

Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning
Kevin Stewart MSP



T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Joyce White
Chief Executive
West Dunbartonshire Council

11 February 2020

Dear Joyce,

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FEEDBACK 2018-19

I am pleased to enclose feedback on your authority's 8th PPF Report for the period April 2018 to March 2019.

I believe that good progress continues to be made by authorities. Although there has been a small drop in the number of green ratings awarded this year and there remains some variation across some authorities and markers. I have been particularly impressed by the speed of determination of major applications in some authorities.

We are now pressing ahead with our programme of reform. In September 2019 we published "Transforming Planning in Practice" our work programme for implementing the provisions of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and wider planning improvements. We have also just launched our www.transformingplanning.scot website where you can keep up to date and involved with Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4), Digital Planning and the Planning Reform programme.

This is an exciting time for the planning system in Scotland with the preparation of NPF4 underway and the changes to the development planning and management systems to follow. We really value the input of your staff as expert users of the system and welcome their continued support in developing and implementing the planning system that we all want to see.

One of the first things I'm keen to address is planning resources, which is why we are consulting on increasing planning fees, moving them towards covering the full cost of determining applications and extending the range of services which authorities can charge for in exercising their planning functions. The consultation is due to close on 14th February and I hope that you will submit your views. I know applicants will expect to see continued improvement in performance and those increased fees invested in the planning service. This is why we are also consulting on how we measure and monitor the performance of the planning system at the same time.

If you would like to discuss any of the markings awarded below, please email chief.planner@gov.scot and a member of the team will be happy to discuss these with you.

Kind Regards



KEVIN STEWART

CC: Pamela Clifford

PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2018-19

Name of planning authority: **West Dunbartonshire 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]	Red	<p>Major Applications Your timescales of 28.5 weeks are slower than the previous year but faster than the Scottish average of 32.5 weeks. RAG = Amber</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications Your timescales of 14.4 weeks are slower than the previous year and slower than the Scottish average of 10.7 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Householder Applications Your timescales of 8.6 weeks are slower than the previous year and slower than the Scottish average of 7.2 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Overall RAG = Red</p>
2	Processing agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	Green	<p>Processing agreements are offered for all applications for major development and important local development. RAG = Green</p> <p>Processing agreement information is available through your website. 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 	Green	<p>You provide a pre-application advice service which is promoted through the website and have a protocol in place. RAG = Green</p> <p>You provide case study evidence to demonstrate how request for supporting information are clear and proportionate to the applicant. RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission reducing number of live applications more than 6 months	Green	No applications with legal agreements were determined during the reporting period.

	after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)		
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	Your enforcement charter was 8 months old at the end of the reporting period.
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 	Amber	<p>Your LDP is out of date and will not be replaced in the next reporting period. Timescales for dealing with applications have slowed since last year and there are several legacy cases to be cleared.</p> <p>RAG = Red</p> <p>You have completed 8 out of 15 of your improvement commitments with the majority remaining to be completed over the next reporting year. You have identified a range of commitments for the next reporting year.</p> <p>RAG = Amber</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Red	Your LDP was 9 years old at the end of the reporting period. It is noted that you have commenced preparation of a new plan.
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 	Amber	<p>Your next LDP is not on track for adoption within the five year cycle.</p> <p>RAG = Red</p> <p>Your most recent Development Plan Scheme (September 2018) suggests adoption in 2020. Your timescales to date have been met.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i>	N/A	
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>	N/A	
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications.	Green	Guidance for 3 conservation areas have been approved. New guidance on green infrastructure is underway with other guidance due to be reviewed.
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	Your report shows how several protocols have been written for customer facing aspects of development management. You have provided some good case studies to demonstrate how you work with other council services.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	Your report identifies working with other local authorities through benchmarking groups.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing	Amber	You have cleared 1 case during the reporting year, with 7 cases still awaiting conclusion. Based on this and last year's figures, no cases reached legacy status during the reporting

	number of live applications more than one year old		year. We note that you are in contact with the applicants and look forward to further progress.
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 	Green	Developer contributions are set out in relation to green network. LDP2 contains policy which will be applied proportionately. RAG = Green Case studies demonstrate how requests are discussed early in the application process. RAG = Green Overall RAG = Green

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL
Performance against Key Markers

Marker		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
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	N/A			N/A
10	Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	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	1	6	6
2013-14	1	2	10
2014-15	2	2	9
2015-16	1	5	7
2016-17	1	4	10
2017-18	1	5	9
2018-19	2	3	8

Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2018-19 Scottish Average
Major Development	19.2	32.4	19.8	24.6	23.4	18.3	28.5	32.5
Local (Non-Householder) Development	12.3	15.2	10.5	10.7	10.0	11.8	14.4	10.7
Householder Development	7.3	7.5	6.8	7.3	6.8	7.0	8.6	7.2