

Planning and Development Customer Feedback and Performance 2017/18

Background

Customer Service Excellence (CSE) remains one of Planning and Development's (P&D) key priorities and is driven by the Business and Customer Services Team in the Strategic Services Directorate. The aim of this annual document is to share the feedback we have received from customers through survey questionnaires.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Overview

P&D use the customer satisfaction surveys which follow below to obtain feedback on the service. All surveys are assessed based on the 5 key principles within the CSE criteria:

1. Timeliness and Quality
2. The Culture and Organisation
3. Information and Access
4. Customer Insight
5. Delivery.

In general, overall satisfaction ratings are based on customers who marked scores on their questionnaires as very good and good. This is because P&D are of the opinion that we should not settle for satisfactory ratings but aim for very good or good.

Satisfaction Survey Outcomes

The results below are based on a low rate of return compared to the questionnaires sent. It does mean that we need to take account of the number of responses compared to the number of planning applications, enforcement cases, enquiries, etc. dealt with when considering potential actions.

Planning Applicants

Within 14 days of a decision notice being sent to the customer, they are sent a Customer Satisfaction letter requesting completion of a feedback questionnaire which includes a web-link to it.

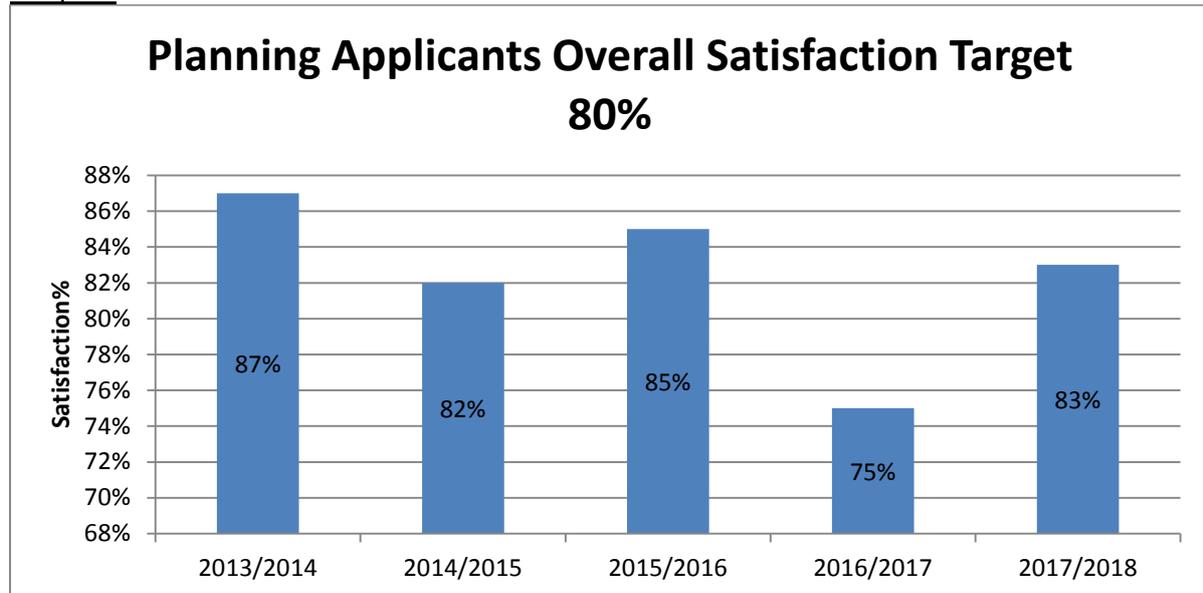
The purpose of this survey is:

- to establish our customers' needs
- to assess satisfaction levels of customers - we aim for an 80% satisfaction level
- to identify areas for improvement to the planning application service

The survey is analysed quarterly and published annually on the P&R website and shown on the plasma screen in reception. Overall satisfaction ratings are shown below in Graph 1. The results show the continued high satisfaction levels over the last five years which range between 75% and 87%. The service is aware that there was an impact in 2016/17 from the

Economy Service Redesign, some experienced staff have left and therefore new staff will take time to be embedded into the service.

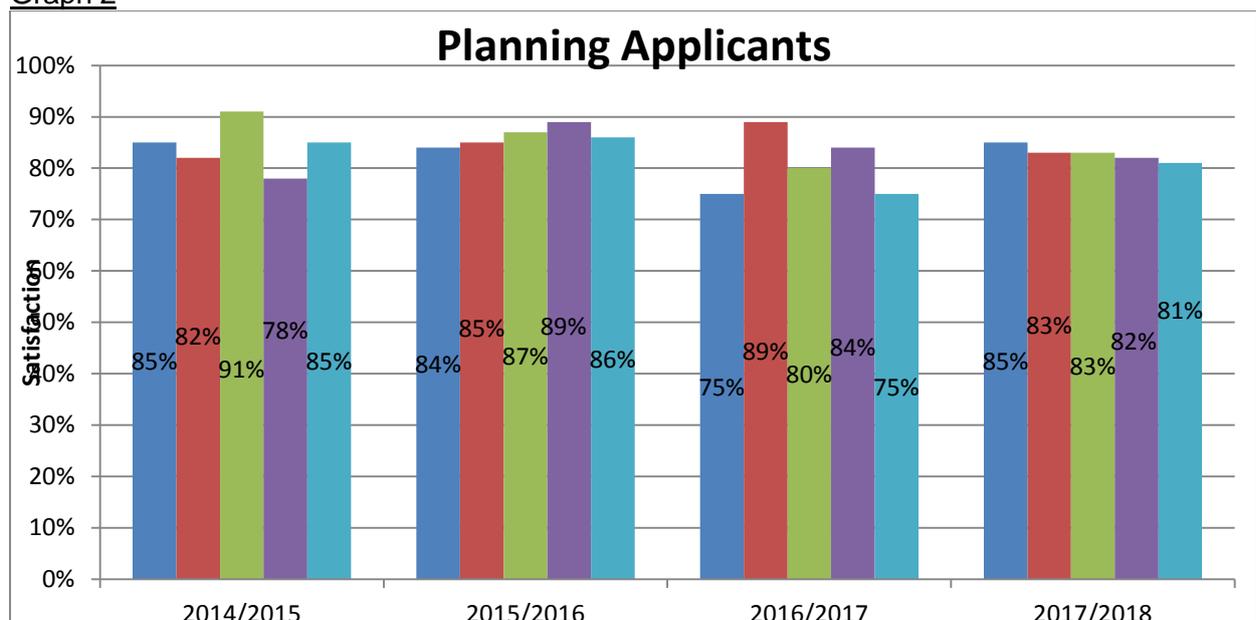
Graph 1



There are five key questions contained within the survey based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria, Graph 2 shows the response rates to these questions.

1. How would you rate the quality of the [pre-application advice](#) service?
2. How would you rate our service overall?
3. Did you feel sufficiently informed about the [planning applications process](#) before applying for Planning Permission?
4. When you contacted us by phone about planning permission, how would you rate our service?
5. How would you rate the overall professionalism of the Planning Officer?

Graph 2



The feedback over the last 4 years suggests that customers consider:

- they are well informed before applying for planning permission with satisfaction levels between 80% to 91%.
- the quality of pre-application advice has remained high with satisfaction levels between 75% and 85%.
- the service offered over the phone has been consistently high with satisfaction levels between 78% and 89%.
- the overall professionalism of Planning Officers has been consistently high with satisfaction levels between 75% and 86%.
- the service overall has been high with satisfaction levels between 82% and 89%.

Planning Enforcement

Planning Enforcement is considered a very high profile area which is high on the political agenda. This is an area that will always generate unhappy outcomes, whether you are the customer raising the enquiry or the owner/occupier. Nevertheless it is important that we measure what our customers think of the service.

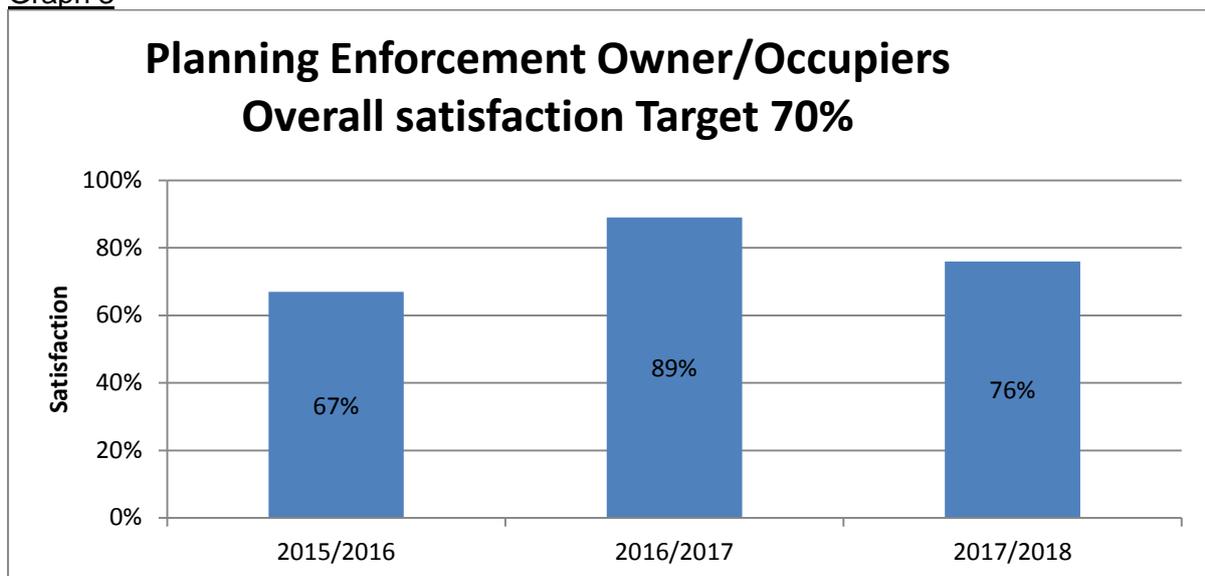
Surveys are sent to both the owner/occupier and the enquirer once a case has been closed. This is currently done in the form of a paragraph at the bottom of the template for the outcome letter which contains the web-link for the feedback questionnaire. In an effort to increase response rates an automatic customer service follow up letter is sent within 14 days after the outcome letter and also includes a web-link to the questionnaire.

The purpose of these two surveys is to:

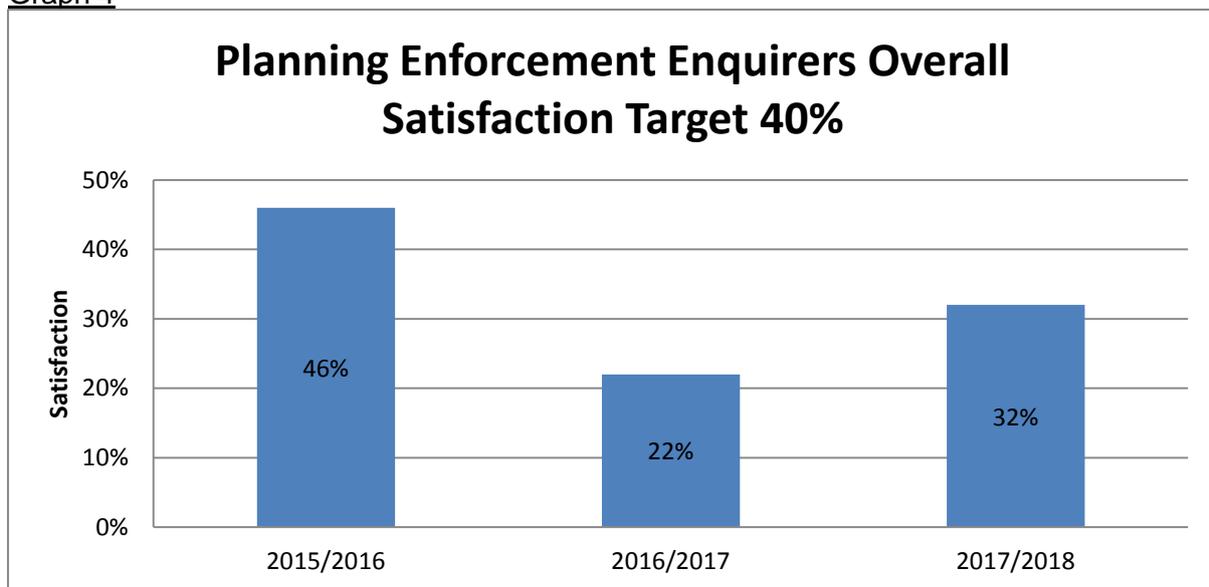
- establish the needs of our Planning Enforcement customers - both the enquirer and those carrying out work without permission (known as 'owner/occupiers')
- assess satisfaction levels of customers
- identify areas for improvement to the Planning Enforcement process

The surveys are analysed quarterly and published annually on our website and shown on the plasma screen in reception. Overall satisfaction ratings show satisfaction levels overachieved for owner/occupiers and underachieved for enquiries. In addition to the comments above, the changes in legislation re “permitted developments” has impacted on what is permitted and therefore resulted in less satisfaction for enquirers who object.

Graph 3



Graph 4



We will continue to work with the Enforcement team to identify and implement actions that will improve satisfaction levels.

There are five key questions contained within the surveys based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria, Graphs 5 and 6 show these response rates.

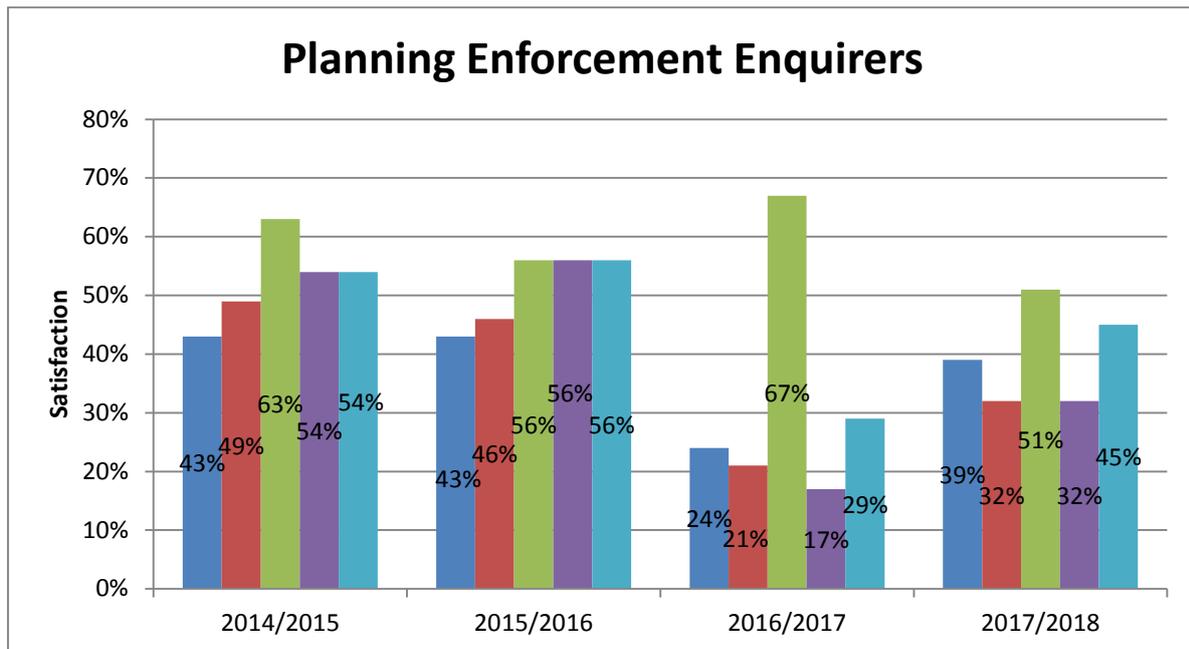
Enquirer

1. When you contacted us by phone about your complaint, how would you rate our service?
2. How would you rate our service overall?
3. Did you feel sufficiently informed about planning enforcement before making your complaint?
4. Did we meet your expectations?
5. How would you rate the overall professionalism of the Planning Enforcement Officer?

Owner/Occupiers

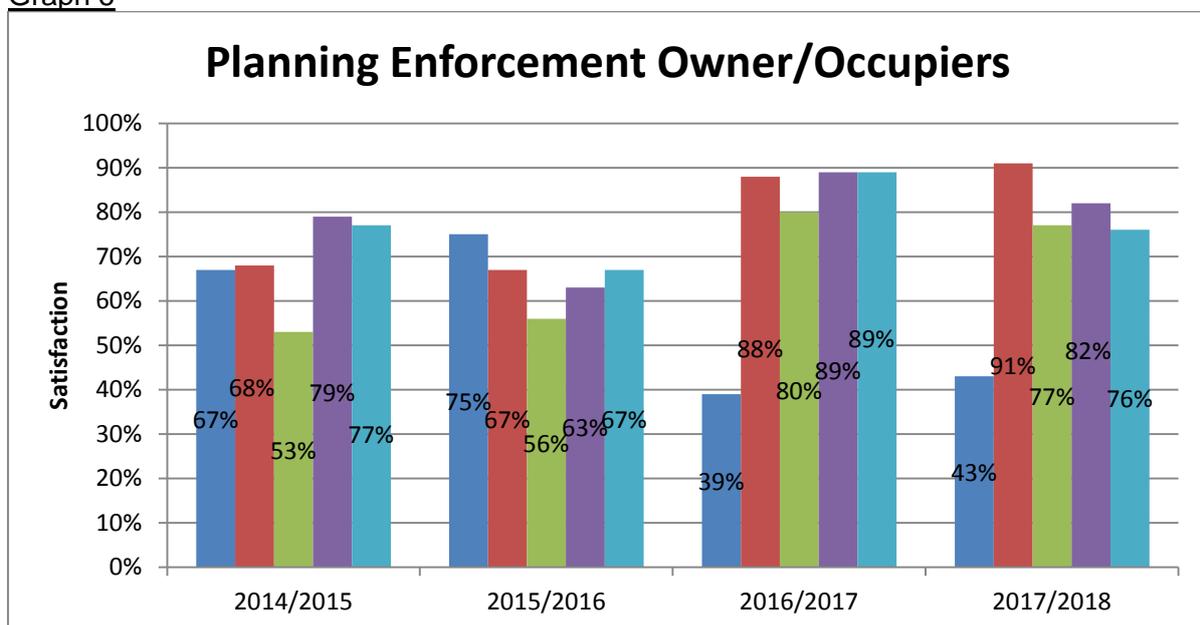
1. Did you enquire from our service whether you would be breaching planning legislation before carrying out the work?
2. Did we meet your expectations?
3. When you contacted us by phone about your complaint, how would you rate our service?
4. How would you rate the overall professionalism of the Enforcement Officer?
5. How would you rate our service overall?

Graph 5



Enquirer customer satisfaction levels have generally increased in 2017/18 other than customers feeling informed about planning enforcement before making the complaint. Our aim is to continue to improve in all areas as mentioned above.

Graph 6



Owner/Occupier satisfaction levels indicate a small reduction in satisfaction with regard to enquiries about the quality of service over the phone from the Contact Centre, professionalism of the enforcement officer and the rating of the overall service. Our aim is to continue to improve in all areas.

Fast Track Enquiries

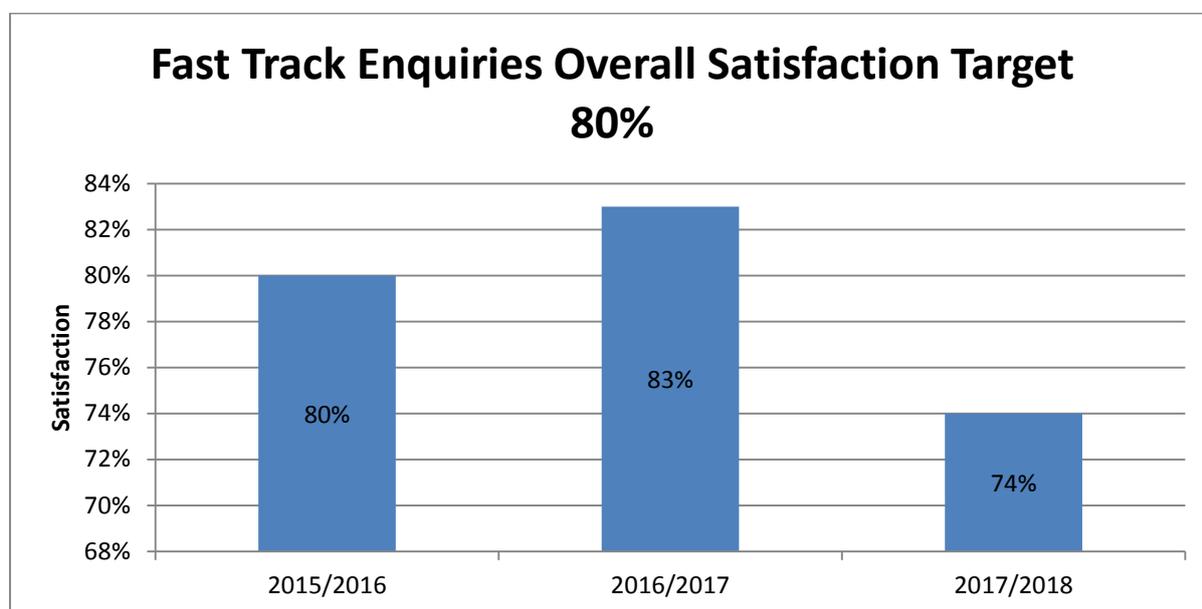
The 'Fast Track' enquiries service allows us to respond to simple enquiries, such as copies of documents, copies of forms, links to information, etc., without the need for the formal logging of an enquiry onto M3. We aim to respond to these types of enquiries within 2 working days. This is a relatively new area for which feedback is assessed, based on the 5 key principles contained within the CSE criteria. A web-link to the survey is sent out with all fast track enquiry responses.

The purpose of the survey is to:

- establish our customers' needs
- assess the satisfaction level of customers using this service
- identify areas for improvement in this service

The surveys are analysed and published annually on our website and shown on the plasma screen in reception. Overall satisfaction ratings are shown below in Graph 7 currently measured against a target of 80%.

Graph 7

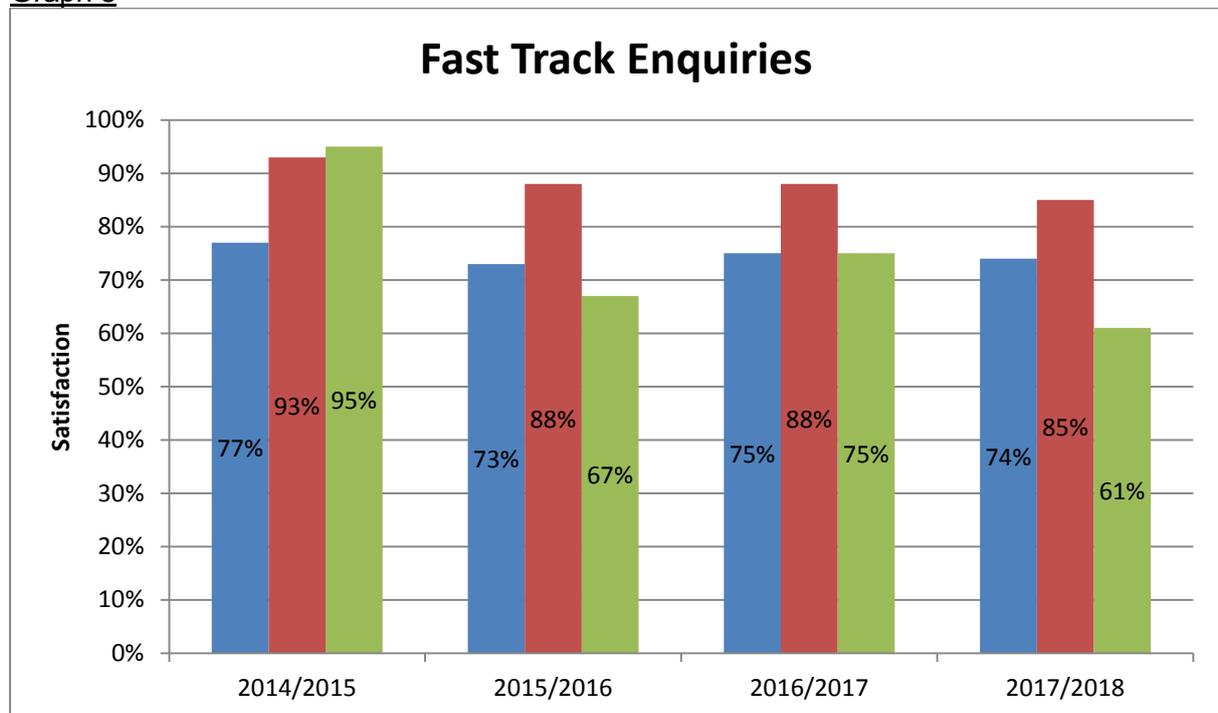


P&D have been very near to achieving the target in 2017/18. The performance has been affected by the transfer of an experienced member of staff to another service area, staff absences and restrictions in recruitment.

There are three key questions contained within the surveys based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria, Graph 8 shows these response rates.

1. Was your enquiry fully answered?
2. Was the response easy to understand?
3. How long did you have to wait for your response?

Graph 8



The level of satisfaction for enquiries being fully answered and responses being easy to understand have been fairly steady over several years but satisfaction with waiting time for receiving responses has decreased. This may be due to a resource issue within the Enquiries Team.

Speaking at Planning Committee

The overall satisfaction rating for 2017/18 was 82% against our target of 80%.

There are five key questions contained within the surveys based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria which are shown below together with the percentage response rating:

	<u>Satisfaction Levels</u>
1. Was it easy for you to arrange to speak at Planning Committee?	100%
2. Was the speaking at Planning Committee process explained to you in detail?	100%
3. When you arrived at Planning Committee were you greeted by a member of staff?	100%
4. Did you feel it worthwhile attending and speaking?	82%
5. Did you follow what was happening at Planning Committee	100%

P&D are pleased with the satisfaction levels.

Housing - BMHT

This is a relatively new survey relating to the transfer of citizens to new homes. The overall satisfaction rating for 2017/18 was 96% against a target of 90%.

There are four key questions contained within the surveys based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria which are shown below together with the percentage response rating:

Satisfaction Levels

1. Were you satisfied with the information you were provided?	100%
2. Were officers able to fully respond to your enquiries?	95%
3. How would you rate the overall professionalism of the BMHT officer?	96%
4. Were you provided regular updates?	63%
5. Were the BMHT officers helpful?	97%

The satisfaction levels are pleasing, however, staff have been reminded that appropriate updates should be provided.

Housing - Clearance

This is a relatively new survey relating to transfer of citizens from houses to be demolished. The overall satisfaction rating for 2017/18 was 100%. There are four key questions contained within the surveys based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria which are shown below together with the percentage response rating:

Satisfaction Levels

1. Do you think it was fully explained why you needed to be rehoused?	100%
2. How would you rate the overall service provided?	100%
3. Was the BMHT officer helpful?	100%
4. Do you think the Housing Officer kept in regular contact?	80%
5. Did you find the Newsletters useful?	100%

The satisfaction levels are pleasing.

Business Development and Innovation

This survey is carried out in relation to customers who apply for funding in relation to specific programmes. The overall satisfaction rating for 2017/18 was 90% and on the last occasion that feedback survey questionnaires had been distributed (i.e. 2015/16) had been at 98%. A target of 90% was set and has been achieved.

There are four key questions contained within the surveys based on the five key principles of the CSE criteria which are shown below together with the percentage response rating:

Satisfaction Levels

1. How would you rate the application process?	90%
2. Were you given sufficient advice, support and guidance?	100%
3. Did you feel you were given enough time to complete the project?	100%
4. How would you rate the BD an I Team's overall service?	90%

The satisfaction levels are pleasing.

Satisfaction Levels to Measure Performance

Planning Applicants

The purpose of the planning applicants' survey is to establish our customers' needs, those who submit planning applications as well as identifying areas for improvement to the planning application service.

The current level of overall satisfaction for the delivery of the planning application process is set at a rating of 80% based on our customers rating our overall service as either good or very good.

Taking into consideration the data shown above in graph 1, P&D will continue with the current satisfaction target rating at 80% with a 5% tolerance either way, based on either a good or very good rating, -5% (problem area), +5% (stretching target).

Planning Enforcement

The purpose of the planning enforcement surveys are to establish our customers satisfaction levels (both the enquirer and owner/occupiers) as well as identifying areas for improvement to the planning enforcement service. The current level of overall satisfaction for the delivery of the planning enforcement process for owner/occupiers is set at a target of 70% and for an enquirer it is set at 50% based on our customers rating our overall service as either good or very good.

Taking into consideration satisfaction levels recorded in 2013/14, 2015/16 and 2016/17 shown above in Graphs 3 and 4, P&D is proposing to implement the following satisfaction targets for 2017/18:

Planning enforcement owner/occupiers remains at 70% with a 5% tolerance either way, based on either a good or very good rating, -5% (problem area), +5% (stretching target).

Planning enforcement enquirers remains at 40% with a 5% tolerance either way, based on either a good or very good rating, -5% (problem area), +5% (stretching target).

Fast Track Enquiries

Taking into consideration satisfaction levels recorded in 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 shown above in Graph 7 P&R will continue with a rating of 80% with a 5% tolerance either way, based on either a good or very good rating, -5% (problem area), +5% (stretching target).

Speaking at Planning Committee

The current level of overall satisfaction is set at a rating of 80% based on whether that customer would wish to attend a meeting and speak again if the opportunity arose. The ratings for the last 2 years have been 64% and 82%. P&D will continue with a target rating of 80% with a 5% tolerance either way, -5% (problem area), +5% (stretching target).

Housing – BMHT

Given the overall satisfaction rating of 97% and 96% in the last 2 years of the survey and that the service focuses on providing new accommodation to citizens we propose to continue the target rating at 90%.

Housing - Clearance

Given the overall satisfaction rating of 100% in the first two years of the survey and that the service focuses on the rehousing of residents into new accommodation we propose to set the target rating at 95%.

Business Development and Innovation

Given the overall satisfaction rating of 98% in the first year of the survey and 90% in 2017/18 and that the service focuses on providing grants we propose to continue with the target rating of 90%.

Service Improvements in relation to Customer Feedback

Service improvements are brought about through listening to feedback from our customers. This provides information about what is working and what is not. It helps us identify existing and potential problems with our processes and procedures and highlights opportunities for staff development.

Overall, customer feedback provides us with the information to evaluate the service we deliver, along with the skills and abilities of our staff that provide them. Below are a sample of some of the ways customer feedback has turned into service improvements.

You Said	We Did
<i>Planning Applicants Survey Feedback</i>	
A customer commented that pre-application advice took too long given considerable fee for service	Spoke with planning officer and Area Manager and concluded that there had been extenuating circumstances in this case.
<i>Planning Enforcement Survey Feedback</i>	
Comment about lack of updates on progress of enforcement investigation.	Officers carry a very heavy caseload and do not have time to update on progress but when significant events take place both the enquirer and owner/occupier are informed in writing. On other occasions customers are able to contact the relevant enforcement officer via their direct dial phone number or direct email address.
<i>Fast Track Enquires Survey Feedback</i>	
Customer survey web-link had not been included in email response to customer.	All enquiries staff reminded of importance of including web-link on their email.
<i>Speaking at Planning Committee Survey Feedback</i>	
Officers who attend the Planning Committee meeting should be introduced as members of public do not know who they are.	Name and title labels are to be shown in front of the officers.
<i>Housing – Land Clearance Survey Feedback</i>	
The area where housing was to be demolished including collecting fly-tipped rubbish etc. was not looked after.	Housing Officer advised of poor ratings from quantitative analysis. He explained that he discusses negative feedback with his staff and writes to customer. Negative feedback on environmental issues is shared with partners.
<u>Planning Policy Service Survey Feedback</u>	
Improve communication through direct emails or links on local social media forums	The Council's twitter feed was used to publicise consultation. We can look at setting up a database of contacts for Smithfield Masterplan.