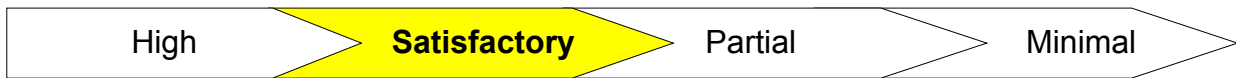


Appendix 2a: Audit Opinion and Themes

Assurance



Development Control

Objective

To assess whether planning applications are effectively and promptly processed and all due income is received.

Themes

There is an appropriate Scheme of Delegation in place setting out the responsibilities to decide upon planning applications, including when to refer the decision to the Development Control Committee. Officers regularly declare interests that are taken into account when deciding who processes applications to minimise the potential risk of the perception of favourable or unfavourable treatment.

There are good processes in place to:

- only accept and begin processing applications once it is confirmed all required supporting evidence is submitted. Going forward, applications will only be processed once the correct fee has been received
- independently review processed applications to ensure the proper practices have been followed and the proposed decision is sound
- appropriately and independently authorise refunds before they are made
- continually and robustly monitor the speed of processing applications, to ensure compliance with the government-set timescales for all different types of application. Targets were met during 2014/15.

Going forward, regular reconciliations will be undertaken of the expected fee income per Uniform (the services IT system) with the actual income received as per the financial accounting system, Agresso. This is to confirm that all income is completely and accurately received or to trigger appropriate recovery action where necessary.

Enforcement complaints will be more proactively and regularly monitored to ensure they are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner.

Number of actions agreed: 5