

REPORT TO: Policy and Performance Review Committee

MEETING DATE: 26 November 2013

BY: Depute Chief Executive - Partnerships and Community Services

SUBJECT: 2013/14 Planning Performance Framework

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with information on how East Lothian Council's Policy and Projects and Development Management services performed in 2012/13 and highlight areas for improvement in 2013/14

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to use the information provided in this report to consider the performance of and proposed improvements to these services.

3 BACKGROUND

Appendix A: East Lothian Planning Performance Framework 2013/14 which includes the National Headline Indicators, commentary on performance in the main aspects of the services and measures to seek further improvement.

Development Planning

- 3.1 Local plan coverage of East Lothian remains just within five years of adoption, although since adoption was in 2008 this will shortly be exceeded.
- 3.2 Further work on SESplan's housing requirement distribution will have an impact on the timing on the East Lothian Local Development Plan's programme.
- 3.3 The requirement of Scottish Planning Policy for a five year land effective land supply has not been met. Despite the extensive amount of land allocated in the current local plan, factors such as the housing market downturn and the reduced borrowing facilities for developers have significantly reduced the rate of house completions. This has, in turn,

reflected on the five year land supply, when measured against the requirements of the Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan. That said, measured against our rate of annual completions rather than a structure plan requirement calculated before the economic and housing market downturn, we would have almost 4.5 years supply.

- 3.4 The Planning Service is considering how it can respond to recent housing appeal decisions which have highlighted the lack of an effective land supply, in advance of the local development plan's approval.
- 3.5 The East Lothian Local Plan 2008 allocates over 70 hectares of land for business and industry. Data from the Council's Economic Development Manager suggests that only about 6 hectares of this is effective, that is, immediately available for development. The remainder is unserviced land that is not in the hands of someone willing to bring the land forward for business or industry. This indicates the difficulties the Council faces in seeking to identify and deliver land for employment.
- 3.6 Through the HGIOC process the Service has introduced a customer feedback procedure for both Development Planning and Development Management. To date there has been insufficient feedback to report on but the process is being monitored and will be the subject of future reporting.

Development Management

- 3.7 The National Headline Indicators for 2012/13 show improvement in average determination timescales from the previous period: major developments reduced from 94.5 weeks to 20.7 weeks; non-householder local developments from 20.9 weeks to 17; and householder from 9.6 weeks to 8.3 weeks.
- 3.8 Further breakdowns of determination timescales in Appendix 1 of the Planning Performance Framework also give the under two months percentage figures for local applications. Of particular concern in these is the deterioration of performance in dealing with local business and industry applications.
- 3.9 Whilst there was a slight increase in the average timescale for these applications where dealt with in under 2 months, those over 2 months stretched significantly from the previous year's 17 weeks to 40.4 weeks. However, it should be borne in mind that 19 (60%) of the 32 business and industry applications were determined within 2 months. Of the other 13, 9 of these were subject to significant issues requiring resolution in terms of at least 1 of the following; listed building consent, concerns from Transportation, Environmental Health and/or Landscape, need for a Section 75 agreement, or a requirement of the applicant to submit additional reports or revised plans. (Only 1 of these 9 was called in to be determined by Planning Committee).

- 3.10 There are very few business and industry applications that are for existing or allocated business/industry sites. The economic land supply in East Lothian is such that there are few applications for developments of this category which are on what would be seen as ideal sites, which is why the types of issues mentioned above arise.
- 3.11 However, the issues which arise need addressing. In the commentary on performance, there is a commitment to revised team arrangements to deal with complex business applications as well as major applications. Those arrangements are now in place as of October 2013. They are intended to address this specific performance issue.
- 3.12 In addition to the above performance focus, work is being done to facilitate removal of the duty to notify certain listed building consent applications to Historic Scotland, to further reduce the timescales for completing Section 75 agreements and to trial electronic working on applications without paper files, all of which will have an influence over further reducing determination timescales. The revised Scheme of Delegation to allow officers to determine Council interest applications where there is no public objection is now in place and again this will help to reduce determination timescales.
- 3.13 Management focus includes ensuring that where applications need to be reported on weekly lists there is no delay between the officer finalising their report and it being published on the weekly list. Where an officer is aware that a report is likely to go over the 2 month target period, a case management discussion will take place with the Service Manager or Principal Planner to ascertain the reasons for delay and to seek ways of expediting a determination. This might include for refusal on the basis that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that an impact of a proposal can be mitigated.
- 3.14 Development of the service will continue to focus on providing well-informed pre-application advice in reasonable timescales, a positive approach to development but without a development at all costs mentality and improvement in the timescales of determining applications.
- 3.15 That takes place against a backdrop of 'legacy' applications which will continue to have an effect on timescales. For example in the past few months, housing proposals subject to Section 75 agreements which were minded to be granted prior to the Council's adoption of a 6 month time limit for concluding agreements have had their agreements registered and therefore planning permission issued. The vintage of those applications are in the 2005-8 range. There are some 65 applications of this status, going back to 2004. Whilst action will be taken to see if applicants will agree to withdraw these, some may well reactivate them, with an impact on average timescales.
- 3.16 Additionally there are many other undetermined 'legacy' applications. Action to have these withdrawn will result in some success, but again some applicants may reactivate their interest and press for determination.

3.17 The context of work to improve timescales whilst clearing out 'legacy' applications is that the latter may have an impact on the former. The Scottish Government calculate average times for all applications determined and a separate figure excluding pre – August 2009 applications to give a clearer indication of how a service is currently working and in the assessment of this Planning Performance Framework in time, as it applies to Development Management, should have consideration of this.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Planning Performance Framework is an important component of East Lothian Council's performance management arrangements and the drive to deliver Continuous Improvement.

5. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial – none

6.2 Personnel - none

6.3 Other – none

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix A: East Lothian Planning Performance Framework 2013/14

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**PLANNING PERFORMANCE
FRAMEWORK
2012/13**

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Appendix One

Planning Performance Framework Official Statistics

Appendix Two

Workplace and Financial Information, March 2013

1. National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2012-2013	2011-2012
Development Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i> development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N) 	<p>5 years</p> <p>No</p>	<p>4 years</p> <p>No</p>
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective housing land: years supply effective housing land supply housing approvals effective employment land supply employment land take-up effective commercial floor space supply commercial floor space delivered 	<p>2.6 years¹ 2093 units 300 units</p> <p>6.0 ha 1.6 ha</p> <p>6000 sq ms 2443 sq ms</p>	<p>10 months 2246 units</p> <p>10 ha 3.6 ha</p> <p>25 ha² 4098 sq ms</p>
Development Management <p>Project Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan percentage planned timescales met <p>Decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> application approval rate delegation rate 	<p>39.3%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>96.7% 85.4%</p>	<p><i>No accessible recorded data</i></p> <p>0 n/a</p> <p>95.8 91.7</p>
<p>Decision-making timescales</p> <p>Average number of weeks to decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> major developments local developments (non-householder) 	<p>20.7</p> <p>17</p>	<p>94.5</p> <p>20.9</p>

¹ See commentary on the calculation of East Lothian's five year housing land requirement

² The Council does not currently have a robust methodology for recording effective commercial floorspace supply. The 2011/12 figure included land that had policy support for commercial use but which could not reasonably be defined as 'effective'. The 2012/13 figure reflects only planning consents for two supermarket developments plus a modest allowance for vacant commercial premises. The development of a more robust methodology is being considered.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> householder developments 	8.3	9.6
Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i> number of breaches identified / resolved 	27/16 163/121	 199/158

Commentary on National Headlines Indicators

Development Planning

Development Plan Programme

The Development Plan programme has slipped further from that originally envisaged in DPS No 1. The approval of the Strategic Development Plan in June 2013 has brought with it a requirement for Supplementary Guidance to provide detailed further information for local development plans as to how much of the SESplan-wide housing requirement should be met within each of the six authority areas. The approved Supplementary Guidance, and its potentially significant implications for the amount and distribution of housing land to be brought forward in the East Lothian Local Development Plan (ELLDP), will not be available before summer 2014.

The Council has taken the view that it would have been too much of a risk to publish an East Lothian LDP Main Issues Report (MIR) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the basis of SESplan's Proposed Plan as submitted to Scottish Ministers. If the housing land requirement in the first two plan periods was to be subsequently significantly increased by Scottish Ministers (as has turned out to be the case) then this would have risked re-publication of the MIR and its SEA, with consequent further delay and potential reputational damage. It is now clear from the draft Supplementary Guidance that the first ELLDP will require to allocate significantly more land for housing than would have been required under SESplan's Proposed Plan as submitted to Scottish Ministers.

The SESplan Joint Committee of 30th September 2013 approved its draft Supplementary Guidance – Housing Land for ratification by member authorities and subsequent public consultation. Consequently, East Lothian has a clearer strategic planning context within which it can prepare its MIR. The Council will now move to finalise and publish an MIR based on this draft SESplan SG as soon as possible. It is still anticipated that the first East Lothian Local Development Plan will be adopted within two years of approval of SESplan's Strategic Development Plan.

Note on the calculation of East Lothian's five year housing land requirement

SESplan's Strategic Development Plan provides insufficient information to allow individual authorities to calculate their respective five year housing land requirement. In approving SESplan, Scottish Ministers require the preparation of Supplementary Guidance (SG) to provide detailed further information for local development plans as to how much of the SESplan-wide housing requirement should be met within each of the six authority areas. While this SG will provide that information, it will not be approved before June 2014.

In the meantime, to provide some indication of East Lothian's five year land supply, the following calculation is based on the distribution of housing requirements proposed in SESplan's *Supplementary Guidance - Housing Land*, September 2013 (approved as a consultation draft). In East Lothian's case, this requirement is 6,250 houses in the period 2009-2019 and 3,800 houses in the period 2019-2024, a total of **10,050 houses** (including current commitments). These figures are subject to final approval.

SESplan's Strategic Development Plan advises that the five year land supply should be calculated over both plan periods ie 2009-2019 and 2019-2024. As indicated above, this is a total requirement of 10,050 houses. Therefore:

Completions achieved 2009-2013 = **1,321 houses**
Remaining requirement = 10,050 – 1,321 = **8,729 houses**
Remaining years to 2024 = 11
Therefore, annual required completion rate = 8,729/11 = **794 houses**

The proportion to be delivered in any five year period (794*5) = **3,970 houses**
East Lothian's effective housing land supply 2013/14 – 2017/18 = **2093 houses**
Consequently, on this basis:

- 1 there is a shortfall in the effective five year land supply of 1,877 houses
- 2 current supply is sufficient for **2.6 years** (2093/794)

It should be noted that East Lothian's house completions have only once exceeded 800 houses in a single year (2006/7), before the housing market downturn. In the six years 2006/7 to 2011/12, house completions have averaged 465 per year. If that average completion rate were applied to the effective land supply of 2093 houses then this would increase East Lothian's effective five year housing land supply to **4.5 years**.

Development Management

Most areas of casework and pre-application enquiries have shown significant improvements in the timescales and the proportions dealt with within target timescales, due to continued officer focus on meeting targets. One area of concern is in dealing with business and industry type applications, where the percentage of applications dealt with within 2 months decreased and the average timescale lengthened. Several reasons contributed to this: very few business type applications are for established business sites and many of these applications involved sites in the countryside or alterations to listed buildings or in conservation areas. Due to objections, some were called in to be determined by Committee. These circumstances apart, the decline in performance in this area is a significant concern and for has led to a review of team structure to focus greater resource in dealing with business type applications as well as major and other complex applications.

The feedback to last year's PPF asked the question as to whether the above average performance for dealing with local applications within 2 months coupled with longer than average timescales for those over 2 months was a product of prioritising cases which could meet that 2 month target. That was the case and continued to be so for 2012-13, however, the emphasis is now on both meeting the 2 month target and reducing average timescales.

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2. Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

Open for business

Development Management offers customers pre-application advice for any type or scale of project:

- a 'walk-in' and phone duty planner service every weekday between 9am and 1pm. If there is insufficient information to assess the proposal the enquirer is asked to email or write in with further details
- written enquiries are allocated to officers with a response target of 10 working days. If a proposal needs consultation with other Council services or outside bodies, responses will be given on the basis of information available and further feedback given as soon as possible. Requests for information to accompany applications are linked to the nature and scale of the application

In 2012-2013, of 541 written enquiries received, 75% were responded to within 10 working days (2011-12, 66% of 378)

Development Management is being restructured to increase focus on resources to deal with major, complex and business applications whilst maintaining/improving standards for other applications:

- a Senior Planner supports the Principal Planner on major, complex and business proposals
- a Senior Planner supports officers on householder/advert /lbc applications
- a planner specialises wind turbine proposals, reduction in these from 2010 (34)/2011 (31) to 19 for 2012-13 allows for some reallocation of this resource
- Two planners specialise in listed building cases
- One planner specialises in householder applications and advertisement/other consents
- management time focuses on actively managing work flows and case work

In 2012-13 96.7% of all applications were approved compared to 2011-12's 95.8%, with householder application approvals at 98% (2011-12, 97.8%); non-householder 96% (92.7%); business and industry 97% (91.4%).

The high approval rate is a product of constructive pre-application discussions informed through consultations and of early appraisal of submitted applications with negotiation to resolve issues needing addressed.

The use of processing agreements where appropriate to major and complex applications will be introduced over the second half of 2013-14 following a restructuring of the Development Management team.

The proportion of invalid applications is a significant area of concern (2012-13, 65% of submissions were invalid on receipt, 2011-12, 62%). Online submissions, which are increasing, are frequently made without payment with an effect on the proportion of invalid applications. However, this situation needs to be addressed. Technicians registering applications have historically been managed by administration and not as part

of Development Management. The new team structure will incorporate staff registering applications, with clear guidelines and performance targets for registration and updating invalid applications. Timescales for communication of omissions in applications will be improved, with email to supplant postal notification wherever possible.

Developer contributions are assessed in terms of the Council's affordable housing policy (25% requirement for developments of 5 or more units) and local plan and case specific assessments in consultation with the Council's Education, Landscape and Countryside (open space and play provision) and Transportation services.

High quality development on the ground

The adopted Local Plan development and design policies encourage good, site context design. The Council's adopted *Design Standards for New Housing Developments* gives clear guidance for shaping places through higher quality layout and housing design and by reducing the dominance of cars. Development frameworks and design guidelines for individual sites aim to ensure developments reflect their context.

Development Management planners negotiate to secure design improvements to proposals to reflect East Lothian's high visual and environmental quality. These qualitative matters are more difficult to evidence, however, the continuing popularity of East Lothian as a place to live shows how development can be successfully managed.

As a fast growing area there is considerable pressure on infrastructure, particularly schools and affordable housing provision. Significant efforts continue to be made to address necessary infrastructure requirements in the face of reduced housebuilder activity without compromising quality. In the meantime, affordable housing developments have been facilitated, through the Council's Urban Design Standards and the Scottish Government's Designing Streets policy, with both documents used to seek innovative, place making design rather than standard developer housing estates. Recent developments, including affordable housing developments at Brotherstone's Way and Muirpark in Tranent and Lochbridge Road in North Berwick, demonstrate the application of these principles to create better places.

Certainty

The high approval rate referred to earlier is not at the expense of clear policy and advice for developers and applicants to consider their proposals. In 2012-13 only 2 (0.2%) of determinations for approval were contrary to the development plan (2011-12 saw 13, 1% such approvals). Housing land supply issues and the approval of SESplan have complicated the situation more recently for major housing applications, however, impending interim guidance on additional housing land and subsequently the new Local Development Plan will help resolve this.

In 2012-13 only 4 of the 34 applications were decided against officer proposed or recommended decisions. These Committee decisions were refusals, 2 of which were subsequently overturned at appeal. (2011-12, 5 overturned at Committee against officer recommendation).

Communications, engagement and customer service

Most Development Management customers are either prospective applicants or people concerned about development proposals.

Pre-application advice is covered earlier. Guidance notes for applicants are published on the Council's website and in paper form but the proportion of applications received invalid remains high. This creates uncertainty over registration timescales for applicants and additional work for the service.

Representations to applications can be made online, by email and by letter. All representations received in time are referred to in the report on the application; if there is objection the report goes on a weekly list, with Councillor access to copies of objections and representations. If an application is called-in from the list to Planning Committee, or is a major application, anyone who has submitted a representation can attend the Committee site visit to make points of information and then present their case at Committee for 5 minutes.

Case reports are publicly available once the application is determined or when published on the weekly list or Committee agenda. Reports give an assessment of the proposal and the reasons for the decision.

Any complaints against the Development Management service are handled through the Council's Feedback procedures. Compliments are rare, but a customer response in relation to one case was very clear:

"I recently made a successful planning application to ELC. Throughout the process, I was impressed by both the efficiency and the customer-friendly approach of the planning team, and in particular the case officer.....who was always receptive to my calls asking for updates, and explained the process clearly and sympathetically. Pass on my thanks to her and the rest of the team."

The Planning Service has put in place a customer engagement survey that can be answered by all those who come into contact with the service. This takes the form of a short on-line questionnaire and is linked to all communications sent out from the service and directly accessible from the Consultation Hub on the Council's web site. The service is keen to understand users' views on the service itself, rather than whether they agree with specific planning proposals or decisions. The customer survey can be accessed from:

https://eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/housing-environment/planning_customer_survey

The Council web page provides up to date information on the development plan and a database of interested parties has been developed to facilitate distribution of updates. ELC uses corporate standards for public engagement and customer care.

Due to a high level of interest in wind turbine applications, we maintain a dataset of these applications, with brief details and their planning status, including applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act and related consultations from adjoining authorities.

Efficient and effective decision-making

The Council's current Scheme of Delegation allows for officer decisions for all local development type proposals other than the statutory exclusions of Council, Council interest or Council Elected Member applications. The Council has approved a change to this in response to legislative change taking effect from June 2013 which removes the requirement for those types of applications to be Planning Committee decisions. This has been approved by the Scottish Government and will be before the Council for adoption in October 2013.

Existing and proposed Schemes allow that where the Council receives public objection to a local type application, or if the application raises important planning issues, it is reported to all Councillors through the Scheme of Delegation List issued on Thursday of each week. The Councillors then have a week to call in the application to be determined by Planning Committee under Section 43A(6) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

The service also operates a similarly run Committee Expedited List for applications where there is a Council interest and for listed building, conservation area and advertisement consent applications where there is public objection.

Some 350 applications (34%) were decided by the weekly list procedures rather than going to Committee.

The Council adopted the practice of limiting the time for conclusion of legal agreements on minded to grant applications in 2010. We are piloting the Scottish Government's best practice for legal agreements and investigating evidence of Reporters using a 3 month timescale in appeal decisions with a view to reducing the standard 6 month period. If the agreement is not concluded then the application stands to be refused. There are however still a significant number of old cases awaiting conclusion of a legal agreement and recently older housing applications at this stage have been subject to the conclusion of agreements and the decision notices issued. Those still awaiting conclusion will be reviewed with the intention to have them withdrawn wherever possible.

Effective management structures

The management structure at East Lothian Council changed in April 2012. Further changes are in progress. The Planning Service operates within the Housing and Environment Division (soon to be Development Division) of the Council's Partnerships and Services for Communities Department. There is no Director or Head of Planning post, with the senior planning staff currently being the acting Service Manager, Development Management and the Policy and Projects Manager. Both report to the Head of Housing & Environment (to be Head of Development). As part of the ongoing restructuring process, it is intended that these two management posts be replaced by a single 4th tier Manager for the planning function, encompassing both Development Management and Development Planning.

The Development Management team structure is flexible and is currently being managed towards a more functional approach to dealing with major, complex and business applications and with senior staff being given more of a role in allocating and overseeing reporting of applications. Management focus is on assessing workloads, managing

problematic casework with officers and ensuring that all reports which require publication on weekly lists or for Committee/Council agendas are cleared without delay. For major, complex and business applications where public objection is likely, report timetables are drawn up to target a reporting week.

Financial management and local governance

Planning managers have access to monthly financial monitoring statements to track current expenditure against budget. Regular meetings are held with dedicated Management Accountant to ensure any issues with budgets are highlighted early. Financial performance 2012-13 resulted in a small net underspend compared to budget.

Culture of continuous improvement

East Lothian Council uses the *How Good is Our Council* (HGIOC) performance management system to assess its services annually through a critical analysis of performance, designed specifically to encourage continuous improvement. The planning service is committed to developing its staff and improving their skills through the Council's Performance Review and Development process, with annual assessment and 6 month reviews. This helps to identify and justify staff training and development needs.

The Development Management Service is undergoing change to address issues of delay where they can be removed. Changes to the team structure are focussed on providing an increased resource for dealing with major, complex and business applications and improved management of casework to increase the proportions of applications being dealt with within 2 and 4 month timeframes and to reduce the average length of time. Legacy applications will also be targeted to weed them out of the system.

Work is ongoing to further streamline the process of finalising Section 75 agreements and the Council is undertaking a trial of best practice in conjunction with the Scottish Government planning division. A 6 month time limit for completing such agreements is currently in place and consideration is being given to reducing this to 3 months, with the SG to advise on the use of that shorter time limit in appeal decisions. A review of the service's practice in using such agreements will also seek to minimise their use.

The service is also working with Historic Scotland to remove the duty to notify them of certain types of listed building consent applications and reduce the timescales for determining such applications.

3. Supporting evidence

Part 2 of this report was compiled, drawing on evidence from the following sources:

- How Good is Our Council?: self assessment of Policy & Projects and Development Management Services, 2013
- East Lothian Customer Care Charter
- East Lothian Customer Care Standards
- East Lothian Feedback Policy
- East Lothian Council Web Site: Planning Pages
- Planning: Service Plan 2013/14
- East Lothian Council Plan
- Single Outcome Agreement
- East Lothian Local Plan 2008
- Development Plan Scheme No 5, March 2012
- Design Standards for New Housing Areas, ELC, 2008
- East Lothian Supplementary Landscape Capacity Study for Smaller Wind Turbines, 2011
- Development Frameworks for Blindwells New Settlement, Wallyford Settlement Expansion, Pinkie Mains (Musselburgh), Mains Farm/Gilsland (North Berwick), Letham Mains (Haddington), Hallhill South West (Dunbar)
- Draft East Lothian Housing land Audit 2013
- East Lothian Council Affordable Housing Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Scheme of Delegation List and Committee Expedited List Procedures
- Published Scottish Government Performance Figures
- East Lothian Council Planning Performance Figures
- Notes for Guidance for Submission of Applications

4. Service improvements: 2013-14

In the coming year we will:

- *analyse online submissions (56% in 2012-13 from 41% in 2011-12) in terms of application types (householder, adverts etc) and evaluate potential to switch to purely electronic working for these application types to streamline work processes*
- *Set performance targets for registration and updating invalid applications*
- *improve communication about invalid applications, with email to supplant postal notification wherever available*
- *target weekly list and Committee/Council meeting dates at earliest opportunity*
- *establish a casework management framework to be used by the Service Manager, Principal Planner and Senior Planner to manage all Service staff*
- *establish written protocols between Development Management and all internal consultees*
- *apply to Historic Scotland to remove the duty to notify certain types of applications*
- *amend the Scheme of Delegation to allow officer decisions on Council interest cases where there is no objection*
- *pilot the Scottish Governments legal agreements best practice and agree with Councillors a new protocol to minimise use of legal agreements*
- *put in place new working arrangements to better resource and improve practices for dealing with major, complex and business applications*
- *evaluate customer service feedback to inform further change and the next planning performance update*
- *remove all legacy applications by withdrawal or determination*

Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2012-13:

Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
<p>We will examine the introduction of a 'one stop shop' for the provision of pre-application advice bringing together planning, economic development, education, housing, landscape and biodiversity, transportation and environmental protection inputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-application enquiries should result in consultation with the relevant services. However this is not universal. As currently configured it requires development management to be 'front of house' and depend on response timescales from the services. The practice needs to be managed in terms of being universal and, in the absence of additional resources, managed by protocols agreed with other Council services to enable a relatively quick 'planning' response adequately informed by them 	No
<p>We will develop and implement ways to obtain and evaluate customer feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online customer service consultation implemented, available on planning web pages and a link on planning staff email footers Awaits implementation of paper version to go with relevant outgoing correspondence and evaluation structure 	No
<p>We will improve access/content of planning web site and explore other forms of publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Planning Service has been closely involved in a refresh of the Council's web site. The Planning pages have been restructured with a view to improving both access and content. 	Yes
<p>We will implement a GIS mapping interface to allow public access to Council-held data and mapping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate IT issues have to date delayed the introduction of a public-facing GIS. It is hoped that these can be resolved and the initiative progressed with. 	No
<p>We will review performance indicators to ensure they reflect the primary services provided by the Policy & Projects Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This work is ongoing. Apart from measures such as the age of the development plan, responses to enquiries, etc., the intention is also to measure our response rate to statutory work including the significant number of requests for EIA screening and scoping requests that the team deals with. 	No
<p>We will continue to ensure that staff are effectively briefed on new legislation and given adequate training in new practices and procedures (ongoing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant changes to planning legislation disseminated to staff/all staff cognisant with changes implemented in 2012-13. 	Yes
<p>We will continue to support to staff to ensure that they meet their Continuing Professional Development requirements (ongoing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The support for CPD is embedded in the Council's Performance Review and Development. All staff have an annual PRD meeting with their line manager, an integral part of which is identifying training/personal development needs 	Yes

<i>and how these can be met. Both Planning Service teams have annual budget allocations from which relevant initiatives can be funded.</i>	
<i>We will consider if staff skills and development can be broadened by giving policy planning and development management staff direct experience in each other's teams, either through staff rotation, job shadowing or specific initiatives such as joint policy development</i>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Reductions in staffing and recruitment freeze meant workload gave no opportunity for this</i> 	
<i>We will undertake regular monitoring of the planning service's web pages and on-line planning service to ensure they remain up-to-date, relevant, accessible and usable by the customers of our service</i>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This is an ongoing initiative. The Planning web pages are a standard item on the monthly team meetings, with suggestions for improvements and new items discussed.</i> 	
<i>We will seek to reduce the average time taken to decide all major development type applications.</i>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Targeted approach to dealing with major applications in relation to consultation responses, report writing, committee timescales. Assisted by reduction in major application submissions /official statistics below</i> 	
<i>We will continue to determine more than 90% of all householder development type applications in less than 2 months</i>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Focus on householder officer effectiveness and clearing applications to weekly lists without delay/official statistics</i> 	
<i>We will seek to improve our rate of determination of non-householder local development type applications to at least 70%.</i>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Some improvement due to greater focus on clearing applications to weekly lists without delay/official statistics</i> 	
<i>We will seek to improve our rate of determination of local and business and industry development type applications to over 80%.</i>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Despite focus on this, performance slipped, thus current restructuring to achieve a better resource to deal with these application types /official statistics</i> 	

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Decision-making timescales

Category	Total number of decisions 2012-2013	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2012-2013	2011-2012
Major developments	4	20.7	94.5
Local developments (non-householder)	278	17.0	20.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	64%	7.0	7.1
	36%	34.9	43.5
Householder developments	460	8.3	9.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	95%	7.3	7.5
	5%	25.8	36.0
Housing developments			
Major	1	17.3	59.0
Local housing developments			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	43.1(%)	7.2	7.5
	56.9(%)	41.7	55.5
Business and industry			
Major	2	19.3	27.1
Local business and industry	32	20.7	9.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	59.4%	7.3	6.9
	40.6%	40.4	17.0
EIA developments			
Other consents*	164	12.4	n/a
Planning/legal agreements**	20	55.7	n/a
Local reviews	10	9.7	n/a

* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 8 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

** Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2012-2013		2011-2012	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	10	5	50	2	16.7
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	14	5	35.7	2	15.4

Enforcement activity

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Cases taken up	206	248
Breaches identified	158	199
Cases resolved	121	163
Notices served***	5	21
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

*** Enforcement notices; breach of condition notices; planning contravention notices; stop notices; temporary stop notices; fixed penalty notices, and Section 33 notices.

Context

*Major application performance assisted by reduction in number of applications
Business application performance affected by most being for non-business
allocated sites, therefore requiring negotiation over Environmental Health
related submissions and being called to Committee*

WORKFORCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As at 31 March 2013

	Managers (2)		Main Grade Posts		Technician Posts		Office support/Clerical		Totals
	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	
Head of Planning Service (1)	Tier? 3								
Development Management	1	0	7	0	1.5	0	4	0	13.5
Development Planning	1	0	4.6	0	0	0	0	0	5.6
Enforcement Staff	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2.0
Cross Service/Other Planning	0	0	3.1	0	0	0	0	0	3.1

Staffing profile	Number
Under 30	1
30-39	7
40-49	9
50 and Over	3

Committees & site visits (3)	No. per year
Full Council committees	6
Planning Committees	9
Cabinet	8
Committee site visits	9
LRB (4)	7
LRB site visits	

Budgets Planning Service	Budget	Costs		Income (7)
		Direct (5)	Indirect (6)	
Development Management	301836	389333	323529	417220
Development Planning	614,463	558,013	57,450	1000
Enforcement				

Notes on Completion:

In relation to service structure, 1st tier post holders are Chief Executives, 2nd tier are Directors, 3rd tier are Heads of service and 4th tier are managers.

2 Managers are those people who are responsible for the operational management of a team/division. They are not necessarily line managers.

3 References to committees also include National Park Boards. Number of site visits are those cases where visits were carried out by committees/boards

4 This related to the number of meetings of the LRB, application numbers going to LRB are reported elsewhere.

5 Direct staff costs covers gross pay, including overtime, national insurance and the superannuation contribution. The appropriate proportion of the direct cost of any staff member within the planning authority concerned spending 30% or more of their time on planning should be included in costs irrespective of what department they are allocated to. (For example: Legal advice, Administration; Typing)
Exclude staff costs spending less than 30% of their time on planning.

6 Indirect costs include all other costs attributable to determining planning applications. Examples (not exhaustive) are:

- Accommodation
- Computing Costs
- Stationery
- Office machinery/Equipment
- Telephone charges
- Print
- Advertising
- T&S
- Committees
- Elected Members' expenses
- The relevant apportionment of Support Service costs

7 Income - include planning fees for applications and deemed applications. (exclude income from property and planning searches)



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