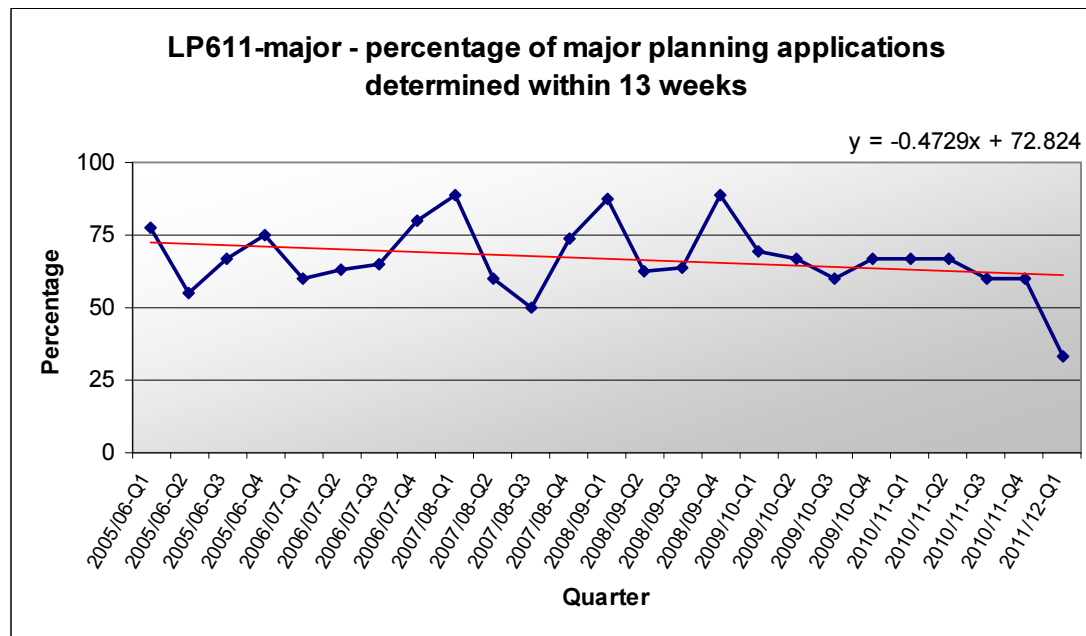


Determination of planning applications

The new approach to performance reporting highlights under performance against targets and a marked downturn in 2010/11 first quarter performance for determination of major, minor and other planning applications.

Determination of major applications also shows a deteriorating trend since 2005/06, as shown in the following graph.



Recent changes in the planning system, a coincidence of hugely time consuming and high profile application and enforcement cases and some serious and concentrated sick leave has had a significant impact on performance.

Going forward the service will continue to operate the team and individual case review system that is in place. Some important sickness cases have been resolved and replacement staff recruited. Some major cases have been cleared although the burden of negotiation, liaison and consultation on many outstanding applications should not be underestimated in terms of resource and time allocation. It should also be noted that the ability and willingness of applicants to conclude negotiations on schemes is a major factor. In the current market with uncertainty over funding often we are finding that applications of various types are simply not pursued with vigour by applicants. In some significant cases months can pass without movement. This does bring into question of the current relevance of the particular indicators and targets that we operate because of factors out of our influence.

Negotiation and renegotiation on key schemes in view of changing policy and economic climate and the diversion of development control resources onto other significant projects is an important factor to recognise. Intervention on time consuming detailed, local matters must be critically monitored.