

Climate, Planning and Public Transport



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Our Reference: DFIPG 051/23

14th March 2023

Dear Denise,

Re: New Planning Portal

Thank you for your letter of 14th February on behalf of the council's Planning Committee regarding the new Planning Portal.

I acknowledge and understand the concerns and frustrations raised in relation to the number of ongoing defects and issues with the system since its launch and the negative impact this has on services and on users' confidence in its reliability. Local and central government have worked collaboratively on this project, including testing, and together we have made significant progress. As of today, there are eight Priority 2 issues that remain open to be resolved, with the expectation that they will be resolved this month.

As you are aware as a member of the Planning Portal Governance Board, a plan to rollout software updates to address the defects has been put in place and will continue over the coming weeks until all the issues are resolved. In addition, as advised at last week's Planning Portal Governance Board meeting, a number of Change Requests are also being considered to adjust some of the functionality so that it better meets the needs and expectations of users.

I wish to assure you that the Department, along with the ICF Team in Belfast City Council, are continuing to work closely with TerraQuest to push for speedy resolutions and that I am keeping the matter under close review.

Further updates on the software releases and Change Requests will continue to be provided to the Planning Portal Governance Board on a regular basis.

Yours sincerely



Julie Thompson
Deputy Secretary