PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

THE PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

September 2013

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1.   National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2012-2013	2011-2012
Development Planning: • age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) *Requirement: less than 5 years*	**1**	4
• development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N)	**yes**	yes
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs • effective housing land: years supply • effective housing land supply • housing approvals	**5 years** **641** **146 units**	**Yes 5 years** **365*** **219 units****
• effective employment land supply • employment land take-up	**51,199 ha** **0.4 ha**	**51,199 ha** **0 ha**
• effective commercial floor space supply • commercial floor space delivered	**3,598 m²** **0 m²**	**3,598 m²** **0 m²**
*This figure did not include an allocation for windfall ** This figure is completions not approvals		
Development Management **Project Planning** • percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice	**49%**	Not collated
• number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan	**0%**	0%
• percentage planned timescales met	**n/a**	n/a
Decision-making • application approval rate • delegation rate	**98%** **94.2%**	99% 96%
Decision-making timescales Average number of weeks to decision: • major developments • local developments (non-householder) • householder developments	**-** **11.3** **8.2**	90.6 11.5 8.2
Enforcement • time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) *Requirement: review every 2 years*	**1 year**	0 years
• number of breaches identified / resolved	**16/17**	51/42

The Outer Hebrides has a profile of application type consistent with its location, geography, relatively spare population and abundant reserve of natural resources. A high percentage of its landmass and marine areas is under Nature Conservation designation, while the landmass of North Uist, Benbecula and South Uist, is heavily constrained by MoD assets, in particular Defence radar.
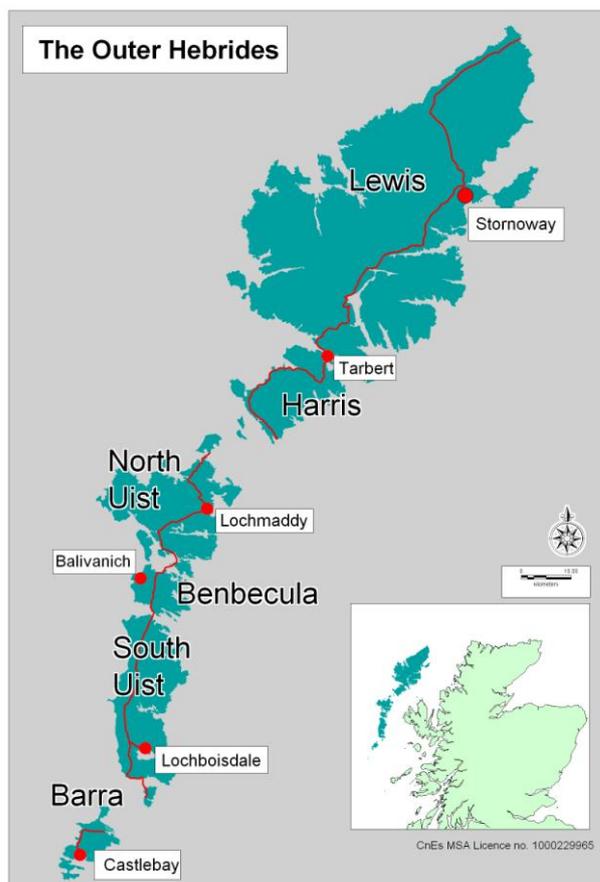
Approximately 70% of housing is delivered through individual private houses there being few bulk house builders in Outer Hebrides. These sites are not reflected in the LDP allocations which are generally identified to deliver affordable housing.

In the 2012/13 year there were no developments reaching planning decision stage that fell into the category of 'Major'. Electricity generation (primarily wind energy) accounted for 43 planning decisions (>10%); householder developments 78 (19%), while housing developments accounted for 126 (30%) of decisions.

Due to the high level of designations most turbine applications require EIA screening adding considerably to non-fee earning workloads. In addition the MOD has increasingly raised objection on the grounds of wind turbine impact on its radar infrastructure with a resultant high level of political interest, high levels of interaction with MoD and developers and resultant uncertainty and delay in decision making. The post consent processing of wind energy proposals has continued to drawn heavily on resource during 2012/13.

The Outer Hebrides has the second highest number of Marine Atlantic Salmon farms in Scotland and with marked expansion in the sector to satisfy global demand, planning applications in this sector while totalling 10 in number have included pre-application discussions, EIA screening and scoping and some challenging cases, together with a high number of Scottish Government cases on the Audit and Review of pre 2007 fish farm development Consents (these cases do not form part of the cases counted in the return, nor do they carry a fee), drawing once again on the resources of a small team.

One planning officer post was vacant from November to April, having a noticeable impact in the workload and performance of a small team. Further, the geography of the Outer Hebrides often presents challenges in terms of service delivery.

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2.   Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

Open for business	The Comhairle's Planning Service is based in the Development Department's Development Services section, alongside other services such as Economic Development, Business Gateway, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Building Standards.

The Development Services' mission "*is committed to providing forward thinking, professional and effective planning, building standards and housing services to facilitate economic, environmental and social development of the Outer Hebrides*".

Business planning is carried out jointly within the Department and Heads of Service and the Director work to develop integrated approaches to service provision.

The service offers free and available pre-application advice and has actively promoted pre-application discussion in relation to all development.

Planning Officers are available to speak to customers during working hours each week day. Where a customer wishes to speak to a particular officer they telephone the dedicated Planning number or the Comhairle's customer service team to make an appointment.

The service organises multi-agency pre-application meetings where appropriate and has been instrumental in the marine fish farming industry adopting this approach.

Pre-application engagement is high across the development types of housing; householder and marine fish farming with 49% of all cases subject to pre-application discussion to some degree.   The Planning Service has led on engagement with the MoD to clarify the issues arising with impact on radar and implemented a range of actions which would aid the MoD in providing clearer responses. It has also co-ordinated stakeholder meetings to aid post-consent variations and discharge of conditions process. It also hosted round table Key Agency events during preparation of the Local Development Plan.

The Comhairle's Planning Service along with the Stornoway Trust, the Stornoway Port Authority, Stornoway Amenity Trust, Stornoway Historical Society, Lews Castle College UHI, Lews Castle Trust and HIE, has led an action programme for the Regeneration of the main centre of Stornoway.

An Advice Note for Developers of Micro Generation Proposals was published in conjunction with the Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development to assist in preparing development applications for micro scale proposals. |
| *High quality development on the ground* | The Comhairle's Local Development Plan promotes a new approach to design standards in the Outer Hebrides. For the first time the Comhairle held design awards in 2011 for new house build – working jointly with the Scottish Government to deliver. Our work featured in a Government publication – Rural |

	Design – Future Landscapes, and the winner featured on the Scottish Government website – inspirational designs. Planning Officers continue to actively promote good design, providing advice to potential applicants and where possible influencing, final design proposals to achieve the highest quality possible. The Townscape Heritage Initiative within the heart of the Stornoway Conservation Area was successfully completed in 2012 with final sign off from the HLF in 2013, revitalising many historic buildings in Stornoway Town Centre and raising awareness of the town's historic assets. One of the six schools developed as part of the previous £70 million six school redevelopment programme throughout the Outer Hebrides, has been shortlisted for a Scottish Quality in Planning Award. A LDP Monitoring Framework is currently being developed (as stated in the 2013 Development Plan Scheme) to set out the approach for reviewing the effectiveness of LDP policy. The influence of the design policy in development can be assessed through the monitoring process.
Certainty	The Comhairle works with both internal and external consultees, monitoring their performance to ensure timely responses and has over the year sought dialogue and agreed interventions and changes to processes and approaches on both the part of the Service and the Consultees to address concerns. The 2013/14 Improvement Plan includes an action to develop a protocol for consultation with a range of internal consultees. The new LDP Development Strategy provides a clear indication for developers of where development will/will not be acceptable and the requirements for a high level of design quality. Building on the experience of the current development plan, the Development Strategy is supported by policies and supplementary guidance that again provides definitive information on what is expected of developers in preparing and submitting applications and how decisions will be made. The LDP was adopted in November 2012 within three months of the target date set out in the original DPS. Work has begun on monitoring the effectiveness of the policies
Communications, engagement and customer service	The Comhairle has a Customer Charter for the Planning Service in place (2011). The Planning Service has in place a customer survey available in paper and online formats and promoted at key stages in the planning process. A copy of the Customer Survey analysis is appended. Questionnaires are also issued alongside consultation stages of the development plan. Views of their experience in the LDP process were sought from Key Agencies. Relatively few responses were received, however the main point emerging was that better feedback was sought on how input was taken into account in the LPD process. Some Key Agencies also looked for longer to consider draft versions of the policies. This will be looked at when work on the LDP review begins and we will endeavour to provide better feedback. Much experience

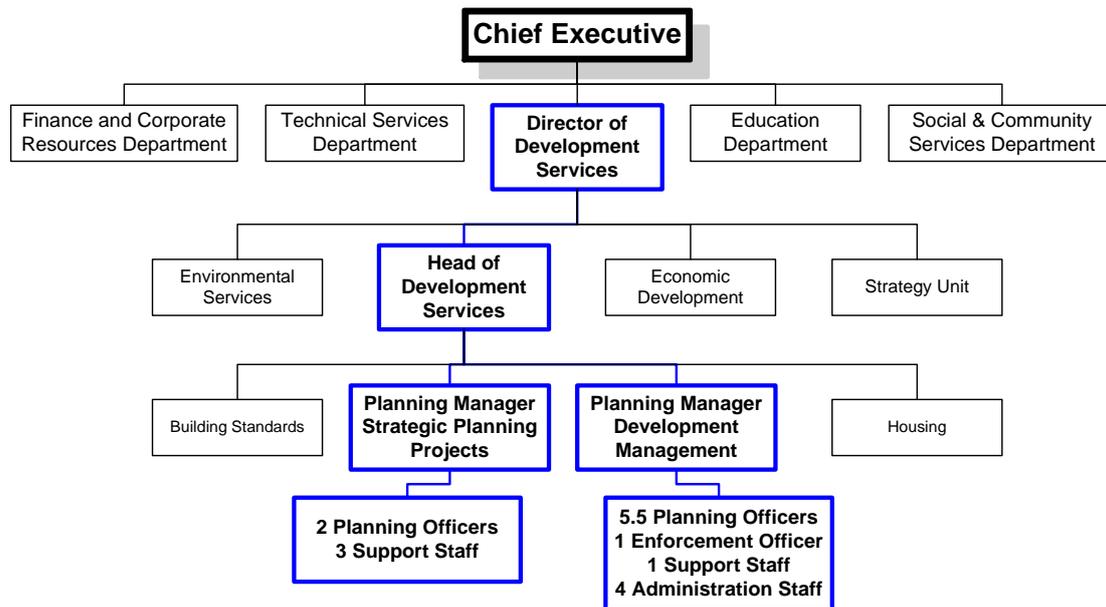|	
	was gleaned during the 1st LDP process which should help improve how the process is timetabled. Stakeholders (including agents and developers) receive electronic updates on a quarterly basis. The Comhairle continues to hosts an annual meeting with the Aquaculture industry – in conjunction with the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO). The Comhairle also follows corporate standards for handing of service complaints. The Comhairle's planning web site is kept up to date and has recently been reviewed. Planning staff are involved in several joint forums for the sharing of ideas and exchange of good practice, including the North of Scotland Development Plan Forum, HOPS Development Management sub committee, and the joint Local Authority Aquaculture Planning group. Particular challenges have emerged in relation to wind energy development in the southern landmass of the Outer Hebrides due to the high level of Military Radar Infrastructure present in the area which also has a high resource for wind energy. The Planning Service is working in conjunction with the MOD to better understand the issues in order to improve its pre-application advice and in turn developer certainty as to the likelihood of issues arising.
Efficient and effective decision-making	The Comhairle has an up to date scheme of delegation to officers as well as clear arrangements for Committee Delegation. The level of delegation is high (94.2%). As of May 2012, the Comhairle has delegated decision making process to the Service Committee in order that decisions can be made without reference to the Full Comhairle where it can. The Local Review Body meets as required – although the case load is very low (1 in 2012/13). Planning application case load is monitored by the Development Management Planning Manager and officers enabled to manage their caseload through issue of a weekly progress report to officers of their own caseload, arranged by development type and colour coded to highlight time taken/available against target – a traffic light system and monthly issue of cases determined again using traffic light system. The Head of Service and the Planning Manager regularly review case loads to assess and respond to changes in the pattern of applications received by re-allocating duties within the team to meet delivery of priority developments and larger/more complex cases. Early engagement of Members and Key Agencies in the LDP process has been followed up by similar engagement in the preparation of subsequent statutory Supplementary Guidance.
Effective management structures	The Planning Service is led by a Head of Service and delivered by two business units: Development Management and Strategic Planning and Projects – each business unit is headed

by a Planning Manager. The Head of Service and Planning Managers work collaboratively and across teams to deliver on service priorities.

Planning Service teams hold team meetings to review progress. Performance is monitored using appropriate systems within teams, Development Management use its case work system and weekly progress reports while Interplan is used to record more strategic actions and tasks and reviewed at quarterly Departmental management meetings. At every Comhairle Committee series the Department reports on quarterly performance.

Planning Officer posts are generally career grade posts. This encourages officers to progress up the career grade scale until they have obtained professional membership of the RTPI. This helps with succession planning in that there are potentially fully qualified staff who would be eligible to apply for a management post if it became available. 3 members of staff are currently undertaking RTPI certified Planning Courses and will be working towards MRTPI. A further Planning Officer is also working towards RTPI Membership having gained his degree in 2012.

Departmental Management Structure below.

Development Department Organisational Chart 2012-13

Chief Executive

Finance and Corporate Resources Department | Technical Services Department | **Director of Development Services** | Education Department | Social & Community Services Department

Environmental Services | **Head of Development Services** | Economic Development | Strategy Unit

Building Standards | **Planning Manager Strategic Planning Projects** | **Planning Manager Development Management** | Housing

2 Planning Officers 3 Support Staff

5.5 Planning Officers 1 Enforcement Officer 1 Support Staff 4 Administration Staff

Financial management and local governance	Budget setting is on annual basis and team budgets are monitored on a monthly basis.

The Planning Service finances are monitored on a monthly basis by the service managers. If income or expenditure deviate significantly from the budgeted amount this is reported on. Planning fee income is recorded in the case management System. The service manager is able to query the database via a standard set of reports to enable an ongoing monitoring of income.

Corporate procurement policies ensure value for money.

To enable the Comhairle monitor and report its performance it has adopted 'Interplan' by CAM management solutions, as its electronic performance management system. Since August 2009, when the system went live, Interplan has been used to track the progress of the Comhairle service business plans and to report on progress made. Because it provides a real time integrated business planning and performance monitoring system within the Comhairle it facilitates more frequent and flexible reporting and a commitment has been made to provide quarterly reporting of business plans and performance to Committee, as noted above. |
| *Culture of continuous improvement* | The Development Department promotes an ethos of openness and continuous improvement. In 2012, Investor in People 'bronze' status was retained through a highly satisfactory mid - term review. This is to be replaced by the "How Good is Our Council" tool and the departmental Business Improvement Unit will take this forward.

The Department's Staff Forum also continues to develop ways in which staff can be fully involved in developing the business of the Department.

Opportunities to develop existing staff is sought and acted upon when they present themselves - enabled through the Comhairle's twice yearly Staff Development Assessment process. Agreed training needs are recorded and progress reported in the Departmental Training Plan.

Staff input to business planning exercises through regular events and are encouraged to bring forward ideas for service improvement.

Provision of training from other agencies is sought and delivered both directly to Comhairle staff and through joint training initiatives with other local authorities eg SEPA delivered SEA training to Comhairle staff and Comhairle planning staff attended training in LDP Examinations arranged through the North of Scotland Development Plans forum.

Planning Managers and Officers attend Development Plan and Development Management forums for the sharing and exchange of information and good practice with others.

The Head of Service meets / communicates with other Heads of Planning in the Highlands and Islands to benchmark and learn from good practice across a range of topic areas. |

3.   Supporting evidence

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

- *Development Plan Scheme 2013*
- *Development Department Business Plan Report 2012/13*
- *Development Department Business Plan 2013/14*
- *Development Department Management Structure 2013*
- *Planning Service Charter 2011*
- *Stornoway Regeneration Action Plan 2012*
- *Planning Service Customer survey results 12/13*
- *Audit Scotland Mori poll*

4.   Service improvements: 2013-14

In the coming year we will:

- Introduce a Protocol for internal consultees to the planning process
- Review Planning Service Customer Charter
- Review Planning Enforcement Charter (March 2014)
- Use the LDP monitoring process to identify ways of improving engagement in the development planning process
- Consider how Uniform can be better used for LDP monitoring purposes
- Review performance management approaches with Development Management to reduce average times for processing planning applications.
- Complete a review of Planning conditions
- Publish our customer survey results for 2012/13
- Review how effective our Customer survey is for implementation in April 2014
- Pilot the use of Processing Agreement for selected large or complex development in the category of Local Development (in the absence of any 'Major' development cases).

Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2012-13:

Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
Review our web site to deliver a more customer focused product • Web site review carried out in 2012 and implemented in 2013	*Yes*
Develop use of the Uniform case management system in the service • The Enforcement Module on Uniform has been developed for recording complaints and Serving Notices. A number of templates were created during the year and staff familiarisation with the module has developed. This work is continued into 2013/14. • A system was piloted to record pre-application information on Uniform; However, due to the high volume of enquiries related to new sites, the work associated with creating new URPN's and the fields in the casework system were not user friendly in interview. Following review of the system a new approach was developed.	*Yes*
Promote the new permitted development rights • Items on the new Permitted Development Rights were included in the Stakeholders Quarterly Bulletin • Staff attended workshops with the Scottish Government • Internal Training was delivered on PDR • A handy sized leaflet on householder PDR was published in paper and on the Web	*Yes*
Implement a one year action plan to assist public understanding/ awareness of the planning system • Quarterly stakeholders' communications adapted to include additional contacts inviting design. • An awareness raising communication to Comhairle staff within staff newsletter. • Plans made to deliver awareness with higher geography classes in Nicolson Institute. • Offer all Community Councils (or other relevant bodies in areas with no CC) the opportunity for a presentation and Q&A session. Presentations delivered to Community Councils who took up the offer. • Agreement of a core 'message' for use of officers give to the public during conversation or when giving advice • Planning influences the design of where we live and work and helps shape our communities. • Planning guides development in the public interest • Implemented a review of the planning service website • Targeted communication to stakeholders to help completion of	*Yes*

forms, prep of plans and design statements etc from agents / builders / frequent developers.	
Implement a design awareness programme for the year	*Yes*
• The Design Action Plan (2012–2013) identified a number of action areas in relation to raising design awareness: Appointment of Design Champion; Elected Member Design Training, Development Plan Policy; Web Content; Stakeholder engagement; Publicity post Design Awards and work with Kit-house designers / manufacturers. • A New Design Champion was appointed by Elected members in June 2012, • Member Design Training took place in November 2012 • There has been an on-going drive amongst Planning staff to engage in pre-application, promote use of the new Outer Hebrides Design Guide and new Siting & Design Policy and negotiate improvements to Design quality. • Web Content on Design has been updated • The Quarterly Stakeholders Bulletin includes a Standing Item to promote Design, • Planning Staff have attended a Kit Manufacturer Sales Event to promote the Pre-application Service and Design Guidance • The 2012 Design Awards were publicised on the Web and in local press	
Adopt the Comhairle's Local Development Plan and associated Supplementary Guidance	*Yes*
• OHLDP + 4 Supplementary Guidance adopted November 2012 • Further SG on Wind Energy development adopted April 2012	
Adopt the LDP Action Programme	*Yes*
• OHLDP Action programme adopted January 2013	
Implement a review of planning conditions	*No*
• The matter is ongoing and only partially implemented; will be completed in 13/14	

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
OFFICIAL STATISTICS
Decision-making timescales

Category	Total number of decisions 2012-2013	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2012-2013	**2011-2012**
Major developments	**0**	**0**	90.6
Local developments (non-householder)			
• Local: less than 2 months	54.9(%)	7.0	7.1
• Local: more than 2 months	45.1(%)	16.5	18.3
Householder developments			
• Local: less than 2 months	76.9(%)	6.5	6.9
• Local: more than 2 months	23.1(%)	13.7	14.8
Housing developments			
Major	-	0	0
Local housing developments			
• Local: less than 2 months	57.1(%)	7.3	7.4
• Local: more than 2 months	42.9 (%)	15.7	14.8
Business and industry			
Major	-	0	0
Local business and industry			
• Local: less than 2 months	46.4(%)	7.1	7.3
• Local: more than 2 months	53.6(%)	15.2	18.5
EIA developments	4	107	34
Other consents*	100	6.2	8.8
Planning/legal agreements**	2	200	158.9
Local reviews	1	9.3	0

* 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 & & 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	1	0	0	-	-
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	1	0	0	1	0

Enforcement activity

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Cases taken up	11	10
Breaches identified	16	51
Cases resolved	17	42
Notices served***	9	9
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

In the 2012/13 year:

The Planning Service increased its engagement with developers pre-application on a wide range of development types but on housing in particular where the Service was deploying its new Housing Design Guide to influence design of rural housing in order to secure better outcomes on the ground. This was integral to the Service's Design Action Plan (2012 – 13) with an action to achieve consistent implementation of the siting and design policy.

The Services' Enforcement Officer was re-deployed to manage the process of condition discharge on a large scale windfarm, reducing the resource available to the service to focus on enforcement issues, one senior planning officer was redeployed to address the first applications for a commercial marine renewables (wave) application (Both S36 and Major PPP) applications, for a six month period and one planning officer post was vacant from November to April.

While these redeployments affected both the workload and pressure on a small team, their effort ensured a small reduction in average timescales for most categories of development, demonstrating a culture of continuous improvement.

Some of the Service improvements planned did however require to be deferred.

The Service took measures to target legacy cases and press developers to withdraw applications that were not being progressed. This is an ongoing action.

There were no developments reaching planning decision stage that fell into the category of 'Major'.

Electricity generation (primarily wind energy) accounted for 43 planning decisions (>10%); householder developments 78 (19%), while housing developments accounted for 126 (30%) of decisions.

The MOD increasingly raised objection on the grounds of wind turbine impact on its radar infrastructure with a resultant high level of political interest, high levels of interaction with MoD and developers and resultant delay in decision making which will again be reflected in wind energy cases in 2013/14. The requirement to screen for EIA on a high percentage of wind proposals and the post consent processing of wind energy proposals has continued to drawn heavily on resource during 2012/13.

The Outer Hebrides has the second highest number of Marine Atlantic Salmon farms in Scotland and with marked expansion in the sector to satisfy global demand, planning applications in this sector while totalling 10 in number have included pre-application discussions, EIA screening and scoping and some challenging cases, together with a high number of Scottish Government cases on the Audit and Review of pre 2007 fish farm development Consents (these cases do not form part of the cases counted in the return, nor do they carry a fee), drawing once again on the resources of a small team.

WORKFORCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Appendix 2 is an integral part of the Annual Performance Assessment. It is designed to be a snapshot of staffing at 31 March 2013.

As at 31 March 2013
Please note - The figures do not have to be exact - we are looking for a snapshot of each authority

Head of Planning Service (1)	Tier?								
	1	2	3	4					
		1							

	Managers (2)		Main Grade Posts		Technician Posts		Office support/Clerical		Totals
	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	
Development Management	1		5.5		1		4		11.5
Development Planning	1		2		3				6
Enforcement Staff			1						1
Cross Service/Other Planning					1				1

Staffing profile	Number
Under 30	4
30-39	4
40-49	7
50 and Over	5

Committees & site visits (3)	No. per year
Full Council committees	5
Planning Committees	5
Area Committees (where relevant)	
Committee site visits	0
LRB (4)	1
LRB site visits	0

Budgets Planning Service	Budget	Costs Direct (5)	Indirect (6)	Income (7)
Development Management	324	347	290	272
Development Planning	292	192	123	0
Enforcement	37	32	5	0

Notes on Completion:

1. 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.

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

3   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 cover 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)