



PLANNING AND ACCESS COMMITTEE

MEETING: Monday 31st August 2015

SUBMITTED BY:	Head of Planning and Rural Development
SUBJECT:	Planning Performance Framework 4 2014/2015

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1 SUMMARY AND REASON FOR PRESENTATION

- 1.1 This paper provides Members with an update on our 4th annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) Report, which was submitted to Scottish Government on 30th June 2015 (Appendix 1)

2 RECOMMENDATION

That Members:

- 1. Note the content of this report and the Planning Performance Framework document as appended.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Now in its fourth year the PPF has become well established as a reporting format by the Scottish Government to assess performance and the quality of planning services across Scotland. Heads of Planning Scotland (HoPS) - the representative organisation for senior planning officers from Scotland's local authorities, National Park authorities and strategic development planning authorities (which lead the establishment of this process) – remain committed to the effective use of the framework in the drive toward consistently high quality planning services across the country. They recognise that it remains an important tool to enable planning to “achieve its potential in supporting the Government’s Economic Strategy”.

4 PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 3 FEEDBACK

4.1 Scottish Government provides feedback individually to each local authority on their PPF report each year. They also provide a Scotland-wide summary and therein they have remarked upon the improvement in quality of the submissions over the years to date and note a trend toward an overall improved performance against the key markers which the framework embodies.

4.2 In terms of the National Park's individual 'feedback report card' on last year's Report (PPF 3 2013/2014), the highlights are summarised below:

- Good progress on the Main Issues Report (MIR) toward the preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP) was noted within the reporting period.
- Our strong commitment to a pro-active and helpful pre-application service is noted and welcomed.
- The National Park's use of processing agreements is noted and encouraged as an effective project management approach to the determination of applications.
- An overall improvement in decision making timescales is welcomed and it is noted that they are typically very close to the national average.
- The determination of those applications subject to EIA in a timescale significantly better than the national average is acknowledged as a highlight - and evidence of a joined up approach to secure co-ordination on complex applications

The report concludes that the National Park is an authority which embraces the PPF culture and that it evidences taking forward a good range of initiatives to influence the delivery of good quality development and the enhancement of places.

4.3 The feedback report also contained some recommendations for the year ahead. The main points are below:

- An update through PPF4 on the multi-media approach to the MIR was encouraged – as well as opportunities to share the approach with other local authorities.
- Publication of information on our use of processing agreements on the website was encouraged to improve clarity for applicants.

5 PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 4

5.1 The PPF4 submission – attached as Appendix 1 to this report – has been developed in a new visual format reflecting the dynamic of the 'LIVE Park' MIR report, which proved more engaging to the reader, along with clearer linkages with Scottish Government priorities. Hopefully this will improve the accessibility of the document - through publication on the NP website and active promotion of what the Planning & Rural Development Service delivers - to those who wish to understand the full scope of our planning service and our commitment to providing a high quality and efficient service.

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5.2 The report seeks to present a positive and clear assessment of our performance – based what has been delivered - during the reporting year April to April 2014/2015. It is structured to particularly respond to the key marker areas identified by the Scottish Government as part of the framework and also seeks to address the recommendations of Scottish Government from the PPF3 feedback. This year we have strengthened how our work connects to the Scottish Government priorities and included ‘Project Focus’ items throughout the report to highlight specific areas of work that identify good practice. These focus on:

- Implementation of Run-of-river Hydro Development;
- Our work on EIA Applications
- LIVE Park; and
- Our Built Heritage Repair Grant.

5.3 The ‘context statement’ on the National Headline indicator statistics (from page 7 in the PPF) gives a useful summary of the successes and challenges of our planning performance across the year – similar to the kind of information that is reported quarterly to the Delivery Group.

5.4 Parts 3 and 4 of the PPF report address ‘service improvement actions’. Part 4 gives a summary of progress on the improvement areas which were targeted from April 2014 in PPF3. Part 3 sets out those new targets for the year ahead – until April 2016.

5.5 One of our key actions is to seek to develop our Development Management digital media presence and communications approach using the experience that has been gained through the success of the LIVE Park brand that was developed around the Local Development Plan process. Other actions address the on-going development of our processes and procedures to directly target the National Park’s performance standing in the Scottish Government published statistics. It also remains an objective to undertake an effective customer feedback survey, a task which has been included in previous PPF reports but which so far has proved a challenge for the planning staff to undertake alongside day to day work pressures.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The PPF report continues to be a key tool for measuring reporting and publicising our ongoing commitment to progress the quality of our planning service. It also sets our target improvement areas for the year ahead. Members are asked to note its content along with the positive feedback from the Scottish Government on last year’s report.

Background *Planning Performance Framework Guidance –*

Documents: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/modernising/cc/ImprovementPlans>

List of Appendices: *Appendix 1 Planning Performance Framework 4 (2014 – 2015)*