



Fife Council

Planning Performance Framework

2015/16



Foreword



by **Cllr Lesley Laird**

Depute Leader and Executive Spokesperson for
Economy, Planning & Employability

As Fife Council's Planning spokesperson I am pleased to submit the fifth Planning Performance Framework for Fife. The framework has continued to be developed at a national level to ensure that the planning system is fit for purpose and is improving year on year.

In Fife our continuing aim is to ensure that the planning system can support sustainable economic growth in keeping with our aim to make "Fife the best place to do business" as well as protecting our environment, and encouraging our local communities to participate in and get involved in our planning process. Something we very much want to do more of.

During this performance year we have submitted for examination FIFEplan, the new Local Development Plan covering the whole of Fife. We have played a key role in delivering quality developments, enhancing places across Fife and listening and engaging with Fife communities.

The introduction of customer surveys has been invaluable and demonstrates that we are improving and providing a good quality of service. The views of our customers are very important and Planning's strap line of 'Listen, Consider and Respond' is becoming embedded in our culture. Customer feedback has also been instrumental in driving improvements in processes, committee reports and is followed up with staff training. Unfortunately we will not always get things right, but when we don't we always seek to learn and implement improvements.

PPF5 demonstrates the continuous improvement which Fife planning has achieved through decisions, promoting a plan-led system, simplifying and streamlining, and delivering development. The case studies exemplify the excellent work which has been delivered.

The speed of decision-making continues to be an important measure of the overall effectiveness of the planning system. Whilst we have seen a significant improvement in major applications, our speed indicator has only marginally improved for local and householder applications and we recognise this must improve.

Developing and building the Planning Team is also important and this year I am particularly pleased that one of our planners, William Shand, was shortlisted for UK Young Planner of the Year, an excellent achievement.

We will continue to provide leadership both politically and through officers to achieve our overall aim of becoming one of the top performing planning authorities in Scotland. Our journey continues.

Introduction

Fife Council's Economy, Planning & Employability Services is pleased to submit the fifth version of its Planning Performance Framework for the 2015/16 period. This performance framework reports on how we have responded to the Scottish Government's feedback report to PPF4 last year.

Fife Council's planning objectives include achieving sustainable development, supporting business investment, and providing a supply of attractive housing and employment land to meet Fife's future needs. The way we do this mirrors our ambition to continually improve the planning service and take on board suggestions from customers.

This Planning Performance Framework sets out examples of engagement and collaborative working, promoting quality in planning Fife's places, and contributing to Fife's economic, community, and environmental aspirations. The case studies used illustrate how planning in Fife adds value to the planning process by improving the built development, working with developers and community groups to find solutions to issues, applying planning policy to arrive at development of which we can all be proud, and encouraging future generations to get involved in their environment and communities.

The Service's improvements and performance continues to demonstrate a commitment to becoming a truly excellent planning service. It also outlines the steps we are taking to develop our staff and ways of working so we can be resilient in dealing with the financial pressures all planning authorities are experiencing. We believe we are on course in our journey of being a planning service which listens, considers, and responds to what our customers say.

Driving Improved Performance

The following table provides a summary analysis of how we consider Fife Council is performing and the progress we are making in relation to the performance markers identified by the Scottish Government.

Table 1

Performance Marker	RAG	Source/Evidence
1. Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average time scales for all development types	Amber	We continue to make progress on reducing the times for major applications and the average time for these cases has reduced considerably from the statistics reported in PPF4. In relation to minor and local applications. Delivery of improved performance has been compromised due to periods of long term illness, colleagues leaving the service, internal promotions and the resultant vacancies. We have now filled these vacancies and can confidently anticipate reporting much improved performance in these areas in PPF 6. The fact that despite these significant pressures on remaining staff, our performance levels have marginally improved is reflective of the strong commitment to service delivery in the Development Management Team. Evidence: National Headline Indicators table.
2. 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.	Green	We can demonstrate an increased uptake of Processing agreements in this reporting period which is reflected in the NHI Table under Development Management Project Planning. The active promotion of this service over the reporting periods which was an objective from PPF4, is beginning to show results. We will be formalising the project management of all applications processed through the Priority Applications Team and this will be reported on further in PPF6. Evidence: NHI Table. PA forms on fifedirect.
4. Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant' * <i>* this will require production of supporting guidance, following wider stakeholder input</i>	Green	Through effective project management and close collaboration with other Services and stakeholders we have continued to reduce the number of planning applications awaiting the resolution of S75 agreements. We have maintained the role of a specialist officer to monitor and project manage legal agreements to ensure that they are not dormant for unreasonable periods. Evidence Official Statistics Table: Planning/Legal agreements.
5. Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Green	Our Enforcement Charter is up to date. We will review and update on this following the outcomes of the Enforcement Lean event to be held in August/September 2016. Evidence: NHI: Enforcement. and Part 4.
6. Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	Amber	The case studies 4,5,and 6, and the programmed improvements for PPF6 noted in Part 4 clearly demonstrate how we deliver innovative approaches to delivering the planning system, are achieving high quality development on the ground, engaging with our stakeholders and communities and seek to encourage, inspire and develop young planners of the future and promote planning to the wider community. Evidence: Case studies 4,5 and 6 and programmed improvements for PPF 6 in Part 4.

PROMOTING THE PLAN-LED SYSTEM

Performance Marker	Measure	
7. LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Green	All three Local Plans were adopted in 2012/2013. The replacement FIFEplan is progressing well through examination stage.
8. Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5-year cycle project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	Amber	The adoption of FIFEplan is programmed for August 2016 in the current Development Plan Scheme (version 7). The plan is on course for adoption within the 5-year cycle. (Position as at 31st March 2016). There has been a significant delay in the examination of the LDP which will result in adoption outwith the 5 year period. This delay is not as a result of Fife Council actions and therefore is not a reflection on the Planning Authority.
9. Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	N/A	This stage pre dates the reporting period for PPF5, nevertheless elected members are engaged throughout the LDP process.
10. Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	N/A	This stage pre dates the reporting period for PPF5, nevertheless elected members are engaged throughout the LDP process.
11. Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	Green	We continue to develop policy advice and guidance for our customers and stakeholders as evidenced in case studies 1 and 3. In addition all our current Development Frameworks are published on our website. The case studies and information below illustrate examples of the activities undertaken during the reporting period. Evidence Case study 1 and 3.

SIMPLIFYING AND STREAMLINING

Performance Marker	Measure	
12. Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Amber	We continue to develop close working relationships with Fife Council's Housing Service to deliver the Affordable Housing Programme , planning has a key role on Affordable Housing Programme Board, School Estates Board, making Fife the Best place to do Business Group, Town Centre Working Group, and Corporate Leadership Group. Colleagues from a range of Services providing specialist advice work closely to provide advice to development management and policy work. Officers work in 'virtual' teams to assist with the progress of the major development areas and provide advice to the developer(s). Case study 3 clearly evidences how all strands of the service work together to develop new policy and how this is tested in an open and collaborative atmosphere which reflects the culture of positive cooperation and respect. Evidence: Case Study 1 and 3
13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	As reported below, colleagues actively participate in RTPI , HOPS and SOLACE . We take opportunities to share experience and benchmark through these organisations and as reported below work with colleagues in Scotland and further afield including Northern Ireland. Enforcement officers actively participate in the the work of NAPE (National Association of Planning Enforcement). Evidence is provided in the Governance and Continuous Improvement sections of PPF5.

DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT

Performance Marker	Measure	
14. Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old	Green	During the reporting period through active management of legacy cases a further 16 cases have been determined. 21 outstanding legacy cases over a year old remain to be determined. We continue to work through live planning cases to reduce and remove those more than 1 year old. Evidence: NHI Table
15. Developer contributions: clear expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and • in pre-application discussions 	Green	The adoption of the Planning Obligations Framework Guidance provides an easy read flow chart for developers and is referred to in Pre Apps and is used to frame legal agreements. It provides clarity to customers and stakeholders. We are currently considering a review of the obligations framework to determine whether any updating is required to ensure that the framework up to date. Evidence is in case studies and testimonials in PPF 5.

Part 1: National Headline Indicators

Table 2

Key outcomes	2015-2016	2014-2015
age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of reporting period Requirement: less than 5 years	<p>As at 31st March 2016:</p> <p>Mid Fife Local Plan (Adopted 23rd January 2012) – 4 years, 2 months</p> <p>St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan (Adopted 5th October 2012) – 3 years, 5 months</p> <p>Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan (Adopted 16th November 2012) – 3 years, 4 months</p> <p>Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 4 years, 11 months</p> <p>TAYplan (Approved 8th June, 2012) – 3 years, 9 months</p> <p>SESplan (Approved 27th June, 2013) – 2 year, 9 months</p>	<p>As at 31st March 2015:</p> <p>Mid Fife Local Plan (Adopted 23rd January 2012) – 3 years, 2 months</p> <p>St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan (Adopted 5th October 2012) – 2 years, 5 months</p> <p>Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan (Adopted 16th November 2012) – 2 years, 4 months</p> <p>Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 3 years, 11 months</p> <p>TAYplan (Approved 8th June, 2012) – 2 years, 9 months</p> <p>SESplan (Approved 27th June, 2013) – 1 year, 9 months</p>
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? (Y/N)	<p>Yes. FIFEplan adoption programmed for August 2016 in Development Plan Scheme 7 at which time the plan ages will be:</p> <p>Mid Fife Local Plan – 4 years, 7 months</p> <p>St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan – 3 years, 10 months</p> <p>Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan – 3 years, 9 months</p> <p>Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 5 years, 4 months * see note below</p> <p>Yes. TAYplan approval programmed for late 2016 at which time the plan age will be – 4 years, 6 months</p> <p>No. SESplan approval programmed for summer 2018 at which time the plan age will be approximately 5 years</p>	<p>Yes. FIFEplan adoption programmed for August 2016 in Development Plan Scheme 7 at which time the plan ages will be:</p> <p>Mid Fife Local Plan – 4 years, 7 months</p> <p>St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan – 3 years, 10 months</p> <p>Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan – 3 years, 9 months</p> <p>Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 5 years, 4 months * see note below</p> <p>Yes. TAYplan approval programmed for late 2016 at which time the plan age will be – 4 years, 6 months</p> <p>Yes. SESplan approval programmed for late 2017 at which time the plan age will be – 4 years, 6 months</p>
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year? (Y-earlier/ Y-later/N)	No.	Yes - later
Were development plan scheme engagement/ consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)	<p>Given the stage the Local Development Plan is currently at, as per the development plan scheme, no engagement or consultation was undertaken within the PPF5 period.</p> <p>The FIFEplan Report of Conformity with the Participation Statement (June 2015) was submitted to the DPEA as part of the ongoing examination. The reporter concluded their examination of conformity with the participation statement in September 2015.</p>	Yes

Key outcomes	2015-2016	2014-2015
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs*		
Established housing land supply	37,673 Units	37,673 Units
5-year effective housing land supply	10,120 Units	10,120 Units
5-year housing supply target	16,440 Units	16,440 Units
5-year effective housing land supply <i>(to one decimal place)</i>	3.1 Years	3.1 Years
Housing approvals	185 Units	185 Units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	4,044 Units	4,044 Units
Marketable employment land supply	210.9 ha	157.04 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	42.19 ha	36.47 ha
(Fully Developed)	33.97 ha	41.03 ha
(Under Construction)		

Due to a delay in reporting the latest housing statistics, the final figures are not yet available; consequently the figures quoted are the same as those in PPF 4. We anticipate that the revised figures will be available in September and these will be published online. [Housing Land Audit](#)

Key outcomes	2015-2016	2014-2015
Development Management Project Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice Number of major applications subject to processing agreement Number of applications subject to other project plan Percentage planned timescales met 	5% 15 0 73%	5% 3 0 67%
Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application approval rate Delegation rate 	93.2% 94.5%	93% 94.8%
Decision-making timescales Average number of weeks to decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major developments Local developments (non-householder) Householder developments 	28.2 15.2 8.5	45.0 15.8 8.6
Legacy Cases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number cleared during reporting period Number remaining 	23 21	44 25
Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) Requirement: review every 2 years number of breaches identified / resolved 	13 117/125	1 170/171

The Fife Local Development Plan continues to progress through the examination stage. There has been a significant delay through the examination period, outwith Fife Council's control, and the examination report is now expected late August/September 2016. Adoption would follow in early 2017. PPF6 will update further on this. We continue to publish updates on fifiedirect and communicate through our [twitter account](#) and our [Fife Local Development Plan eBulletin](#)

We are pleased to report the improved performance of the Priority application team in this PPF; this can largely be attributed to more proactive management of legal agreements, a period of relative stability in terms of staff numbers and a focus on the project management of cases through the team. We have included further information on these areas within case studies 1, 2 and 3 and in the supporting text in this PPF. The decision timescales for local and minor applications have only marginally improved during the PPF 5 reporting period and this is directly related to a disproportionate turnover of staff within this team and long term sickness absences which has reduced capacity. We have undertaken restructuring and new appointments within this area of our Service as reported in the Governance section of this PPF which we are confident will provide the capacity and resilience to improve performance which we will be able to deliver in the PPF 6 reporting period.

Having directed specific resources to improving how we process our Section 75 and legacy case monitoring we are pleased to report a significant reduction in these cases. Of the 69 cases in this category which we processed in the 2014- 15 period we have reduced the on hand cases remaining to 21. These continue to be pro-actively managed by our dedicated Section 75 case officer or other project managed approach such as our remaining wind turbine applications.

While our enforcement statistics provide an indication of our performance over the PPF6 period we are going to review the recording of our performance and consider new metrics to ensure all the activities in this area are more accurately measured which will ensure the efforts of the enforcement officers are reflected better. We have an Enforcement LEAN programmed for late summer 2016. Contrary to the statistics recorded here we can confirm that there has been one formal prosecution of a planning case through the courts which resulted in a fine for the offender. The accurate recording of our enforcement statistics in uniform which is the source of the quarterly return will also be addressed through the LEAN event.

Part 2 Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service.

Quality of Outcomes

These snap shot case studies provide examples of on the ground development pulling various objectives and guidance together. These provide examples of cases where the Planning process has influenced the outcomes and achieved improved quality of development through a combination of implementing guidance documents, design improvements, and joint working. We continue to champion innovative contemporary design and promote the very best architecture of today to ensure that Fife continues to enrich its built heritage and can demonstrate continued investment in its communities.

Case Study 1- Development on the ground.

Example A:

Residential Development, Volunteers Green, Kirkcaldy Esplanade.

This proposal was the first significant private sector investment leading to the reinvigoration of the seafront in Kirkcaldy. In October 2015 Fife Council approved the [Town Centre Design and Development Framework for Kirkcaldy](#) which sets out the opportunities and development criteria for the regeneration of Kirkcaldy town centre and how its heritage and assets can provide the drivers for economic investment and reconnecting the town centre to the sea front and the esplanade. Fife Council as part of its investment in new leisure centres had previously redeveloped a long term vacant site nearby to build a new state of the art leisure centre fronting onto the esplanade with views across the Firth of Forth.



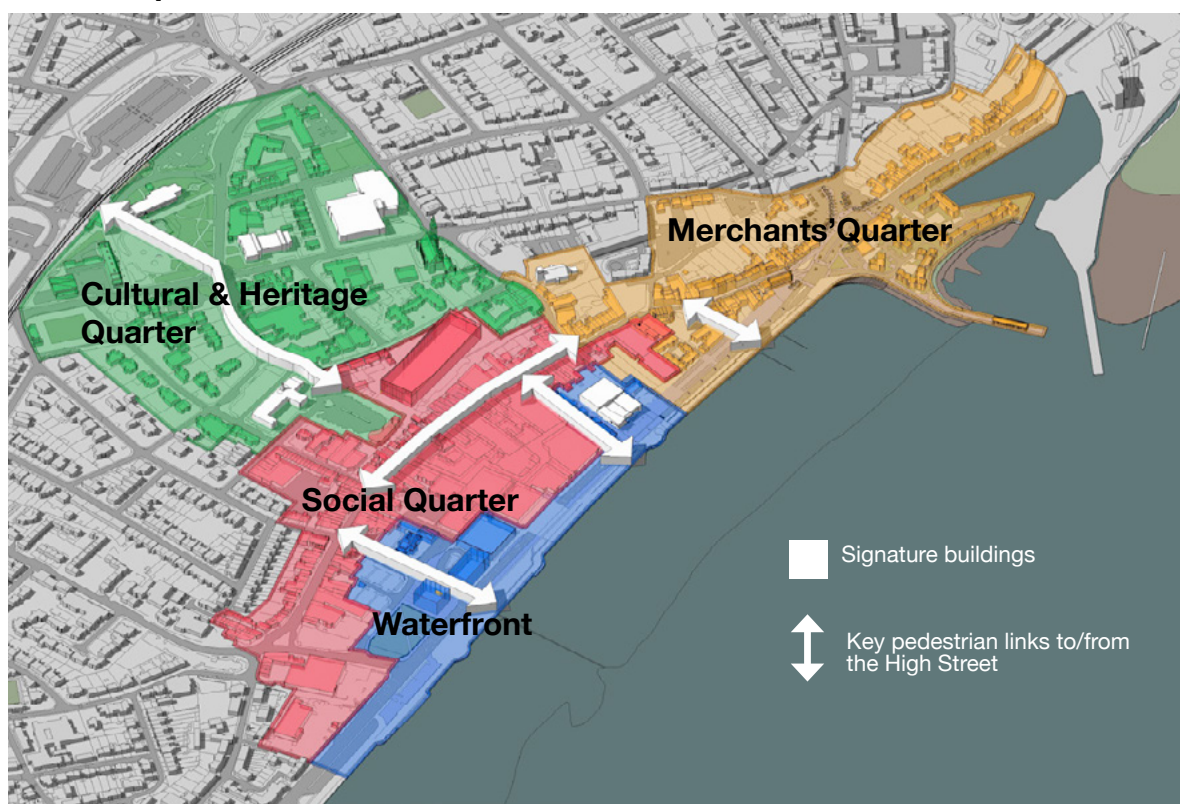
Picture credits:
 Architects: Davidson Baxter Partnership Ltd
 Consulting Engineer: McGregor McMahon Associates
 Principle Contractor: Kilbarchan Homes
 Developer: Alex Penman

The residential development next to Volunteers Green is the first of several opportunity sites on the seafront and around the Town Centre identified in the Development Brief. The design criteria in the brief clearly established the pivotal urban design role that the site had in terms of creating a prominent building to act as a gateway feature and signature building. The existence of the brief was used by the developers in their design strategy, and incorporated into their design statement accompanying the planning application, and provided confidence and certainty as to what was expected in how the council envisaged the site could be developed. The brief also provided a strong basis for the planning service to frame its discussions with the applicant. The resulting building is considered to provide a high quality development on the seafront which is already proving popular with new residents; and together with the investment in the leisure centre by fife Council signifies the re-connection of Kirkcaldy's waterfront to the town centre.

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Kirkcaldy Town Centre Quarters

The four quarters in the town centre



Example B:

Aytoun House, Abbey Walk, St Andrews, Fife.

This project was processed by the Council's Priority Applications Team. The Team is designed to process Major applications and business investment proposals. The staff work alongside the Economic Development Team to maximise the opportunities of shared knowledge and understanding of key inward investment projects. By having a dedicated team for such planning applications the applicants are able to engage in meaningful pre-application discussions. These were formalised within a draft submission proposal that allowed positive design discussions. This process culminated in a clear direction from the Planning Authority on the design constraints of the development, the application submission requirements and a Processing Agreement setting out the likely timescale for the decision. The proposal has been submitted for a Scottish Award for Quality in Planning.

"In this instance developer, architect, council and community groups worked together from the outset to ensure that the design solution was driven primarily by the local context of the site and would be constructed to a high standard using quality materials. There was constant open dialogue between the architects and the Planning Authority as the designs developed. At the community consultation stages the architects concentrated only on massing and form (with simple cardboard models) and thus were able to take on board suggestions from members of the public. The development greatly benefitted from the engagement with the Priority Applications Team and the pre-application work that was possible. This led to a timeous decision date and greater certainty for the developer.



Photographs by **Michael Wolchover**
courtesy of Oberlanders Architects LLP

“It is recommended that other planning authorities look at this particular team approach and the benefits it may bring to the determination of complex and sensitive development projects.

Arguably this could have been a virtually impossible task, however by ensuring open dialogue and discussion throughout the process, planners, designers, clients and the community successfully worked together to ensure a successful outcome. There is no doubt that the Priority Applications Team approach within the Planning Authority was instrumental in ensuring that everyone involved understood fully what was required to achieve a satisfactory design solution and helped orchestrate the final outcome. Testament to the process was the fact that the design proposals were fully endorsed and approved by Council at the first opportunity.

The entire planning process, took under 12 months with construction taking a further 18 months. The project was constructed by The Watkin Jones Group on a design and build basis and was successfully completed and fitted out ready for the student intake in September 2015.

The project therefore is an exemplar of the planning process as envisaged by the changes introduced by the 2006 Planning Act, working, successfully with full community, design team, council and private sector involvement to achieve a build solution to the benefit of all.”

David Lawson, for Oberlanders Architects LLP.



Performance Marker Measure

2 - Project management

3 - Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications.

12 - Corporate working across services.

Case Study 2 - Working together

Carnegie Libraries and Galleries

Approved in August 2012, work commenced on site in 2015, this Fife Council scheme involved the change of use of office accommodation and extension of the existing Carnegie library to form a major new museum and art gallery incorporating archive research, local and family studies facilities as part of a cohesive and multi-purpose public building. A key component of the scheme is the erection of a contemporary extension to the existing B Listed Carnegie Library building (originally completed in 1883 with later extensions and alterations carried out in 1922 and 1993) and incorporates 5-7 Abbot Street (also B Listed) and the unlisted St Margaret's House. The scheme also proposes environmental improvements to the outdoor areas in the form of formal landscaping for general public use. These prominent town centre buildings are key components to the wider Dunfermline Outstanding Conservation Area.

The library building is considered to be important for its social, historical and architectural associations in addition to being a highly valued and well-used community facility. This meant that the sensitive integration of the new with the old was key to the success of the project whilst it was important to create an easily managed and efficient modern facility. The library has important connections to the industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie who was born in Dunfermline. The Dunfermline Carnegie Library was the first library to be funded by him and the first of over 2,500 worldwide to be constructed using grants from his charitable foundations.

The sensitive site as a whole lies close to other architecturally and historically important buildings and structures such as the Abbey (its grounds, gate piers, walls and gatehouse), Abbot House and the New Abbey Parish Church. The site lies close to a Scheduled Ancient Monument and important ecclesiastical centre that dates back to a period earlier than the visible remaining 16th century remnants.



The proposal forms part of a wider programme of works to reorganise the cultural attractions in Dunfermline. The overall plan is to close the existing Pittencrieff House Museum in Pittencrieff Park and replace it by opening an improved and integrated library, museum, art gallery and educational resource centre in the heart of the town centre attached to the world's first Carnegie Library and in close proximity to the Abbey and Abbot House. The proposals involve extensive refurbishment and renovation work and some demolition to the two B listed properties. The evolution of the project itself stems from a design competition run in 2007 for a new museum and art gallery for the town which was won by Richard Murphy Architects.

The planning case officer attended the pre application meetings with the board charged with delivering the project and maintained his role as the key contact throughout the pre application and during the assessment of the planning application. Other members of the Planning team were involved in securing Heritage Lottery Funding for the Project, devising a Conservation Plan for the building and for ensuring an Archaeological Investigation was undertaken before the start of construction works. Through the work of the case officer and other planning portfolio colleagues' engagement with the project we were able to effectively influence the approach to the redevelopment of the site and ensure that LDP, Urban Design and Designing Streets principles in our Supplementary Guidelines were incorporated into the project.

Close work with the Council's Estates, Fife Cultural Trust who will manage the facility when it is completed in spring 2017, and the developers is delivering a significant and important investment in the tourism offer in Dunfermline building on the historic attractions of the town.



Performance Marker Measures -

- 3 - Early collaboration with applicants/stakeholders,
- 11 -policy advice and guidance on CAs LBC.
- 12- Working together: services and stakeholders.

Quality of Service and Engagement

The Fife Local Development Plan reviewed to address the outcomes from the examination, it is anticipated that it will be adopted in early 2017. We have updated the [Local Development Plan Scheme](#) which provides the latest timescales for adoption. We also publish regular updates on the progression of the Development Plan and have twitter and linkedin accounts to ensure customers are informed of developments with the [LDP program](#) and related initiatives and activities.

The Planning Service continues to respond to the economic pressures affecting Fife and collaborate to provide assistance to economic investment into Fife and to support existing businesses. Our Priority Applications Team continues to provide a tailored service for these customers and applicants. We promote the use of processing agreements and provide Pre application advice across both development management teams. We have a dedicated planning officer supporting the delivery of Fife Council's ambitious program to deliver affordable housing. A planning officer also provides direct guidance and support to the work of the three Business Improvement Districts and the town centre managers have priority access to Development Management Lead officers and the Service Manager to address urgent issues relating to the processing of critical applications which may assist in revitalising town centres as well as assisting with pre application advice. Development management continue to provide a contact planning officer to assist with the submission of planning applications for the delivery of broadband, who offers advice on location of exchange boxes in conservation areas and next to listed buildings to ensure issues are resolved as far as possible before planning or listed building applications are submitted.

We are pleased to report in PPF 5 a significant uptake in Processing agreements, all priority applications are project managed and as reported in PPF 4 the dedicated support of a bespoke team to deliver these key applications has perhaps limited the uptake of Processing Agreements in Fife. Nevertheless in the PPF 5 reporting period formal processing agreements have increased from the 3 reported in PPF4 to 15. We have also received positive feedback on these:

"Myself and my client, David Morgan, attended the West Planning Committee yesterday in Dunfermline. David was delighted with the outcome based on your thorough report and excellent presentation to Members by (the case officer) as well as his response to questions.

I just wanted to say it was a pleasure working with you on this application and I thought that the Processing Agreement worked very well. Thank you for all your efforts and advice throughout the process, of which my client is also very appreciative.

I look forward to working with you again in a similar vein in the future should another opportunity arise."

John McCallum, Planning Consultant.

We continue to promote the availability of Processing agreements on our website and in the responses to [Pre application advice](#).

In the PPF5 reporting period we have provided 272 pre application responses covering the range of application types. As noted in the guidance we provide a tailored service for pre application advice with different fees depending on the type of development proposed. In addition business investment and major proposals and those proposed by the top 200 businesses are dealt with by the Priority Applications Team.

Throughout the reporting period we have continued to work towards securing restoration of former opencast coal sites. restoration of one site (St Ninians) is substantially complete. Significant improvements have been achieved at Muirdean under the provisions of a positive enforcement notice and funding is in place to support the continuing works on the site. A Legal claim is being pursued to secure the funding needed to progress restoration of a third site at Blairhall.

In December the first phase of the remit of the Scottish Coal Taskforce was discharged through the publication of the Ministerial report [Surface Coal Mine Restoration - Towards Better Regulation : A final report to the Scottish Opencast Coal Taskforce by its Compliance and Finance Subgroups](#)

Fife continues to participate fully in the ongoing remit of the Taskforce.

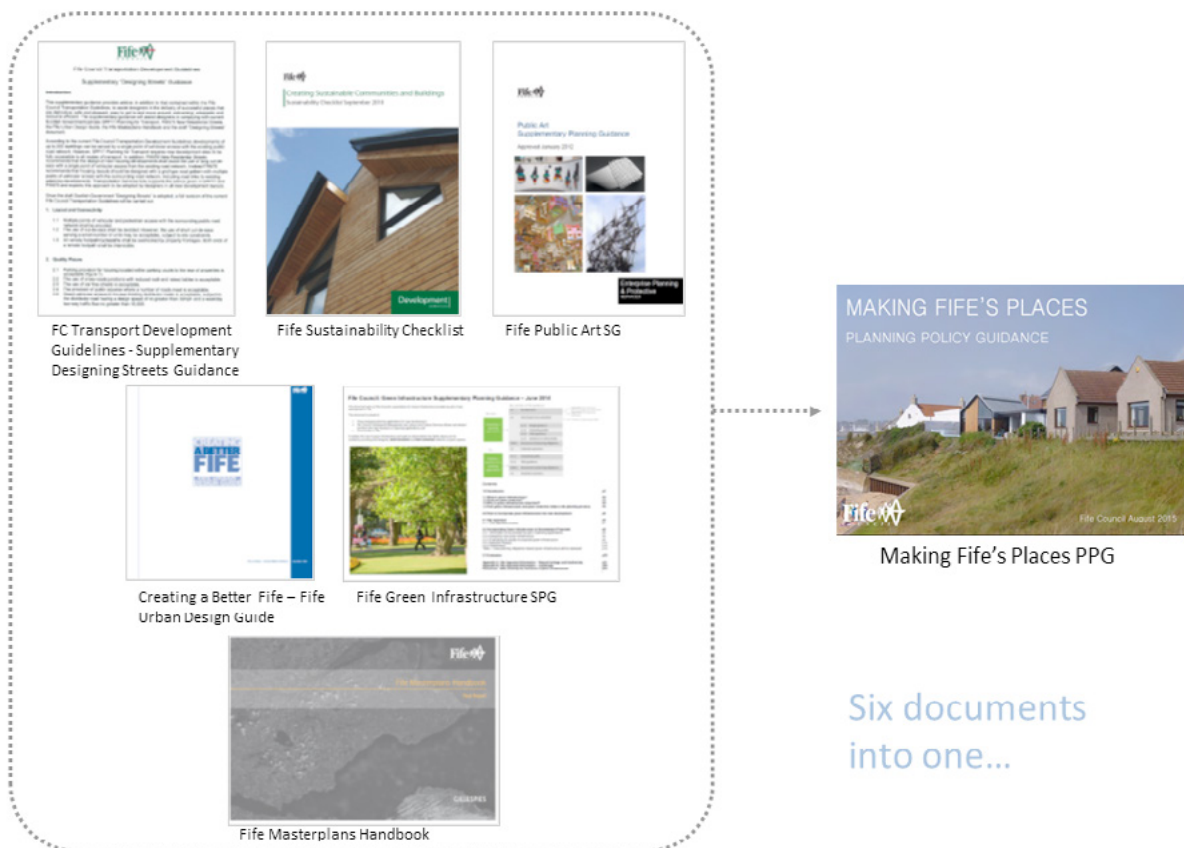
Case Study 3

This case study demonstrates that the Planning Service has effective systems and processes in place which enable early collaboration to achieve positive outcomes. It is also illustrative of how we deliver holistic policy guidance which relates to different areas of work within the Planning Service.

Makings Fife's Places

In August 2015 Fife Council approved new planning policy guidance on design and place making to support policies in the Fife Local Development Plan.

[Making Fife's Places](#) provides guidance on the design of green infrastructure, streets and buildings and includes detailed guidance on green networks, built and natural heritage, sustainable buildings and public art. It brings together all Fife's planning guidance on the built environment into one document and provides clarity over Fife Council's expectations on design matters. The guidance concentrates on local issues and the local interpretation of national policies.



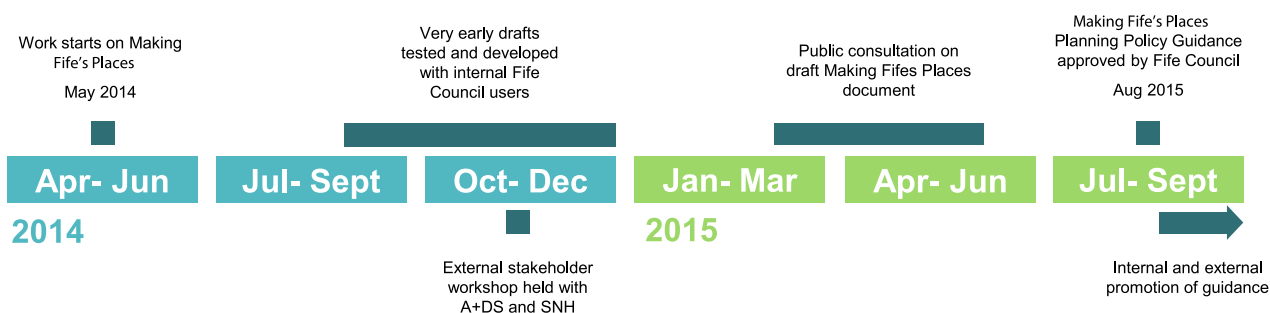
It is important that the guidance is a useful tool as part of design and planning decision making processes. The guidance focuses on how policies in the Fife Development Plan should be applied, with explanations of terms used, Fife Council's expectations and how proposals can demonstrate that they meet these expectations. The aim is to demystify built environment considerations, to give planning professionals, communities and elected members greater confidence when they are assessing the design of proposals. To that end there is an evaluation framework provided in the guidance; this sets out a series of questions which can be used as a basis to judge the quality of proposals.

The guidance also encourages the submission of higher quality planning applications by setting out what Fife Council will be looking for in terms of information and assessments to support the application and it promotes the inclusion of better quality visualisations.



Visualisation of the Dunfermline Museum proposal. Source: Richard Murphy Architects

Because the guidance needs to be useful and usable it was important to involve the people who would be using the guidance most frequently in its development. Any aspect of the guidance that involved specialist knowledge, such as historic and natural heritage, was developed in partnership with the officers who lead on those specialisms. There was also good cross team working between planning policy officers and development management officers; testing the text and the processes set out in the guidance to ensure that they will be straightforward to apply.



We also engaged early on with the development industry and local designers and key agencies. Architecture + Design Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage helped to set up and run a workshop with developers, architects, planning agents and other local authorities. The workshop considered an early draft of the guidance and tested the contents through a series of exercises, followed by discussion and consideration. The outcomes of this workshop informed a final draft document that was consulted on more widely. Architecture + Design Scotland have promoted this approach as an example of good practice.

The collaboration between officers in the development of the guidance helped to make it fit for purpose and has encouraged wider use of the guidance. Since the document was approved it has been extensively promoted through briefing sessions and presentations. As the document is being used we are reviewing it and identifying refinements. These will be incorporated prior to the guidance being submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval as statutory Supplementary Guidance in autumn 2016.

Making Fife's Places has been generally well received. One important objective was to make the guidance accessible for people who might not have an understanding of urban design principles or terminology. Photographs and diagrams are used extensively throughout the document to illustrate the text and the examples used are overwhelmingly from Fife.



'Townhill Community Council has considered the draft Supplementary Guidance and believes it has much to commend it as it appears comprehensive, practical and is designed to encourage high standards and to improve the environment in which new development takes place.'

Extract from a submission made by Townhill Community Council as part of the Making Fife's Places consultation.

The success of the approach taken in the guidance can be seen as the document is now being referenced not only by applicants in planning submissions and in planning officer's case reports, but also by communities and individuals when they are commenting on new development.

Performance Marker Measure

12 - Corporate working across services

11 - Production of regular and proportionate policy advice

3 - Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications.

6 - Continuous improvement

Case Study 4

Engaging with Young People

Results of one of our equality questions in our customer survey made it clear that we had no registered users in the 16-24 age categories. We feel that we have to look beyond our current customer base and give the opportunity and platform for young people to have their say on such important decisions, as they represent the customers and decision makers of the future in Fife.

As part of our youth engagement strategy, we embarked on visits to both primary and secondary schools in North East Fife with the view to rolling it out Fife wide in the future. The idea is to give pupils an introduction into town planning and invite them to take part in active engagement scenario's to promote open discussion and debate within a classroom/workshop setting.

As part of this program we visited 3 high schools- Auchmuty in Glenrothes, Waid Academy in Anstruther and Bell Baxter in Cupar and St Columba's primary schools in Cupar and worked with around 80 students. This work also fed into the [TAYplan Youth Camp](#) in Dundee.

We want to know what young people think of the places they live and play in, what issues they encounter on a daily basis and that they be given the chance to discuss their suggestions for addressing these. Discussions included issues such as how to tackle climate change; how to go about creating a more sustainable community environment; what facilities they feel are missing from the community within which they live; or where major new development should be located.

It was both surprising and refreshing to see how much knowledge the pupils actually had on the subject, which is testament to the teachers and staff of the schools visited. There is definitely an opportunity to tap into an unreserved source of youthful ideas and aspirations which could also help shape their future careers by providing skills for work. We can also see how this engagement can help the pupils by fulfilling all four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence, i.e.:-

Successful Learners

Confident Individuals

Responsible Citizens

Effective Contributors

In short, we hope the education engagement process would provide a broad and progressive learning experience which will positively contribute to the Curriculum for Excellence, whilst at the same time we achieve our goal of getting the younger generations more actively involved with Planning.

Customer Service Week

In October 2015, as part of Customer Service Week, we invited a group of pupils from a local secondary school to come into the office and meet the staff. Our aim was to highlight the importance of planning and how we would welcome the views of young people but we also wanted to highlight the range of jobs that were linked to the planning process. We found that pupils were particularly interested in our Enforcement and Legal teams.

Hi there,

Just a quick note to say thank you so much for the opportunity yesterday, it was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and was really interesting finding out the 'ins and outs' of the planning processes. I especially enjoyed our visit to the enforcement department as they had some really interesting stories to tell! I would also like to thank Laura for taking the time to talk to me, it was so helpful and I felt it really put me in good stead for my future aspirations. So thank you all very much for your time, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Thanks **Hannah**

Performance Marker Measure.

6 - Continuous improvement

13 - Sharing good practice ; skills and knowledge.

Case Study 5

Customer Survey

During 2015 we completed our customer surveys which had been scheduled in our Listening Plan, introduced in 2014. We carried out 6 separate surveys with key stakeholder groups and hosted an open event for members of Fife's Community Councils (see Case study 6). While this round of surveys marks the completion of those identified in our Listening Plan. The use of customer surveys to obtain feedback and opportunities to improve how we undertake and deliver our service is now an essential business as usual part of how we identify those areas which we are doing successfully or require to be reviewed.

Survey Description	Number of Responses	% Response Rate
Elected Members	26	33%
External Consultees	11	22%
Registered Users of Online Planning Site	879	9.5%
Fife's Business Customers	16	13%
Employee Survey	61	100%
Decision Notice Survey (sent to customers 2 weeks after issue of Decision Notice)	319	13%

Collating all the responses and attendees at our event we were able to gather feedback from 1268 individual customers and 61 staff members. The questions in each survey were geared to find out specific information from the different customer groups. Examples are set out below

Elected Member Survey

- Quality of Reports presented to Committee
- Ease of getting in touch with case officers
- What, if any, training was required
- How much time was spent dealing with planning issues from constituents

External Consultees

- Establish if we provide sufficient time for responses to be sent
- Ease of communicating with the case officer to discuss the case
- How often they are required to carry out a site visit
- What actions could we take to make the consultation process easier for them

Online Planning Site Survey

- Ease of registration
- Facilities Used
- Whether site used to submit comments
- Frequency of using the site

Business Survey

- Ease of finding information relating to planning.
- What would they regard as important to them if they had to submit a planning application?

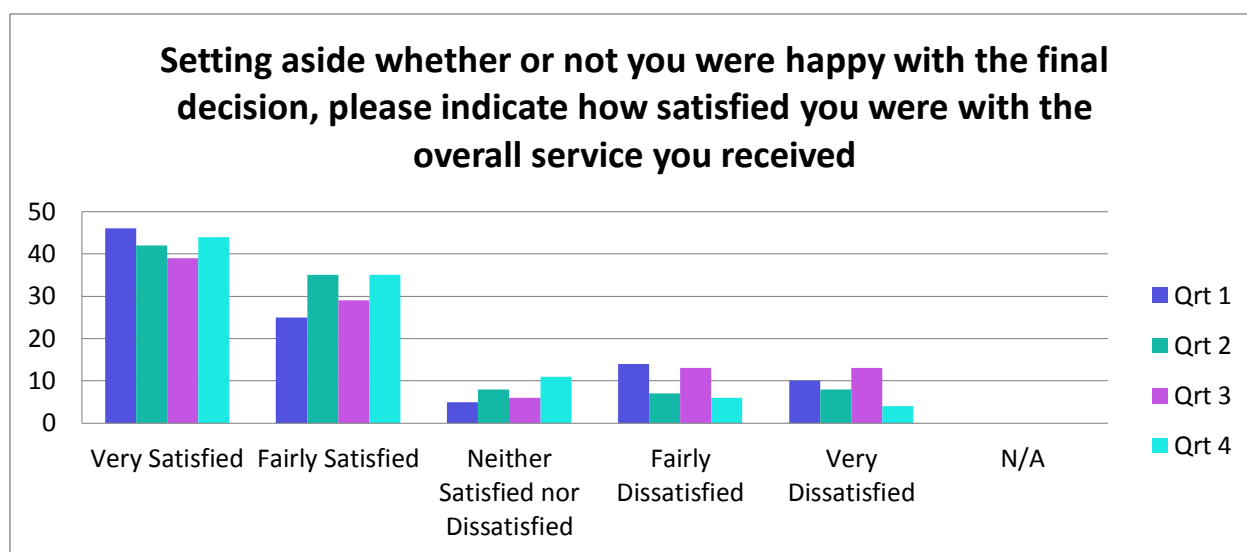
Employee Survey

- Whether staff have had development/training opportunities
- How successfully staff are able to manage their time
- Whether staff share skills and knowledge between teams

Decision Notice Survey

- Use of online site to track progress
- Where customers look for information on planning e.g. online, telephone, office
- Satisfaction with time taken to deal with the application
- What could we do to make their experience of planning better

Although the majority of surveys were carried out within a specific time frame our ongoing Decision Notice survey has proved to be extremely beneficial in tracking whether any improvements implemented result in an increase in customer satisfaction. Our [Annual Report](#) is available online.



Figures taken from Decision Notice Survey 2015/16

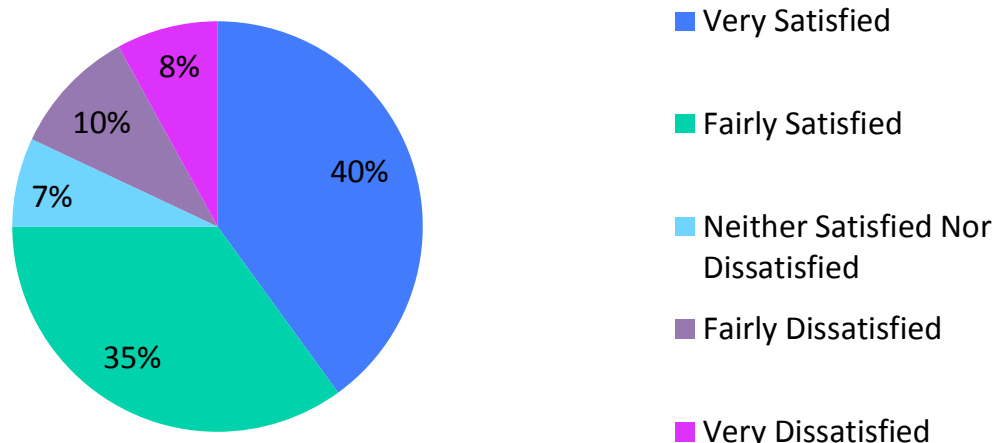
The information provided by our customers has enabled us to make a number changes including:

- Introduced an Absence Protocol to advise customers when their case officer will be absent for a lengthy period of time.
- Introduced an Electronic Decision Notice to speed up the final part of the application process
- Streamlined validation process to speed up start of application process
- Set up a new process for site visits
- Better information supplied to consultees
- Improved information available for Community Councils

Although our surveys were tailored to specific customer groups we included a generic question asking about the overall service received. To gauge overall customer satisfaction we included the same question in each survey, apart from the Business

Customer Survey as this survey was geared towards asking customers what type of service they would value rather than asking about a service received.

How Would You Rate the Overall Service Provided



Figures taken from Decision Notice, Elected Member and External Consultee Surveys

While we recognise that there are improvements still to make and new challenges arise on a regular basis, it is re-assuring to know that a significant proportion of our customers are satisfied with the service we provide. As we look to the future and consider how we will deliver the service in the coming years continued engagement and feedback from the customers and communities we serve will be crucial, and also reflect the increasing emphasis on Community Planning and involvement in the planning process.

Performance Marker Measure:
6 - Continuous improvement.

Governance

Planning is a key function within Fife Council's [corporate structure](#). It is recognised as an essential component of development delivery and complementing the wider goals and objectives set out in the [Single Outcome Agreement, the Fife Community Plan](#), and the Fife Economic Strategy.

Planning application decisions are delivered through the [Scheme of Delegation](#) which is continually reviewed to ensure that it complies with improvements to processes and aligns with customer feedback to ensure that decisions are taken as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Planning applications which are not determined by officers are determined by three Planning Committees with some enforcement and Development Policy decisions undertaken by the 7 area committees. These cover the geographic areas of West Fife, Central Fife and North East Fife. The Planning Committees meet in central locations in each of the areas; West Fife committee meets in Dunfermline, Central Fife meets in Glenrothes and North East Fife meets in Cupar. It is considered that this provides an acceptable balance between speed of decision making and ensuring that planning operates against a context of making decisions at a local level where appropriate. The committees are all open to the public and visual presentations accompany the reports heard at the meetings. IT improvements continue to be made and within the PPF 5 period the committee meeting room in County Buildings, Cupar has been upgraded to provide 5 large format flat monitor screens and enhanced sound equipment to more effectively display presentations and communicate the details of the proposals to elected members and the public. Similar IT facilities exist in Fife House in Glenrothes to serve the Central planning committee and a review of IT in the City Chambers in Dunfermline is to be undertaken by Fife Council corporately to ensure that similar presentation equipment is available in that locality.

A separate planning review board comprised of 5 members drawn from the three planning committees, meets once a month to consider appeals for delegated local and minor applications. Over the PPF 5 reporting period it has heard 29 cases. Of the 29 cases 17 (58.6%) decisions upheld the original recommendation. We use the findings and feedback from the LRB and appeals to learn and improve the quality of reports and to determine if our guidelines and policies need to be reviewed and updated.

Our current Development Management team structure aligns with the key customer groupings, allowing us to respond to householders, community groups, local developers, major employers and inward investment opportunities in a way which provides a tailored approach for each group.

We have continued to focus on the reduction in legacy cases over the PPF 5 reporting period clearing 16 cases with now 21 cases one year or older on the system. This is a substantial reduction since PPF 4 with legacy cases having reduced from 52 in March 2014 to 21 in March 2016. Having agreed the new validation standards for wind turbines which were noted in PPF 4 we have seen a significant reduction in that type of development in the last year and we are now actively project managing the remaining cases through to determination. 11 cases now remain in the system ranging from a windfarm comprising 11 turbines to smaller scale domestic proposals in rural areas.

The inroads into improved performance of local and minor applications has not achieved the results we had hoped in the PPF 5 period, however looking forward with vacant posts filled and proactive changes in team structures aligned to tackle capacity and short term vacancy issues we are confident more significant progress will be delivered in the forthcoming year. Nevertheless despite these pressures on performance some marginal improvement has been achieved in local and minor performance and it is a credit to the dedication of the team that performance has not deteriorated and held at similar levels as reported in PPF4. It is though acknowledged that the current level of performance needs to improve further to meet and ultimately exceed the Scottish average.

We successfully recruited new young planners to the Development Management Team to fill a number of vacancies which arose during the reporting period. These vacancies arose from internal staff promotions and colleagues leaving the organisation to set up their own businesses. The following quotes from our new colleagues demonstrate what attracted them to come to work in Planning in Fife.

I was attracted to Fife by the multitude and variety of development within the region, having grown up in the area it also gives me the chance to contribute and help shape its Built Environment in a positive way, which is an extremely exciting prospect.

Fife's Planning team has an impressive and growing reputation for taking bold and innovative steps to make it one of the best in Scotland. I was drawn to the team's focus on providing a high quality service for all groups engaging with Planning, especially Fife's businesses and members of the public.

I was also eager to contribute to a team which sees Planning as a positive way to enhance this fantastic area by helping to provide important improvements for its communities whilst recognising the features that make it so special already.

I was attracted to working at Fife Council due to the range and variety of planning challenges I would face, and the unrivalled opportunity these would provide to develop my skills as a planner. I have worked both in a largely urban context, at Glasgow City Council, and in a more rural context at Aberdeenshire Council. Fife provides 'the best of both worlds' – a strong urban context in major settlements like Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline with associated development pressures – and sensitive rural areas where environmental, landscape and sustainability considerations are the key drivers in planning decision making.

The attraction for me to Planning in Fife was the variation of experience I would gain from working here. I have worked in the two big cities, which bring their own challenges, but Fife as an area brings an even more diverse range of planning issues to contend with and I was interested in gaining valuable experience and progressing my career to the next stage. I had heard from friends who work in the planning profession that the Planning teams in Fife are impressive and, from my short time here, I have seen that this is the case.

We also appointed a student to a temporary role for a year which he found particularly rewarding and beneficial in terms of his educational and future career development:

“I have been very fortunate to have worked in several areas of the planning service, including the Gateway Team, Development Planning and in Development Management which has enabled me to witness the entire planning process from beginning to end.

The staff within the department have been very accommodating towards trainees, including me. They have given me the benefit of their experience and they have ensured that the work I have been undertaking has been both useful and varied. The Gateway Team were very welcoming and dedicated a lot of staff time and effort in to training me up in validation. I believe that it is to the credit of the planning department that many of the staff who originally came to the department as trainees have ended up returning and I can see why. The experience that I have gained will be of immense value for when I eventually graduate from University and enter the job market.”

William Shand, one of our planners in the Priority Applications Team entered the Young Planner of the year award and successfully advanced through to the final 4. He attended the awards ceremony in London with our Senior Manager.

We have continued to innovate with regard to e-planning and the experience gained in delivering the e-planning programme over the last few years has been shared both across Scotland and also used to assist with the introduction of e-building standards in Fife. We will also be upgrading our systems in 2016 to adopt Uniform 10 and roll out uniform Enterprise to all planning case officers. It is anticipated that this will provide significant opportunities to improve case load performance monitoring and workload analysis, this will be reported on in PPF 6. Within the PPF5 reporting period we have also introduced electronic decision notices for all applications submitted online (which for the PPF5 period was around 75% of all applications) this has resulted in efficiencies in terms of printing and postage costs, and staff time.

We have also hosted visits from West Lothian who wished to learn from our experience with Lean and associated Rapid Improvement Events (RIE) and the processes we use in relation to pre application advice. The feedback we received indicated that this was very useful to them.

“We found the session to be inspiring and motivating for conducting RIE across our Development Management Dept.

Once again thank you for sharing all the information with us and if there is anything we can help you with please do not hesitate to contact us!”

Gosia Lawes Improvement Officer, West Lothian Council.

One of the Planners in the Development Plans team was seconded to East Lothian to assist their work with SESPLAN and other LDP work.

“The experience was an effective example of how added value can be secured through sharing of services and collaborative working. For East Lothian Council the secondment of an experienced staff member from Fife Council assisted the development of principles for planning policy and guidance on Planning Obligations and Infrastructure Delivery. This work demanded an understanding of the technical and political requirements of the Authority in addition to the assessment of proposed infrastructure projects informing prioritisation and costing

within the LDP. The secondment also identified opportunities for continuous improvement in sharing information or communicating requirements across Council Services and City Region partners. For ELC this has been a useful process in assessing the requirements for a Planning Obligations Officer post as well as contributing to a significant piece of LDP work.”

Iain McFarlane Service Manager- Planning East Lothian Council.

The officer is now seconded to our Economic Development section as a Project Manager assisting with the cross service work relating to the Council wide approach to dealing with the closure of Longannet Power Station and the Markinch Paper Mill, both of which have resulted in significant job losses as well as releasing large sites with investment and development opportunities. Commenting on the benefits achieved from this secondment the Service Manager for Economic Development commented:

“The work of Longannet Task Force involves drawing together economic, spatial, environmental and community strands to support meaningful change in the wake of the closure of the Power Station. Andrew’s previous experience in Development Policy has proved invaluable in our efforts to engage with neighbouring authorities, national agencies and the community to develop and deliver a strategic response to this major closure.”

George Sneddon Service Manager – Economic Development, Fife Council

On a similar theme the Development Planning Service Manager provided management cover to the TAYplan following the departure of the former manager in that organisation. This also provided the opportunity for Lead officers in the Development Plans team to act up as Service Managers during the secondment period. This flexibility of approach is embedded within the culture and philosophy of Fife Council Planning Service to enable staff to move between different roles within the Planning Service which not only provides the ability to reinforce teams or functions which may be under particular workload demands, but also provides opportunities for staff to widen their experience and enhance their career development.

During the PPF 5 reporting period we have appointed a new Senior Manager and restructured our Development Management service. Following the departure of one of the Service Managers and having reviewed the options it was resolved to combine the former minor applications, enforcement and transportation development management team, and the local applications team all under one Service Manager. This has provided a clear line of management across the team and the ability to deliver a single vision and standard while also achieving budget savings. The way in which the team delivers the planning functions it is responsible for has also changed: the new team is subdivided into North Fife and South Fife sections. Each multi-functional team covering, planning applications, enforcement and transportation is headed by a Lead Officer. This structure provides greater capacity to deal with vacancies, long term absence, and provide training opportunities. As both teams deal with a broadly similar number of applications with similar numbers of staff it also generates healthy competition to drive performance improvement across Fife. We have maintained the specialist Priority applications team to focus on major applications and those applications submitted by the top 200 businesses in Fife to provide a bespoke tailored service to assist with economic investment in Fife as reported in PPF 4.

Case Study 6

Working with Community Councils

Engaging with Community Councils

In August 2015 we hosted an open event for representatives from Fife's Community Councils. The purpose of the event was to gather feedback on issues that mattered to them and build better relationships with the Community Councils. Although we had carried out a number of customer surveys with other stakeholder groups we felt that hosting this event would prove to be a more useful engagement mechanism with Community Councils.

Invitations were sent out to all Community Councils asking them to note their interest and to secure their place. We received expressions of interest from 25 Councils. However with a number of apologies on the day a total of 17 representatives attended (20% of all Community Councils). The format was 3 separate groups each discussing one topic with an open group discussion at the end.

Topics were identified from email correspondence, telephone conversations and face to face meetings. The groups were asked to consider

- Web pages and Online Planning System
- Development Plans and Policy
- Communication and Social Media

Volunteer members of staff helped to facilitate and record the discussion. Feedback was recorded onto a spreadsheet to enable monitoring of identified actions and the expected timescale. Initially this spreadsheet was sent to those CCs attending, to agree that the information was an accurate reflection of our discussions, then on to all Community Councils.

We were able to initiate some changes within a relatively short timeframe e.g 1 -3 months. Other identified issues have been considered alongside the feedback received through our other customer surveys.

Actions

- Link added to our Weekly Update of Development Applications to take users to a guidance note advising how to register, track and save searches for [specific applications](#)
- Drop In Sessions arranged to guide CCs through the registration process and training to use the site to full potential
- Clearer information and better structure contained within committee reports
- Twitter account details sent to all Community Councils [@FifeDevPlan](#)
- Produced a Weekly Update specifically for Community Councils i.e. applications clustered into boundary areas.

We also looked to recruit volunteers from this group to take part in a smaller focus group. We had a number volunteers come forward and we invited 6 members from across Fife to take part. This group commenced in November 2015 and the meeting frequency and format were agreed by the group. We meet every 2 months and by the end of March we had hosted 3 meetings. To date the topics chosen have been Community Matters, Development Plan , Planning Obligations, Enforcement and Statutory Consultees. We invite various members of staff to the meeting to talk to the

group on their area of specialism. This also allows the group to meet staff which has improved the communication and relationships between Community Councils and the planning team.

Comment left on our Evaluation Sheet at the end of the event (August 2015)

'I feel the issues raised have been taken back to be considered by the planning dept. Perhaps to help C Councils understand the planning process a member of staff could perhaps attend a CC meeting'

Feedback from one of our Focus Group Members (March 2016)

'Fife Council 'planners' have committed time and resources to engage with Community Councils by means of a small focus group which meets on a bimonthly basis. For officers and for those Community Councillors who manage to attend, this is proving very valuable in increasing mutual recognition and understanding of the respective roles (and frustrations) of planners and Community Councillors.'

Performance Marker Measures - 6 - Continuous Improvement

Culture of Continuous Improvement

In addition to the ambitious programme of service improvement focused around our listening plan and culture change process reflected in our Service's "Listen, Consider Respond" theme. All of the case studies referenced represent continuous improvement deriving from a critical evaluation of how we deliver our services. We continue to apply LEAN process improvements in undertaking service improvements and have a large LEAN project programmed to commence in September 2016 which will look at how we provide the planning enforcement function. PPF6 will report on this LEAN event in more detail. We are also committed to ensuring that all staff have Personal Development Plans identifying their aspirations and training needs.

We have encouraged a range of trainee ships and new approaches to develop existing colleagues at all levels in the service. We are developing through our Personal Development Plans a structured approach to identify individual learning needs and CPD plans and also where relevant group CPD sessions.

In the PPF period we delivered training to elected members which covered the following topic areas:

- Role of the Planning Authority
- Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plans
- Development Management
- Role of Elected Members
- Appeals and Reviews
- Enforcement
- Committee & Code of Conduct
- Planning – A Councillor's Perspective

The Planning Portfolio Customer Focus Project Board established in 2014 to provide governance to an internal working group met for the last time in November 2015. The purpose of the internal group was to embed customer focus as a priority within the planning portfolio.

The underlying objective of the project was 'to enhance the culture of the planning service and provide individual members of staff with the tools to enable them to exceed customer expectations. Thereby improving customer relationships, staff morale and motivation levels and the professional reputation of the planning service'.

The key deliverables of the project included

- Customer Survey
- Staff Survey
- Online Customer Forum
- Customer Focus Groups
- Training and Development Programme
- Communication Improvements
- Planning Portfolio wide Approach
- National Award for Customer Service and Service Improvements

Our Listening Plan was the main focus of the Board which was used to track progress and highlight where additional resources or actions were required. Although the Board disbanded in November 2015 the Listening Plan covered the period up to March 2016.

To date the Project Board has overseen the completion of:

- Decision Notice Survey
- Online Planning Site Customer Survey
- Hosted an engagement event with representatives from Community Councils
- Employee Survey
- Internal and External Consultee Survey
- Business Community Survey
- Developed an online customer feedback form
- Elected Members Survey
- Clear understanding of project objectives at the start of the process
- Structure of Project Board

The Project achieved its objective to support the work of the Lead Officer Customer Focus Group. It also gave us the stimulus to review the internal customer group which has emerged as our Planning for Excellence group. This will be the driving force to take the planning portfolio forward to the next stage of our customer improvement programme and this will be reported in PPF6.

Service Improvements 2014-2015

Table 3

Fife Council's assessment of how we have delivered on our service actions and objectives from PPF4

Committed Improvement and Actions in PPF 4	RAG Status
Further implementation of protocol agreements between planning: primarily development management and consultees.	We are discussing changes to how we consult and obtain information from specialist internal consultees. We continue to ensure we have close working relationships with other Services such as Environmental Health through training events on topics such as noise. Also we continue to employ a specialist planning officer to prioritise the processing of Fife Council's affordable housing program as reported in PPF 4. We have put in place a protocol and memorandum of working practice and procedures with our colleagues in legal services, this is assisting to streamline the processing of S75 and legacy cases as reported in this PPF.
Development of single consent process with Transportation –Roads Construction Consents, to align with Making Places Policy, Designing Streets, Urban Design, Making Fife best place to do business.	Transportation officers within Development Management attend pre application meetings and provide comment for Pre application advice to ensure applicants have clear guidance and assurance. We do not have a single consent process in place as yet, however transportation policy and advice is intrinsic to the development of policy and guidance as evidenced in Case Study 3.
Development of new Transportation Guidelines to align with Designing Streets.	Following the restructuring of Development Management and embedding Transportation Engineers in Development Management this already has improved the day to day application of Designing Streets principles in the decisions made. We evidence the moves to address this objective in case study 3. Further opportunities to expand this role and working more closely with Development Plans in the formalisation of Policies will be developed in the PPF 6 reporting period.
Continued work to develop validation standards and guidance. Drawing on work from HOPS.	Work continues with HOPS to monitor the work being undertaken piloting the introduction of national validation standards for planning applications. Following the findings on this issue in the Planning Review, Fife will continue to work with HOPS and actively participate in developing validation standards for planning applications. Case Study 3 also highlights the use of such documents to promote higher quality of information to be submitted with applications.
We will complete the Customer First Project by finalising the Listening Plan. This involves completing the survey work and engagement with key customer groups.	The outcomes and improvements derived from this project are highlighted in case study 6 and our report relating to continuous improvement.
Agree inter service protocol with Legal Services to improve processing of legal agreements including Section 75 cases.	Improved working with Legal services has greatly assisted the throughput of legal agreements as reported in table 1 and the NHI table.
Staff Development Day focus on Consider element of our "Listen, Consider, Respond" theme. Planning portfolio will provide key input to e-building standards project. The opportunity will also be taken to review e-planning.	This work is ongoing with e building standards and e-planning improvements including upgrades to Uniform and expansion of use of tablets due to be implemented in August 2016.
Examine options for increasing the proportion of electronic submissions.	We now receive 75% of all planning applications submitted on line this is an increase from 69% from the last PPF reporting period. As noted in the Governance section of the PPF we continue to develop new services such as the use of electronic decision notices for such submissions.
Review to the publication of consultee responses	During PPF5 we reviewed the publication of these documents and these are currently not displayed during the assessment phase of the application. We are however constantly reviewing how we publish all documents and continue to receive feedback from customers on this issue.
Benchmarking with other authorities.	Some of the benchmarking and learning events undertaken in the PPF 5 period are noted in the PPF document.
We will work with the improvement service to improve the efficiency of publishing planning information on the PINS website.	Fife has continued to develop its working on Public Information Notices (PINS) and has developed an automatic process whereby notices are picked up via the back office system and are displayed automatically on to the Tell Me Scotland Website .

Part 3: Supporting Evidence.

[Enforcement Charter](#)

[FIFEplan](#)

[Fife DP Update](#)

[Guidance note on how to register track and save searches for specific applications](#)

[Local Development Plan Scheme](#)

[Making Fife's Places](#)

[Planning Obligations Framework Guidance](#)

[Pre-Application Advice](#)

[Scheme of Delegation](#)

[Single Outcome Agreement, the Fife Community Plan](#)

[TAYplan Youth Camp](#)

[Tell Me Scotland Website](#)

[Twitter account @FifeDevPlan](#)

Part 4: Service Improvements PPF 6 2016-17

Objectives for PPF 6.

- Improve performance processing our local and minor applications.
- Better collaboration and closer working between Development Planning and Community Planning.
- Enforcement LEAN
- Structured CPD and Learning Plan for colleagues arising from PDA process
- Implementation of use of new technology to further develop efficiencies of working practices arising from e-development programme.
- Formalisation of Project management of all Priority Business Cases.
- Continued learning and improvements arising from our Listening Plan and Customer Survey Programme.
- Development of resilience planning for Development Management to ensure processing capacity during holiday and long term absences, set against a wider theme of flexibility between teams a theme which will be developed in our Planning Portfolio Day in the Autumn of 2016.
- Expansion of Transport Planning role integrated into the work of Development Plans and strategic policy work.
- We will review the project management of the Strategic Development Areas. which are critical to the delivery of Fife's strategic housing and economic development objectives.

Part 5: Official Statistics

A: Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Category	Total number of decisions	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2015-2016	2014-2015
Major developments	20	28.2	45.0
Local developments (non- householder)	771	15.2	15.8
• Local: less than 2 months	344 (44.7%)	7.3	7.2
• Local: more than 2 months	427 (55.4%)	21.6	21.5
Householder developments	998	8.5	8.6
• Local: less than 2 months	698 (69.9%)	6.9	6.9
• Local: more than 2 months	300(30.1%)	12.2	12.4
Housing developments			
Major	11	34.9	62.6
Local housing developments	217	17.8	28.9
• Local: less than 2 months	72(33.2%)	7.5	7.3
• Local: more than 2 months	145(66.8%)	23.0	33.1
Business and industry			
Major	1	17.6	41.2
Local business and industry	55	17.6	17.8
• Local: less than 2 months	28 (50.9%)	7.5	7.3
• Local: more than 2 months	27 (49.1%)	28.0	22.4
EIA developments	4	43.7	48.3
Other consents*	631	7.7	9.4
Planning/legal agreements**			
• Major: average time	7	39.6	115.2
• Local: average time	17	69.9	54.9
Local reviews	29	13.7	16.9

* 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

Local Reviews and Appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2015-2016 No. %		2014-2015 No. %	
Local reviews	29	17	58.6	30	63.8
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	27	14	51.9	19	48.7

Enforcement Activity

	2015-2016	2014-2015
Cases taken up	6	23
Breaches identified	117	170
Cases resolved	125	171
Notices served***	6	8
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Workforce and Financial Information

Service Budget

	Total Budget	Costs		Income
		Direct	Indirect	
Development Management	418	1,615	729	-1,926
Development Planning	1,559	995	564	0
Enforcement	248	167	81	0
Other	373	258	115	0
Total	2,598	3,035	1,489	-1,926

Staff Structure

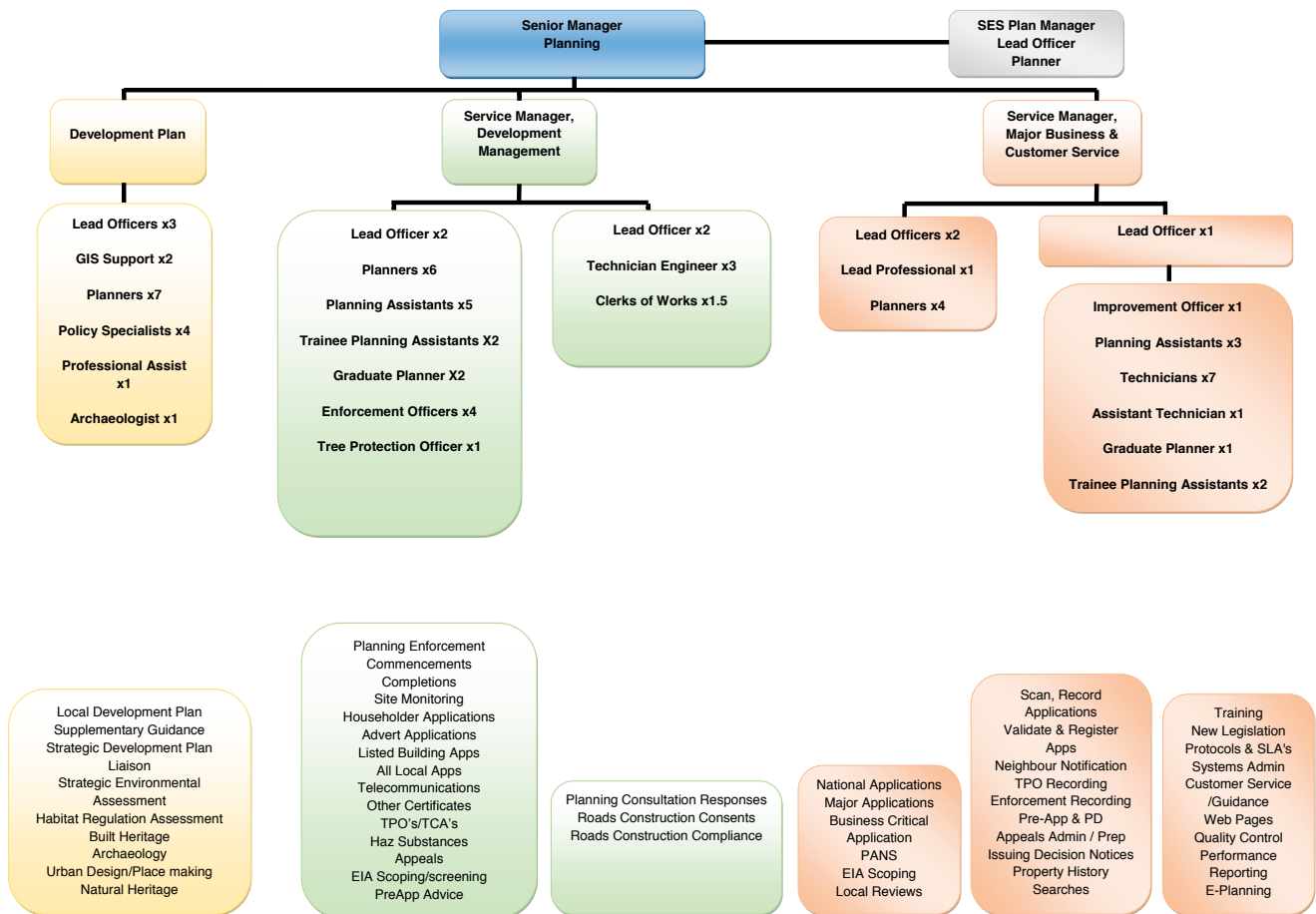
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Head of Planning Service			1	

Note: Tier 1= Chief Executive, Tier 2= Directors, Tier 3= Heads of Service, Tier 4= Managers

		DM	DP	Enforcement	Other
Managers	No. Posts	7.5	4	0.5	2
	Vacant				
Main grade posts	No. Posts	23.5	15.5	4	3.5
	Vacant				
Technician	No. Posts				
	Vacant				
Office Support/Clerical	No. Posts	6			
	Vacant				
TOTAL		37	19.5	4.5	5.5

Note: Managers are those staff responsible for the operational management of a team/division. They are not necessarily line managers.

Planning Service Structure



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.

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.

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