



Fife Council

Planning Performance Framework

2016/17



Foreword



by **Cllr Altany Craik**

Convener- Economy, Tourism, Transportation &
Strategic Planning Committee.

I am pleased to introduce our Planning Performance Framework for 2016/17. This is now our 6th such annual report from our Planning Service, setting out our performance during that year.

Nationally, the planning system is being reviewed. Fife Council has actively engaged with this review and in doing so seeks to have greater opportunity for communities to be involved in how their communities change. As the planning review continues, we are working to bring land use planning and community planning closer in engaging with our communities.

During this performance year the Examination into FIFEplan has been concluded moving to the next stage of adoption. Whilst the Planning Service has seen a reduction in posts, performance continues to be good. The case studies provide examples of the excellent work which has been delivered. A culture of continuous improvement is embedded within the service, with examples of process management, new technology and training being some of the areas highlighted.

We recognise that further improvements are needed to bring about speedier decision making in planning applications. We have delivered improved performance within the latest 2 quarters and I am confident this will continue. Our improvement programme demonstrates our commitment to this.

Working in collaboration with the housebuilding industry, the Council will continue to progress housing sites allocated within FIFEplan and suitable brownfield sites to help meet Fife's housing needs. Strategic infrastructure, particularly new schools and transportation, will be a focus of that collaborative working.

Planning has a central role in helping deliver the Council's aim to make 'Fife the best place to do business' as well as protecting our environment, and encouraging our local communities to participate and get involved in the planning process. This Performance Framework demonstrates the excellent work which is done by the Service to achieve that aim.

I look forward to seeing continued performance improvements through 2017/18.

Introduction

Fife Council's Economy, Planning & Employability Services is pleased to submit the sixth version of its Planning Performance Framework for the 2016/17 period. This performance framework reports on how we have responded to the Scottish Government's feedback report to PPF5 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 environment, 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 commitment to improving both performance and quality demonstrates our 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 (Amber in PPF5)	<p>Whilst we continue working to make improvements to our speed of decision making we have not delivered an overall consistent improvement in speed of decision making over and above those reported in PPF5.</p> <p>Following recruitment and case management changes; the restructuring within the team which deals with local and minor applications continues to see significant improvements in the average number of weeks taken to determine applications and this is reflected in the Q3 and Q4 2016/17 figures in the statistical returns.</p> <p>Some major applications have been slower to progress due to a number of factors, including lack of robust supporting information on application submission, and education constraints.</p> <p>Increased focus on ensuring that we have measures in place to ensure that the service is resilient to address absences due to recruitment delays or sickness will assist to deliver improved performance. We are expanding the training of all planners and planning assistants to ensure that they are familiar with IT systems such as uniform and idox and allocating planning applications to familiarise them with the process and issues. The project management of Major applications also widens the knowledge of the current cases in the Priority team. These measures and those reported on this PPF evidence the steps we are taking to enhance resilience within the Planning service.</p> <p>We will also undertake further changes such as simplifying the format of our delegated reports.</p> <p>In addition we are confident the development of the use of Uniform Enterprise will also improve performance through enhanced project management of all cases. We publish out monthly performance statistics on fifedirect.</p> <p>Evidence: National Headline Indicators table and Case Studies.</p>
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.	Amber (Green in PPF5)	<p>Despite active promotion of the pre-application process and the availability and benefits of processing agreements the take up of this service has been disappointingly low, and the numbers have reduced from the statistics reported in PPF5. Due to the low numbers small changes disproportionately affect the percentage figure reported.</p> <p>We can however report that as indicated as an objective in PPF5 all our Priority Applications are formally project managed and are scrutinised at regular high level management meetings to ensure that these are progressed through the system as quickly as possible.</p> <p>In this context there is perhaps less demand arising for formal processing agreements in Fife as case officers maintain a close working relationship throughout the progression of the case. Our Customer survey provides information on how our customers, particularly agents view the quality of service they receive. It is noted that processing agreements are not mandatory.</p> <p>PA forms on fifedirect.</p> <p>Case Studies: Evidence: statistical table/measures.</p>

<p>3. Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications:- Availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications Clear and proportionate requests for supporting information.</p>	<p>Green (amber in PPF 5)</p>	<p>We continue to actively promote our pre- application service to prospective applicants both in meetings and through the advice and guidance on our website. Through this process clarity is provided on the proportionate supporting information required.</p> <p>Case Studies 1a and 1b illustrate how we are responsive to the needs of our customers. Case study 6 demonstrates how we adapt the service to provide clear and proportionate guidance to prospective applicants to ensure that information submitted ensures applications are front loaded with the relevant information to prevent processing delays later in the process.</p> <p>Evidence: Case studies: SUDs, Spiral Weave. Customer feedback testimonials. Pre App Forms and advice on fifiedirect</p>
<p>4. Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant' * * this will require production of supporting guidance, following wider stakeholder input</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>We have maintained the role of a specialist dedicated S75 monitoring case officer who continues to effectively and proactively monitor and progress S75 cases through the system. All Section 75s whether major or local cases are processed and project managed by the dedicated S75 officer.</p> <p>Evidence: Official Statistics table- Planning/Legal Agreements.</p>
<p>5. Enforcement charter updated / re-published</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Our Enforcement Charter has been revised and is up to date. We will review and update this document following the outcomes of the Planning Review relating to Enforcement. Evidence: NHI: Enforcement and Part 4.</p>
<p>6. Continuous improvement: • show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators • progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report.</p>	<p>Amber</p>	<p>We can evidence significant improvements and outcomes from PPF5 being achieved and implemented as evidenced throughout this report. We have an ongoing commitment to embed future process improvements through lessons learned and feedback from our Customer Survey. We continue to work on our processes and systems to secure performance improvements in terms of speed of decision making and implement LEAN as a business as usual process to effect change.</p> <p>Whilst we cannot report a continuous an improvement in our performance throughout the reporting year in terms of speed of processing applications, as noted in section 1, the improvements we have implemented are delivering significant improvements in Q3 and Q4 which we are confident will be sustained and reflected in PPF7.</p> <p>We continue to adapt to the ongoing pressures of financial challenges which inevitably creates pressures on the ability to meet the performance targets.</p> <p>Within the case studies and in our list of improvement objectives we identify what we consider to be an ambitious program of service improvements. These arise from the feedback we have received both from our Customer Survey and comments in the feedback from PPF 5. We also adapt and change as a result of legislative and organisational change using LEAN as a key tool.</p> <p>Evidence: Case Studies, PPF6</p>

PROMOTING THE PLAN-LED SYSTEM

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
7. LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Amber	Fife Council has submitted FIFEplan as intended to be adopted to Scottish Government. Confirmation that the plan can be adopted is expected by July 2017. Evidence:PPF6
8. Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: • on course for adoption within 5-year cycle • project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	Green	All work completed to timescale by FC FIFEplan adoption confirmation awaited. There has been a significant delay in the examination of the LDP as a result of further consideration by Scottish Ministers following the examination stage. Evidence: Part NHI Key Outcomes
9. Elected members engaged early (pre MIR) in development plan preparation	N/A	This stage pre-dates the reporting period for PPF6, nevertheless elected members are engaged and kept informed 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 PPF6, nevertheless elected members are engaged and kept informed throughout the LDP process.
11. Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	Green	Policy advice and guidance for our customers and stakeholders is continually reviewed and updated and based on our Customer Survey, feedback sessions and lessons learned. All our current Development Frameworks are published on our website. Evidence: Case study: Granny Clarks Wynd/SUDS/ /Spiral Weave.

SIMPLIFYING AND STREAMLINING

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
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)	Green	We continually work across services on an application and corporate basis. We maintain the specialist affordable housing planning officer post. Multi-disciplinary teams with representatives from Planning specialisms co-operate to progress the SDA sites. The SDA board has representatives from numerous other council services. The Case study relating to SUDs relates how cross service working has delivered clear and proportionate guidance for applicants. Close collaboration between teams continues with day to day working with Environmental Health; Building standards, and Transportation colleagues for example. Where required joint service inputs to pre-applications are delivered as business as usual. Education infrastructure is a key challenge in progressing some major applications. The Services across the Council are working closely to monitor and progress advice and solutions for new provision. Evidence: Case Studies on Appeals and SUDs; customer service testimonials.
13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	Active participation in Training CPD, LEAN, RTPI , HOPS , SOLACE , NAPE , FTBSF (Fife Traditional Building Skills Forum) . Work with DoE NI on SUDs process. Evidence is provided in the Governance and Continuous Improvement sections and Case studies.

DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT

Performance Marker	Measure	Source/Evidence
14. Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old	Green	<p>During the reporting period through active management of legacy cases a further 34 cases have been cleared during the reporting period.</p> <p>31 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.</p> <p>Add narrative on KSW and Cupar – stalled SDA sites</p> <p>Evidence: NHI Table</p> <p>Two examples are Cupar North, where delay is being experienced through determining an appropriate solution for education infrastructure, and outstanding supporting information to be updated. The Tayside City Deal includes The Cupar North road as a key infrastructure requirement. Also, Kirkcaldy South West SDA with ongoing delay on the submission of revised supporting information and agreement on developer obligations.</p>
15. Developer contributions: clear expectations • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and • in pre-application discussions	Green	<p>The Planning Obligations Framework Guidance provides an easy read flow chart for developers and is referred to in Pre application discussions and is used to frame legal agreements. In this context it provides clarity to customers and stakeholders. The current guidance is in the process of being replaced by statutory Supplementary Guidance, which was published for consultation in March 2017, following which it will be amended to address issues raised by those consulted. A revised version of the supplementary guidance will be published and submitted to Scottish Ministers following the adoption of the FIFEplan Local Development Plan. FIFEplan clearly references the expectations and obligations expected of new development proposals. Its formal adoption will further assist clarity in this area.</p> <p>The Council recognises the challenges developers are facing in delivering housing sites, and is committed to support development. The responses received to the revised guidance consultation will be carefully considered and the council will set to ensure the final guidance accords with Circular 3/2012.</p> <p>Evidence: In PPF 6 Case Studies and testimonials.</p>

Part 1: National Headline Indicators

Table 2

Key outcomes	2016-17	2015-16
<p>Development Planning: age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period Requirement: less than 5 years</p>	<p>As at 31st March 2017: Mid Fife Local Plan (Adopted 23rd January 2012) – 5 years, 2 months St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan (Adopted 5th October 2012) – 4 years, 5 months Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan (Adopted 16th November 2012) – 4 years, 4 months Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 5 years, 11 months TAYplan (Approved 8th June, 2012) – 4 years, 9 months SESplan (Approved 27th June, 2013) – 3 year, 9 months</p>	<p>As at 31st March 2016: Mid Fife Local Plan (Adopted 23rd January 2012) – 4 years, 2 months St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan (Adopted 5th October 2012) – 3 years, 5 months Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan (Adopted 16th November 2012) – 3 years, 4 months Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 4 years, 11 months TAYplan (Approved 8th June, 2012) – 3 years, 9 months SESplan (Approved 27th June, 2013) – 2 year, 9 months</p>
<p>Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?</p>	<p>Not fully: two of the three area Local Plans will be replaced within 5 years of their adoption. The current Development Plan Scheme (2016) anticipated the replacement Local Development Plan (FIFEplan) to be adopted by August 2016. However, examination of the Plan ran for longer than programmed. This has delayed the anticipated adoption of the Local Development Plan to July 2017. This delay is outwith the control of the Council. TAYplan's current Development Plan Scheme programmed approval of TAYplan 2 for late 2016. As with FIFEplan examination extended beyond anticipated timescales and approval will now be beyond the PPF6 reporting period, and slightly beyond the 5th anniversary of the approved TAYplan. The approval of SESplan 2 is programmed for mid 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 at which time the plan ages will be: Mid Fife Local Plan – 4 years, 7 months St Andrews & East Fife Local Plan – 3 years, 10 months Dunfermline & West Fife Local Plan – 3 years, 9 months Fife Minerals Subject Local Plan (Adopted April 2011) – 5 years, 4 months</p>
<p>Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?</p>	<p>The timescales for FIFEplan and TAYplan have changed over the past year as outlined above. The expected date of submission for SESplan remains unchanged since last year.</p>	<p>Yes. TAYplan approval programmed for late 2016 at which time the plan age will be – 4 years, 6 months No. SESplan approval programmed for summer 2018 at which time the plan age will be approximately 5 years</p>

Key outcomes	2016-17	2015-16
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	<p>N/A</p> <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 PPF6 period. This was reflected in the DPS with no requirement.</p> <p>The FIFEplan Report of Conformity with the Participation Statement (June 2015) was considered by a DPEA Reporter as part of the examination. The reporter concluded that 'the council has conformed with its participation statement and has in many cases exceeded minimum consultation requirements with regard to consultation and the involvement of the public at large as envisaged by Scottish Ministers'.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <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>

Key outcomes	2016-2017	2015-2016
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
Established housing land supply	36,865 units	37,673 units
5-year effective housing land supply (1) (2)		10,120 units
SESplan (Fife)	8,775 units	
St Andrews and North East Fife HMA (TAYplan)	1,471 units	
Cupar and North West Fife HMA (TAYplan)	941 units	
5-year housing supply target (3)	Not applicable	16,440 units
5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place) (4)	Not applicable	3.1 years
Housing approvals (5)	280 applications	185 applications
Housing completions over the last 5 years	4,894 units	4,044 units
Marketable employment land supply	219.04 ha	210.90 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	36.93 ha	42.19 ha

1. Source: Fife Housing Land Audit 2016. All data are from the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 as the date for the submission of the PPF6 report is before that of the publication of the Housing Land Audit.
2. Fife does not have a single housing land requirement and is covered by 2 strategic development plans. The reported housing market areas are those stipulated in SESplan and TAYplan.
3. Fife is covered by 2 strategic development plans (SDP), TAYplan to the north and SESplan to the south. Neither SDP sets a housing supply target as both were prepared using Scottish Planning Policy 2010.
4. This calculation uses the housing supply target as the denominator. See note (3).
5. This figure is the number of approved applications for housing/residential development including PPP proposals: we do not record the actual number of units approved, and cannot therefore determine this figure from the records held in uniform.

We publish our housing statistics online in [Fife Council's Housing Land Audit](#) which includes the most up to date figures.

While the approved Development Plan Scheme in the PPF5 reporting period programmed the adoption of FIFEplan in August 2016, timescales have slipped, this is outwith the Council's control. The examination was programmed to run until 1st June 2016 with adoption programmed for August 2016. However, the examination ran for 14 months with the examination report being published in November 2016. The modifications and the updated FIFEplan were submitted to Scottish Ministers on 24th March with an adoption date beyond the PPF6 reporting period.

Key Outcomes	2016-2017	2015-2016
Development Management Project Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement 	2% (50) 17.6% (3)* *all Priority cases project managed	5% 15
Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application approval rate Delegation rate 	95.3% 95.7% 36%	93.2% 94.5% 34%
Validation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of applications valid upon receipt 		
Decision-making timescales Average number of weeks to decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major developments Local developments (non-householder) Householder developments 	38.1 15.9 8.6	28.2 15.2 8.5
Legacy Cases Number cleared during reporting period Number remaining	34 31	23 21

The Fife Local Development Plan continues to progress through the examination outcome stage. There has been a significant delay through the examination period, outwith Fife Council's control, and the report is now expected to be progressed to adoption in Summer 2017 subject to the approval of the Minister. PPF7 will update further on this. We continue to publish progress updates on fifedirect and communicate through our twitter account and our [Fife Local Development Plan eBulletin](#). We have also recently set up an [Instagram](#) account. ([Instagram.com/fifeplanning](https://www.instagram.com/fifeplanning)).

We have not seen a significant improvement in Performance in the Development Management teams in the PPF6 reporting period which is disappointing. In our Priority Team there have been significant staff changes in the last year resulting in capacity issues, staff changes have also had an impact on our local and minor applications team too.

Nevertheless we have been able to maintain performance to an acceptable level and meet the expectations of our Priority Business Customers. Similarly the performance of the local and minor applications teams has not seen the improvement which we would have hoped for coming through in the annual performance statistics. However we can report that the changes in structures and processes have ensured that we have maintained levels of performance despite continuing staff turnover and absence as well as delays in recruitment of new posts.

As an outcome of PPF5 a Development Management Performance Improvement Plan has been implemented. We have put in place training programmes to build in extra resilience by ensuring that all planners in the service including in Development Planning have experience of processing applications to provide back up to the Development Management team during periods where capacity is stretched. We are pleased to report that while the annual statistics are little changed from those reported in PPF5 as a result of the averaging from Q1 and Q2, the performance in terms of average weeks demonstrated in the Q3 and Q4 statistics is dramatically improved: the average weeks to determine all local applications reduced to 10.91 weeks in Q4; and for householder applications the Q4 measure was 8.12 weeks. We are confident with the changes we have made both in process and resilience management that the level of performance achieved in Q3 and 4 2016/17 will be reflected in the annual statistics reported in PPF7. Our Customer Survey reports a high level of satisfaction with the service we provide, however it is essential we continue to strive to deliver improved performance in terms of the speed of making decisions.

We have implemented an excellent internal CPD programme, with fortnightly CPD sessions. These include external and external speakers, and often attendance from representatives of other services within Fife Council and colleagues from other Councils. These are providing opportunities to increase knowledge skills and networking.

We continue to implement LEAN business process reviews and have delivered an Enforcement LEAN and worked with the DPEA to deliver an Appeals processing LEAN which we report on in this PPF. The Enforcement LEAN has achieved results in streamlining and identifying and resolving issues with how we gather statistics which have now been embedded in our process. The reasons that this was not picked up in the statistics have been identified through the LEAN review and have now been addressed. We are confident our enforcement reporting processes and statistical gathering in Uniform are now accurate. The work with DPEA has greatly simplified and consequently reduced the resources required to deal with the appeal process by

ensuring that all Fife Council's LDP and guidance documents are retained in the DPEA electronic library.

Further development and expansion of the use of Information Technology as part of the e-Planning agenda has been delivered within the PPF6 reporting period. To this end we have begun the roll out of Uniform Enterprise which will assist with project management and processing speed of planning cases. In addition Development Management case officers and Enforcement Officers have been issued with computer tablets to enable direct access to electronic cases and data systems while on site and other functions through apps. We will continue to develop and expand on this technology to improve efficiency and speed of processing cases and delivering services to our customers. We are experimenting with the use of drones to capture aerial footage of larger sites to reduce repeat visits by multiple consultees and case officers and will report on this initiative further in PPF7.

Part 2 Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service.

The following case studies provide examples of how our processes enable us to deliver an efficient and effective planning system for the people and communities of Fife. They illustrate how we innovate and develop the Planning Service in Fife as we continue to meet the challenges; both economic and technological, and provide a forward thinking flexible and responsive service to achieve sustainable economic growth. The case studies cited illustrate examples of how we influence the quality of development on the ground and highlight examples of cases where the Planning process and colleagues have influenced outcomes and achieved improved quality of development through a combination of utilising guidance documents, design improvements, and joint working. Development Planning actively seeks out new and innovative ways to encourage people and the communities of Fife to shape and influence their environment and lay the foundations for the implementation of FIFEplan2. 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.

Quality of Outcomes

The case studies in this section demonstrate how we work across services and provide clear and proportionate advice and guidance to achieve quality in the built environment and also in how we deliver our policy planning processes through the Local Development Plan.

CASE STUDY 1- DEVELOPMENT ON THE GROUND.

Example A:

GRANNIE CLARK'S WYND, ST ANDREWS

The project relates to a significant roof alteration/extension of a traditional stone built villa overlooking the 17th and 18th Fairways of the Old Course in St Andrews. The building while not listed occupies a highly prominent site forming part of one of the most photographed locations in Scotland and the backdrop to one of the most famous sporting arenas in the world.



Redevelopment of the property sought to maximize the top floor which as originally constructed had limited head height, to create an open plan living area with balcony looking out across the Golf Course and wider landscape views to the north and west.

Close collaboration and open discussion between the architect and Fife Council planning including contributions from Built Heritage specialists was important

given that the client was committed to developing a very contemporary scheme. Fife Council has a formal pre-application process but can also adapt flexibly to respond to specific cases where a different approach is required. In this instance the close pre application work secured a high quality contemporary development in a sensitive historic environment. It is considered that the pre application work, particularly given the potentially challenging design concept secured a decision in 6 weeks with no objections to the project.

Initial contact between the architect and Fife Council had highlighted the sensitivities of the proposed site. It was clear that the importance of the location required a bespoke tailored response to the development of the site. A meeting was held between the architect and planning officer to develop sketch ideas and options following initial discussions and contacts. This approach reflected the need to ensure that the proposal achieved the highest architectural merit while encompassing a contemporary solution. An open approach was encouraged with both parties being receptive to an iterative process to refine the design concept of the final scheme.

'The historic and globally renowned context of the site meant that particular care had to be taken in the development of the design for this project. Fife council planning department were very helpful and the detailed design process was conducted in close collaboration with them. This involved an iterative approach and included a workshop at our offices, which the planning officers attended, where we assessed the merits of a range of sketch options. We were challenged by the planning authority to find a scheme that would meet the Clients objectives whilst preserving all of the key features of the existing building, we feel that the end results bear out the validity of this approach and the quality of the finished product is a direct result of this co-operative way of working.'

Euan McCallum, Senior Associate and Architect, Nicoll Russell Studios.

It is considered that where necessary Fife Planning can provide a proactive innovative approach to respond to the needs of its customers and applicants to secure the quality of built environment and create quality development on the ground to deliver the built heritage of tomorrow.

No objections from Community Council or Preservation Trust were received. The application from submission to determination, despite the potential controversial nature of the proposal, was achieved within a short timescale notwithstanding the contemporary design and the location of the development.

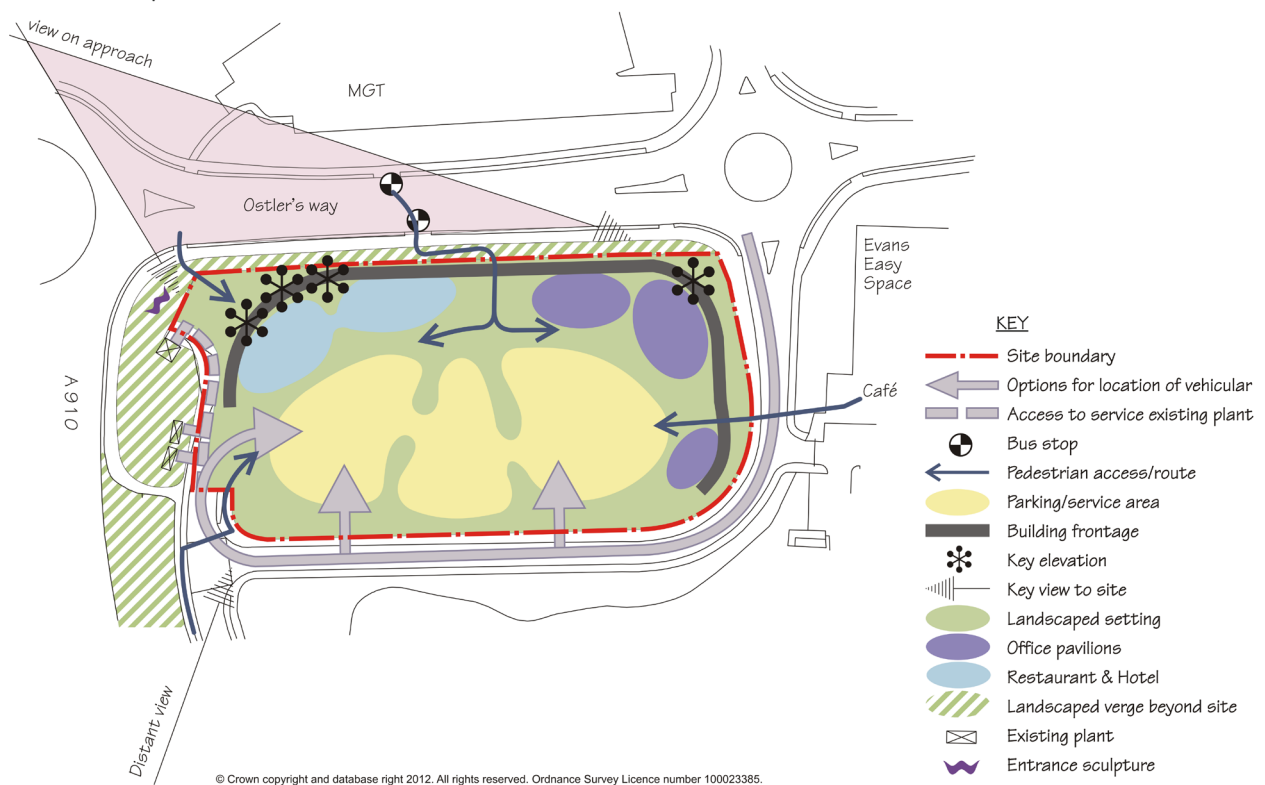


Example B:**SPIRAL WEAVE AT JOHN SMITH BUSINESS PARK,
KIRKCALDY**

A cross-service team from Fife Council worked with Marston's PLC – one of the UK's leading independent and pub retailing businesses – to bring a family pub-restaurant to the gateway site at the main entrance into John Smith Business Park. Located on the northern edge of Kirkcaldy, JSbp is one of Fife's premier business parks on 36 hectares of developable land owned by Fife Council. The whole site was master-planned to accommodate a mix of business space, retail/leisure & community facilities, 12 hectares of residential development and a hotel with conference facilities. It is covered by design guidance set out in the [JSbp Design Guide 2010](#), which provides a clear framework for building forms, layout, materials, access, landscaping and other aspects of sustainable design. In addition Fife Council provided separate development briefs for key area of the business park.



Design Principles - John Smith Business Park Site 5



Fife Council Economic Development marketed the gateway site off the West Kirkcaldy Chapel Interchange on the A92 as the chosen location for a restaurant, hotel and office pavilions, with a set of Design Principles to guide developers provided by Fife Council Urban Design. Marsden's came forward through that process with a proposal for a pub-restaurant using their standard model, based on traditional vernacular buildings. This was not considered an appropriate fit with the Council's aspirations for the

Business Park of stylish contemporary architecture, or with the office pavilions already erected there. A series of pre-application meetings were held between the applicant's design team and a team of officers bringing Economic Development, Urban Design and Transportation perspectives together through Development Management Priority Applications team. The architect was urged to develop a more contemporary external expression for the building envelope whilst still employing a Marsden's standard interior layout; using height, glazing and modern materials to provide a bold statement. They were advised to bear in mind its prominent location seen from one of the main approach roads to the town centre and beside a landmark piece of public art called the Spiral Weave, inspired by Kirkcaldy's weaving tradition and the idea of connecting threads associated with modern telecoms linking JSbp to the outside world. There was regular dialogue between the parties, and particularly the architect and Fife Council Urban Design, until a proposal was eventually finalised which was acceptable in design and financial terms to all parties in advance of submitting the planning application.

Case Study 1, Example A and B Performance Marker Measures:

- 1 - Improved decision making timescales.
- 2 - Project management
- 3 - Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications; clear and proportionate supporting information.
- 12 - Corporate working across services.

CASE STUDY 2

SP=EED PAS TRAINING



This training took place at a time when those involved in or working with the planning system in Scotland were looking closely at The Scottish Government's consultation paper People, Places and Planning and thinking about how its proposals can shape how planning is carried out in Scotland. The focus of the training was concerned with how people – communities or individuals – get involved with planning and its various factors. In short, engagement.

In Fife, we believe we have a good track record with community engagement and, indeed, engaging other partners and agencies we work with. But we know we can

always do better and are keen to learn from changing expectations of those groups who want to be involved in the planning system or simply communicate with us.

We regularly review what works well and what could be done better when we carry out some form of consultation or engagement exercise to do with development planning or in the wider sphere of planning activity. As we look ahead to finalising Fife's first Local Development Plan and thinking about what might emerge from the planning review for a future plan, the time was right to work with PAS (formerly Planning Aid Scotland) on SP=EED (Successful Planning = Effective Engagement & Delivery). We wanted the SP=EED verification training to review our own experiences and practice and to measure those against the principles set out in SP=EED.

Our SP=EED event took place at the beginning of February 2017 and involved almost all of the Development Plan Team, including planners and specialist officers. We also included guests from Fife Council's Community Learning and Development Teams who work closely with communities on a range of community events and activities to help deliver better services and work with priorities identified by communities. In addition, we were pleased to accommodate two representatives from a Buckhaven based community group, CLEAR, in order to have a community perspective on the discussions and activities of the day.

This was a half day training event and proved to be both lively and enjoyable and everyone who attended got something from it. Looking ahead, it helps us to start shaping our thinking about how we take forward the next step of Development Planning and its likely closer alignment with Community Planning.

SP=EED is not the only technique or set of principles available for community engagement but it compares well with and complements other methods and principles such as those set out in the National Standards for Community Engagement.

Performance Marker Measures:

6 - Continuous improvement

12 - Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit

Quality of Service and Engagement

The case studies in this section highlight examples of how we work collaboratively to achieve sustainable economic growth by working with customers and stakeholders to provide a positive experience. More widely colleagues participate in a number of national bodies such as HOPS, RTPI, SOLACE, and have been appointed to formal roles in various committees of these organisations. One of our graduate planners actively participates in the Scottish Young Planning Network committee and is on the RTPI East of Scotland Chapter organising committee.

One of our enforcement colleagues chaired the NAPE conference in Manchester in 2016 and all enforcement officers feed into the national association to shape and influence the agenda as it develops through the Planning Review.

Our Senior Manager is Vice Chair of the RTPI Membership and Ethics Committee and sits on the RTPI General Assembly.

The Service meets with Homes for Scotland and key agencies regularly.



We remain committed to using LEAN as a mechanism to review update and effect change as to how we deliver our service and reflect issues raised by our Customer Survey and also outcomes from SPSO decisions and appeals. Our experience of LEAN working continues to be used across the Council to assist other services in how they approach change. Colleagues have provided assistance to the implementation of e-Building Standards to ensure the smooth commencement of that initiative.

We keep a record of complaints received from customers and where these are upheld we feedback the learning from these and review our processes and examine where there are areas we can improve our service. We also record the compliments we receive and these are also fed back to individual officers and teams to ensure their efforts for high quality service are recognised. These are a few of the comments our customers have made:

"Thank you so much. And can I just say that everyone I've called or spoken to at Fife Council has been so incredibly pleasant and nice. It's really been a pleasure talking with you all :) Makes me very proud to be Fifer!"

"Thanks for getting this one out before the Christmas holidays. I was on shift at time and so didn't pick this up till later - I heard your not back till the 9th but thought I'd text to say thank you so it's in your inbox for your return. Once again, a really big thank you for dealing with this and doing so in the mad panic before Christmas."

"It has been a long and eventful journey and I suspect that without assistance and support from you and your teams that it is one which we would not have completed to this stage."

It is now that the fun starts and we can begin to consider how we can use the additional income to support and invest in community projects and enterprise. Many thanks again for your assistance."

"I was very pleased with the clear and practical advice received. We were anxious about this application and your staff's professionalism helped to reduce that anxiety by laying out how it should be worded to explain our intention with the use of our property. I would like to thank [the officers] for their clear and helpful advice on what the important aspects of this application were, enabling it to provide suitable information for the council to decide the case in accordance with policy."

"Many thanks for all your help, guidance and prompt response to all our communications."

"I should like to express my gratitude to [the officer] for the professional manner in which she has dealt with the above Application. She has been most courteous and helpful and dealt promptly with matters, including calling quickly to examine the trees and discussing my queries very willingly. "

CASE STUDY 3

MAJOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, MASTERTON, DUNFERMLINE

A major housing development was proposed on an allocated site in Dunfermline by a volume house builder. The site was part of a larger allocation under the then Adopted Local Plan with all bar this site having been built out. The applicant submitted their Pre-Application Notice and in response, we set out the benefits of entering in to dialogue with ourselves via our pre-application service in the intervening 12 week period and also advised on the merits of entering in to a processing agreement.

The applicant opted to submit a pre-application enquiry and due to the scale of the proposal, it was processed the Priority Applications Team. The developer was encouraged to submit a pre-application enquiry which they did. Whilst the site was an allocated housing site, there were numerous issues that needed to be considered which would ultimately shape the final form of the development. There was also a masterplan (extract below) for the area which set the parameters for the development which was designed to protect the setting of a listed building as well as the amenity of the residential units given its proximity to the M90 motorway as well as an existing woodland.

The pre-application enquiry proposed a far greater number of units than the site had been allocated for and also encroached on to the open space surrounding the listed building. Via the pre-application enquiry, we were able to consider the acceptability of both these elements and allowed us to negotiate improvements to safeguard the setting of the listed building secure improved open space provision to also the green network opportunity identified in the emerging FIFEplan.

The pre-application enquiry also allowed consideration to be given to various elements of the proposal and ensured that the application was submitted with the appropriate and proportionate level of supporting information.

The transportation impacts and the level on information that transport officers would require to comment on the proposal was clearly defined. Thus the applicant was able to procure the necessary appropriate level of supporting information prior to formally submitting the planning application. Furthermore, we were also able to advise on the level on contribution that would be required in line with the Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance in relation to strategic transportation contributions.

We provided advice in relation to education capacity within the 4 catchment schools. One of the Primary Schools had a capacity risk and there was also another residential application under consideration which was also in this Primary Schools catchment. Due to these complexities, we were not able to quantify the level of contribution that this development would be required to provide in order for the Primary School to accommodate this development. Nonetheless, the submission of the pre-application enquiry did allow us to initiate a feasibility study to consider options for providing the necessary capacity with the Primary School in advance of the planning application being submitted, thus expediting the education solution and thereby the contribution to be quantified.

Since the level of detail provided within the pre-application enquiry was relatively detailed, we were able to advise the applicant of not only the need to provide 25% of their units as affordable, but actually specify the preferred mix of units ranging from the type of unit and the number of bedrooms.

In addition to the above contributions, we were also able to confirm the level of contribution which would be required towards play provision as well as provide feedback relative to the citing of public art.



As part of our consideration of the pre-application enquiry, we were able to advise the applicant of the information that should accompany their formal application in order to allow us to determine the application as timeously as possible. At the end of each section within our pre-application response letter, we provide a summary of the information we consider necessary to determine compliance with our development plan and policies. Below is a list of all the information that was identified via the pre-application enquiry which we requested be submitted with the formal planning application:

- Phase 1 habitat survey
- Details of biodiversity enhancements
- Transport assessment
- Tree survey
- Bat survey
- Tree protection and mitigation measures
- Site appraisal, design and access statement and consideration of design points raised
- Consideration of an adjustment to the northern part of the site.
- Justification for the uplift in numbers.
- Details of noise mitigation.
- Details of landscaping along M90 boundary

- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- An acoustic report
- Air quality assessment

The length of the above list demonstrates the thoroughness of our pre-application service and the value of opting to engage with us through this process. Had the applicant not engaged with us via our pre-application enquiry service, it is likely that this information may not have been provided and would only have been requested following the formal submission of their planning application or that the supporting information provided did not cover the appropriate areas. This would have significantly delayed the determination of the application as these reports would have had to be commissioned during the determination period and then issued for consultation once they had been submitted. Depending on the nature of the information, it may also necessitated re-neighbour notification. The pre-application enquiry allowed us to give consideration to the level of detail necessary to assess the various elements and thereby narrow the scope of the supporting information to cover the specific areas of interest.

Lastly, our response to the enquiry also contained information about the planning fee, the likely timescales for making a decision and other administrative advice.

The above demonstrates that from initial contact with a developer, we encourage applicants to engage with us via our pre-application service and one of the means by which we do so is by setting out the benefits in our responses to Pre-Application Notifications and providing details about how to take up this offer. This early collaboration is immensely valuable to both the applicant and planning authority as it allows early consideration of the proposal and for supporting information to be identified and tailored in advance of the formal submission. This also extends to quantifying the likely level of contributions that would be required but does require the pre-application enquiry to provide a relatively detailed proposal for our consideration.

Performance marker measures:

1 - Improved decision making timescales.

2 - Project management

3 - Early collaboration with applicants and clear and proportionate requests for supporting information.

12 - Corporate working across services.

CASE STUDY 4

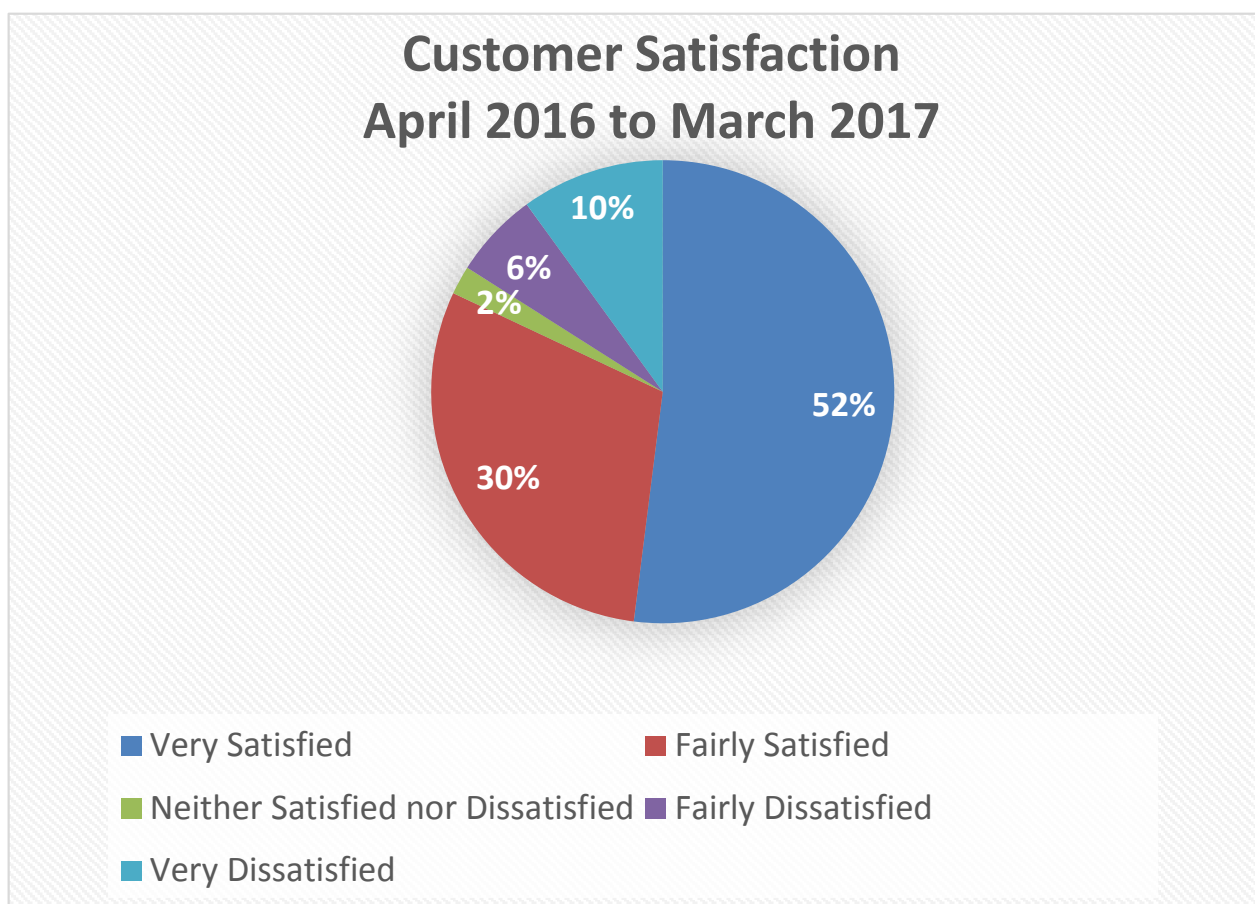
CUSTOMER SURVEY

During the 2016/17 the Development Management team sent 2934 invitations to customers asking them to complete our online survey. All applicants who received a Decision Notice, marking the end of the planning application process, were sent a request 2 weeks after receiving their Notice. The invitation provides a link to our online survey provided by Survey Monkey.

A total of 331 surveys were completed giving an average response rate of 11%. This is a constant figure across all 4 Quarters with only a slight increase to 12% during the 2nd Quarter.

We monitor the invitations we send out by classifying customers into 2 categories. This distinguishes between professional agents or individual applicants. The vast majority of invitations 78% are sent to professional agents.

The survey has 16 questions with a mixture of open, closed and equality monitoring questions. We have 2 questions which allow the customer to provide free text with their views on the service received and to provide suggestions on how we can improve. The results of this survey are provided as a percentage of responses.



As a result of the feedback received we were able to identify improvements to take forward in our Service Plan.

Our customers told us that they would like to see improvements in the following areas:

- Easier access to case officers
- Speed up decision making times

- Consistent advice and support with the validation process
- The planning jargon was confusing
- Flow chart or one page step by step guide to explain the planning process
- Provide the opportunity to withdraw or make amendments before issuing a Refusal
- Provide correct information regarding the fee at the start of the process

How we will improve our service to customers.

Monitor the process for an extension of time when an application will not achieve the target to ensure all customers are kept up to date with progress

Introduce an electronic communication to our customers at the start of the process to provide information on the various stages of the planning process

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 Planning committee meets in Dunfermline, Central Planning Committee Fife meets in Glenrothes and North East Planning Committee 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 6 period we introduced tablets for officers dealing with planning applications and commenced the roll out of Uniform Enterprise.

A separate planning Local Review Body 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 6 reporting period it has heard 28 cases in total. Of these cases 17 decisions upheld the original officer recommendation entirely or with a variation. 9 of the decisions taken by case officers were reversed. 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.

In the PPF 6 reporting period we have formalised our in house Continuing Professional Development programme with a range of internal and external speakers delivering lunchtime seminars and lectures on various topics. In addition all officers have had Personal Development Appraisals which involves a one to one meeting with their line

manager to discuss how they are enjoying their job, what areas they feel could be improved both in terms of the scope of their work, to broaden their experience and career development, and observations on how they are managed by their line manager. The meeting requires self-reflection and consideration of performance issues and a frank discussion on how any issues can be addressed with SMART objectives agreed.

As part of a wider Service initiative the Planning teams have developed individual team plans to identify their improvement objectives for the forthcoming year to set the broad context of how we approach the delivery of the planning service in Fife. Fife Council has introduced an initiative to progress culture change within the Council called Reality Checks and the Planning Service has actively participated in this project. The feedback results from the Planning Service are largely positive which reflects the journey that Planning has been on in recent years in Fife, as compared to other services that are at the start of that business transformation process.

It is however recognised that change and improvement to any process and service is a continuum and the Planning Service in Fife remains committed to adapt, develop, change and progress to achieve improvement to the service it delivers both in terms of quality and speed.

CASE STUDY 5

APPEALS LEAN

During Quarter 3 of 2016 we undertook a review of our Appeals process and carried out a LEAN event. This work was done in collaboration with Development Management staff, Legal Services and the Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA). The event was a 2 day event hosted by Fife Council.

The purpose of the event was to improve the end to end process for Planning Appeals between Fife Council (FC) & Directorate for Planning & Environmental Appeals (DPEA). The group looked at ways to eliminate the duplication of activities within the process; and to make the best use of resources.

This collaboration gave all parties a better understanding of the activities carried out within Fife Council and the DPEA. An action plan was created at the end of the event which indicated key dates for changes to be made. Some of the changes and benefits have already been implemented and are detailed below

Information to Planning Case Officers at start of process

Details of the appeal are now being sent to the planning case officer at the start of the process, which now means that they can start preparing appeal statements/information earlier in the process.

Compiling Documentation for DPEA

Documents submitted by Fife Council to the DPEA no longer need to be attached to appeal submissions. Fife Council now have this information uploaded onto the DPEA's Core Document Library. Instead of having to regularly send these documents, all that needs to now be done is a link provided within the appeal statement to the document. Examples of such documents will be Scottish Planning Policy, Local Development Plan etc.

Sending Planning Application Response Form (PARF) & Associated Documentation To DPEA / Appellant

Due to the large size of many documents that are sent to DPEA & Appellants, greater use will be made of Document Exchange / Dropbox type facilities to send such large documents efficiently. For the DPEA, all PARF and supporting information is now sent via Document Exchange. For Appellants / Agents an expansion of the current system for E-Planning which sees a Dropbox type facility within Fife Direct (accessed by secure password) that works in a similar fashion to Document Exchange may be used.



Measures of Success

- Improved time from receipt of appeal to completion of PARF (we will report more on the timescales in PPF 7)
- Improved time to make appeal decisions
- Improved end to end process time for Appellants

Performance Marker:-

6 - Continuous Improvement

12 - Corporate working across services.

CASE STUDY 6

SUDS VALIDATION

Some of the delays in processing planning applications can be where additional information is required following consultation responses. One of the most common requests for information is information on Flood Risk and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). In this regard we looked at the information provided in terms of Flood Risk and SUDS details. We worked in collaboration with our colleagues in the Infrastructure Team, and developed detailed guidance and checklists.



SUDS Guidance

In February 2017 we introduced this as a validation standard. Detailed information is now required to be submitted as part of an application as well as a self-verification checklist for SUDS and Flood Risk. By providing this information at the outset we would expect to see improved timescales for some decisions moving into PPF7.

“Since the introduction of the SuDS Validation Procedure the Flooding Team have noted a greater awareness from Developers and Planners to the early consideration of flooding, flood risk and Sustainable Drainage solutions for new developments.”

Ross Speirs, Lead Professional, Harbours Flood and Coast.

The work we have done in developing the SuDS Validation has been shared with other authorities and representatives from Fife have been asked to attend a workshop with SEPA to explore the validation process and report on our experience. We have also shared the knowledge and experience of rolling out the validation process with HOPS. We have also fed into and assisted the development of Northern Ireland’s approach to the relationship of Planning and SUDs and flooding more generally.

Performance marker:-

- 1 – Improved decision making timescales
- 3 – Clear and proportionate requests for supporting information.
- 6 – Continuous improvement
- 12 – Corporate working across services.
- 13 – Sharing good practice.

CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The case studies and examples noted above illustrate that we have a forward thinking and proactive approach to develop the Planning Service in Fife and an agenda which enables us to meet the ongoing complex challenges arising from the continuing economic climate and the forthcoming changes anticipated to arise from the Planning Review. We also continue to develop the resilience of the service by providing training opportunities both in house

and attendance at conferences and seminars. It is recognised that we still have a challenge to improve the speed of the decision making process, and while we take comfort from the results of our Customer Survey we are not complacent and continue to seek opportunities for improvements to our processes and how we deliver the Planning Service. In PPF 7 we will report on how we will use LEAN to develop e-Transportation to embed the electronic processes and the benefits that has brought to the Building Standards and Development Management team to the Transportation Development Management part of the service which provides planning consultations and RCCs. We have assisted the Northern Ireland Environment Department in providing assistance with how they will embed the use of SuDS and address flooding and drainage issue in general within their new planning system.

“Thanks for your comments and for all your assistance throughout this process. I will review and amend accordingly, your input is greatly appreciated and will be of great assistance in progressing this issue.”

Stuart Freeman, Senior Planner, Dept for Infrastructure, Planning Policy Division, Northern Ireland Government.

We continue to actively promote training opportunities for young graduates and in collaboration with colleagues in our Employability Team seek innovative approaches to enable access to employment by encouraging trainee ships in the Planning Service. We work closely with local colleges such as Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, to engage with planning students and recent graduates. We are particularly keen to encourage and inspire young people to become involved in the planning profession and to engage with the Development Planning process to ensure that their voice is heard in the Planning policy agenda.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Fife Council and I feel I learned a great deal during my one year placement. In my role as a Trainee Planning Assistant I was able to experience all aspects of the planning portfolio by working within different teams across the service. I feel as if my experiences of working in a planning office have gone a long way in aiding my learning and understanding of the practicalities involved in the role of a town planner, which is something I could not possibly have learned in the lecture theatre. Taking a year out of University was daunting, however, I feel I made a great decision in joining Fife Council and I am very grateful for the opportunity presented to me as it has allowed me to grow and develop both personally and professionally.”

**Bryan Reid,
Trainee Planning Assistant, Student at Duncan of Jordanstone, MA, Town and Regional Planning.**

“Like many others, I wasn’t sure what career path was right for me when I left school. Although I had never considered planning, I have always had an interest in our built and natural environment, so I was delighted when I was offered the Trainee Planning Assistant position. After a few months of gaining experience in various departments, earning a qualification, developing relationships with other members of staff and continually growing in confidence, I knew I wanted to progress in the field. My time with Fife Council has encouraged me to go on to study Town and Regional Planning at the University of Dundee at the end of the year, as it has been so beneficial and enjoyable throughout.”

Sarah Purves, Trainee Planning Assistant.

CASE STUDY 7

In 2016 we held an Enforcement LEAN workshop to examine how we provide our enforcement service and to assist us to streamline and simplify our processes. As part of the workshop process maps were created to set out visually what the end to end process was in relation to dealing with the enforcement of planning applications. This highlighted areas of inconsistencies in relation to how different officers were applying the process in terms of logging enquiries and complaints and how the uniform record keeping was not consistently applied. It was reassuring that on the whole the evaluation and quality of the assessment of cases and the decisions made in evaluating the cases was of a consistent quality. What the process highlighted was the inconsistency in completing the uniform record, recording of information, and how actions and outcomes were not always formally recorded as being closed off. The LEAN event has enabled us to address these issues and target the inconsistencies to ensure a higher quality of service. The event also initiated a wider discussion on what the shape of the Enforcement Service in Fife should look like.



The event also assisted us in feeding into the consultation process for the Planning Review as it stimulated colleagues to re-evaluate what they do and how they do it. The focussed period of time on this area also provided an opportunity to consider innovative approaches as to how we can deliver the Enforcement service against and increasingly challenging financial climate, and was also used as a springboard to review and redraft the Enforcement Charter.

Performance markers:

6 - Continuous improvement

13 - Sharing good practice.

CASE STUDY 8:

ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH TRADITIONAL SKILLS.

A Traditional Building Skills Demonstration Workshop and Exhibition was held at the Townhouse, Kirkcaldy on

13th and 14th March 2017. Over forty S3 pupils from three Kirkcaldy High Schools (Balwearie, St Andrews and Kirkcaldy) were able to try four traditional building skills, instructed by trade experts. Careers and traditional buildings information was provided in the exhibition marquee.

Demonstrators:-

- **Stone Carving /Joinery** - Fife Council Building Services Heritage Team including an award winning apprentice stone mason
- **Slating and Painting/Decorative finishing** –Fife College

Information/Advice/ Assistance was provided from representatives of :-

Fife & Tayside Traditional Building Forum, Fife College, Historic Environment Scotland, Construction Industry Training Board, Fife Council's Planning Built Heritage and Building Standards and Public Safety (Private Housing Standards) Team, and the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Event Objectives :-

(1) influence/inspire/engage:-

- Young people (ages 13-14) in their built environment and in traditional building skills
- Young people's influencers (for example, parents and teachers)
- Public/homeowners – information on maintaining/repairing traditional property/ common repairs

(2) Raise awareness/profile to young people/ teachers/the public of:-

- Potential careers in traditional buildings construction, surveying, architecture and planning
- Skills needed to maintain, repair, and adapt traditional buildings
- The special quality of traditional buildings and their contribution to amenity, identity and place.



This was the first F&TTBF event in Fife and it was innovative in:

- Using the built heritage planning policy agenda and knowledge/ resources within partnerships to give a practical outcome to Kirkcaldy Community Planning 'Improving Economy, Employment and Learning Opportunities' Theme objectives
- Fulfilling the recommendation in the Planning Review to engage with young people and encouraging them to understand their environment better.
- Linking with Fife Council's 'Scheme of Assistance' to help owners repair/maintain their properties and understand/ meet their common repair responsibilities.
- Demonstrating the link between economic development, the town centre agenda, and education.
- Raising awareness of the built heritage, traditional materials, repair and maintenance, skills required and the types of careers available in the field of traditional buildings
- Encouraging young people to enter traditional building careers. (informed by event feedback)
- Addressing an identified need for 12,000 more workers in the housing and infrastructure sectors over the next 5 years to meet the country's needs.

Feedback has been positive. The members of this branch of the [Scottish Traditional Building Forum](#) have been inspired to continue the beneficial networking/ partnership working that has begun. It is anticipated that similar events will take place in future, possibly at the schools themselves.

Performance markers:

6 – Continuous improvement

12 – Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit

13 – Sharing good practice

Service Improvement Objectives 2015-2016

Table 3

Fife Council's assessment of how we consider we have delivered on our service actions and objectives from PPF5. Additional details and information on these are reported in this PPF.

Committed Improvement and Actions in PPF 5	RAG Status
Improve performance processing our local and minor applications.	The NHI section of this PPF provides evidence of embedded improvement in recent performance returns but not yet reflected in annual statistics. Implementation of Uniform Enterprise will also help performance improvement.
Better collaboration and closer working between Development Planning and Community Planning.	Case study 7 reports on the delivery of this objective and process improvement in place. Uniform used consistently to record case load and performance.
Enforcement LEAN	Completed. Training needs and Personal Development Appraisals delivered to all colleagues. Ongoing internal CPD programme.
Structured CPD and Learning Plan for colleagues arising from PDA process	Completed. Training needs and PDAs delivered to all colleagues.
Formalisation of Project management of all Priority Business Cases	Case studies 3 and 4 as well as process improvements mentioned throughout this PPF highlight examples of how we have delivered this objective. Priority cases are monitored within the team; processing agreements are promoted; and all cases reviewed at regular meetings with Senior Management. We achieve high satisfaction ratings in our Customer Survey which represents a high proportion of agents.
Implementation of use of new technology to further develop efficiencies of working practices arising from e-development programme.	Tablets distributed to DM and Enforcement colleagues. We report in this PPF our commitment to build on and improve the application of this technology. Live Workflow Management- through Uniform Enterprise. We are also beginning to use drones to film large and complex sites.
Continued learning and improvements arising from our Listening Plan and Customer Survey Programme.	We have reported in this PPF how we have used our Customer Survey to identify improvements and other changes and initiatives arising from lessons learned. We continue to actively review and seek improvements to our processes and our systems as part of a business as usual approach to applying LEAN business improvement. The case studies illustrate examples of this in practice.
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.	All qualified planners are being trained in Development Management specialist IT systems (uniform/idox) to provide resilience and capacity for processing applications. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the specialist systems now applied through IT can also prevent smooth transitions between DM and DP staff unless such training is in place. All Planning Assistants are being trained to validate applications again this provides resilience to the system and support across teams.
Expansion of Transport Planning role integrated into the work of Development Plans and strategic policy work.	Officer supporting Transport work in SDAs. To be developed further and reported on in PPF7.
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.	The review will seek to ensure better corporate working within the Council and with Community Planning partners. This relates to work that will make the LDP Action Programme more of a Council delivery programme. A revised governance structure on the SDA programme has been implemented to better coordinate across Council Services. The Planning Service works closely with individual housebuilders and Homes for Scotland to proactively deliver work. Continued joint working with Education Service focusing on unlocking constraints relating to education infrastructure.

Part 3: Supporting Evidence.

[DPEA – Core Library](#)

[Enforcement Charter](#)

[Fife Council SUDS Guidance](#)

[FIFEplan Report of Conformity 2015](#)

[FIFEplan](#)

[Planning](#)

Other documents and supporting evidence is accessed from hyperlinks within the document.

Part 4: Service Improvements PPF 6 2017-18

Our improvement agenda is driven from feedback from our customer survey and lessons learned from complaints. We continue to apply LEAN as a tool to secure change, and critically evaluate our business model to seek opportunities to improve it. The following list gives an overview of the main objectives we aim to deliver within the PPF 7 reporting period.

- **Improve Performance of Major, Local and Minor Applications to better than national average.**
- **Undertake a Transportation LEAN, and implement the outcomes to provide e-Transportation.**
- **CPD Knowledge Hub to create an online learning resource to provide a resource which pools the presentations and information from the CPD programme.**
- **Staff Rotation between Development Management and Development Planning.**
- **Workshops to maximise benefits of new technology: joint workshops with colleagues in IT, maximise use of tablets and other technology.**
- **Joint working with other authorities on specific service delivery improvements: such as shared specialist staff resource, staff secondments between neighbouring authorities.**
- **Improvements driven from Customer Feedback.**
- **Review how we apply Specialist Support such as Built and Natural Heritage and Tree Officer advice to simplify the planning and listed building application process without a loss of quality.**
- **Streamlining delegated reports to increase efficiency and speed of decision making**
- **Continue to work to encourage young people to work within planning and contribute to the wider planning process.**
- **Work with Scottish Government on development of National Case load management system.**
- **Continued working with housebuilding industry, particularly in relation to infrastructure delivery.**

Part 5: Official Statistics

A: Decision making timescales (based on “all applications” timescales)

Category	2016-2017	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2016-2017	2015-2016
Major developments	17	38.1	28.2
Local developments (non-householder)	782	15.9	15.2
● Local: less than 2 months	313 (40%)	7.5	7.3
● Local: more than 2 months	469 (60%)	21.4	21.6
Householder developments	1051	8.6	8.5
● Local: less than 2 months	767(73%)	7.1	6.9
● Local: more than 2 months	284 (27%)	12.4	12.2
Housing developments			
Major	11	49.1	34.9
Local housing developments	206	19.2	17.8
● Local: less than 2 months	50 (24.3%)	7.8	7.5
● Local: more than 2 months	156 (75.7%)	22.9	23.0
Business and industry			
Major	0	0	17.6
Local business and industry	43	14.2	17.6
● Local: less than 2 months	20 (46.5%)	7.4	7.5
● Local: more than 2 months	23 (53.5%)	20.2	28.0
EIA developments	2	19.7	43.7
Other consents	696	8.2	7.7
Planning/legal agreements	16		23
● Major: average time	45.2		39.6
● Local: average time	39.1		69.9
Local reviews	28	13.3	13.7

LOCAL REVIEWS AND APPEALS

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2016-17		2015-2016	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	28	20	71	17	58.6
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	40	22	55	14	51.9

ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

	2016-17	2015-16
Complaints lodged	747	866
Cases taken up	22	6
Breaches identified	170	117
Cases resolved	237	125
Notices served	5	6
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Staffing pressures continue to affect the ability of the Service to deliver performance improvement largely as a result of continuing budget pressures reducing the number of posts in the Planning team. This reduces the resilience of the team to cope with unforeseen staffing issues which impacts on the throughput of applications. Training and redeployment of existing staff has been undertaken to mitigate the impact of this in service delivery terms but inevitably there is a time lag as experience is built up and the familiarity with the complexities of the IT systems used in the e-planning process is gained. Regrettably the team has continued to suffer from long term sickness absences which creates further pressures in the ability to improve performance where the reductions in staff numbers compromise the resilience of the team. The measures that we have put in place related in this PPF however have meant that despite reductions in staff, delays in appointing replacement staff, and sickness absences all of which compromise our capacity we have significantly improved performance in Q3 and Q4 2016/17 and the Customer feedback attests to the quality of service we can deliver.

We consider that this PPF demonstrates that notwithstanding these very real business pressures, we have achieved improvements to performance; maintained our commitment to continuous improvement, and staff development; and the promotion of planning as a profession. We are an excellent service with highly motivated staff delivering a quality service to the people of Fife.

B: WORKFORCE INFORMATION

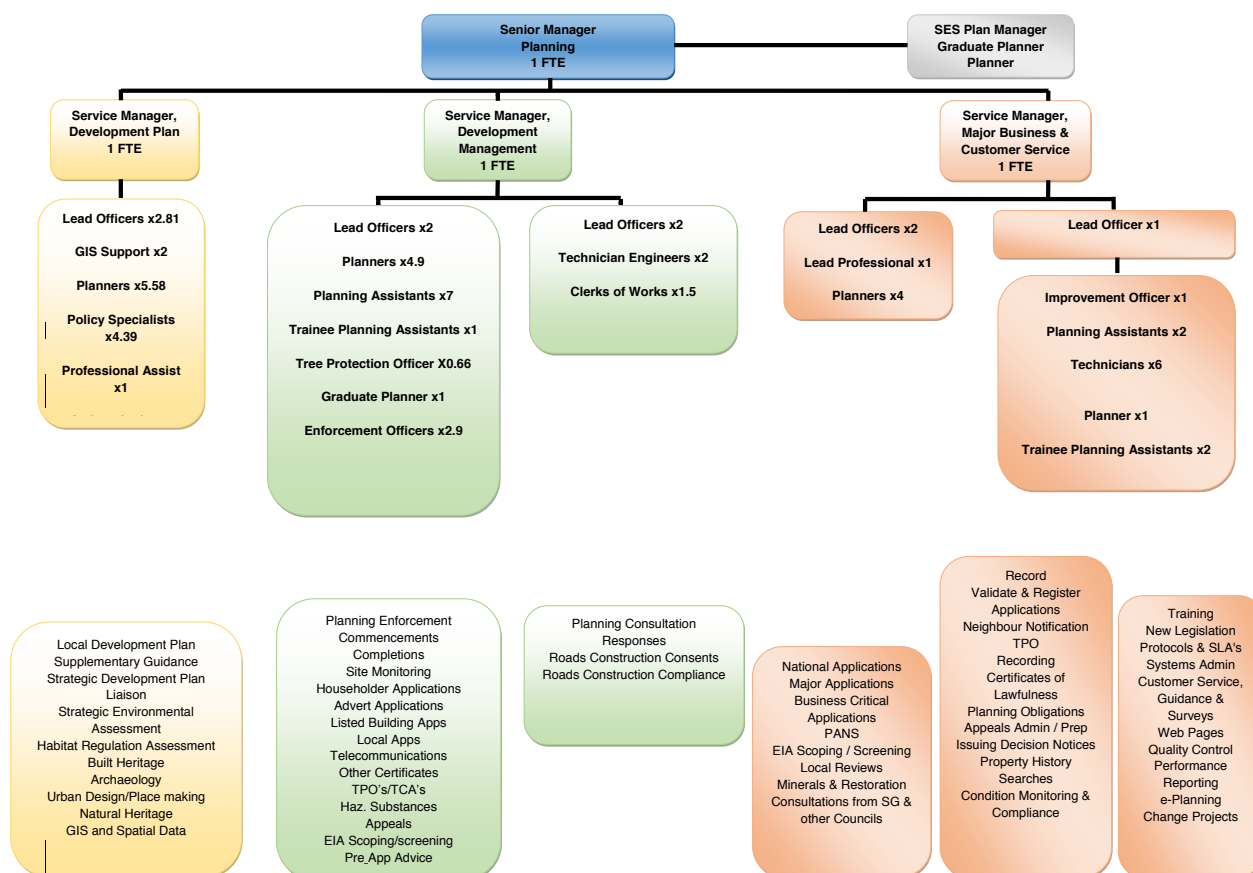
Staff Structure (at 31 March 2017. FTE)

	Tier 1 Chief Executive	Tier 2 Director	Tier 3 Head of Service	Tier 4 Manager
Head of Planning Service			1	

		DM	DP	Enforcement	Transportation DM
Service Managers	No. Posts	2	1	Under DM Service Manager	Under DM Service Manager
	Vacant				
Main Grade Lead Officers, Lead Professionals, Policy Specialists, Planners, Graduate Planner	No. Posts	16.9	12.78		2
	Vacant				
Planning Assistants, Tree Protection Officer, Technician Engineers, GIS, Enforcement officers, Clerk of Works, Professional Assistant.	No. Posts	19.66	3.0	2.9	3.5
	Vacant			1	
Office Support/ Clerical	No. Posts				
	Vacant				
TOTAL		38.56 (FTE)	16.78 (FTE)	3.9(FTE)	5.5(FTE)

Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full council meetings	5
Planning committees	11 X 3
Area committees (where relevant)	71 Meetings- (7 Area Committees)
Committee site visits	We do not record this information
LRB	10 Meetings
LRB Site Visits	26 Site visits

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.

ROBIN PRESSWOOD

Head of Economy, Planning and Employability Services

Fife Council, Kingdom House, Glenrothes, Fife KY7 5LY

Tel **03451 555555** ext **442260**

Email Robin.presswood@fife.gov.uk

PAM EWEN

Senior Manager, Planning Fife Council,

Kingdom House, Glenrothes, Fife KY7 5LY

Tel **03451 555555** ext **442288**

Email Pam.Ewen@fife.gov.uk

ALASTAIR HAMILTON

Service Manager Fife Council,

Kingdom House, Glenrothes, Fife KY7 5LY

Tel **03451 555555** ext **450514**

Email Alastair.Hamilton@fife.gov.uk

Acknowledgements:

The help and assistance of all colleagues in the Planning Portfolio who contributed to the collation of this document is gratefully acknowledged. The Planning service would also like to give special thanks to Mark Dolatowski in Fife Council's Print Team for his graphic design and DTP skills.