
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

23 January 2018

Cabinet

Title: Planning Performance Framework

Purpose: To report on feedback from the Scottish Government on the Planning Performance Framework 6.

Recommendation: To consider and note the feedback from the Scottish Government on PPF 6 contained in Appendix 1.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the meeting on 20 June 2017, the Cabinet approved the publication of the Planning Performance Framework 6 (PPF6) and submission to the Scottish Government. PPF6 sets out the planning service performance for 2016-17.
- 1.2 Feedback on PPF6 from the Scottish Government was received on 21st December 2017. The feedback reflects the high level of performance and customer service which is delivered by the Planning Service for North Ayrshire, and approved an Action Programme. (see Appendix 1).
- 1.3 The Scottish Government feedback on PPF6 notes a generally successful performance from North Ayrshire Council Planning Service and includes feedback points which can be addressed through proposed actions in the next PPF.
- 1.4 The feedback report recognises that the Council's Local Development Plan remains up-to-date and notes a range of positive achievements in service delivery throughout 2016/17. It is recognised that timescales for the determination of Householder applications has continued to improve and remain quicker than the national average timescales.
- 1.5 It should be noted that the 'Overall Markings' table in Appendix 1 indicates 12 markers rated as green, and 3 as amber. This table is correct but the amber rating for the determination of Local Applications was given due to an increase from 5.8 to 5.9 weeks. The report notes that the performance is still significantly faster than the national average of 11.1 weeks.
- 1.6 In the category for determining all local applications, North Ayrshire Council performed better than all other planning authorities in Scotland during the year 2016/17 and demonstrated an ongoing improvement compared with previous years. North Ayrshire were

2 weeks faster than the next fastest planning authority and 4 weeks faster than the national average.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Planning Performance Framework (PPF) was developed in response to the Government's reform agenda and an annual return is required from each planning authority within Scotland. The PPF provides the planning system with a balanced score card approach to performance, which enables each planning authority to demonstrate its achievements, successes and individuality. The PPF was introduced to provide a broader picture of performance than that offered by the Statutory Performance Indicators (SPI) by Audit Scotland.
- 2.2 By letter dated 21 December 2017, the Minister for Local Government and Housing notes that the recently introduced Planning Bill aims to support effective performance management. The Bill includes specific provision to improve performance monitoring and appoint a National Performance coordinator with powers to conduct assessments and require improvements to be made. If approved, the Bill would make the PPF a statutory procedure.
- 2.3 The preparation of the next PPF (PPF7) is underway and will be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration in the summer of 2018.
- 2.4 Of the 15 'Performance Markers' the Service has been assessed to have 12 markers rated as green, and 3 as amber. This compares to the previous year's report which had 9 rated as green, 4 as amber, 2 as red.
- 2.5 The 3 ambers include the performance marker on Local Applications noted above at 1.5 which is still well ahead of Scottish average. The other 2 ambers have been given for performance markers 3 – Early Collaborative with applicants and consultees and 15, Developer Contributions. Both of these measures and the comments made will be specifically addressed within the next P.P.F.
- 2.6 The Report notes that all processing agreements met agreed timescales, and supports the Council's use of such agreements to reduce the need for legal agreements, which generally delay the determination timescales. In addition the report notes that the Council's LDP, Development Scheme and Enforcement Charter are up to date.
- 2.7 Our training for Elected Members on the LDP and Main Issues Report has allowed welcome participation and access to plan making. There is also strong evidence of cross-sector engagement during the MIR including for hard to reach groups. There is also good evidence of corporate working across services, including the working group set up by the ELT to improve policy advice on affordable housing.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 As noted above, the action points arising from the feedback report will be addressed within the next PPF.

3.2 The Cabinet is invited to note the feedback contained with Appendix 1.

4. Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
Human Resources:	There are no staffing implications arising from this report.
Legal:	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
Equality:	There are no equality implications arising from this report.
Children and Young People:	There are no implications for Children and Young People associated with this report.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Key Priorities:	PPF contributes to the Council core objective for "operating more efficiently and effectively" by increasing the levels of accountability and transparency within Planning Services and by introducing annual service improvement commitments.
Community Benefits:	N/A

5. Consultation

5.1 None required



Karen Yeomans
Executive Director Economy & Communities

For further information please contact James Miller Senior Manager Planning Services on 01294 324315.

Background Papers

Insert titles of any background papers or N/A



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Ms Elma Murray
Chief Executive
North Ayrshire Council

21 December 2017

Dear Ms Murray

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FEEDBACK 2016/17

Please find attached feedback on your planning performance framework report for the period April 2016 to March 2017.

You will be aware that we recently introduced the Planning Bill to the Scottish Parliament. The Bill aims to support effective performance across a range of planning functions. It includes specific provisions to strengthen and improve performance monitoring; to appoint a national performance co-ordinator to provide advice and recommendations; and powers to conduct assessments and if necessary require improvements to be made. This structured approach is essential to improving the reputation of the system across the country. It aims to provide better support to authorities, whilst recognising that other factors and stakeholders, impact on your performance.

I appreciate that resourcing is a critical issue for you, and the Bill includes provisions for discretionary charging to allow greater local flexibility. Following the Bill, we will consult on revising the fee regime to better reflect the developments which are being brought forward.

We will continue to liaise with COSLA, SOLACE and Heads of Planning Scotland as the Bill progresses through the Parliamentary process. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you all to actively engage - this is a fantastic opportunity to make our system work better to enable planners to deliver the high-quality development our communities need, and it is important that voices from all viewpoints are heard. You can monitor the progress of the Bill on the Parliament website at: www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/106768.aspx

Kind Regards

KEVIN STEWART

CC: James Miller, Senior Planning Manager



PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2016-17

Name of planning authority: **North Ayrshire Council**

The High Level Group on Performance agreed a set of performance markers. We have assessed your report against those markers to give an indication of priority areas for improvement action. The high level group will monitor and evaluate how the key markers have been reported and the value which they have added.

The Red, Amber, Green ratings are based on the evidence provided within the PPF reports. Where no information or insufficient evidence has been provided, a 'red' marking has been allocated.

No.	Performance Marker	RAG rating	Comments
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	Amber	<p>Major Applications</p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications</p> <p>Your timescales of 5.9 weeks are slightly slower than the previous year but are significantly faster than the Scottish average of 11.1 weeks. Whilst we have had to mark an amber to maintain consistency in marking, we do recognise that you are operating faster than other authorities who may have received a green due to their level of improvement since the previous year.</p> <p>RAG = Amber</p> <p>Householder Applications</p> <p>Your timescales of 4.6 weeks have improved since the previous year and are faster than the Scottish average of 7.3 weeks.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>
2	<p>Processing agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	Green	<p>You used processing agreements for all 7 major developments and 1 local developments. All of these met the agreed timescale.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Processing agreements are publicised on the web.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>

3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	Amber	<p>You continue to demonstrate a good record in delivering pre-application advice and the new system of recording shows a high number of these pre-application discussions taking place.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Pre-application discussions and processing agreements are used to ensure that the required information is submitted. But there is no evidence of how these requests are proportionate.</p> <p>RAG = Amber</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period) 	Green	<p>You have noted an established link between the use of legal agreements and lengthy cases and have sought to use processing agreements to manage these more successfully and focus on using conditions as an alternative.</p>
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	<p>Your enforcement charter was 23 months old at the end of the reporting period.</p>
6	Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	Green	<p>Your timescales have improved and you have an up to date development plan.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>You have progressed a number of your 2016/17 service commitments, however a number of the commitments identified for the coming year are considered to be core business and are not necessarily service improvements.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Green	<p>Your local plan was 2 years and 10 months old at the end of the reporting period</p>
8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	Green	<p>Your Development plan scheme is up to date, project planned and expected to be adopted within the 5 year timescale.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>You have a project plan in place to ensure your replacement remains on track.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p>

			Overall RAG = Green
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i>	Green	You have provided training to elected members on the LDP process including pre-MIR engagement. This training has allowed greater participation and access to the plan-making process.
10	Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i> <i>*including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</i>	Green	Strong evidence of cross-sector engagement during the pre-MIR period including hard to reach groups.
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications.	Green	The working group set up by the Extended Leadership Team is working on improving policy advice for affordable housing. Your case study provided a positive example of the impact a strong policy can have on an application.
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)	Green	The report contains good evidence of cross-authority working to help provide strong policy and joined-up working.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	You have undertaken a wide range of discussions across authorities, all of which show the importance of sharing knowledge and experience.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Green	You have continued to reduce the number of legacy cases, some of which are quite old.
15	Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions 	Amber	<p>Your Executive Leadership Team has started to consider developer contributions including affordable housing.</p> <p>RAG = Amber</p> <p>The report is not clear on how developer contributions are set out at the pre-application stage.</p> <p>RAG = Red</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
Performance against Key Markers

Marker		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1	Decision making timescales					
2	Processing agreements					
3	Early collaboration					
4	Legal agreements					
5	Enforcement charter					
6	Continuous improvement					
7	Local development plan					
8	Development plan scheme					
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	N/A		
10	Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	N/A		
11	Regular and proportionate advice to support applications					
12	Corporate working across services					
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge					
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases					
15	Developer contributions					

Overall Markings (total numbers for red, amber and green)

2012-13	3	7	3
2013-14	2	5	6
2014-15	0	3	10
2015-16	2	5	8
2016-17	0	3	12

Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2016-17 Scottish Average
Major Development	30.9	21.5	12.6	90.3	-	37.1
Local (Non-Householder) Development	8.7	6.8	6.2	5.8	5.9	11.1
Householder Development	6.6	5.7	5.1	4.7	4.6	7.3