

NATIONAL PLANNING IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Improvement Action Plan 2024

West Dunbartonshire Council





A high performing planning authority needs to have the right number of people to do the work expected of it with the rights skills set. It also needs to have a strategy to ensure that it retains and recruits the right staff in the future. It supports staff to upskill and to be prepared for changes in policy, legislation, and new circumstances.

Attribute	Score <small>(1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)</small>
1. The planning authority has sufficient resources and skills to maximise productivity	3
2. The planning authority has a valued and supported workforce	3

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action <small>What action will you take? What will the outcome be?</small>	Owner	Importance <small>High Medium Low</small>	Timescale <small>Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years</small>	Resources
Implement the new back-office document management system and carry out a full end-to-end review of all workflow processes	Chief Planning Officer, Development Management Team Leader, Technical Support Co-Ordinator	High	Short Term	All service staff will be required to support this process in some way. In conjunction with IDOX and ICT, a project board will be established.



Develop a workforce strategy and service training plan, including any options/opportunities for restructure or cases for investment	Chief Planning Officer	High	Medium Term	Chief Officers for relevant service areas, finance and organisational development and People and Change partner.
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A high performing planning authority has a positive culture through ensuring it has sound governance, effective leadership and a commitment to continuous improvement. The authority has an identified chief planner, who is supported by a strong leadership group to advise on decision-making, policy and operational management.

Attribute	Score <small>(1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)</small>
3. This Planning Authority has embedded continuous improvement	1
4. This Planning Authority has sound governance	3
5. This Planning Authority has effective leadership	1

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action	Owner	Importance	Timescale	Resources
What action will you take? What will the outcome be?		High Medium Low	Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years	
Complete review of Scheme of Delegation to ensure it is proportionate	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader	High	Short Term	Chief Planning Officer, Legal Manager, Chief Officer Regulatory and Regeneration and Elected Members



<p>Implement the new back-office document management system and carry out a full end-to-end review of all workflow processes</p>	<p>Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader and Technical Support Co-Ordinator</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Short Term</p>	<p>All service staff will be required to support this process in some way. In conjunction with IDOX and ICT, a project board will be established.</p>
<p>Finalise review of committee and delegated Reports of Handling Templates to ensure that they are proportionate and are clear and easy to be understood by a variety of audiences</p>	<p>Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Short Term</p>	<p>Chief Planning Officer, Development Management Team Leader and Democratic and Registration Services Manager.</p>
<p>Produce detailed team improvement plans, focusing on improvements that increase efficiency and are clear, including increasing the quality of our customer communication</p>	<p>Chief Planning Officer, Development Management Team Leader, Principal Officer Development Planning and Place and Technical Support Co-Ordinator</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Short Term</p>	<p>All service staff.</p>





A high performing planning authority needs to have an effective local development plan and other strategies in place to provide a vision for the future of the area. It needs to be able to set and deliver on policy ambitions and priorities by clearly informing decision making and providing certainty and predictability for communities, developers and investment. The authority’s development management systems need to be effective in making the right decisions about development and be as efficient as possible in doing this. The planning authority makes best use of digital technology and how it manages and uses data.

Attribute	Score <small>(1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)</small>
6. The planning authority has a robust policy and evidence base	3
7. The planning authority makes best use of data and digital technology	3
8. The planning authority has effective and efficient decision-making processes	3

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action	Owner	Importance	Timescale	Resources
What action will you take? What will the outcome be?		High Medium Low	Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years	
Implement the new back-office document management system and carry out a full end-to-end review of all workflow processes	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader and Technical	High	Short Term	All service staff will be required to support this process in some way. In conjunction with IDOX and ICT, a



	Support Co-Ordinator			project board will be established.
Finalise review of committee and delegated Reports of Handling Templates to ensure that they are proportionate and are clear and easy to be understood by a variety of audiences	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader	Medium	Short Term	Chief Planning Officer, Development Management Team Leader and Democratic and Registration Services Manager.
Produce detailed team improvement plans, focusing on improvements that increase efficiency and are clear, including increasing the quality of our customer communication	Chief Planning Officer, Development Management Team Leader, Principal Officer Development Planning and Place and Technical Support Co-Ordinator	High	Short Term	All service staff.
Undertake review of the Development Management and Enforcement Charters and processes to ensure they remain fit for purpose.	Development Management Team Leader	Medium	Short Term	Development Management Team





A high performing planning authority should ensure a wide range of people are involved in shaping their future places. Engagement should be fair and inclusive, early, collaborative, meaningful and proportionate and should include difficult to reach groups. The authority should engage with a wide range of partners at a national, regional and local level to ensure a joined-up approach and that links are made across policies and programmes. The planning authority should demonstrate good customer care, transparency and effective communication.

Attribute	Score (1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)
9. This planning authority has good customer care	3
10. The planning authority has effective engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and communities.	3

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action <small>What action will you take? What will the outcome be?</small>	Owner	Importance <small>High Medium Low</small>	Timescale <small>Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years</small>	Resources
Set up regular agent's forum, in conjunction with Building Standards	Chief Planning Officer, Development Management Team Leader, Principal Officer Development	Medium	Short to Medium Term	Development Management, Development Planning and Building Standards



	Planning and Place and Building Standards Team Leader			
Carry out wider Service Day (with Building Standards and Environmental Health) to share good practice and workstream updates. This will inform detailed Team Improvement Plans	Chief Planning Officer	Medium	Short	All service staff.





A high performing planning authority should demonstrate place leadership by taking a collaborative place-based approach in line with the Place Principle. It should use the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes in decision-making processes, to achieve the three spatial principles outlined in NPF4: sustainable places, where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity; liveable places, where we can all live better, healthier lives; and productive places, where we have a greener, fairer, and more inclusive wellbeing economy. The planning authority should seek to ensure that there are no impediments to delivering agreed development.

Attribute	Score <small>(1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)</small>
11. The planning authority supports the delivery of sustainable, liveable and productive places	1
12. This planning authority supports the delivery of appropriate development	2

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action	Owner	Importance	Timescale	Resources
What action will you take? What will the outcome be?		High Medium Low	Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years	
Complete review of Scheme of Delegation to ensure it is proportionate	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader	High	Short Term	Chief Planning Officer, Legal Manager, Chief Officer Regulatory and Regeneration and Elected Members



Implement Project Management approach within Development Management	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader	High	Short to Medium Term	Development Management, Technical Support and Uniform
Implement the new back-office document management system and carry out a full end-to-end review of all workflow processes	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader and Technical Support Co-Ordinator	High	Short Term	All service staff will be required to support this process in some way. In conjunction with IDOX and ICT, a project board will be established.
Explore how 'Added Value' can be better captured and reported on	Development Management Team Leader	High	Short Term	Uniform system
Review Development Management Conditions	Chief Planning Officer and Development Management Team Leader	High	Medium Term	Development Management and other sections of the Council (e.g Environmental Health, Roads etc.)

