

## Planning Performance Framework 2012/13



# Fife Council's Annual Planning Performance Framework

1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013

September 2013

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# Foreword

## by Councillor Lesley Laird, Fife Council Planning Spokesperson

As Fife Council's Planning Spokesperson I am pleased to submit the second Planning Performance Framework (PPF2) for Fife Council. The Council has strongly advocated for and supported this new, more balanced approach to performance management and measurement and PPF 2 demonstrates further improvements and progress in the quality of planning decisions, processes and the final outcomes being achieved in Fife.

This new, comprehensive approach to performance management, effectiveness, leadership and achieving quality outcomes supported by the Scottish Government, COSLA, SOLACE and HOPS is to be commended. Fife Council has clear strategic objectives for sustainable development, encouraging business investment, providing quality places, ensuring an effective supply of housing and employment land and providing environmental safeguarding policies. The role of the planning functions is central to all these strategic outcomes and this PPF illustrates the overall progress and performance of the planning authority during 2012 and 2013 in achieving these objectives.

As we said in last year's PPF we are proud of these achievements but we are not complacent. Improvements identified in 2012/2013 have been progressed and implemented as set out later but we recognise that we still need and want to improve in certain areas and these are identified in the PPF as part of our continuous improvement processes. These improvements also take account of the Government's feedback comments at the national level and the specific comments on Fife's first PPF, summarised in Tables 1 and 2 and our current work in the Key Performance Markers, in Table 3.

Whilst speed of decision making is still recognised as an element of the overall performance process, I consider that Fife's open, democratic and transparent decision making processes taken together with its pro-active negotiation and enforcement approaches, ensures that the final outcomes on planning matters are carefully considered and assessed. Customer focus issues and responsiveness and delivering a "Best for Business" focus remain areas for further refinement along with the reduction of all planning decision times.

2012/2013 has been another challenging year due to the continuing economic downturn, further pressures on the Council's budgets

including the planning budget, and the difficulties still being experienced in the local development and house building industry. This has been compounded by difficult market conditions in the opencast coal industry and the overall position of financial bond providers which has required new approaches to be considered. This PPF features some of the new and creative ways we are working together in partnership with parties to resolve these issues.

Fife is pleased to outline these contributions, achievements and outcomes as a clear demonstration of the effective leadership and management of our planning processes, at a political and officer level.





# 1. Introduction



The key planning processes and activities in Fife are carried out by a range of specialist staff in the recently established Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services (EPPS) service.

In June 2012 the new Service was located in a single building in Glenrothes (Kingdom House) to provide a single, focussed customer channel for enquiries and transactions and 2012/2013 will see further improvements and synergies developed to enhance these levels of service provision towards a “one stop shop” customer service.

This second Planning Performance Framework enables Fife Council to further demonstrate some of the ways in which it delivers on the sustainable economic growth agenda but also the varied roles played by EPPS in shaping, supporting, influencing, leading, championing and delivering on the planning, economic and environmental outcomes across Fife. This was an important element in PPF1 and we have developed this further in PPF2 to highlight wider corporate roles of planning and what planning can achieve.

We believe that the achievements and successes highlighted in the PPF demonstrate the positive roles planning can and does play in developing, growing and protecting Fife’s communities and at the same time promoting the Council’s contributions to the Single Outcome Agreement and the Fife Community Planning Partnership. This has a renewed focus in 2012/2013 where the new political administration has confirmed its new priorities, including a focus on town centres and a priority to make Fife the best place to do business.

The contributions we make are inter-connected and linked in many ways and the PPF reflects this partnership and joint working approach used to provide wider and longer lasting benefits to

Fife’s communities beyond what the statutory planning processes can achieve on their own.

Collectively the Leadership Group in EPPS leads on these matters for Fife Council and we hope that this second PPF provides further evidence of our commitment and desire to place Fife at the forefront of achieving excellence and quality in the range of planning, development, enterprise, employment and protective services we provide across Fife and its communities.

## **EPPS LEADERSHIP GROUP**

### **Keith Winter**

Head of Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services

### **Jim Birrell**

Senior Manager, Development and Buildings

### **Robin Presswood**

Senior Manager, Business and Employability

### **Roy Stewart**

Senior Manager, Protective Services

## 2. Scottish Government feedback on the first round of Planning Performance Frameworks and Fife's PPF for 2011/2012

In February 2013, the Scottish Government (Directorate for Local Government and Committees Planning and Architecture Division) published its report on the first round of Planning Performance Annual Reports.

The report summarised the outcomes from all Planning Authorities on a Scotland wide basis and also sets out the Government's comments for future priorities and actions. Fife Council has summarised the key aspects identified in **Table 1** with Fife Council specific comments where appropriate.

In June 2013, Derek Mackay, MSP, Minister for Local Government and Planning wrote to the Chief Executive enclosing a feedback report on PPF1 for Fife Council as part of the approach to pursuing performance improvement together.

In his covering letter the Minister outlined six key areas for particular focus on improvement areas Scotland:

- Relevant and up-to-date development plans, reviewed and applied on a rolling five year cycle.
- Clear arrangement for pre-application discussion and strong project management arrangements.
- Requests for information are clear and proportionate.
- Increase the pace in Planning Application decision making.
- Concluding long-running 'legacy' cases.
- Improving performance on delivering section 75/ legal agreements.

In **Table 2**, Fife Council has set out the identified comments specific to Fife's first Planning Performance Framework with summary responses as appropriate.

On 21 August 2013, Derek Mackay, MSP, Minister for local Government and Planning, and Councillor Stephen Hagan, COSLA Spokesperson for Development, Economy and Sustainability, wrote to all LPAs to ensure that clear reference is made to the Key Performance Markers (KPMs) in the PPF. Current progress on the identified key markers is summarised in **Table 3**.

Table 1: Scottish Government Feedback on Planning Performance Frameworks

Performance Activity	Fife Council Position	Comments
1. Strong evidence of further progress from those authorities which have identified delay in their development plan.	Fife's annual Development Plan Scheme identifies variances of plan programme against programme. All three Local Plans were adopted in 2012 as programmed and the replacement LDP has started to schedule.	SESplan's examination recommendations will mean a delay in publishing the Fife LDP Proposal Plan – Slipping into 2014.
2. Stronger commitment to processing agreements, both in authorities who offer them and the willingness of developers to enter into them.	Fife has introduced a system of requiring all major applications to be subject to a Processing Agreement since 1 April 2013. Outcomes from this will be reported in PPF3.	We are actively and positively promoting this approach with developers but it is not mandatory in terms of legislation and some developers may choose not to participate
3. Extensive use of effective case management.	In our three discrete DM teams effective case management, workload reviews, and performance updates are a key part of the decision making.	Can be an individual officer issue rather than a process issue and requires team working and self-scrutiny.
4. Action by authorities to conclude 'legacy' cases.	Fife has a register of "Golden Oldies" which is being given priority status by senior management to ensure no live applications older than three years.	Delays can be with the applicant or agent and sometimes there is a tactical reason for no decision being chased beyond the planning authority.
5. Continued sharing of, and learning from, examples of good practice.	An area we are not particularly good at as a profession and in Fife we require to better manage this type of benchmarking activity.	This will become more of a natural and embedded process as work on performance management and benchmarking across Scotland formalises and matures.
6. No Enforcement Charter should be beyond the period of review and progress on this requirement should be included in the next round of reports.	Fife Council adopted a universal model for its charter style which, by definition, does not require regular review but we acknowledge the legislative requirement for two yearly review periods.	The effectiveness of enforcement activity and actions is more important than the date of publication of the Charter.
7. Greater engagement with Architecture and Design Scotland.	Fife has been involved closely with A&DS as part of the FIFEplan key agency group and through bespoke partnership working on development plan graphics and spatial strategy work.	Fife Council will continue with this collaborative approach and seek to further influence design approaches and solutions.
8. Increased evidence of added value through design improvements.	Fife Council uses added value codes on all planning decisions and design improvements is one of the designated categories.	Outcomes from this process are summarised in PPF2.
9. All authorities should have a single point of contact in place in the future.	All planning applications and related consents have a designated case officer as the single point of contact.	As we expand our commitment to business customers we will review the different needs for single point contacts.
10. Further clarity on levels of customer satisfaction, further exploration of the use of social media	FC carried out a survey of development plan issues in 2011. This has led to the clarification of the Fife LDP Exchange which will be used to feedback customer views on development planning.	Fife Council has expanded this element in PPF2.
11. A stronger target and performance culture around development planning.	The development planning work in Fife is covered off by detailed project plans and specific project management leads	Details set out in PPF2 and related documents
12. Practical examples of how resourcing and caseload pressures are managed and dealt with effectively.	Performance monitoring is a key area of activity in all 3 DM teams and is carried out slightly differently to customise to the specific issues.	Examples are included in the PPF
13. Sharing experiences and good practice is vital to ensure that authorities are making the most of the expertise and the efficiencies that can be gained. We would strongly support further efforts in this particular area.	Agreed and covered off in part 5 above also.	The introduction this year of the SOLACE benchmarking families will provide a comparative focus for further work to identify good practice measures.

Table 2: Scottish Government Feedback Report on Fife Councils PPF1 - June 2013

Measure/ Activity/ Outcome	SG summary Comments	Fife Council Response/Actions
National Headline Indicator	<p>Welcome adoption of all 3 local plans in 2012</p> <p>LDP remains on track</p> <p>Housing land supply noted</p> <p>19% of applications subject to pre-application advice noted</p> <p>Welcome project planning approach to all 20 major applications</p> <p>Discrepancy on information re decision timescales.</p> <p>Average decision times fluctuate with the Scotland wide figures</p> <p>Enforcement Charter over two years old.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>Check for 2012/2013 submission</p> <p>✓</p> <p>New charter issued in 2013</p>
Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service	<p>Very good initiatives supplemented by testimonials from business contacts</p> <p>Closer alignment of teams and consenting regimes</p> <p>Bringing a stronger focus to design quality and improving the built environment</p> <p>Interested in approach re added value in the design process</p> <p>A positive approach to collaboration across the authority</p> <p>Guidance on application submissions and validation requirements noted</p> <p>Welcome the use of residents surveys</p> <p>Particularly interested in the changes to customer contact arrangements</p> <p>Encouraging to see substantial increase in take up of online opportunities</p> <p>Welcome the steps being taken to analyse the costs of delivering the service</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓ More information added in PPF2</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
Service Improvement Commitments 2012 / 2013	A range of commitments clearly linked to improvement needs identified in the PPF	✓
Service Improvements 2011/2012	<p>Demonstrated a good range of improvement actions with particular emphasis on business investment and development delivery.</p> <p>Helpful if actions had been listed using template table.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Template to be used in PPF2</p>
Conclusions	<p>A lot of activity displaying the culture and behaviours central to planning reform and a reputation of an "open for Business authority.</p> <p>Make some improvements to application handling timescales.</p> <p>Customer connections programme is a good example of forming relationships with stakeholders.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Focus for 2012/2013</p> <p>✓</p>



Table 3: Key Performance Markers

### Driving Improved Performance

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	Evidence of continuous improvement.	Statistics and National Headline Indicators
Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website	Yes	Fife Council has promoted and implemented Processing Agreements from 1 April 2013 for all major planning applications.
Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications</li> <li>• clear and proportionate requests for supporting information</li> </ul>	Yes	Fife Council has a pro-active approach to pre application discussions and a charge is currently made for this service. Customer comments are included in the PPF on this aspect.
Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant'*  * this will require production of supporting guidance, following wider stakeholder input		Reducing number of live applications more than six months after resolution to grant (from same time last year)
Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Within 2 years	Third version issued in 2013.
Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators</li> <li>• progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report</li> </ul>		Progress on all c CDI Team promoting roll out of tailored interactive performance monitors so case officers can track real time performance to meet set targets commitments.



Planning staff on training event with architect - Conservation Area

## Promoting the Plan-led System

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Yes	All three Local Plans adopted in 2012/2013.
Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on course for adoption within 5-year cycle</li> <li>• project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale</li> </ul>	Yes Yes	Timetable included in PPF demonstrating this timescale.
Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Yes	Members briefed ahead of the MIR (Jan & Oct 2012) and advised of plan timetable.
Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Yes	Key Agencies Liaison Jan & Jul 2012. Call for sites & ideas letters/invitations to business sector, developers, landowners and agents to submit proposals for LDP. Press release & E-Bulletin update FifeDirect and online submission facility.
Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through SPGs, on (i) information required to support applications and (ii) expected developer contributions	Yes	Development Plan Scheme (DPS) summarises policy development and changes since the previous DPS. Policy review, including supplementary guidance is part of LDP preparation involving input from development management. Policy changes are subject to assessment of change & implications. This covers examples (i) & (ii).

## Simplifying and Streamlining

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Yes	Preparation of Joint PMA between Historic Scotland, City of Edinburgh and Network Rail re Planning/LBC for Forth Rail bridge in context of UNESCO World Heritage submission.  Coordinated/ tailored assistance to Harlequin and BT to expedite roll out of Superfast broadband – enhanced pre app process for DSLAM boxes throughout Fife. Programmes agreed with Housing and Education Services including designated contact officers for planning.
Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Evidence of activity to pass on and adopt good practice	Reference to joint work/initiatives with the SOLACE benchmarking family to identify further improvements.

## Delivering Development

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old	Reducing number of applications more than one year old (from same time last year)	Statistics from SG Analytical Services
Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and</li> <li>• in pre-application discussions</li> </ul>	YES	Exemption of small sites from Education contribution Revised Financial Framework for Planning Obligations as Supplementary Planning Guidance Integral part of all Pre Application Discussions



### 3. Fife in Figures

- Fife is a large, diverse Planning Authority with a wide variety of development proposals to consider and assess. It is one of the five 'busiest' Local Planning authorities in Scotland by volume of applications received.
- In population terms Fife is the third largest local authority after Glasgow and Edinburgh, with a population of 360,000.
- Fife Council employs 30 chartered town planners to lead, manage and implement the planning functions.
- The Council has a 10-year capital investment plan (8 years left to run) in excess of £1bn. This covers investment in Council houses, schools, roads, leisure facilities and other Council assets. It includes acquisition, improvement and enhancement and new-build projects and an ambitious capital investment plan that is "front-loaded" to assist in mitigating some of the negative impacts of the economic downturn.
- Over the past 8 years, a total of 620 jobs have been created and £87m per annum has been created through inward and mobile investment projects supported by Fife Council.



- During 2012/13 the Invest in Fife Team attracted 9 investment projects to Fife, worth over £260 million, creating a total of 215 jobs.
- In 2012/13, 1,235 businesses received assistance via Business Gateway, creating an anticipated 1,320 jobs.
- The Council issues an average of 20,000 neighbour notification letters annually.
- 90% (89%) of planning applications were dealt with by officers, and 10% (11%) were decided at Committee.
- 88% (92%) of planning applications were approved.
- In 2012/2013 88% (81%) of all householder applications have been decided in two months improving on last year's figures. (Target is 95%).
- 2783 applications were received last year.
- In 2012/2013 the DPEA determined 89 (52) appeals, and 24 (25) were allowed. 37% (48%).
- In 2012/13 the Council determined 46 local reviews and 24 decisions were overturned or had the conditions varied. (52%).
- 72% of all applications are submitted online.



## 4. National Headline Indicators

Key outcomes	2011-2012	2012-2013
<b>Development Planning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i></li> <li>development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N)</li> </ul>	YES	0-1 years old NO (See explanatory comments)
<b>Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective housing land: 5-year supply (Y/N)</li> <li>effective housing land supply</li> <li>housing approvals</li> <li>effective employment land supply</li> <li>employment land take-up</li> <li>effective commercial floor space supply</li> <li>commercial floor space delivered</li> </ul>	6,000 units 759 units 166.53 ha 36.95 ha N/Am2 N/Am2	5,558 units 545 units 149.7ha 3.0 ha N/Am2 N/Am2
<b>Development Management</b> Project Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice</li> <li>number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan</li> <li>percentage planned timescales met</li> </ul> Decision-making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>application approval rate</li> <li>delegation rate</li> </ul>	19% 20 75%  92% 89%	8% 28 79%  88% 90%
<b>Decision-making timescales</b> Average number of weeks to decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>major developments</li> <li>local developments (non-householder)</li> <li>householder developments</li> </ul>	58.3 14.2 12.9	58.5 21.2 7.2
<b>Enforcement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time since enforcement charter published/reviewed (months) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i></li> <li>number of breaches identified / resolved</li> </ul>	2 years 278/243	0 years 84/349



## 5. Defining and measuring a high quality planning service

Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services lead the Fife Council agenda for economic regeneration. It does this by encouraging appropriate business development, assisting people into work and promoting high quality developments, including a wide range of employment and housing sites across Fife.

The Service is managed through three distinct portfolios:

**Business and Strategy:** Leads on economic development and inward and mobile investments, initiatives and strategic policy direction and provides access to employment through a programme of vocational training and a range of initiatives to assist disadvantaged groups in to work.

**Development and Buildings:** Performs a range of functions relating to buildings standards and safety, building warrants, planning applications and permissions, planning appeals and local reviews, road construction consents and strategic and local planning policy matters.

**Protective Services:** Monitoring and inspection in the fields of Metrology & Customer Safety, Food & Workplace Safety, Housing/Anti-Social Behaviour and Public Protection with a view to ensuring the protection of public health and well-being.

There are eight teams which provide the range of planning, economic and development services across Fife.

- Transportation, Enforcement and Minor Developments
- Community Developments and Investment
- Major Business and Customer Service
- Development Plan
- Strategic Policy and Tourism
- Regeneration, Place and Environment
- Economic Development
- Building Standards and Safety



Site works for Diageo bonded warehouses expansion, Begg |Farm, Kirkcaldy

The Service aims to develop the Fife Economy by assisting people into the work and promoting high quality sustainable development for business and communities while protecting public health and consumer safety and balancing environmental contexts.

### Priorities

The Council Plan sets out the priorities for the next five years. The Council aims to 2017 are:

- Growing a vibrant economy
- Increasing opportunities and reducing poverty and inequality
- Improving quality of life in local communities
- Promoting a sustainable society
- Reforming Fife Council's services

Of these priorities, Enterprise, Planning & Protective Services is identified as having lead responsibility for Growing a vibrant economy and the Service also has a key supporting role in relation to Improving quality of life in local communities.



These strategic priorities have been cascaded from the Council Plan to the Service Plan. The Service addresses the delivery of these priorities under the following themes:

- A. Business & Economy (Growing a vibrant economy)
- B. Extended Employment & Skills Opportunities (Growing a vibrant economy)
- C. Development, Place & Regeneration (Improving quality of life in local communities)
- D. Public Health & Consumer Protection (Improving quality of life in local communities)
- E. Effective Management of Strategic Assets and Resources (Reforming Fife Council's services)

## Open for Business

Our joint vision for 2023 is for a vibrant local economy in Fife through sustainable economic growth – where Fife's business environment inspires residents and businesses to create private sector job opportunities, making Fife the best place to start and grow a business.

As Fife Council is responsible for planning or overseeing the delivery of much of the infrastructure and a range of services that affect businesses operation and growth, the Fife Economic Strategy (2013-2023) challenges the Council to examine the ways in which it interacts with businesses to make it as straightforward as possible to work with the Council.



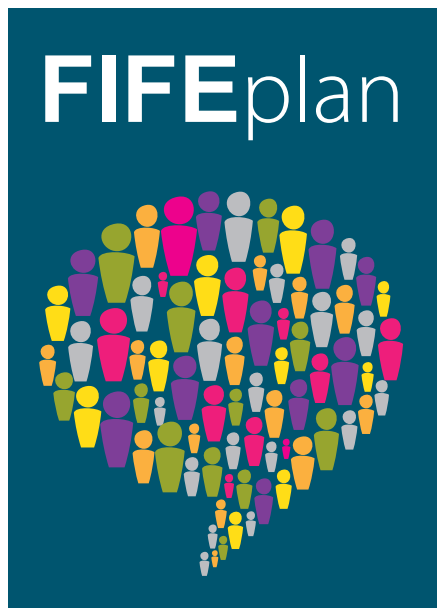
### Achievements:

- An established Priority Applications Team whose remit includes all Business Priority Planning applications for Fife's Top 100 companies and all major and national category applications.
- The establishment of a Fife Council Officers Network to develop and implement cross-Service actions to "Make Fife the Best Place to do Business".
- The "Hangar 17" Project and related links where Fife Council and Edinburgh Napier University work with businesses linked to sustainable construction and energy initiatives in the construction industry in Fife.
- We adopt a project management approach to the processing of all major applications summarised in Appendix 1 and all inward and mobile investment applications. Since April 2013 this has included positively promoting the need for a processing agreement to be signed as advocated by the Scottish Government. This approach can involve all services in the Council as appropriate and a designated 'planning' lead officer, who is normally also the case officer. In 2012/2013 specific developers who have benefited from the previous informal project management approach include:
  - Kingdom Housing Associations multi award winning Fife Housing Innovation Showcase Housing in Dunfermline
  - Diageo's investment in new bonded warehouses at Begg Farm, Kirkcaldy
  - John Fergus Colorado's new whisky distillery at Glenrothes
  - Robertson Homes investment in new special need housing in St Andrews
  - Fife Council's own developments at Bankhead (new Council offices in former Amazon building ), new primary school at Burntisland, and new secondary school at Auchmuty, Glenrothes and affordable and mainstream housing at Dunfermline.
- Early discussions are held at senior management level on all critical investment applications to provide clarity and certainty of process across all the related teams and activities.



## Development Plans

- Fife Council publishes an annual Development Plan Scheme which includes:
  - A timetable for preparing current and future Local Development Plans and supplementary planning guidance in Fife; and
  - A participation statement, which describes the opportunities for public consultation and Fife Council's proposals for public involvement in the preparation of the plans.
- The Development Plan Scheme is updated annually and reported to committee for adoption by the Council.
- All three "old style" Local Plans were adopted in 2012 as programmed and work is underway to prepare for the new Fife LDP providing



a single, coherent and consistent planning vision for Fife. This began with the publication of a Main Issues Report at the start of 2013. The publication of the Proposed Local Development Plan (called FIFEplan) is now scheduled for 2014 - a delay from the work programmes of late 2013 due to an additional stage of work required for SESplan - the strategic development plan for South East Scotland. The LDP is scheduled for adoption in 2015.

- The forthcoming Local Development Plan (LDP) is being managed through a project board arrangement to manage the project and implementation. The consultation element is being operated through the Fife LDP Exchange which is a wide network of users. It acts as a sounding board for new ideas on the form and content of the LDP and an exchange of ideas and views both online and, where necessary, face-to-face.
- Fife has also established a partnership/workshop approach with the Key Agencies to help shape the spatial strategy and policy content in a collaborative manner.
- At the strategic planning level, Fife Council plays a role in the Joint Committees, Project Boards, and Operational / Steering Groups for both strategic Development Plans covering the Council area, SESplan and TAYplan, which is unique in Scottish planning terms.



## Development Delivery

Fife continues to develop and test innovative approaches to development delivery in partnership with the Scottish Government and other stakeholders. The key features of the Fife approach can be summarised as follows:

- Large scale development focussed on seven Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) which have sufficient critical mass to support delivery of key infrastructure requirements e.g. major road improvements and new schools. The combined development value of these sites is £2.5 billion
- Governance and programme management arrangements for the SDAs that ensures proactive leadership by the planning authority, and learning between each SDA.

- A strong, plan-led approach which has the core principles of the infrastructure planning requirements enshrined within the strategic development plans, the three Fife Local Plans and their related Financial Frameworks. This gives developers early clarity over likely levels of strategic planning requirements, specifically education and transportation obligations.
- Draft supplementary guidance on ways to maintain an effective five year land supply of housing land was undertaken as part of the FIFEplan Main Issues Report consultation and will be presented for Council approval during 2013/2014.
- Development of a Fife Infrastructure Investment Fund which will assist in the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects which are necessary to unlock proposed growth areas across Fife. The model is underpinned by a



*Little Raith windfarm, by Lochgelly*

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guide 9SPG) issued for consultation in early 2013. A revised draft of the SPG will include an indication of the proposed development levy that is intended to fund strategic transportation and education needs across Fife. It will also provide an indication of where the future strategic infrastructure improvements are necessary giving communities and developers information on anticipated investment levels. (This approach is consistent with the recent Scottish Government guidance in Circular 3/2012 (Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements) and will be closely monitored as discussions with SDA developers' progress. A full business case including financial planning assessment for the Fife Infrastructure Investment Model will also refer).

- Establishment of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Scheme within Levenmouth allied with on-going investment in low carbon and energy uses. The TIF pilot scheme uses future addition revenue gains from taxes to finance the borrowing required to fund public infrastructure improvements. The £17million proposal would see the development of a strategic integrated manufacturing hub for the renewables sector in the Levenmouth area. The proposal will also include improved vehicular and marine access to Energy Park Fife, site remediation and enhance delivery of a Levenmouth Low Carbon Investment Park. A business case with the Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust is underway.

- Consultation on a Fife-wide Planning Obligations supplementary guidance was undertaken as part of the FIFEplan Main Issues Report and this will also be presented for Council approval in 2013/2014.
- The new Queensferry Forth Crossing project, led by Transport Scotland, commenced in 2011 and is due for completion in 2016. Work has also started on developing better traffic flow management on the M90, A92 and A823M. Fife Council has secured £10 million funding from the Scottish Government to build a new Park & Choose facility at Halbeath, Dunfermline and this is now almost complete.
- Updated supplementary guidance for onshore wind energy projects was approved by the Council in June 2013. The new guidance works ahead of draft national planning policy by taking account of the cumulative landscape impacts of onshore turbines and provides the basis for the wind energy spatial framework to be included in FIFEplan.
- Two wind farms in Fife now in operation at Westfield and Little Raith.



## High quality development on the ground

Fife Council has developed a strong design ethic to deliver quality buildings and quality places and spaces and this approach is followed on all major applications and selected local applications and it includes:

- Building on the experience of previous joint staff and Councillor training workshops and using staff training and drawing classes to address design solutions.
- Partnership working with Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS) and Planning Aid and other partners to help develop approaches for creating spatial strategies, storyboards and supporting local place leadership.
- Working in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), including developing Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance and developing an approach to mapping Fife's Green Networks.
- Using specialist staff in urban design skills and expertise, and including them in masterplanning and design and development frameworks as well as individual planning applications and pre application discussions as appropriate.
- Fife has tested collaborative approaches with applicants focused on built outcomes and better decision making.



*Conservation area, Kirkcaldy High Street*

- Fife Council has been successful in partnership with applicants and architects in transforming some ordinary layouts and designs in to more integrated and cohesive places with an enhanced design solution
- Fife Council has an agreed focus on town centres and regeneration areas and continues to take forward action plans and programmes in Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy, including the targeting of empty buildings and improving shop fronts. A review of town centre boundaries and the specific roles of each town centre is underway as part of the FIFEplan LDP preparation.
- Fife operates a 1% public art policy for all major developments and developments on prominent public frontages which is now being implemented in relevant locations. It is

currently under review to build in customer feedback and lessons learned.

- Positive and pro-active negotiations on unacceptable design features or layouts are a feature of the development processes and a part of the “added value” in development management which we monitor on all applications.
- Working in partnership with Housing and Neighbourhood Services seven sites across Fife for affordable housing were completed or under construction.

- All planning decisions in Fife require to demonstrate any “added value” by the planning process. Last year 1,028 applications were deemed to include “added value” (40% of applications). This related to:

Major applications – 1% (13)

Local applications – 27% (699)

Household applications – 12% (316)

- The Fife Housing Innovation Showcase is a partnership with Kingdom Housing Association, Fife Council, Fife Construction Forum and Green business Fife Network. The showcase element was the first phase of 27 new houses for social rent using different forms of Modern Methods of Construction. This is to test, trial and promote sustainable housing products.
- Fife Council and Homes for Scotland have been working together to tackle some key issues for the housing sector. Together, we have identified the need for a better appreciation of each other’s requirements and aspirations, principally to deliver effective and viable housing sites through the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP). A joint Action Plan has been agreed for implementation on a range of planning/housing initiatives.
- Fife Council has an agreed Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA) programme for all 48 conservation areas and 5 (7) detailed Conservation Area Appraisals were completed in 2012/13 emphasising townscape and historical designs.



- 30 of the Councils 48 conservation areas now have up to date appraisals.
- 82 applications relating to trees and tree preservation orders.
- The Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) in Kirkcaldy has been very effective:
  - 1 priority buildings approved
  - 10 small grants approved
  - £4.4m investment in public realm improvements in Closes.
  - Total value of investment during the programme was £5.6m

## Certainty

Fife Council is committed to a culture of delivering consistency and certainty to applicants and developers. It does this in a wide range of ways, but will be looking for further qualitative improvements in 2013/2014 building on the initiatives introduced in 2012. The key elements of this approach include:

- Dedicated development management teams linked to the planning hierarchy of applications to provide continuity, experience and focus.
- Innovation in how we work with a dedicated, multi-disciplinary support team (Gateway) providing consistency in validation, scanning, training, process and procedural development and support to the application processing teams.

- Consultation with and partnership working with key agencies and other consultees in all development plan activities.
- Clear and simple schemes of delegation and administration showing decision making arrangements.
- Collaborative working with other council services and officers to deliver high quality education facilities e.g. Auchmuty High School, Glenrothes.
- Published guidance on application validation requirements and information for application submissions.
- An updated website in 2013 with a clear structure and layout which includes links to all relevant documents, forms and guidance and a particular focus on E Planning and the planning services available.
- All major applications are project managed formally or informally to target date and processes agreed with the applicant.
- The Council continues to be innovative and proactive in addressing issues notified by the house building industry and businesses in general (Fife Chamber of Commerce, the Fife Construction Forum Partnership meetings and briefings with the Federation of Small Businesses in Scotland) – revision of affordable housing policies, planning obligations reviews, re assessment of effective housing land supply and better joined up approaches to regulation for small businesses.



## Communications, engagement and customer service

Fife Council continues to work and improve to put the customer first. Last year's PPF highlighted the fact that the biennial residents' survey told us satisfaction with council services was at an all-time high with 94% satisfied with Council Services and 92% of customers feeling well treated by staff. This continues to be an important area for planning services and we will continue with our commitment towards improved customer responsiveness and effective customer channels. Our ongoing review of our 'customer connections' will provide the focus for this work and new surveys are planned for 2013/2014 and a new customer focus group is to be established.

To improve our responses to customers, we have undertaken a number of significant initiatives which have transformed the way we interact with customers. This has included:

- Senior management commitment to all lessons learned and areas for staff improvement.
- Rigorous reviews of all external decisions and recommendations to challenge existing processes/procedures e.g. Planning Appeals (DPEA) customer Appeals (SPSO), customer complaints, and local review decisions.
- A dedicated customer contact centre with trained staff and detailed customer scripts

- Guaranteed telephone appointments for customers with development management planners.
- Updated web information to facilitate self-help.
- An established social media feed via twitter for development planning (@fifedevplan).
- External engagement through staff office bearer roles in HOPS, RTPi, COSLA, SOLACE and SLAED.
- E-Planning spans both statutory arms of the planning service - development planning and development management. Development plans are published online and the latest round of local plans are available as interactive documents allowing users to search maps for related policies and proposals. This will be developed further with the FIFEplan Local Development Plan.
- Fife has taken a proactive approach to Planning Information Notices (PINS) and the direct linking of application information to Fife Direct for the benefit of customers.
- Development plan consultations have seen a shift from written comments to electronic submissions – both via e mail and through the online portal. In 2013 the FIFEplan MIR resulted in 64% of over 1700 submissions online. (88% if e mails are included). This is a marked change from 20% submissions to the Mid Fife Local Plan in 2009.

## Customer Feedback

PPF1 was sent to all community councils in Fife and to all Fife councillors for information and also for any feedback and comments. The response rate was very low from both community councils and councillors and a more structured approach will be taken forward for consultation of PPF2 as part of the Improvement Plan.

Regardless of the low response rate the following matters featured in the responses received and have also been raised by other customer groups during the year and are worthy of attention and appropriate feedback.

- Concerns about the e-planning system and access to development management applications linked to the variability of the electronic system and downtime.
- Councillor training workshops can be of limited value to specific councillors.
- The introduction of charges for pre-planning advice is not popular with some customers.
- The quality of the relationship between the planning authority and a specific community council has generally deteriorated.
- The weekly planning list is very helpful and provides comprehensive information.
- A dedicated customer contact centre is not necessarily appropriate for customers who know what they want to speak about and they know who they want to speak to.

- The community council can be the eyes and ears of the community in relation to enforcement matters but it doesn't always feel that the council is listening to enforcement complaints.
- The introduction of local review bodies appears to be cumbersome and time consuming.
- There still appears to be an imbalance between the different planning customers e.g. large scale development proposals set against the limited means of the local community.

Although these comments were from a very small customer sample, Fife Council has included the selected concerns in the improvement actions for 2013/2014 and will host a specific Customer Focus Group to identify 'lessons learned' in order to further improve customer responsiveness levels.



## Efficient and Effective Decision Making

Decision making in Fife was previously based on a devolved seven Area Committee structure, a strategic Planning Committee and Full Council, all involved in taking planning decisions. The 7 Area Committee approach and single Planning Committee has now been replaced with 3 new Planning Committees as a more focused approach to all planning applications requiring a Committee decision.

- The Councils Scheme of Delegation was reviewed in 2012/2013 and 90% of all decisions continue to be delegated decisions by officers.
- Delays in determining planning applications are influenced by internal factors controlled by the Council, and external factors outwith the direct control of the Council. Internal initiatives and processes include:
  - Caseload management by senior officers
  - Monitoring of all applications current after 12 months and not determined.
- Development management teams are based on the planning hierarchy as summarised in section 5.3 – major, minor and local applications.

## Effective management structures

Planning is a key function within Fife's corporate structure. It is recognised as an essential component of development delivery and implementation and complementing the Councils wider goals and objectives set out in the single outcome agreement and the Fife Community Plan.

- We are leading on reducing transaction costs and maximising mobile flexible working arrangements which are currently in place for 87% of development management staff.

### Development management

- We have co-located all our development consent teams together in a single building and our organisational structure keeps all the relevant teams in a single portfolio. This provides for processing of planning applications, listed buildings consents, advertisement consents, enforcement notices, building warrants, roads construction consents and taking enforcement action.
- The administration and support for development management e-Planning is focussed within a single central gateway which is also located within the same building so we are in a strong position to enable E-Development initiatives as they develop and grow in due course. The gateway concept is designed to be scaleable and as such would ultimately provide a registration and workflow hub for development consents.







## Financial management and local governance

During 2012/2013 the economic downturn continued to adversely affect the Fife income levels for planning (and building standards) as the number of applications submitted declined, Fife Council monitors the revenue budget by working closely with our financial support team, regular monthly meetings of our internal

budget scrutiny group and through reporting to Committee.

Work is being piloted in both Planning and Building Standards teams to analyse transactions costs at a detailed level. This work will be included in the 2013/14 PPF.

The specific facts in this financial year were:

- In 2012/2013 planning fee income required corporate financial assistance of £640k to maintain planned budget levels.
- The statutory planning element of EPPS has a gross expenditure budget of £3,883k and is delivered by 75 fte employees.
- The net expenditure is £2,493k as there is an income target of £1,390k, derived mostly from planning application fee income of £1,260k.
- Since the start of the economic recession, there has been a significant drop in this income which previously ran at circa £1,700k per year.
- This continuing drop in income levels is compounded by the need to make savings so strong financial management is essential in the current climate.

## Culture of continuous improvement

A culture of continuous improvement is central to Fife Council's approach to performance, quality and outcomes and is recognised by all teams and staff as core business on the journey to excellence.

### **Delivery of the service improvements identified in 2011/2012**

Last year's Improvement Plan set out a range of prioritised improvements which were implemented/introduced during the year. These included:

- Fast track team established across Fife to focus on 90% householder applications within two months, now being consistently achieved.
- Creation of new specialist and support section to implement all new Planning Reforms and legislation and to re-focus on process and performance improvements.
- A refresh of all internal processes following on from the previous Fife Excellence Model (FEM) and new process management systems were installed and refined. (Provides all key information on a consistent basis to all members of staff in the same convenient electronic format).

- Senior management focus on weekly performance statistics for all planning applications and special attention is paid to major applications and any possible delays.
- Fast tracking of all major/inward investment proposals resourced by crossService staff led by a senior manager, e.g. Diageo at Kirkcaldy, Samsung at Fife Energy Park, Methil and Shepherd Offshore at Dunfermline.
- An audit of all outstanding Section 75 Agreements was complete and an Action Plan agreed which included the setting up of a new Planning Obligations Group across the 3 key services- Planning, Finance and Legal.
- Responsive actions to implications of economic downturn by reviewing conditions and Section 75 requirements, considering re-phasing of developments and changes to house types and layouts etc.
- Continued updating of LEAN management principles across the Development Management teams.
- Implementing business related efficiencies, linked to mobile and flexible working arrangements for all staff, at the same time as achieving reductions in staff numbers.
- The further development and maturity of themed/functional teams to respond to the planning hierarchy and planning reforms and updates.
- Implementation of lessons learned from complaints, reviews, appeals, and SPSO recommendations are responded to proactively and the wider circulation of staff compliments received from customers.

## 6. Supporting evidence

Part 5 of this report was compiled drawing on evidence from a variety of published sources.

A full list of our key publications, customer guidance, planning procedures etc. is available on Fife Direct:

[www.fifedirect.gov.uk](http://www.fifedirect.gov.uk)

### **Other relevant web links include**

- DPEA website:

[www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk)

- SG Website:

[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

## 7. Service Improvements - 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

In 2011/2012 we continued to embed the new planning and building processes and procedures and to prioritise our work in assisting developers out of the economic downturn.

In 2012/2013 fresh challenges were encountered in relation to continued reduced public sector funding and we reviewed current resources, and processes and how we managed our business.

Delivery of our service improvements and actions in 2012/2013 is set out in the table on the following page.

**Table 4: Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2012-13**

Committed improvements and actions	Complete
	Yes/No
The specific improvement areas set out in Audit Scotland's Report "Monitoring the Planning System" (September 2011). Ongoing and integral to the overall performance improvements to be achieved. Now also links in to the Key Performance Markers focus set out earlier in the PPF.	Ongoing
An Action Plan responding to the Federation of Small Businesses Manifesto (May 2012). Worked up in conjunction with colleagues in Protective Services. New guidance to be issued in 13/14 to set out customer focus.	Ongoing
Fife Council currently operates a decentralised, local area committee arrangement for considering non-delegated application (seven area committees). This arrangement is currently being reviewed to assess options for more efficient and proportionate delivery of planning decisions. Now reviewed and three new Planning Committees established from April 2013.	Yes
Fife Council, the Community Planning Partnership and the Fife Economy Partnership are collectively looking towards "Fife is a Centre of Excellence in Renewable Energy and Low Carbon technologies". A priority for Fife and continues to be advanced.	Ongoing
An updated version of the Enforcement Charter will be published in 2013 although it is up to date and relevant. Third issue of Enforcement charter published in 2013.	Yes
Further enhancements will be made to our website on Fife Direct to simplify information access for customers and to further embrace new social media channels. Updates completed but subject to continuous review to ensure site remains relevant and up to date.	Yes
A continued focus on sustainable development and implementation of the Council's Sustainability Statement and Checklist initiatives linked to building standards. Ongoing work across teams to ensure that sustainability matters are seen as an integral part of the planning process.	Yes
E-Building Standards to follow on from E-Planning to improve customer access for building warrants as part of Scottish Government review of E-Planning funding. Early development work completed but awaiting Scottish Government's formal position regarding funding and maintenance.	Ongoing
A radical review of all our activities, how we deliver services and our office spaces in the light of increasing pressure on the public sector budget to ensure continued value for money and efficient and effective service provision. Change processes are a continuous part of the work and will continue further in to 2013/14 and beyond.	Yes and ongoing
Reduction in target times from receipt to registration/validation – target maximum of five working days. Validation dates are now regularly within two days from receipt of a valid application.	Yes
Continued focus on "customer connections" and the introduction of customer identified improvements and changes. Another item which is constant each year and is built on with feedback and lessons learned.	Yes
Streamlined and fast track management of all legal agreements. New, jointly agreed arrangements in place with Legal Services with a further priority linked to Key Matters.	Yes and ongoing
Faster and leaner DPEA appeal processing arrangements to comply with DPEA target timescales. General improvements made to timescales and submissions but more improvements to be made in 2013/14.	Ongoing
New management approach to local development applications to speed up response times for decisions. A range of new performance monitoring approaches has been introduced to track performance across the Team and each staff member has specific targets set and monitored by management.	Yes

In the current year we will carry out the following improvements, in addition to ongoing improvements agreed in 2012-2013:

- The Key Performance Markers identified by Scottish Government/COSLA will be the principal focus for implementation and improvement.
- Performance targets and achieved performance for all application types to be further scrutinised and improved upon.
- New benchmarking arrangements to be introduced for the SOLACE “family” to identify “best in class” and to identify and implement any lessons learned/new initiatives for Fife.
- The creation of a new planning portfolio to bring together all the statutory planning functions and specialist planning activities into a single unified team.
- The implementation of an electronic Planning Obligations Tracker (POT) together with a cross-service focus on all legal agreements.
- The setting up of a new Customer Focus Group based on specific lessons learned and customer feedback.
- Processing agreements to be positively promoted and to be used for all major applications (and other local applications as appropriate).





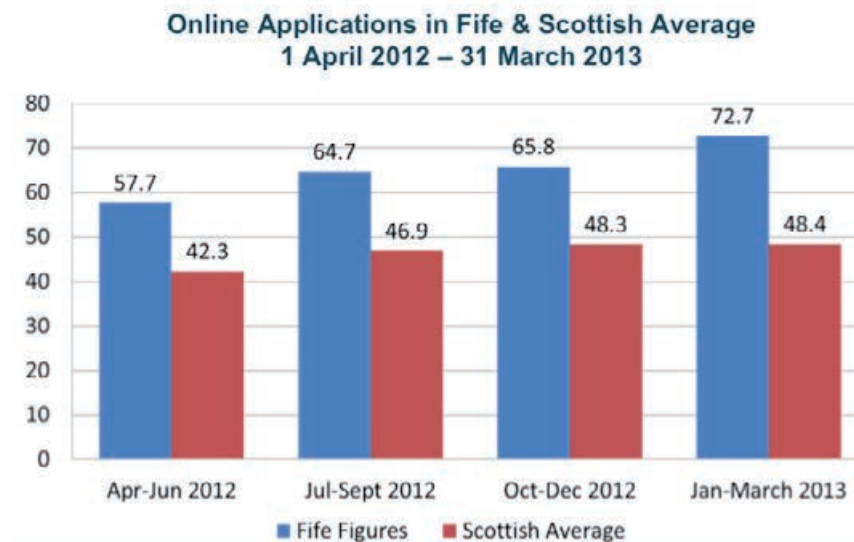
## 8. Conclusions

Fife Council provides Planning, Economic Development and Environmental Services at a consistently high level as evidenced by developer, applicant and customer feedback.

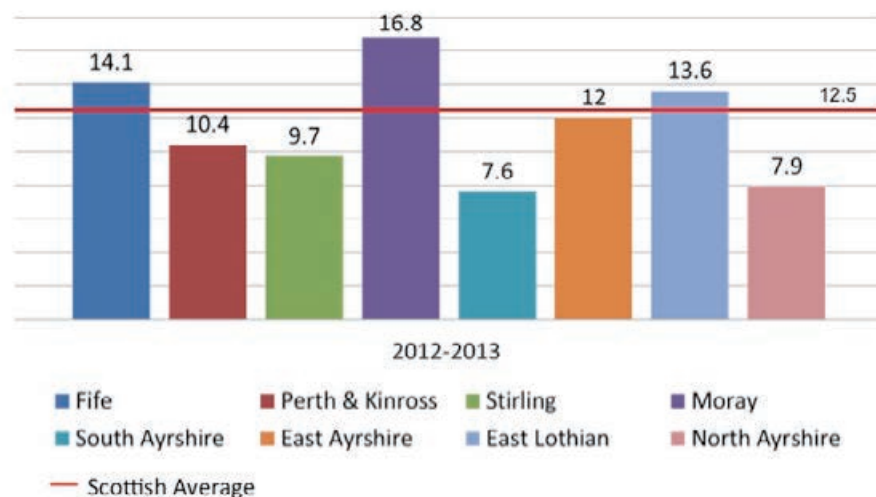
During 2012/2013 it has performed well in difficult circumstances with further staff reductions, internal team changes and the completion of an office and service move to a single office location for all planning services.

### Key highlights have included:

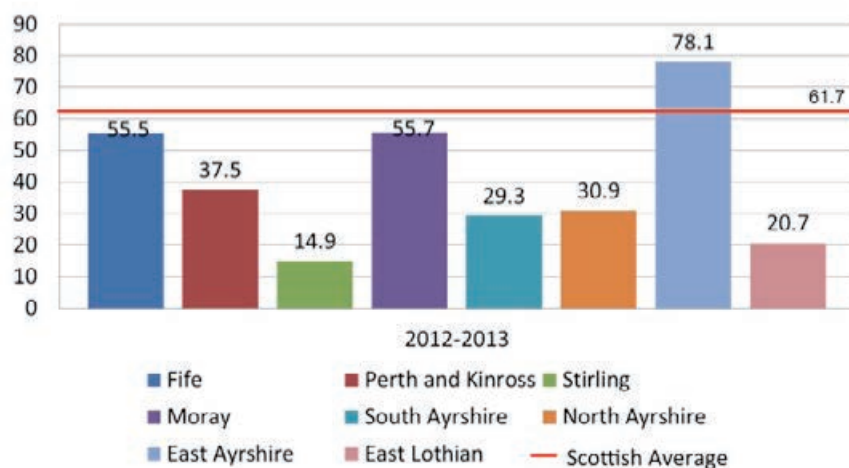
- Significant reduction in transaction and office accommodation costs.
- A continuing and successful track record of fast tracking large scale inward investments to planned project timescales.
- Complete up to date development plan coverage.
- Further implementation of community charette exercise in Methil led by Planning Aid Scotland and sponsored by the Scottish Government linking local community planning with land use planning.
- 100% active participation in Scottish Government consultation exercises
- Innovative training and consultative workshops on planning strategy, design and place making involving planning staff and key agencies.



Average time in weeks for Processing of Local Developments



Average time in weeks for all Major Developments to be processed



Areas which have been identified for further focussed improvements during 2013/2014 include meeting with customers who have experienced low levels of customer satisfaction in their views.

- Improved and targeted customer care and responsiveness levels including:
  - Short life "customer focus groups"
  - Introduction of new income streams and reduced advertising costs
  - Council agreement on three new planning committees from April 2013
- Processing agreements used for all major planning applications (April 2013).
- Project management, process and timescale improvements for all local development applications to improve performance levels.
- Renewed focus on the poor quality of application submissions and lack of supporting information.
- A new, integrated approach to section 75 agreements and planning obligations and other legal agreements including the introduction of a "Planning Obligations" manual tracker system. This would provide an invaluable interface with the establishment of any Fife Infrastructure Investment Model with both, in turn, ensuring that monies received or accrued are used to secure best value for Fife. An electronic version of the tracker is to be introduced in late 2013 to further improve the monitoring regime.

We want to build on our successful achievements and to improve areas of internal under-performance, although we recognise that these are considered to be at the margins of performance and not substantive, structural matters.

Fife Council considers that the PPF approach to performance and outcomes is a sound and appropriate approach which it wishes to consolidate and improve where necessary. Any subsequent suggestions for change will be submitted to the Heads of Planning Scotland and the Scottish Government for further discussion and consideration in rolling forward the PPF for 2013/2014. Fife has included new elements in PPF 2 which it considers merits consideration for inclusion in the national template for PPF3.

The PPF requires to be read in conjunction with the SLAED (Scottish Local Authority Economic Development) and LABSS (Local Authority Building Standards Scotland) scorecards and performance approaches which similarly showcase economic development and building standards performance, service standards and outputs.

The new benchmarking family agreed by SOLACE in 2013 will provide a further opportunity to compare and contrast relative performance levels and to identify areas of best practice for consideration in Fife. This will be a major feature of PPF 3 but some performance markers are shown for 2012/2013. Fife will be benchmarking with: Perth & Kinross, Stirling, Moray, East Lothian and South, East and North Ayrshire.

## Contact and Communication

This PPF has not covered every aspect of Fife Council's performance on planning matters and it has not listed all the different team achievements and outputs. It has focussed on the higher level and more obvious achievements as required by the PPF template.

Fife Council welcomes comments about the services provided, suggestions for improvements and endorsements of good practice. A more formal consultation process will be carried out on PPF 2 with key customer groups to further improve the range of priorities set out in PPF 2.

Separate to the consultation process, if you wish to provide specific comments or you require any further information on the contents of the PPF, the available supporting evidence or you wish to enquire about other areas of performance and achievement then please contact:

Jim Birrell, Senior Manager  
Development and Buildings  
Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services  
Fife Council, Kingdom House, Glenrothes  
Fife, KY7 5LY

Telephone **03451 555555** ext **442288**

or email **[Jim.Birrell@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Jim.Birrell@fife.gov.uk)**

# 9. Glossary and Guidance

## Part 1: National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

### Interpretation

Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years)	Number of full years passed starting from date(s) existing local or strategic development plan(s) were adopted /approved. Only the strategic development planning authority should provide the information on the strategic development plan.
Development plan scheme: on track?	On track if actions completed on time from last Development Plan scheme and there has been no slippage in forward-looking timetable set out in last scheme. Provide information in the text box to explain reasons for any slippage that has occurred.
Effective housing land supply	Position as at 31 March (or most recent annual figure held, if different date). Land on which residential units can be completed and available for occupation, as defined by paragraph 55 of Planning Advice Note 2/2010: Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits. Expressed as number of years and number of units supply, and also number of units approved.
Effective employment land supply	Position as at 31 March (or most recent annual figure held, if different date). Marketable land that meets business requirements, can be serviced or serviceable within 5 years, be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and has a secure planning status.
Effective commercial floor space supply	Position as at 31 March (or most recent annual figure held, if different date). Land comprising suitable and viable sites in terms of size, location and availability within a reasonable time period.
Applications subject to pre-application advice	Planning applications decided during the year on which the planning authority had provided pre-application advice to the applicant normally including written advice.
Number of applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan	Applications decided during the year for which there had been a clear project plan, shared and understood and agreed between the applicant and planning authority, including a scheduled timetable for handling of the application.
Application approval rate Delegation rate	Percentage figures; to be provided by the Scottish Government (Analytical Services), drawn from the data provided by planning authorities.
Decision-making timescales	Average number of weeks from receipt of a valid planning application to decision. Figures to be provided by the Scottish Government (Analytical Services), drawn from the data provided by planning authorities.
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed	Position as at 31 March. The number of months since the authority's enforcement charter was last published or reviewed and re-published.
Number of breaches identified / resolved	Matters which the planning authority has recognised to be breaches of planning control during the year; along with a record of identified breaches that have been resolved either through negotiation or compliance with more formal enforcement action.



### Text box

You can use the text box below the NHIs table to provide a short contextual statement, focussing on reasons/factors which have influenced the authority's performance and any increase or decrease on past results. This text box can also be used to provide relevant context for the development land supply and delivery figures, such as the area or percentage of land covered by environmental designations or national parks.

## Part 2: Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

The grid at Part 2 should be completed drawing on the list of identified actions and behaviours below. These are not exhaustive lists but examples of possible areas which may be covered in each section; there may be other more relevant activities you consider are more appropriate to report under each of the section headings for your specific Authority.

Guide: approx 150 words per section

### Open for business

Positive actions to support sustainable economic growth and social needs:

- Holistic approach to economic development and investment opportunities in partnership with others, internal and external to the authority.

- Development plan action programmes; evidence of efforts and success of delivery
- Management structure in place to facilitate/handle specific applications meeting business and social priorities and development plan delivery; use of project managers as appropriate
- Single point of contact allocated for duration of application; appropriate level of authority to provide reliable advice
- Positive and proactive policy on pre-application discussions and follow-up contacts/advice to developers post-decision; evidence of policy in practice; measure (i) percentage of major and local applications preceded by PAD, and (ii) resources given to customer-facing service for pre-application and post-decision activity
- Proportionate information requests: evidence of reasonable, risk management approach to requests for supporting information alongside applications
- Proportionate and reasonable expectations for contributions to infrastructure etc.; clear on expectations at early stage e.g. policy
- Policy in place on engagement standards: quick response to meeting requests; telephone calls taken or returned quickly; early dates set for meetings
- Early consideration of detail and quality aspects of proposals during application process, in addition to the principle of development

### High quality development on the ground

Creating and shaping places of which we can all be proud:

- In context of development plan and changes in land use, positive steps to examine and produce case studies into how physical environment has changed; learn from experiences
- Development proposals have been the subject of negotiated or conditioned design improvements through the planning process
- Development plans provide a clear policy context for placeshaping and quality design
- Design panel; operate local design awards
- Promote understanding and provide support/training for community interests
- Demonstration of investment and benefits; recognise value to area of consented/completed development and if possible, development plans
- Local environmental improvements, regeneration and town centre activities and enhancements
- Design context set out in Strategic Development Frameworks, Masterplans, Design Briefs or similar

### **Certainty**

Consistency of advice, process, engagement and decision-making:

- Key Agencies and Lead Persons engaged over development plan action programmes' ability to deliver planned development
- Robustness of development plan: measure percentage of applications decided contrary to plan; benchmark level of departures considered acceptable
- Protocols/concordats in place with other local authority services and agencies about reliability of advice and working timescales for development management and development planning
- Positive support for processing agreements/ project management approach to timetabling decisions; set clear and realistic timescales for actions and decisions
- Clear project management in place for development planning with development plan schemes setting out project plans
- Consistency and reliability of officer advice on likely decisions; measure applications decided contrary to officer recommendation
- Clear advice on expected standards for application submissions (including assessments etc.); measure percentage applications not validated at first attempt

### **Communications, engagement and customer service**

Communications strategy for engagement and positive customer experience:

- Customer service charter(s) in place; include clear contact points/one-stop-shop for reliable advice; recognise differing needs of regular and occasional customers
- Customer surveys and local forums, covering range of interests (report in segments); examine experiences and perception of whole service; report on customer satisfaction levels; results inform action plans
- Proactive encouragement for constructive feedback of customer experiences
- Complaints: policy on handling complaints and actions where complaints upheld; report on number of upheld complaints
- Electronic communication options: website audits; proactively pursue ePlanning use; measure applications and representations submitted online; and development planning and other consultations online
- Document quality: evidence of commitment to easy-to-read; Crystal Mark on key documents; availability of alternative methods of presentation (e.g. Braille; minority languages)
- Meaningful and balanced engagement: evidence of effort to engage with 'hard to reach' groups; rolling programme of training for community groups

### **Efficient and effective decision-making**

Ensuring structures and processes are proportionate:

- Team and committee structures and governance arrangements established; displaying a collective sense of urgency
- Schemes of delegation effective; committee and local review body cycles meet with appropriate regularity
- Dealing with delays: evidence of action to progress projects, e.g. stalled cases, development plans
- Time management: training available and policy/procedures in place
- Service agreements/protocols with agencies and other consulters; reviewed regularly

### **Effective management structures**

Ensuring management structures are effective and fit for purpose:

- Local authority management and team structures capable of delivering planning/ development priorities
- Good support mechanism in place; mobile/ fluid workforce able to react where needed
- Planned development of staffing resource; right numbers and skills available to meet future needs

- Collaboration: strong relationships with (i) other business areas within local authority, (ii) neighbouring authorities, and (iii) other public bodies, to deliver joint objectives

### **Financial management and local governance**

Demonstrating effective governance and financial management:

- Resources aligned to priorities; demonstrate drawing on workforce survey
- Policy to ensure time and resources committed is proportionate to the value added.
- Structures in place to procure services/spend effectively

### **Culture of continuous improvement**

Demonstrating a culture of learning and improving:

- Plan for on-going development of staff, management and elected members
- Evidence staff, management and members have been well trained and given clear sense of priorities
- Previous improvement plan – evidence it has been delivered and benefits realised

## **Part 3: Supporting evidence**

Explain (briefly) what information the authority has drawn on in compiling this report, such as:

- what customer input there has been which has influenced the report and/or authority actions
- whether there has been any audit or management/process reviews, and the relevant findings
- partnership work with others
- formal and informal benchmarking
- other Council reports and initiatives

Include links to web pages as appropriate and illustrate through images.

## **Part 4: Service improvements**

### **Service improvements in the coming year**

State key commitments and actions for future service improvements, drawing on the results and findings from sections 1-2 and Appendix I. There is no maximum or minimum number of commitments to be made here – but it might be best to have a small number, focused on specific and practical service improvements.

### **Delivery of service improvement actions committed in previous year**

Based on the service improvement plan from the previous year, report on the commitments made and the specific actions carried out in relation to each commitment, including any evidence of the results of those actions.

# Appendix I: Official Statistics

## Decision-making timescales

Information on decision-making timescales for planning and other applications will be provided by the Scottish Government (Analytical Services), drawn from the data provided by planning authorities.

It is important that the statistics give an accurate and reliable account of the timescales for handling applications. There will be an opportunity for planning authorities, when providing their data to the Scottish Government, to highlight particular cases where substantial, and clearly unavoidable, delays have occurred. Additionally, the planning authority should highlight at that time any applications where there has been written agreement between the authority and the applicant that no action should be taken on the application during a specified period. The figures provided by the Scottish Government for this section may therefore have been reasonably adjusted to provide a more accurate marker of performance.

For applications where the authority and applicant have agreed a timescale different from the 2 month and 4 month targets, for example where there are processing agreements in place, the statistics on decision times will be adjusted to reflect these agreements.

## Local reviews and appeals

Information on local review and appeal decisions will be provided by the Scottish Government (Analytical Services), drawn from the data provided by planning authorities.

## Decision-making timescales

Category	Total number of decisions 2012-2013	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2012-2013	2011-2012
<b>Major developments</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>45.5</b>	58.3
<b>Local developments (non-householder)</b>	<b>855</b>	18.8	
Local: less than 2 months	39.4(%)	6.9	
Local: more than 2 months	60.6(%)	26.5	12.9
<b>Householder developments</b>	<b>896</b>	7.2	
Local: less than 2 months	87.9(%)	6.4	
Local: more than 2 months	12.1(%)	12.6	
<b>Housing developments</b>	<b>5</b>	62.6	64.9
<b>Major</b>	<b>221</b>	28.9	
<b>Local housing developments</b>	16.3(%)	7.3	41.5
Local: less than 2 months	83.7(%)	33.1	
Local: more than 2 months			
<b>Business and industry</b>	<b>3</b>	21.8	77.7
<b>Major</b>	<b>235</b>	13.2	
<b>Local business and industry</b>	54.9(%)	6.7	23.0
Local: less than 2 months	45.1(%)	21.0	
Local: more than 2 months			
<b>EIA developments</b>			
Local developments subject to EIA	5	76.6	73.3
AMSCs (subject to EIA)	4	11.5	
<b>Other consents*</b>			
Listed buildings & con area consents	306	14.0	
Advertisements	122	8.4	
Hazardous substances consents	2	39.9	
Other consents and certificates	370	4.0	
<b>Planning/legal agreements**</b>	47	58.2	90.5
<b>Local reviews</b>	42	16.3	11.4

\* 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 & 7 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

		Original decision upheld			
Type	Total number of decisions	2012-2013 No.	%	2011-2012 No.	%
Local reviews	42		47.6		59.1
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	65		63.1		51.9

## Enforcement activity

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Cases taken up	50	29
Breaches identified	84	-
Cases resolved	349	-
Notices served ***	22	29
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.

# Appendix 2: Fife 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.

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	7	0	21.6	0	5	0			33.6
Development Planning	5.8	0	8	0	3	0			16.8
Enforcement Staff	1	0	5	0					6
Cross Service/Other Planning	3	0	4				10	0	17

Staffing profile (DM & DP Teams)	Number
Under 30	8
30-39	19
40-49	28
50 and Over	19

Committees & site visits (3)	No. per year
Full Council committees	6-weekly
Planning Committees	4-weekly
Area Committees (where relevant)	4-weekly
Committee site visits	N/K
LRB (4)	4-weekly
LRB site visits	N/K

Budgets	Budget	Costs		Income (7)
Planning Service		Direct (5)	Indirect (6)	
Development Management	1,174	1,534	915	-1,260
Development Planning	2,149	1,253	988	0
Enforcement	436	276	163	0

Budget & costs are in £ thousands