

To: Planning and Climate Change Policy Board

On: 7 November 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Planning Performance Framework Feedback 2022/23

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the board of the feedback report from the Minister for Local Government Empowerment and Planning in relation to Renfrewshire's Planning Performance Framework 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- (i) Notes the feedback report on Renfrewshire's Planning Performance Framework 2022/23.
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3. Background

- 3.1 A system of performance management has been established between local authorities and the Scottish Government, whereby every planning authority is asked to produce an annual planning performance framework.
- 3.2 The framework was developed by Heads of Planning Scotland to capture and highlight a balanced measurement of planning performance, showing commitment to the following areas:
- Speed of decision making;
 - Qualitative analysis, providing case studies to demonstrate the years planning performance;
 - Delivery and implementation of good quality development and design;

- Communication, consultation and engagement with our communities and stakeholders;
- The added value that planning makes in decision making;
- How policies and guidance have shaped developments;
- Use of project management in planning.

4. Feedback Report for Renfrewshire Planning Performance Framework 2022/23

- 4.1 This year Renfrewshire Council have received a positive feedback report on Renfrewshire's Planning Performance Framework, with all areas of the assessment, with the exception of one area, achieving the required level of performance.
- 4.2 The planning performance framework demonstrates that Renfrewshire Council is committed to continuous improvement in the service it provides in its role as a local planning authority.
- 4.3 The one area which did not meet the required level of performance relates to the decision making timescales with respect to major, local and householder applications. In this regard the feedback noted the following:
- Timescales for major applications were slower than the statutory target but faster than the Scottish average;
 - Timescales for local (non householder) applications were slower than the statutory target and also the Scottish average; and
 - Timescales for householder applications were slower than the statutory target and also the Scottish average.
- 4.4 As previously advised to Board in January 2023, the service was carrying three vacancies for a significant period of time during the reporting period in question. The vacancies in question contributed significantly to the processing times relating to the application types noted above.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Planning will work with members, other council services and stakeholders in the preparation and shaping of the next Renfrewshire Council's Planning Performance Framework 2023/24 which is anticipated will be reported to the Board in August 2024.
- 5.2 During 2023, the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 continues to be implemented along with the wider reforms of the planning system and significant changes to planning regulations, guidance and practice which includes new duties on planning authorities. As part of these wider reforms the Scottish Government will introduce mandatory training for elected members in the planning system. Training of elected members in planning has already commenced at Renfrewshire Council and this will continue throughout the year with various training sessions being organised.

- 5.3 Notwithstanding the positive results outlined above, it is significant to note that recruitment of suitably qualified planning officers remains a challenge for all authorities across Scotland. We are currently carrying one vacancy within a team of eight dealing with planning applications (and related matters), and we are hopeful of successfully recruiting to fill the vacant position in the coming weeks.
- 5.4 In addition, it is also significant to note that delays experienced in relation to receiving comments from some consultees will also have an impact on the performance of the service in respect of decision making timescales.
- 5.5 The challenges noted above are likely to impact the authority's performance in the current reporting period.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The extent and details of the additional duties in the newly published National Planning Framework 4 (Jan 2023) are still to be confirmed.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – None.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** - None.

13. **Climate Risk** – None.

Appendix 1 - Feedback Report from the Scottish Government on Renfrewshire Planning Performance 2022/23

Background Paper – Renfrewshire Planning Performance Framework Feedback 2021/22, Board Report (Planning and Climate Change Policy Board), 23rd January 2023

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Minister for Local Government Empowerment and
Planning
Ministear airson Cumhachdachadh is Dealbhachadh
Riaghaltas Ionadail
Joe FitzPatrick MSP
Joe Mac Giolla Phádraig BPA



Alan Russell
Chief Executive
Renfrewshire Council

20 October 2023

Dear Alan Russell,

I am pleased to enclose feedback on your authority's twelfth Planning Performance Framework (PPF) Report, for the period April 2022 to March 2023.

Across the country, performance against the key markers continues to be stable and there has been little variation in the overall total of green, amber and red markings awarded this reporting period compared with previous periods. It is clear that each of you continue to put in considerable effort to ensuring our planning system continues to run efficiently. I have been particularly pleased to see there has been a marked improvement on speed of determination for major applications across some authorities.

Resourcing remains a key priority which I will continue to discuss with the High Level Group on Planning Performance, which I jointly chair with COSLA. I also have asked officials to bring different parties together to talk about resourcing in the autumn, to identify practical solutions. We need options that work for all sectors, and I think it would be really beneficial to discuss a variety of issues including full cost recovery, the local setting of fees, charges for additional services and approaches which could enable authorities to access the skills and expertise at the time they require.

Finally, I am delighted that we have recently announced the appointment of the National Planning Improvement Champion (NPIC), Craig McLaren, who took up this new post in early September. Craig will play a pivotal role in supporting improvement and will also be looking at how we can improve the way we measure and assess the performance of the planning system in the future.

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

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Joe Fitzpatrick

JOE FITZPATRICK

CC: David Love, Chief Planning Officer

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PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2022-23

Name of planning authority: **Renfrewshire 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 average timescale is 22.5 weeks which is slower than the previous year but faster than the Scottish average of 39.5 weeks. RAG = Amber</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications Your average timescale is 15.2 weeks which is slower than the previous year and slower than the Scottish average of 14.4 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Householder Applications Your average timescale is 12.3 weeks which is slower than the previous year and slower than the Scottish average of 8.9 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Overall RAG = Red</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 continue to offer processing agreements as part of the planning application process. RAG = Green</p> <p>You advertise processing agreements on your website which is accompanied by advice to help applicants. 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 continue to offer and encourage pre-application discussions on all major and complex applications. RAG = Green</p> <p>You have highlighted how your pre-application discussions help assist with relationship management with developers and provide confidence to applicants by providing them with clear advice on next steps including the types of supporting information required. 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 timescale for applications with legal agreement is 40.1 which is faster than the Scottish average of 41.1 weeks. You did not determine any legal agreement applications in the previous reporting period.
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	You updated your enforcement charter in 2022 which is within the last 2 years.

6	Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	Green	<p>You set out 3 improvement commitments in the previous year and have made substantial progress in all 3 commitments. You have identified that each commitment is still on-going and will be completed in the next reporting period.</p> <p>You have set out a further 4 commitments for the coming period.</p>
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Green	<p>The LDP is 1 year and 3 months old which is within 5 years since adoption.</p>
8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	Green	<p>As your LDP has recently been adopted, no indicative timescales have been set out for the next LDP. You have however set out an Action Programme relating to the delivery of the most recent LDP.</p>
9 & 10	LDP Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholders including Elected Members, industry, agencies, the public and Scottish Government are engaged appropriately through all key stages of development plan preparation. 	N/A	<p>Although no early engagement has commenced on the next LDP, you have asked various stakeholders to note their interest in helping to prepare and shape the next LDP and this will be captured in future Development Plan Schemes.</p>
11	Policy Advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of relevant and up to date policy advice 	Green	<p>You have updated a variety of policy advice documents during the reporting period which includes refreshing the Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy and Development in the Countryside as well as Development Briefs and planning guidance for various sites identified in the LDP.</p>
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	<p>You have been working with different services throughout the council to help shape GIS mapping software and have recently been involved in the setting up of the corporate GIS working group. The group is seen as a strong collaborative approach between services such as Environment, Housing and Infrastructure to help shape the spatial mapping of data across the council.</p> <p>Other examples of corporate working where planning have been involved include Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Schools Estate Management Plan.</p>
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	<p>You continue to participate in HOPS forum which encourages sharing good practice along with identifying lessons learnt on specific planning issues. You are also actively engaging in the Clydeplan steering group and Glasgow City Region meetings.</p>
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Green	<p>You do not have any outstanding legacy cases.</p>
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	<p>Your expectations for developer contributions are covered within your recently adopted LDP and also within Renfrewshire New Development Supplementary Guidance. RAG = Green</p> <p>You aim to seek early discussions and partnership working with developers and landowners to help provide certainty over contribution requirements. RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
Performance against Key Markers

Marker		13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
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 & 10	LDP Engagement	N/A				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)

	Red	Amber	Green
2012-13	6	5	2
2013-14	1	9	3
2014-15	0	2	13
2015-16	0	3	12
2016-17	0	6	9
2017-18	0	3	10
2018-19	1	4	8
2019-20	1	2	10
2020-21	1	2	10
2021-22	0	0	13
2022-23	1	0	12

Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	2022-23 Scottish Average
Major Development	12.0	10.1	13.1	20.0	18.6	35.4	13.3	32.2	17.7	22.5	39.5
Local (Non-Householder) Development	8.7	8.3	9.4	9.8	10	8.9	7.4	8.0	10.5	15.2	14.4
Householder Development	6.9	7.2	7.9	7.6	7.6	6.9	6.1	6.9	7	12.3	8.9