

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

Mr Cleland Sneddon
Chief Executive
Argyll and Bute Council

21 December 2017

Dear Mr Sneddon

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: Angus Gilmour, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services

PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2016/17

Name of planning authority: **Argyll & Bute 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 developments Your timescales of 22.1 weeks have improved since the previous year and are faster than the Scottish average of 37.1 weeks. RAG = Green</p> <p>Local Non-householder developments Your timescales of 12.4 weeks are slower than the previous year and are slower than the Scottish average of 11.1 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Householder developments Your timescales of 7.5 weeks are slower than the previous year and are slightly slower than the Scottish average of 7.3 weeks. RAG= Red</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>Whilst there has been no uptake of processing agreements you do continue to offer and promote them. RAG = Green</p> <p>They are also publicised on your website. RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>
3	<p>Early collaboration with applicants and consultees</p> <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>The number of pre-application discussions you enter in to continues to increase and you promote these through the web and officers. RAG = Green</p> <p>We note that you highlight early on in the process the need for further information and where developer contributions are required. Further information is needed on how these are proportionate. RAG = Amber</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>

4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)	Green	This year there were no major applications. The average time for local applications was 22 weeks, faster than the Scottish average of 25.7 weeks. You have a process in place to regularly review S75 and refuse if stalled.
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	Your enforcement charter was 22 months old at the time of reporting.
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	Your decision making timescales are slower than last year for local and householder applications but your local plan and enforcement charter are up-to-date. RAG = Amber You have completed a wide range of service improvement commitments over the last year. Those proposed for this year are mixed, and some could be classed as core business. RAG = Green Overall RAG = Amber
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Green	Your development plan was 2 years old at the time of reporting.
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	Your next LDP is on course for adoption within 5 years. RAG = Green You state that the Development Plan Scheme is project planned and that it continues to be delivered to the timescales originally outlined in it. RAG = Green 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 engaged early with elected members and other cross-authority internal stakeholders holding workshops and presentations.
10	Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year *including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</i>	Green	You have engaged stakeholders using presentations on how to get involved and you have used the place standard to gather input at the pre-MIR stage. You included Key Agencies in a tandem event calling for ideas.
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications.	Green	A number of case studies highlight how requests for supporting information are clear and not onerous. Your masterplanning case study identifies clearly the expectations of the authority as do the design briefs.
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	Strong evidence of how corporate working across the authority is helping to deliver not only development but added value to the planning process. Your Area Property Action Group is a good example of cross-authority working.

13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	You liaised with Shetland Council on developing good practice advice to implement a place standard consultation. You have taken the opportunity to present and assist with the workshops at a Wind Farm conference.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Red	You have only cleared one legacy case during this period whilst 39 remain, and increase of 4 from last year.
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	The existing plan and supplementary guidance are still in place. You are gathering information to support the preparation of the new local development plan. RAG = Green The report is clear that the Council promotes their pre-application process and uses this as an opportunity to highlight any potential requirement for developer contributions at an early stage in proceedings. RAG = Green Overall RAG = Green

ARGYLL AND BUTE 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	N/A	
10	Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	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)

	Red	Amber	Green
2012-13	0	4	9
2013-14	0	5	8
2014-15	0	2	11
2015-16	0	3	10
2016-17	1	3	11

Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2016-17 Scottish Average
Major Development	88.2	59.1	14.1	23.3	22.1	37.1
Local (Non-Householder) Development	14.0	13.1	10.8	10.3	12.4	11.1
Householder Development	8.9	7.2	6.9	7.0	7.5	7.3