

Gordon Watson
Chief Executive
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park

20 October 2023

Dear Gordon Watson,

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.

Joe Fitzpatrick

JOE FITZPATRICK

CC: Stuart Mearns, Director of Planning and Rural Development

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

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PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2022-23

Name of planning authority: **Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority**

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 54.3 weeks which is slower than the Scottish average of 39.5 weeks. You did not determine any major applications in the previous reporting period and therefore cannot compare the timescale. RAG = Red</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications Your average timescale is 13.2 weeks which is faster than the previous year and faster than the Scottish average of 14.4 weeks. RAG = Green</p> <p>Householder Applications Your average timescale is 9.3 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 offer processing agreements for all major applications and this is evident by the increase in applications utilising processing agreements compared to none the previous year. RAG = Green</p> <p>You have provided evidence in your PPF of the availability of processing agreements 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 have evidenced that you offer a pre-application service and this is promoted on your website. RAG = Green</p> <p>It is noted that your pre-application service is wide-ranging and has been useful for prospective applicants to be made aware of the supporting information likely to be required. Case Study 1 highlights how setting out the supporting information required help the applicant submit a comprehensive Design and Access Statement to support the application. 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 27.7 weeks which is faster than the previous year and faster than the Scottish average of 41.1 weeks.
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	Your enforcement charter was updated in March 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	You have completed 4 out of 4 improvement commitments identified during the last reporting period. For the coming year you have identified a range of commitments across different areas within the planning service.
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Red	Your LDP is 6 years and 3 months at the end of the reporting period which is more than 5 years since adoption.
8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	Green	Your latest Development Plan Scheme was adopted during the reporting period and sets out early preparatory work for the new LDP in line with the regulations and guidance on Local Development Plans.
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. 	Green	You have set out how you have begun engagement work to prepare your new LDP including targeted stakeholder engagement to help inform the draft plans of your National Park Partnership Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy. You have also undergone general community engagement to help prepare Local Place Plans which will help towards your Evidence Report.
11	Policy Advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of relevant and up-to date policy advice 	Green	You have updated a range of policy advice during the reporting period including guidance on Sustainable and Active Travel and updated Visitor Experience Planning Guidance. You have also set up a dedicated information and contact page of your website to help deal with enquiries relating to the new licensing system for Short Term Lets.
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 have aimed to improve customer service outputs by creating a dedicated mailbox for all enquiries relating to Short Term Lets. You have also provided evidence of feedback you have received from customers throughout the reporting period on the quality of service. Case Study 5 illustrated joined up working between teams when dealing with an application for a Fish Farm which was the first type of application of that nature to be submitted to the National Park Authority.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	You have identified a range of occasions throughout the reporting period where you have shared good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities. This includes discussions with other authorities on the best approach to gather information for the evidence base of the LDP as well as sharing progress and work on Local Place Plans.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Green	You cleared 18 cases during the reporting period, 3 more than the previous year. The number of cases remaining has decreased from 12 to 10.

15	<p>Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions 	Green	<p>You provide up-to date information through Developer Contribution guidance as well as your Housing Supplementary guidance. You also set out more local specific Developer Contribution information in your Masterplan Frameworks for specific areas.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>You set out clear and proportionate requests for Developer Contributions in your pre-application discussions.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>
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LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
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 Early 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
2013-14	1	5	9
2014-15	1	2	10
2015-16	2	4	7
2016-17	0	4	9
2017-18	0	4	9
2018-19	1	5	7
2019-20	0	4	9
2020-21	1	5	7
2021-22	1	3	10
2022-23	2	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	26.3	13.1	-	19.7	-	-	28.6	66.4	N/A	54.3	39.5
Local (Non-Householder) Development	14.0	14.3	14.4	13.1	12.5	13.2	12.7	22.2	16.3	13.2	14.4
Householder Development	8.2	8.6	9.2	10.5	7.5	9.1	7.4	16.3	9.1	9.3	8.9