



Our ref: MB-CS 4387/14

To: all Chief Planning Officers

03 November 2014

Dear Colleague

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

I am writing to inform you of the introduction of the Planning Performance Framework. The Framework provides a tool to monitor the performance of local planning authorities in a number of key planning service areas on a consistent basis, in order to ensure the continuous provision of high quality planning services.

Last December, as part of the Positive Planning Consultation, the Welsh Government consulted on a draft Performance Framework which set out a series of proposed indicators to monitor the performance of authorities against key service measures. Since December the draft indicators have been refined in discussion with stakeholders including the Welsh Local Government Association, and representatives from the Planning Officers Society for Wales.

Determination speeds for applications

Speed, together with quality, are the major components of our measure of development management performance. The 8 week determination period remains important. However, in retaining this target for determination, we have made the following adjustments:

- A local planning authority will be deemed to have determined a planning application, if it has resolved to grant permission subject to negotiation of a Section 106 Agreement; and
- A local planning authority will be deemed to have determined a planning application "on time", if the decision is issued in accordance with the time period set out in a Planning Performance Agreement, or an agreed extension of determination period.

Taken together I am confident that these changes will take account of work by local planning authorities to deal with complex planning issues, within a time period deemed to be reasonable by the applicant.



Average time taken to determine planning applications

The Welsh Government recognises that large and more complex applications may sometimes be determined outside of the 8 week statutory time period. Therefore, in response to suggestions from stakeholders, two new indicators will be introduced:

- the average time taken to determine all applications; and
- the average time taken to determine major applications.

Target setting

Benchmarking will be undertaken before targets can be established for the new indicators. These targets will be developed in discussion with stakeholders in due course.

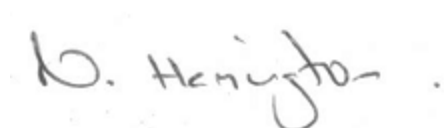
Implementation

The Development Management Quarterly Survey will be amended to include fields for recording the new indicators. These will then feed into the Performance Framework, which will be published annually on the Welsh Government's website. The Framework indicators, and the data sources, are set out in more detail in the table at **Annex A**.

The Performance Framework is part of a broader analysis of the delivery of local planning services. Other measures include the Sustainable Development indicators and the findings of the authority's Annual Monitoring Report.

Taken together, these three components form the basis for an Annual Performance Report. The Annual Performance Report will set out each authority's self assessment of its overall performance, and chart the steps each authority will undertake to improve the delivery of planning services.

Yours sincerely



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Chief Planner
Planning Directorate
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**PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK:
INDICATORS, TARGETS AND SOURCES OF DATA**

The Welsh Government consulted on a draft Performance Framework, which set out a series of proposed indicators used to set out the performance of authorities against key service measures. Following analysis of consultation responses and work with the Welsh Local Government Association and the Planning Officers Society for Wales, this document sets out the final Performance Framework indicators as at 10 October 2014, in the following format:

Indicator	Performance considered "Good"	Performance considered "Fair"	Performance considered "Poor"	Data source and comments
Description of the performance indicator	The local planning authority performs well in this particular aspect of service delivery, meeting and exceeding expectations. The authority has a robust service delivery mechanism in place.	The authority performs to a reasonable standard in this aspect of its service, although there remains opportunity for this aspect of its service to be improved in line with best practice examples available from some other authorities.	The authority's performance in this particular aspect of its service delivery falls below the expectations of service users and the Welsh Ministers, and the standard being delivered by other planning authorities. Effort should be invested in addressing this shortfall in service delivery.	The source from which the authority's performance against this indicator will be drawn, along with any comments about changes to the indicator

PLAN MAKING				
Indicator	Performance considered "Good"	Performance considered "Fair"	Performance considered "Poor"	Data source and comments
Is there a current Development Plan in place that is within the plan period?	A development plan (LDP or UDP) is in place and within the plan period		No development plan is in place (including where the plan has expired)	Planning Division's Local Development Plans monitoring regime
LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	The LDP is being progressed within 12 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed within between 12 and 18 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed more than 18 months behind the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	Planning Division's Local Development Plans monitoring regime
Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	An AMR is due, and has been prepared		An AMR is due, and has not been prepared	Planning Division's Local Development Plans monitoring regime
The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	The authority has a housing land supply of more than 5 years	The authority has a housing land supply of between 4 and 5 years	The authority has a housing land supply of less than 4 years	Planning Division's Local Development Plans monitoring regime

EFFICIENCY				
Indicator	Performance considered "Good"	Performance considered "Fair"	Performance considered "Poor"	Data source and comments
Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – the definition of determination date has been revised, so no targets have been set
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – this is a NEW FIELD to be introduced in January 2015
Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	More than 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 60% and 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 60% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Development Management Quarterly Survey
Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – this is a NEW FIELD to be introduced in January 2015

QUALITY				
Indicator	Performance considered "Good"	Performance considered "Fair"	Performance considered "Poor"	Data source and comments
Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – the number of decisions made under delegated powers will be reported from January 2015, and be used to calculate this new figure
Percentage of appeals dismissed	More than 66% (two thirds) of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Between 55% and 66% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Less than 55% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Planning Inspectorate statistics
Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	The authority has not had cost awarded against it at appeal	The authority has had costs awarded against it in one appeal case	The authority has had costs awarded against it in two or more appeal cases	Planning Inspectorate statistics

ENGAGEMENT				
Indicator	Performance considered "Good"	Performance considered "Fair"	Performance considered "Poor"	Data source and comments
Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Members of the public are able to address the Planning Committee		Members of the public are not able to address the Planning Committee	Local planning authority Annual Performance Report
Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Members of the public can seek advice from a duty planning officer		There is no duty planning officer available	Local planning authority Annual Performance Report
Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	All documents are available online	Only the planning application details are available online, and access to other documents must be sought directly	No planning application information is published online	Local planning authority Annual Performance Report

ENFORCEMENT				
Indicator	Performance considered "Good"	Performance considered "Fair"	Performance considered "Poor"	Data source and comments
Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – this is a NEW FIELD to be introduced in January 2015
Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – this is a NEW FIELD to be introduced in January 2015
Percentage of enforcement cases where enforcement action is taken or a retrospective application received within 180 days from the start of the case (in those cases where it was expedient to enforce)	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – this is a CHANGED FIELD to be introduced in January 2015
Average time taken to take enforcement action	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	<i>Target to be benchmarked</i>	Development Management Quarterly Survey – this is a CHANGED FIELD to be introduced in January 2015