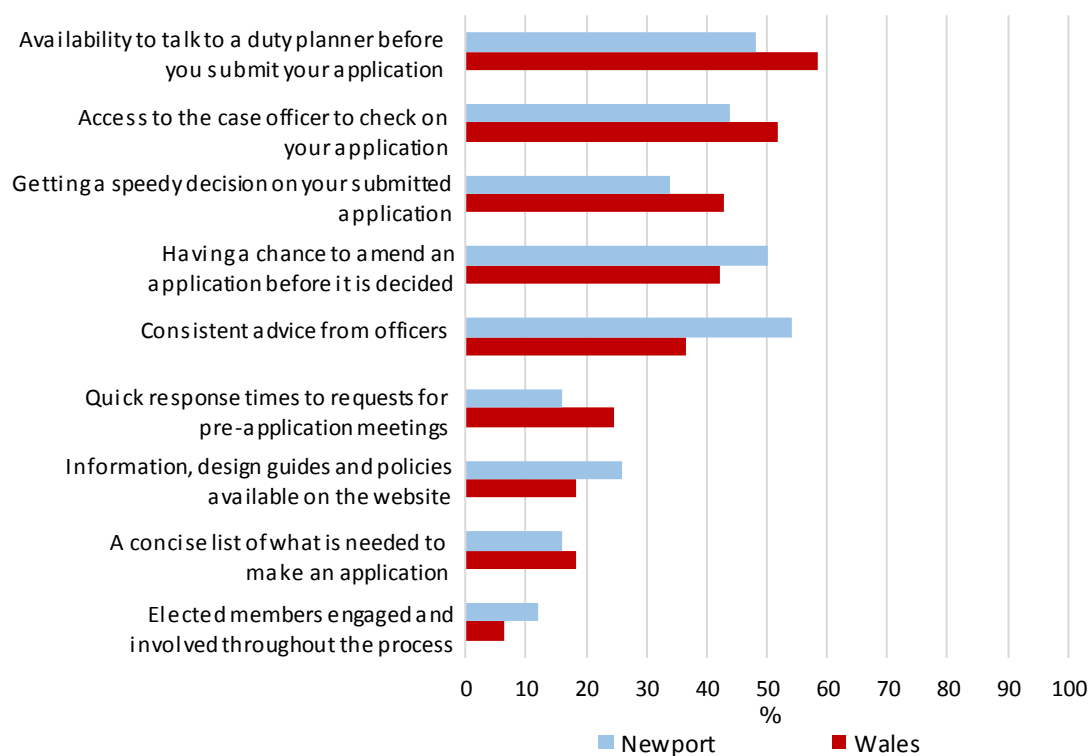
We asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the planning service. Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents that selected either 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' for each statement for both our planning authority and Wales.

Table 1: Percentage of respondents who agreed with each statement, 2017-18

Respondents who agreed that:	Newport LPA %	Wales %
The LPA applies its planning rules fairly and consistently	48	55
The LPA gave good advice to help them make a successful application	45	60
The LPA gives help throughout, including with conditions	50	52
The LPA responded promptly when they had questions	54	62
They were listened to about their application	49	60
They were kept informed about their application	43	52
They were satisfied overall with how the LPA handled their application	51	63

We also asked respondents to select three planning service characteristics from a list that they thought would most help them achieve successful developments. Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents that chose each characteristic as one of their three selections. For us, 'having consistent advice from officers' was the most popular choice.

Figure 1: Characteristics of a good planning service, 2017-18



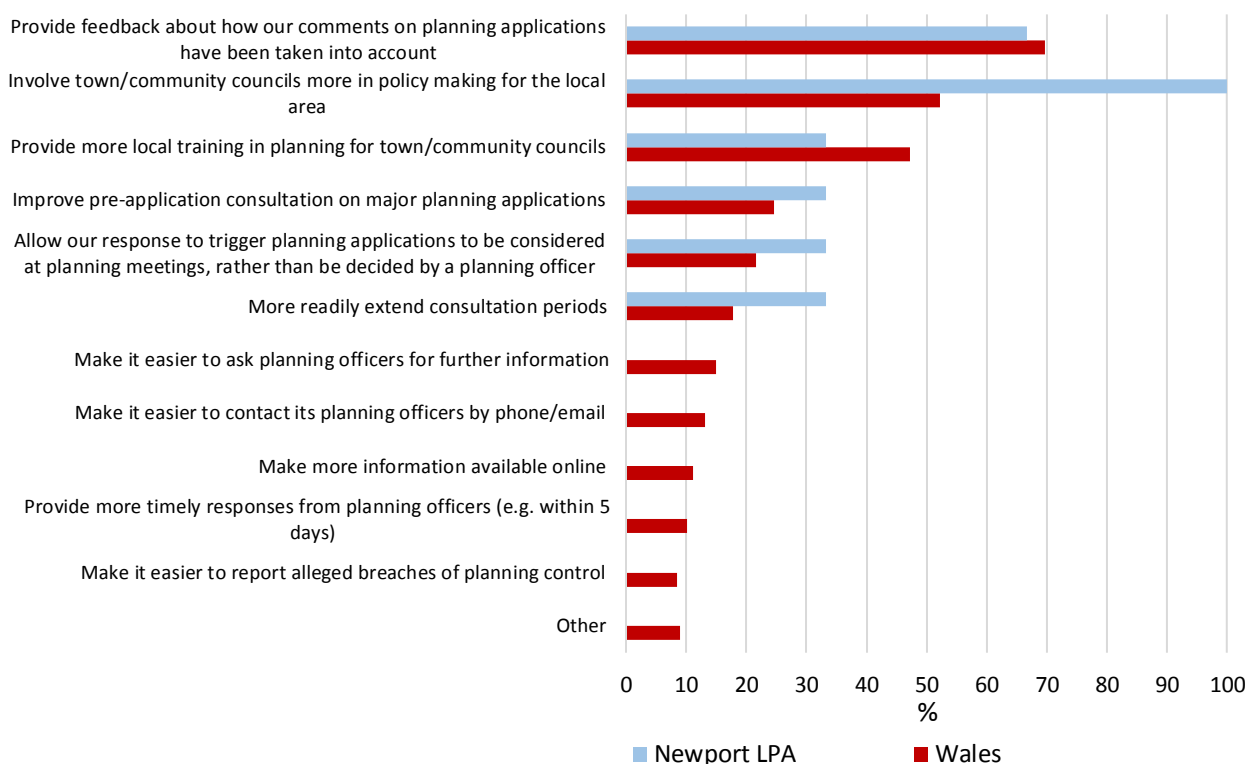
Comments received include:

- “Newport Council have a consistent approach and apply their policies fairly.”
- “Consistently good and fair. my experience with the Council in submitting planning applications over the last 12 years has been very good.”
- "Overall it was quite good and I achieved the intended result, Some good advice early on in the procedures would have stopped me having an application rejected as I would have had a better idea of what was required.”

In 2018-19 we conducted a survey of clerks of the town and community councils that are statutory consultees for our planning authority. There are 14 such councils in our area, and we received 5 responses to the survey.

The respondents were asked to select the three ways in which they thought our LPA could help town/community councils to participate more effectively in the planning system. Figure 2 shows the percentage of respondents that selected each option as one of their three choices. ‘Involve town/community councils more in policy making for the local area’ was the most frequently selected option for our LPA.

Figure 2: Ways LPAs could help town/community councils participate more effectively in the planning system, 2018-19



OUR PERFORMANCE 2018-19

This section details our performance in 2018-19. It considers both the Planning Performance Framework indicators and other available data to help paint a comprehensive picture of performance. Where appropriate we make comparisons between our performance and the all Wales picture.

Performance is analysed across the five key aspects of planning service delivery as set out in the Planning Performance Framework:

- Plan making;
- Efficiency;
- Quality;
- Engagement; and
- Enforcement.

Plan making

As at 31 March 2019, we were one of 23 LPAs that had a current local development plan (LDP) in place. We are required to submit an Annual Monitoring Report in October 2019. This document has been prepared.

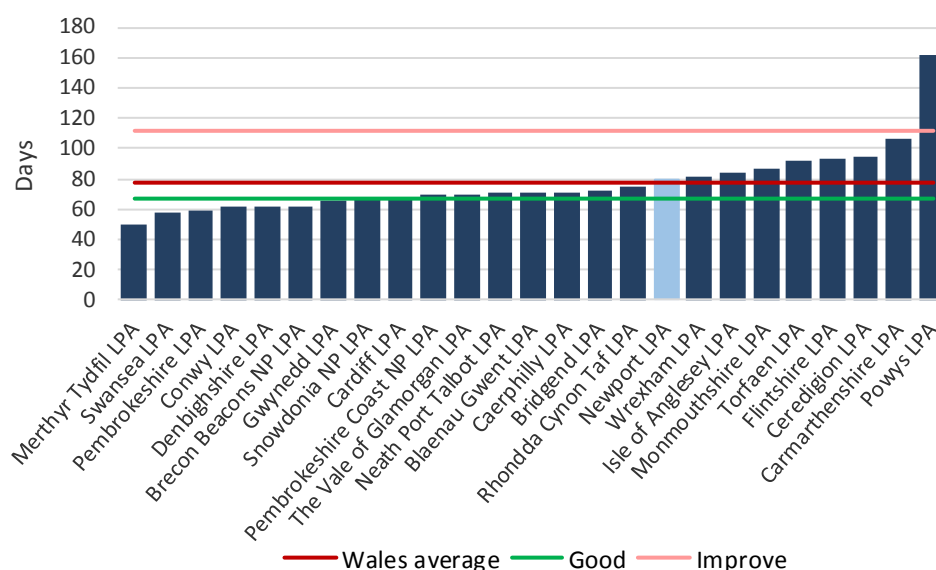
During the APR period we had 5.6 years of housing land supply identified, making us one of 6 Welsh LPAs with the required 5 years supply.

1 respondent to the 2018-19 town and community council clerks survey (25%) said that their council contributed to the production and/or review of our LDP. No respondents agreed that the LDP process is easy to understand, and none agreed that their council is satisfied with how the LDP process is going (or went), compared to 64% and 62% respectively across Wales.

Efficiency

In 2018-19 we determined 936 planning applications, each taking, on average, 80 days (11 weeks) to determine. This compares to an average of 77 days (11 weeks) across Wales. Figure 3 shows the average time taken by each LPA to determine an application during the year.

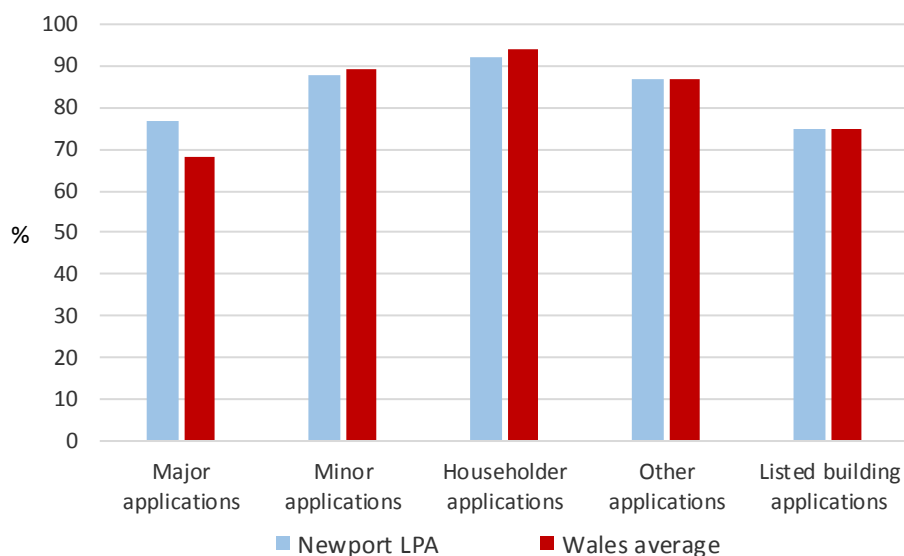
Figure 3: Average time taken (days) to determine applications, 2018-19



88% of all planning applications were determined within the required timescales. This compared to 88% across Wales and we were one of 20 LPAs that had reached the 80% target.

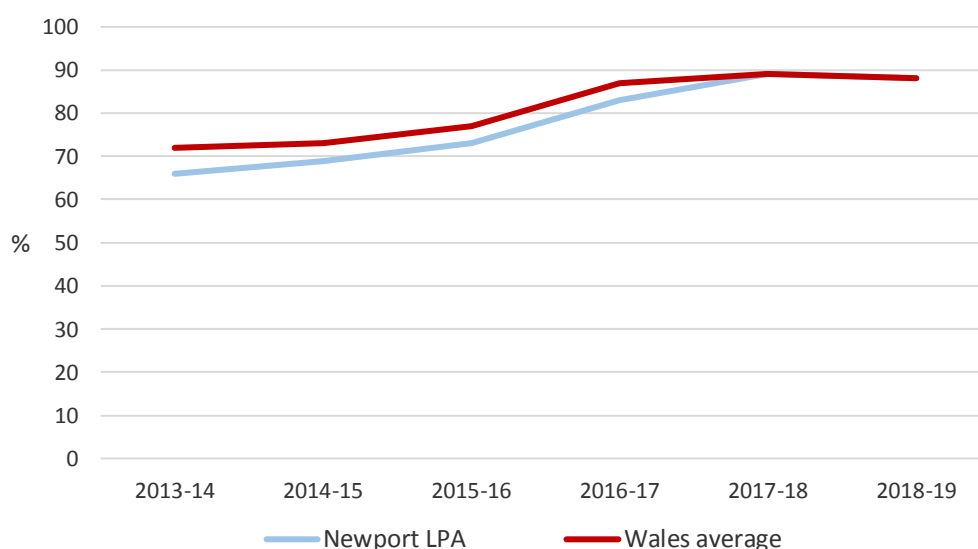
Figure 4 shows the percentage of planning applications determined within the required timescales across the main types of application for our LPA and Wales. It shows that we determined 92% of householder applications within the required timescales. We also determined 75% of Listed Building Consent applications within the required timescales.

Figure 4: Percentage of planning applications determined within the required timescales, by type, 2018-19



Between 2017-18 and 2018-19, as Figure 5 shows, the percentage of planning applications we determined within the required timescales decreased from 89%.

Figure 5: Percentage of planning applications determined within the required timescales



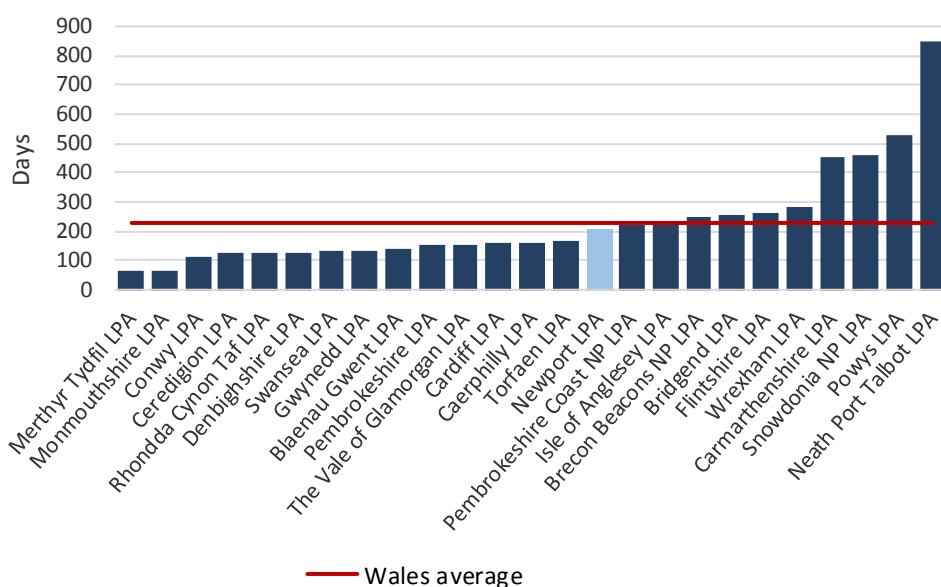
Over the same period:

- The number of applications we received increased;
- The number of applications we determined increased; and
- The number of applications we approved increased.

Major applications

We determined 22 major planning applications in 2018-19, none of which were subject to an EIA. Each application took, on average, 209 days (30 weeks) to determine. As Figure 6 shows, this was shorter than the Wales average of 232 days (33 weeks).

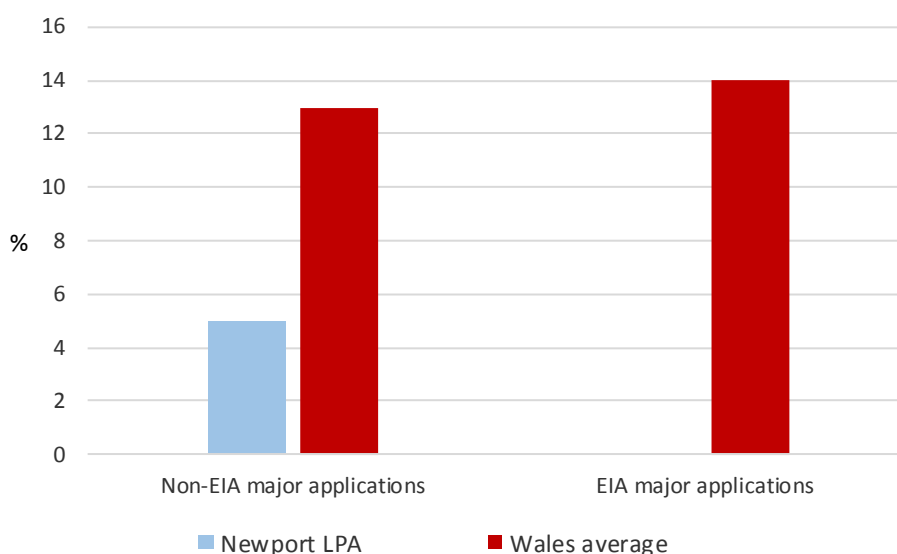
Figure 6: Average time (days) taken to determine a major application, 2018-19



77% of these major applications were determined within the required timescales, compared to 69% across Wales.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of major applications determined within the required timescales by the type of major application. 5% of our 'standard' major applications i.e. those not requiring an EIA, were determined within the required timescales during the year.

Figure 7: Percentage of major applications determined within the required timescales during the year, by type, 2018-19

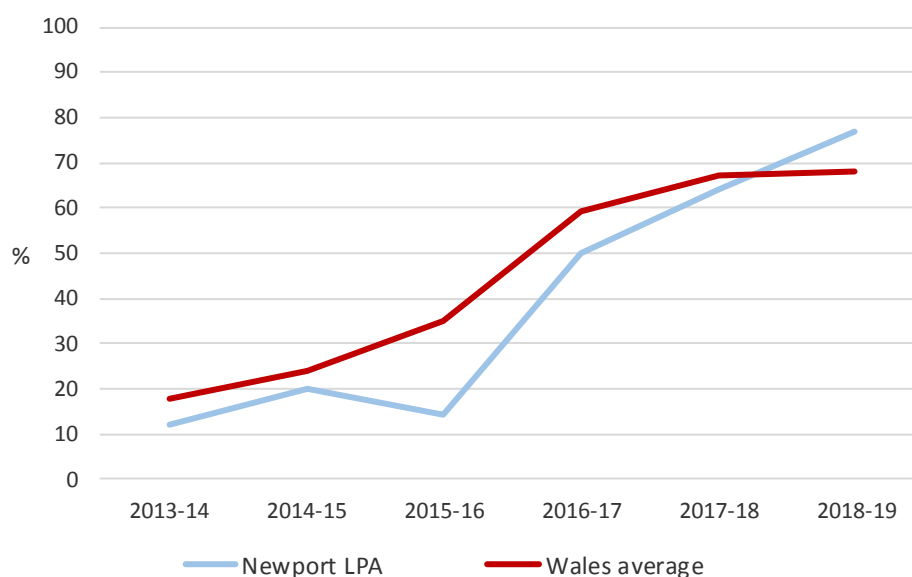


In addition we determined 16 major applications that were subject to a PPA in the required timescales during the year.

Since 2017-18 the percentage of major applications determined within the required timescales had increased from 64%. In contrast, the number of major applications determined stayed the same as had the number of applications subject to an EIA determined during the year.

Figure 8 shows the trend in the percentage of major planning applications determined within the required timescales in recent years and how this compares to Wales.

Figure 8: Percentage of major planning applications determined within the required timescales



Over the same period:

- The percentage of minor applications determined within the required timescales decreased from 90% to 88%;
- The percentage of householder applications determined within the required timescales decreased from 94% to 92%; and
- The percentage of other applications determined within required timescales decreased from 89% to 87%.

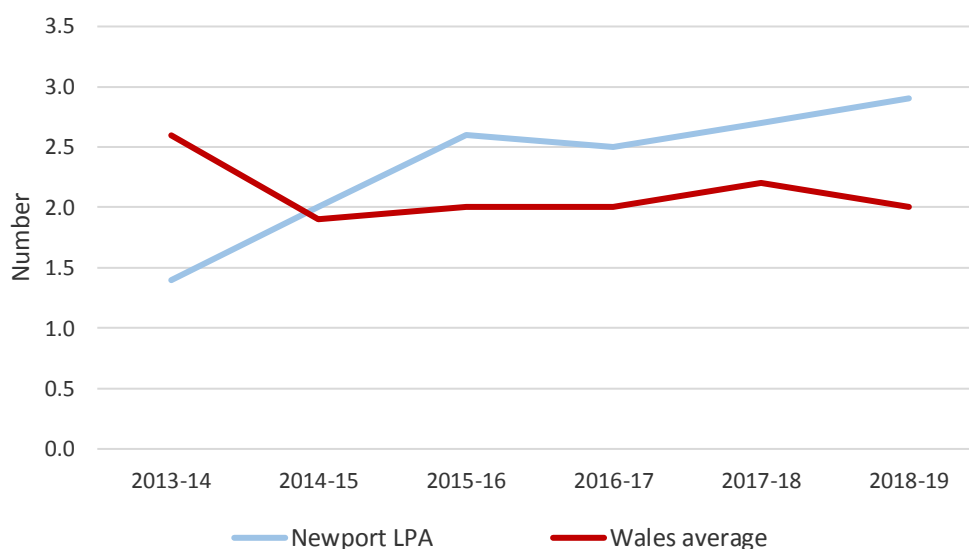
Quality

In 2018-19, our Planning Committee made 64 planning application decisions during the year, which equated to 7% of all planning applications determined. Across Wales 6% of all planning application decisions were made by planning committee.

3% of these member-made decisions went against officer advice. This compared to 9% of member-made decisions across Wales. This equated to 0.2% of all planning application decisions going against officer advice; 0.5% across Wales.

In 2018-19 we received 31 appeals against our planning decisions, which equated to 2.9 appeals for every 100 applications received. This was the fourth highest ratio of appeals to applications in Wales. Figure 9 shows how the volume of appeals received has changed since 2017-18 and how this compares to Wales.

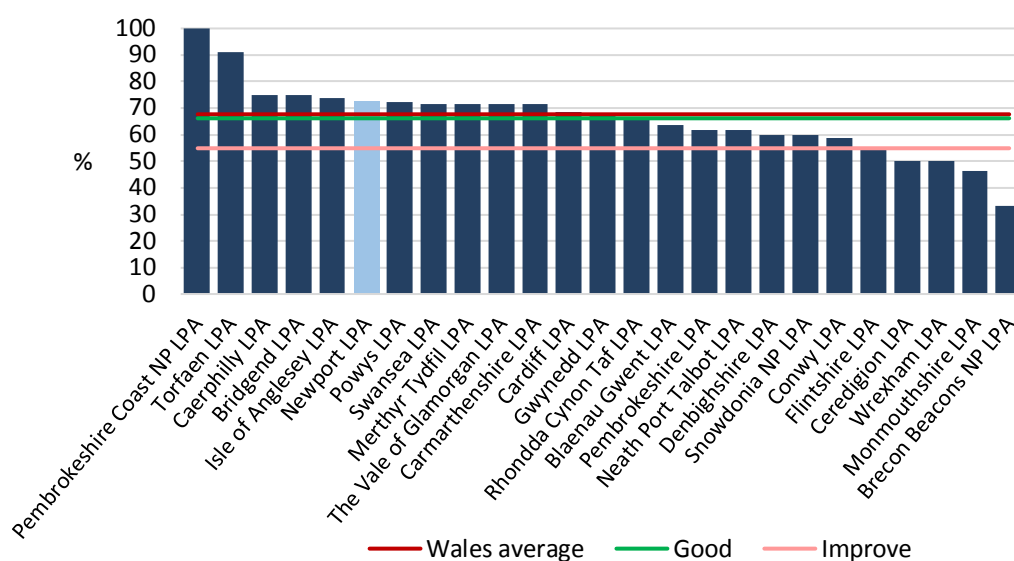
Figure 9: Number of appeals received per 100 planning applications



Over the same period the percentage of planning applications approved increased from 68% to 73%.

Of the 33 appeals that were decided during the year, 73% were dismissed. As Figure 10 shows, this was higher than the percentage of appeals dismissed across Wales as a whole and we were one of 14 LPAs that reached the 66% target.

Figure 10: Percentage of appeals dismissed, 2018-19



During 2018-19 we had 1 application for costs at a section 78 appeal upheld, making us one of the 10 LPAs to have at least one such application upheld in the year.

1 respondent (33%) to the 2018-19 town and community council clerks survey reported that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied' with how the Planning Inspectorate deals with their council around appeals, compared to 55% of the respondents across Wales.

Engagement

We are:

- one of 24 LPAs that allowed members of the public to address the Planning Committee;
- one of 22 LPAs that had an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public; and
- one of 21 LPAs that had an online register of planning applications.

2 (50%) of the town and community council clerks that responded to the 2018-19 survey felt that their council has enough time and resources to effectively contribute to development management in our area, compared to 59% of clerks that responded across Wales. 2 (50%) reported that they are 'always' able and 2 (50%) reported that they are 'sometimes' able to respond to applications within the 21 day statutory time period.

As Table 2 shows, 45% of respondents to our 2017-18 customer survey agreed that the LPA gave good advice to help them make a successful application.

Table 2: Feedback from our 2017-18 customer survey

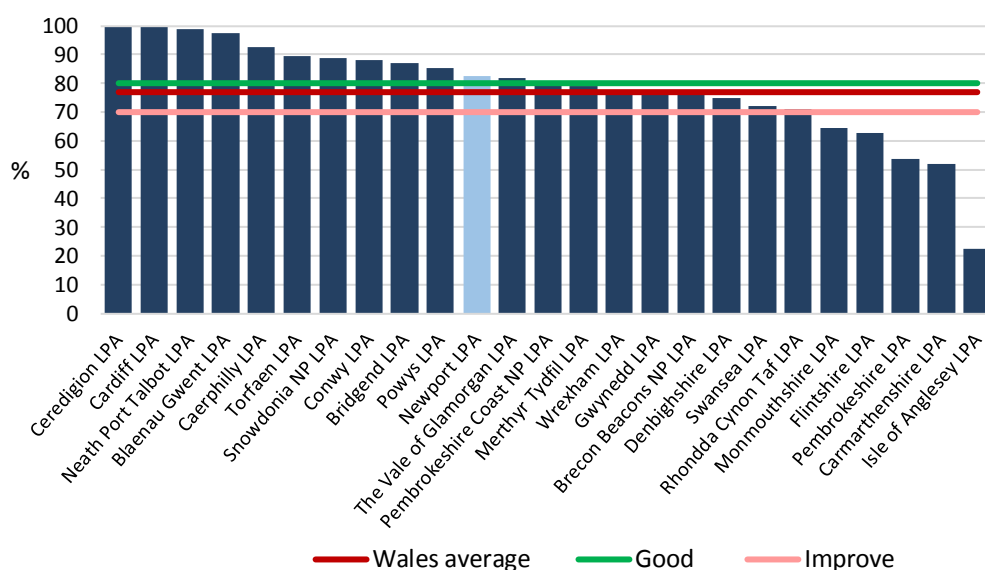
Respondents who agreed that:	Newport LPA %	Wales %
The LPA gave good advice to help them make a successful application	45	60
They were listened to about their application	49	60

Enforcement

In 2018-19 we investigated 346 enforcement cases, which equated to 2.3 per 1,000 population. This compared to 1.9 enforcement cases investigated per 1,000 population across Wales.

We investigated 83% of these enforcement cases within 84 days. Across Wales 77% were investigated within 84 days. Figure 11 shows the percentage of enforcement cases that were investigated within 84 days across all Welsh LPAs.

Figure 11: Percentage of enforcement cases investigated within 84 days, 2018-19



The average time taken to pursue positive enforcement action was 181 days.

In the 2018-19 town and community council clerks survey, 2 respondents (67%) stated that our LPA investigates enforcement cases 'very promptly' or 'reasonably promptly', compared to 36% of respondents across Wales. 2 respondents (67%) reported that they are either 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied' with how our LPA generally responds to investigating breaches. This was 40% for Wales.

ANNEX A - PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Plan making			
Is there a current Development Plan in place that is within the plan period?	Yes		No
LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	<12	13-17	18+
Time taken to commence formal revision of an LDP following the triggering of Regulation 41, in months	<12	13-17	18+
Has an LDP Revision Delivery Agreement been submitted to and agreed with the Welsh Government?	Yes		No
LDP review deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	<3		4+
Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	Yes		No
The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	>5		<5
Efficiency			
Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	>60	50.1-59.9	<50
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	Not set	Not set	Not set
Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	>80	70.1-79.9	<70
Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<67	67-111	112+
Percentage of Listed Building Consent applications determined within time periods required	>80	70.1-79.9	<70
Quality			
Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<5	5-9	9+

WALES AVERAGE	Newport LPA LAST YEAR	Newport LPA THIS YEAR
Yes	Yes	Yes
73	N/A	N/A
17	-	7
Yes	-	N/A
1	-	N/A
Yes	N/A	Yes
6 of 25	6.1	5.6
68	64	77
232	195	209
88	89	88
77	77	80
75	72	75
9	3	3

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Percentage of appeals dismissed	>66	55.1-65.9	<55
Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	0	1	2+
Engagement			
Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Yes		No
Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Yes		No
Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	Yes	Partial	No
Enforcement			
Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	>80	70.1-79.9	<70
Average time taken to take positive enforcement action	<100	101-200	200+

WALES AVERAGE	Newport LPA LAST YEAR	Newport LPA THIS YEAR
68	57	73
0	0	1
Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes
77	94	83
167	136	181

SECTION 1 – PLAN MAKING

Indicator	01. Is there a current Development Plan in place that is within the plan period?	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
A development plan (LDP or UDP) is in place and within the plan period	N/A	No development plan is in place (including where the plan has expired)

Authority’s performance	Yes
Yes. Newport adopted in LDP in January 2015. The Plan period runs from 2011 to 2026.	

Indicator	02. LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
The LDP is being progressed within 12 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed within between 12 and 18 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed more than 18 months later than the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement

Authority’s performance	N/A
N/A	

Indicator	03. Time taken to commence formal revision of an LDP following the triggering of Regulation 41, in months	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
The Delivery Agreement is submitted less than 12 months after Regulation 41 is triggered	The Delivery Agreement is submitted within 12 and 18 months after Regulations 41 is triggered	The Delivery Agreement is submitted more than 18 months after Regulation 41 is triggered

Authority’s performance	7
A formal revision of the LDP has not yet commenced, but we are still within a reasonable time period following the triggered of Regulation 41.	

Indicator	04. Has an LDP Revision Delivery Agreement been submitted to and agreed with the Welsh Government?	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
An LDP Revision Delivery Agreement has been submitted by the LPA and agreed with the Welsh Government		No LDP Revision Delivery Agreement has been submitted by the LPA or agreed by the Welsh Government

Authority's performance	N/A
N/A	

Indicator	05. LDP revision deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
The LDP revision is being progressed within the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement		The LDP revision is being progressed later than the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement

Authority's performance	N/A

Indicator	06. Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
An AMR is due, and has been prepared		An AMR is due, and has not been prepared in time

Authority's performance	Yes
A fourth AMR has been completed and will be submitted to Welsh Government by 31 October 2019. It concludes that the LDP is still functioning well and its brownfield strategy is still being delivered. Housing numbers remain broadly on track and there has been a large increase in employment land delivered in 2018/19 as well.	

Indicator	07. The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
The authority has a housing land supply of 5 years or more		The authority has a housing land supply of less than 5 years

Authority's performance	5.6
Detailed response to performance against the indicator above.	

SECTION 2 - EFFICIENCY

Indicator	08. Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
60% or more of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 50% and 60% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 50% of applications are determined within the statutory time period

Authority's performance	77
<p>77% of major planning applications in Newport were determined within the required time period. This represents a major improvement on the 64% recorded last year and the 50% recorded the year before this.</p> <p>The Authority has dealt with some particularly large and significant planning applications this year. Worthy of note is the conversion of the Chartist Tower to a hotel, along with ancillary facilities and ground floor coffee shop and restaurant. Further phases of Celtic Business Park have also been approved plus Phase 1 of Llanwern Village, which is the Council's second largest strategic housing site.</p>	

Indicator	09. Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority's performance	209
<p>Newport are performing reasonably well with an average timeframe to determine major applications of 209 days. This is a slight increase on last year but is still considerably below the Welsh average of 232 days.</p>	

Indicator	10. Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
80% or more of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 70% and 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 70% of applications are determined within the statutory time period

Authority's performance	88
<p>Newport continues to make progress year on year:</p> <p>2013/14 – 66%</p> <p>2014/15 – 69%</p> <p>2015/16 – 73%</p> <p>2016/17 – 83%</p> <p>2017/18 – 88%</p>	

Indicator	11. Average time taken to determine all applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
67 days or less	Between 67 and 111 days	Greater than 112 days

Authority's performance	80
<p>The figure of 80 days is a small increase of last year's 77 day average. The 80 days is also marginally above the Welsh average of 80 days.</p> <p>It is considered that the 80 days average is attributable to officers trying to provide applicants with an opportunity to amend unacceptable schemes or to negotiate improvements to schemes. Feedback from customers tells us that they would prefer a slow approval rather than a quick refusal. Meeting performance targets and balancing the needs of our customers is a very difficult thing to balance.</p>	

Indicator	12. Percentage of Listed Building Consent applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
80% or more of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 70% and 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 70% of applications are determined within the statutory time period

Authority's performance	75
<p>The percentage of Listed Building Consents determined within the statutory time period stands at 75%. The 75% is exactly the same as the Welsh average but is considered 'fair'. This is the first time this indicator has been benchmarked. The 75% is reasonable but efforts will be made to try and increase this percentage.</p>	

SECTION 3 - QUALITY

Indicator	13. Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Less than 5% of decisions are made contrary to officer advice	Between 5% and 9% of decisions are made contrary to officer advice	More than 9% of decisions are made contrary to officer advice

Authority's performance	3
<p>3% of member-made decisions went against officer recommendation. This is considered a good result and the same as last year. Members of the Planning Committee receive regular training on important matters such as Section 106 Agreements and parking in order for them to fully understand the relevance of important planning issues. Together with a good working relationship with the Planning Officers, Members have confidence in the quality and robustness of the reports and recommendations being put before them.</p>	

Indicator	14. Percentage of appeals dismissed	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
More than 66% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Between 55% and 66% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Less than 55% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal

Authority's performance	73
<p>73% of appeals have been dismissed, which is a significant improvement on the 57% recorded last year.</p>	

Indicator	15. Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
The authority has not had costs awarded against it at appeal	The authority has had costs awarded against it in one appeal case	The authority has had costs awarded against it in two or more appeal cases

Authority's performance	1
<p>There was one application where a Section 78 application for costs was awarded against the Council. The application was an extension to a dwelling where the officer recommendation was to approve, but this was turned over at Planning Committee who refused the application. The recorded minutes of the Planning Committee did not sufficiently set out the reasons for refusal. This is something the Council will learn from in order to prevent from happening again.</p>	

SECTION 4 – ENGAGEMENT

Indicator	16. Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
Members of the public are able to address the Planning Committee		Members of the public are not able to address the Planning Committee

Authority’s performance	Yes
The Authority has allowed members of the public and applicants to address the Planning Committee since March 2005.	

Indicator	17. Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
A duty planning officer is available during normal office hours	A duty planning officer is available, but not always during normal office hours	There is no duty planning officer available

Authority’s performance	Yes
A duty planning officer service is provided with no prior appointment necessary. All Officers are also accessible by telephone and email.	

Indicator	18. Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access track their progress (and view their content)?	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
All documents are available online	Only the planning application details are available online	No planning application information is published online

Authority's performance	Yes
<p>All application documents, responses and Officer reports are able to view online. Customers are able to search via an address, application number via a map based system called iShare. The Adopted Local Development Plan, Annual Monitoring Report and all Supplementary Planning Guidance are also available to view online. The Authority also broadcast Planning Committee meetings live on the website.</p>	

SECTION 5 – ENFORCEMENT

Indicator	19. Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
80% or more of enforcement cases are investigated in 84 days	Between 70% and 80% of enforcement cases are investigated in 84 days	Less than 70% of enforcement cases are investigated in 84 days

Authority's performance	83
83% of Newport's enforcement cases were resolved within 84 days. In comparison to the Welsh average of 77%, this is a very positive result.	

Indicator	20. Average time taken to take positive enforcement action	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
100 days or less	Between 101-200 days	Greater than 200 days

Authority's performance	181
The average time taken to take positive enforcement action is 181 days. This is more than the 167 day Welsh average. The Authority has experienced staff shortages in enforcement over the year which explains the time. Vacancies in enforcement have now been filled, so it is hoped that this indicator will improve for next year.	

SECTION 6 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

The purpose of the Sustainable Development Indicators is to measure the contribution the planning system makes to sustainable development in Wales.

The Sustainable Development Indicators will be used to measure the progress against national planning sustainability objectives, set out in Planning Policy Wales, and can be used to demonstrate to our stakeholders the role and scope of the planning system in delivering wider objectives. The information will also be useful to local planning authorities to understand more about the outcomes of the planning system and help inform future decisions.

Authority's returns	Full returns provided.
Full returns provided.	

Indicator	SD1. The floorspace (square metres) granted and refused planning permission for new economic development on allocated employment sites during the year.
------------------	--

Granted (square metres)	
Authority's data	192,000m ²

Refused (square metres)	
Authority's data	0

Two employment planning applications received planning permission within 2018/19 on EM1 LDP allocated sites. Gwent Europark is allocated in the LDP for 150,000 m² of B8 use and had an extant planning permission in place. This permission has recently received an extension of time and also a change of use for part of the site to allow B1 and B2 use.

In addition, 42,000m² of employment land has also been approved as a reserved matters application as part of the Glan Llyn Regeneration Site, EM1 (vii) Celtic Business Park. Two separate reserved matters applications were approved which consisted of two different layouts in order to provide greater flexibility.

No permissions were refused on allocated employment sites during the year.

Indicator	SD2. Planning permission granted for renewable and low carbon energy development during the year.
------------------	--

Granted permission (number of applications)	
Authority's data	3

Granted permission (MW energy generation)	
Authority's data	54.4 MW

Three planning applications were approved for renewable energy development during 2018/19. One for biomass boilers to provide a sustainable source of heat directly to an industrial unit. The second application was for a single wind turbine.

The third application was a Development of National Significance solar farm, which was determined by Welsh Government. The proposal comprises of up to 245,000 ground mounted solar panels and would generate sufficient electricity to power approximately 15,000 average UK households and offset around 21,208 tonnes of CO2 per annum and about 636,240 tonnes over the lifetime of the scheme.

Indicator	SD3. The number of dwellings granted planning permission during the year.
------------------	--

Market housing (number of units)	
Authority's data	266

Affordable housing (number of units)	
Authority's data	165

These numbers are slightly down on last year but there are plenty of residential applications with planning permission in the system. The 5.6 year land supply demonstrates this. In addition, major reserved matters applications at Glan Llyn have recently been approved, along with further development at Llanwern Village. Therefore it is expected that next year's figures will increase.

Out of the total number of units approved, 165 were affordable, which represents approximately 38%. This is probably indicative of the Registered Social Landlords taking more of a leading role in developing in Newport during the reporting periods.

Indicator	SD4. Planning permission granted and refused for development in C1 and C2 floodplain areas during the year.
------------------	--

Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) which were GRANTED permission	
Authority's data	343 / 14.65ha

Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) which were REFUSED permission on flood risk grounds	
Authority's data	0

Over the past year, 62 developments have been located within a Flood Risk Zone. In the vast majority of cases, the applications were able to meet the TAN 15 tests. In a small number of instances, the applications were unable to satisfy all TAN 15 tests, but the planning officer was satisfied following consideration of all matters and consultation responses from NRW. Further analysis is contained with the Council's AMR.

Indicator	SD5. The area of land (ha) granted planning permission for new development on previously developed land and greenfield land during the year.
------------------	---

Previously developed land (hectares)	
Authority's data	15.6ha

Greenfield land (hectares)	
Authority's data	6.1ha

The Council's LDP Strategy is still very much a brownfield regeneration led strategy. The above figures are reflective of this approach. In 2018/19, over 96% of housing completions on major sites (10 units of more) were completed on brownfield land.

Indicator	SD6. The area of public open space (ha) that would be lost and gained as a result of development granted planning permission during the quarter.
------------------	---

Open space lost (hectares)	
Authority's data	0

Open space gained (hectares)	
Authority's data	0

N/A	
-----	--

Indicator	SD7. The total financial contributions (£) agreed from new development granted planning permission during the year for the provision of community infrastructure.
------------------	--

Gained via Section 106 agreements (£)	
Authority's data	373,974

Gained via Community Infrastructure Levy (£)	
Authority's data	0

Two applications were approved (totalling £108,493) for education facilities and two applications were approved (totalling £265,481) for transport related facilities.