

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

FROM: Acting Head Of Legal And
Administrative Services

REPORT NUMBER **F26**

TO: Overview & Scrutiny (Stewardship)
Committee

DATE OF MEETING 23 May 2006

LOCAL LAND CHARGES – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the latest performance trends for the Local Land Charges service. The report is for information only.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None.

4. **KEY INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The Committee has asked for quarterly reports on the performance of the Local Land Charges section, with particular reference to Best Value Performance Indicator 179 (the percentage of standard searches processed within 10 working days).
- 4.2 It was reported in January that performance had suffered a slight reverse at the end of November and into the first week in December. January saw a problem in another section of the Council where the absence of a key member of staff meant that information required to complete several searches within the 10-day target was not received in the Land Charges office early enough. In January, therefore, 82 searches were returned within the 10-day target out of a total of 110 standard searches (74.55%). Performance was back on target during February when 100% of searches were returned in 10 days or under and during March when the monthly performance was 98.59%.
- 4.3 The annual target for 2005/06 was 50%. Actual performance was 48.48% (702 searches out of 1448), which represents a considerable improvement, following the application of additional resources after the first quarter, when performance was 3.45%.
- 4.4 Best Value Performance Indicator 179 has been deleted for 2006/07 but it is important that performance continues to improve so that the Council will be best placed to provide searches as part of the Home Information Packs (HIPs) that will be required by property vendors from summer 2007. Compilers of HIPs will need to know that search information can be sourced at reasonable prices and within short timescales, probably much less than 10 working days.

- 4.5 By 2007, it is most likely that the Council will also be obliged to provide access to information to personal search agents that is not currently available on public registers in accordance with a charging scheme to be laid down by the Department of Constitutional Affairs and there is little doubt that the advent of HIPs will see even greater competition from personal search companies. For this reason, the completion of the gazetteer project and the electronic integration of systems remain vital for the future viability of the Land Charges service.
- 4.6 The target for the current year is to return 90% of standard searches within 10 working days. So far (i.e. during the month of April), 98.13% of standard searches have been returned within the target period.

5. **APPENDICES**

None.

5. **BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO:**

None.

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