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Chief Executive
Perth and Kinross Council

17 December 2020

Dear Chief Executive

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FEEDBACK 2019-20

I am pleased to enclose feedback on your authority's ninth Planning Performance Framework (PPF) Report, for the period April 2019 to March 2020.

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for enabling planning services to continue to operate during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has been a difficult year for so many, and our planning system has a vital role to play in Scotland's green recovery. The impact which the pandemic has had, has demonstrated how valuable planning is from ensuring that businesses can operate flexibly to the contribution that it can make to the Places that are so important for our communities in terms of having access to the services they need, to greenspace and other areas where families can walk, wheel and cycle safely.

Turning to the 2019-20 PPF reporting year, I believe that good progress continues to be made by Scotland's planning authorities. Overall, there has been an increase in the number of green ratings awarded this year, with a subsequent reduction in red ratings, however, there remains some variation across some authorities and markers. I have been particularly pleased to see improvements in the speed of determination of major planning applications in some authorities.

When I wrote about performance reporting last year, I indicated that a consultation on Planning Performance and Fees was underway, including preparations for the new performance arrangements being introduced through the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019; with our intention at that time being that the proposed changes would be implemented in Summer 2020. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has required a rethink about the timing and a wider reprioritisation of our work programme.

I would like to reassure you that, while we have paused the changes to the fees and performance legislation, I am committed to ensuring that planning authorities are properly resourced and that planning fee levels are proportionate. We will pick this up again when the timing is more appropriate.



Finally, although the Covid-19 pandemic will have impacted on the tail end of the 2019-20 reporting year, I appreciate the impacts on service delivery will show through more in the 2020-21 reporting year. The Planning statistics for the first 6 months of the reporting year are due to be published in January, which will provide the first indications of how the pandemic has affected the ability of authorities to determine applications. I would like to reassure you that I will consider, in liaison with the High Level Group on Planning Performance, how next year's reports will be assessed, so that authorities are not unfairly criticised due to circumstances outwith their control. It could also provide an opportunity to recognise the vital actions taken by planning authorities to maintain the planning system and its contribution to recovery.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Stewart', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

KEVIN STEWART

CC: David Littlejohn

PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2019-20

Name of planning authority: **Perth and Kinross 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]	Green	<p>Major Applications Your average timescale of 28.2 weeks is faster than the previous year and faster than the Scottish average of 33.5 weeks. RAG = Green</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications Your average timescale of 8.1 weeks is faster than the previous year and faster than the Scottish average of 10.9 weeks. RAG = Green</p> <p>Householder Applications Your average timescale of 7.3 weeks is slower than the previous year but the same as the Scottish average weeks. However this remains faster than the statutory timescale. RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</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>We note your offer of processing agreements to prospective applicants for major and complex local developments. These are offered during the application process as well to assist with programming. RAG = Green</p> <p>Your processing agreements information is available 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 	Green	<p>You offer pre-application and pre-validation checks support to prospective applicants. RAG = Green</p> <p>Your report outlines that meetings are undertaken with and without the applicant to ensure that discussion about potential impacts can be identified and ensures that requests for supporting information are proportionate. 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 after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)	Green	Your average timescales for determining applications with legal agreements is faster than last year and the Scottish average.
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	Your enforcement charter was 14 months old at the end of the reporting year.
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	Timescales for major and non-householder applications were faster than last year but timescales for householder applications were slower than last year. Your enforcement charter is up-to-date and your LDP was replaced during the reporting year. The number of legacy cases has increased. RAG = Amber You completed 6 of your 9 commitments last year and have identified an ambitious set of commitments for the next reporting year. RAG = Green Overall RAG = Amber
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Green	Your LDP was 4 months old at the end of the reporting year.
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	With your LDP only 4 months old we would not expect that there would be any reasons to not expect to be in a position to replace your LDP within 5 years. It is noted that Covid19 has delayed the approval of your DPS.
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	Although you have provided evidence within your PPF in the boxes next to these markers it is not considered that this engagement was to inform your next LDP as the marker indicates.
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	With your LDP recently being adopted you focus has now been on revising and publishing new SPG in order to support implementation of your LDP policies. You have recently reviewed all allocated development sites to identify if they would benefit from more detailed site briefs. Your officers also attend regular meetings with applicants and provide written consultation applications which helps to ensure feedback is thorough and consistent.

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	You provide a number of examples where Planning has contributed to projects which are being led by other councils services such as the Food Growing Strategy, Renewables, Flood Risk, biodiversity and Climate Change. You also hold round table discussions with other services for complex proposals. Planning conditions are also reviewed regularly to ensure they remain up to date and take account of any changes to legislation.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	You regularly engage with other authorities to share experience and good practice. Examples provided in your report include demonstrating how you have moved from several local plans to one LDP and the issues raised with housing land supply. You have also liaised with Moray and West Lothian on challenges from implementing a policy which expects low or zero carbon generating technology in new developments. You also participate in the LHEES Knowledge Sharing Group along with other councils, Zero Waste Scotland and ARUP.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Amber	You have cleared 11 cases during the reporting year, with 21 cases still awaiting conclusion. The number of legacy cases which are undecided has increased from last.
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	You have a clear developer contributions policy which has recently been updated. RAG = Green Developer contributions form part of your pre-application discussions. RAG = Green Overall RAG = Green

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
Performance against Key Markers

Marker		12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
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	N/A
10	Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	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	4	7	2
2013-14	1	5	7
2014-15	1	0	14
2015-16	0	1	14
2016-17	0	6	7
2017-18	0	4	9
2018-19	1	4	8
2019-20	0	2	11

Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	2019-20 Scottish Average
Major Development	37.5	55.4	42.2	23.7	20.9	18.5	31	28.2	33.5
Local (Non-Householder) Development	12.0	12.5	11.8	11.3	8.1	8.4	8.3	8.1	10.9
Householder Development	8.1	7.8	6.8	6.3	6.5	6.8	6.9	7.3	7.3