

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 6



moray
council



ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - 2017



Knockomie Braes, Forres

FOREWORD

As Chair of the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee I am delighted to submit the 2016/17 Planning Performance Framework as we continue to work hard in the present challenging economic climate to balance our aspirations for growth with safeguarding our outstanding environment and promoting quality places to live, work and enjoy.

Planning has a key role to play in our day to day lives and we will continue to improve our service and in doing so, we will strive to engage with as wide an audience as possible. We will embrace the changes to the planning system emerging from the ongoing national review and support the focus on delivery of development and greater scrutiny of the viability and effectiveness of development.

We have included 6 case studies which showcase good practice and also represent a wide range of the issues Moray faces. The case studies range from the Elgin South Masterplan which proposes 2,500 houses to the Moray Woodlands and Forestry Strategy, a land use which accounts for more than 30% of Moray, to the magnificent renovation of a grade A listed building on the Altyre Estate.

We have identified a range of further improvements and actions for the coming year as we continue to review our Development Management procedures and complete the Main Issues Report for the Moray Local Development Plan 2020.

I look forward to reporting on our continued progress in due course.



Claire Feaver
Chair of the
Planning and Regulatory Services Committee
Moray Council

PART 1

Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

1.1 QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

High quality development on the ground is a key national and local outcome where the emphasis over the last 12 months has been on aiding delivery of development. The adopted Moray Local Development Plan 2015 is now embedded into decision making with the 3 Primary policies striving to ensure they support sustainable economic growth that is of a high quality creating important places that future generations will wish to protect. The three examples below demonstrate how we have supported high quality of development for both new and regeneration of listed buildings in rural and town centre locations (case studies 1 – Elgin South Masterplan; case study 2 - Victoria Cottages and case study - Altyre Estate). A further (case study 4 - Moray Woodland and Forestry Strategy) demonstrates how the planning system can support economic development in rural areas as well as promoting environmental and social benefits.

Major developments that are under construction in Moray are the Macallan Distillery and associated warehousing supporting the tourist industry and securing long term employment opportunities in Speyside. The replacement Elgin High School is progressing well to deliver improved education facilities for students in Elgin. Blackhillock Sub-Station and on-shore cable routes are all nearing completion and support renewable energy projects on and off shore. A wide variety of Housing proposals are under construction in Forres, Elgin, Keith and Buckie all of which continue to provide both private and affordable houses across Moray. All these projects had the security of an up to date adopted Local Development Plan and a suite of Supplementary Guidance that provided a platform for giving effective pre-application advice and consistent decision making.

In terms of Supplementary Guidance all remain fit for purpose with Developer Obligations being adopted which will now ensure that certainty in decision making is given to developers. New Supplementary Guidance on Open Space and revised Onshore Wind Energy Policy Guidance has been consulted upon and will be adopted in summer 2017.

The Quality Audit process has started to deliver results as a number of residential developments over the last 12 months have been through this collaborative assessment which is



Elgin High School replacement

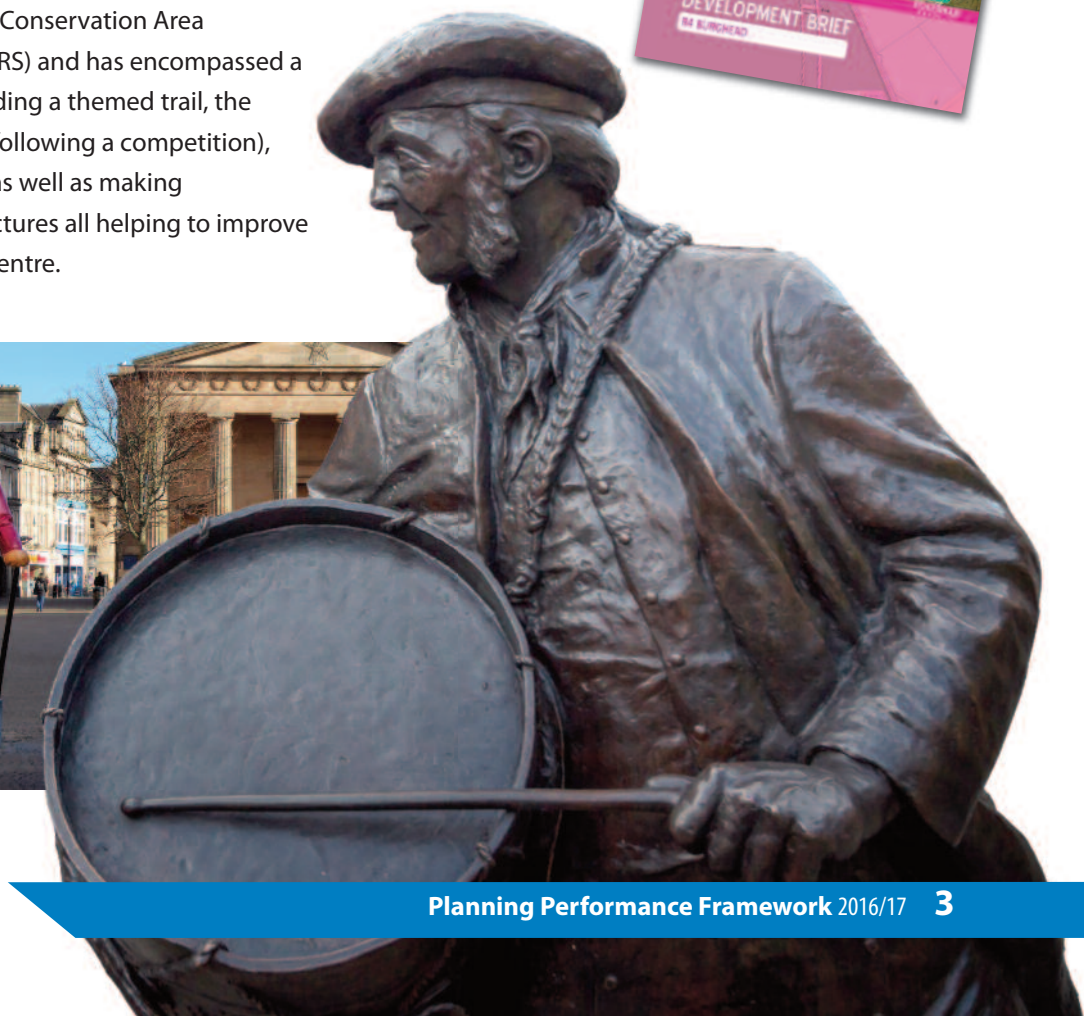


worked on by colleagues in transportation, housing, development plans and development management. Over the reporting period a number of schemes were subject to review and change at both the pre-application stage and during the application assessment to improve the quality of design overall.

The masterplans that have been progressed and approved to the final stage are Elgin South, Dallas Dhu and Findrassie. A number of development briefs have also been prepared to give developers focus and certainty of the key considerations to be incorporated into planning application submissions. These will form part of the Moray 2020 Local Development Plan.

Two planning awards were granted in two separate categories – One for Creating Places in Moray, covering the processes put in place to promote improved design quality from masterplanning and training events through to the quality audit process and the other award for Findrassie Masterplan, promoting a partnership approach, a high quality development of 1500 homes and mixed uses to the north of Elgin.

The Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere project has been delivered as part of Elgin's Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and has encompassed a number of elements including a themed trail, the provision of 3 sculptures (following a competition), hosting a number events as well as making improvements to key structures all helping to improve the vibrancy of the town centre.



CASE STUDY 1

ELGIN SOUTH MASTERPLAN

Elgin South is a LONG term designation identified in the Moray Local Development Plan. The release of LONG sites is controlled through the annual housing land audit and a series of triggers, principally being whether there is a shortage of effective land or whether the Council or a community planning partner needs the site for a particular purpose. The Council worked with Springfield Properties on a collaborative masterplan, which was a requirement of the Moray Local Development Plan 2015. At the outset of the masterplanning process, Architecture and Design Scotland facilitated a workshop of key stakeholders which started to form a vision around three villages. The Masterplan proposes approximately 2,500 houses, 2 primary schools, retail, commercial and community uses, a sports centre, cemetery and extensive open spaces. The Masterplan was approved in May 2017 and a first phase application for 870 houses, sites for 2 primary schools and a sports centre was granted planning consent in June 2017.

The masterplan approach encouraged a longer term co-ordinated approach to infrastructure planning and Council planners worked closely with colleagues from transportation, education and other services as well as NHS Grampian to ensure future needs were provided for in the masterplan and the first phase application.

Viability was a key issue in determining the application and developer obligations of £5.6 million were secured towards mitigation of the impact of the development on education and healthcare infrastructure. Collaborative working was also key to the success of this project, with the developer's project team meeting with the Council project team on a regular basis.



Elgin South Village Garden concept



South Glassgreen (Elgin South) concept

CASE STUDY 2

VICTORIA COTTAGES, ELGIN

211A-211F High Street Elgin is a redevelopment of 6 townhouses that have been vacant for over 10 years. The properties are Category B & C listed and form a diminishing range of gabled buildings. The site is located within the outstanding conservation area, as identified in the Moray Local Development Plan 2015, and contributes to the medieval herringbone layout that characterises it.

Planning permission and listed building consent were approved for the redevelopment works which has ensured that 6 properties on the Buildings at Risk Register can now be removed from the list. The proposed works conserve and invest in a historic built environment resource whose future was in doubt and jeopardised by continued lack of use and therefore maintenance.

The development involved minimal changes to the exterior façade of the buildings fronting onto the lane. Existing windows were retained where possible and any replacements made to match the existing in terms of detailing. New conservation velux windows and slate vents were introduced to comply with current building standards and a lean-to at the end of the terrace was removed and replaced with a new bin store with timber linings. Internally, alterations were limited to decoration; stripping and replacing plasterboard, new insulation measures, kitchens and bathrooms. 2 properties were extended into roof space to create more living accommodation.

Working in collaboration with the developer to identify a viable use and regeneration strategy for the 6 vacant properties complies with aims of a recent conservation area appraisal of Elgin High Street that identified a lack of residential uses within the conservation area. Ensuring occupancy has wider benefits, in that buildings in use tend to be better looked after and maintained.



Prior to the application being made, Moray Council Planning Section, Economic Regeneration (CARS) and Building Standards had detailed discussions with Robertsons Properties to establish the scope of works proposed and how this would ensure that the special architectural interest and character of the listed buildings and wider conservation area was preserved. The Council and Robertsons worked together throughout the planning process to create a redevelopment scheme that would create inviting places for people to live while still retaining the original character of the properties and established street pattern.

From start to finish the process of identifying the vacant buildings, obtaining grant funding from the Scottish Government and CARS scheme to completion and occupation of the buildings took less than a year (July 2016 - February 2017).

The development demonstrates that collaborative working can produce well considered high quality development within the historic environment and that this partnership approach can be successfully replicated on other projects.



CASE STUDY 3

ALTYRE ESTATE, FORRES

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted for a new mixed use creative learning/art space and office development utilizing a Category A listed historic steading approx. 2 miles outside Forres on the Altyre Estate. Alterations were carefully considered and designed to minimise impact on the historic structures. The external appearance, historic interest and health of the buildings ultimately benefit from the proposed works.

Development centred on the restoration and part demolition of agricultural buildings to form mixed use commercial development. Large scale repair of historic fabric ensured that original windows, doors, roof, stonework and harling were retained where possible. Re-configuration and rationalisation of internal spaces to modernise buildings for use included adding new window and door openings, glazed screens infilling existing openings, new conservation type roof windows and new downpipes for areas lacking provision.



Before and after



Extensive collaboration with the estate owner and architects throughout the planning process, in the form of pre-application advice and guidance on design aspects of the proposal from Moray Council and Historic Environment Scotland, has ensured that a successful and innovative end use for a large historic steading complex has been found.

Blairs Home Farm Steading on the Altyre Estate near Forres has been transformed into a world-class research and teaching space. This is an unparalleled opportunity for students to study within a newly renovated campus in spectacular surroundings. The buildings have been converted into a Glasgow School of Art (GSA) campus, providing inspiring studio, workshop and exhibition space as well as state of the art areas for research, teaching, prototyping and flexible lab work.

The GSA is internationally recognised as one of Europe's leading university-level institutions for the visual and creative disciplines. The campus brings the GSA's world-leading research and teaching to the Highlands and is one of the top 10 art schools in the world (QS World Subject Rankings 2015).

The development demonstrates that collaborative working can produce well considered high quality development within the historic environment and that this partnership approach can be successfully replicated on other projects.



CASE STUDY 4

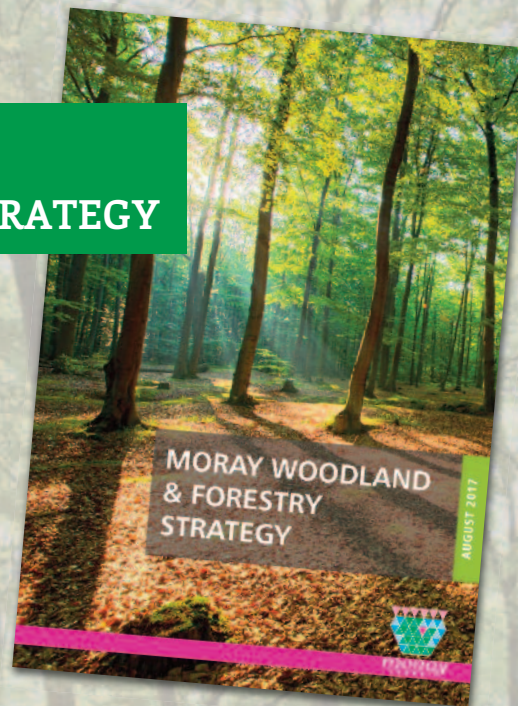
MORAY WOODLAND & FORESTRY STRATEGY

The Moray Woodland and Forestry Strategy Supplementary Guidance has been prepared by a working group led by the Council with representatives from Scottish Natural Heritage, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Forestry Commission Scotland and Moray Speyside Tourism.

The strategy is framed around a 20 year vision of growth for woodlands and forests which currently account for over 30% of Moray's land cover. The strategy highlights the economic importance of forestry and woodlands in Moray, which supports an estimated 820 FTE jobs in Moray. Economic opportunities are identified within the strategy including increasing the demand for timber through the increased use of native timber in house building and increasing the demand for biomass creating local woodfuel markets. Opportunities for new planting are identified spatially and these areas bring a grant premium for landowners.

The strategy seeks to support and enable continued development of our woodland tourism by promoting an attractive accessible environment, promoting quality, affordable and varied accommodation options in and around woodland and creating a co-ordinated woodland tourism offer of attractions, events and services, building upon the excellent network of walking and cycling trails and linkages to the Cairngorms National Park.

The strategy also supports woodland and forests for health and wellbeing purposes, opportunities for education, training and skills development and opportunities for hutting, community ownership and affordable housing.



In terms of the environment, the strategy seeks to protect, enhance and expand the woodlands and forests and highlights the need for them to become resilient to the risk associated with climate change and tree health. Opportunities for natural flood management, creation of green networks and creation of woodlands in and around towns are identified in the strategy.



1.2 QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

In the reporting period for 2016/17 we issued 146 pre-application information packs for local developments and 9 for major developments, all of which will steer and front load the planning application process in the right direction. Our turnaround timescales are 28 days from the receipt of an enquiry for local developments and 28 days for feedback to be received following the holding of the pre-application meeting. These timescales are monitored. This service is not covered by a fee and it is therefore important to ensure that benefits are realised as part of the decision-making process in helping to reduce delays in average determination rates, as well as giving the applicant certainty in being able to deliver a decision without burdening the process with unreasonable and disproportionate requests for information. Case study 5 shows that the clear and proportionate requests for information are being made. Where possible, the officer responsible for providing the pre-application advice will generally be the planning officer dealing with the application when submitted, to provide consistency in decision-making.

All applicants are offered processing agreements on major planning applications as well as local developments and these are publicised on the web site. There has been a steady increase in the take up of these from 6 in 2015/16 to 19. The monitoring of these is an area that will be the subject of review.

Regular update/liaison meetings are held with our key partners annually that also provide an opportunity for CPD and these include Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service, SNH, SEPA and the Cairngorms National Park. These are beneficial to creating good practice opportunities and understanding the standing advice used by key agencies and reducing the amount of individual consultation on a case by case basis.

A corporate approach to customer engagement has resulted in a group of officers across the Development Management service to come together to produce a customer action plan. This has been an effective way of reviewing existing methods of customer engagement and feedback and identifying areas of improvement. The group will continue to meet annually to support customer engagement through our existing charter, telephone and desk duty services, as well as holding developer workshops.

An effective enforcement service, which ensures developments are delivered on the ground, has an important role to play in providing a high quality outcome on the ground. Case study 6 describes how close partnership working with transportation colleagues has secured the delivery of a number of highway improvements, mainly passing places and lay-bys, which have been the subject of planning conditions on rural housing development.

CASE STUDY 5

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

In 2016/17 we held 7 major pre-application meetings with developers seeking pre-application advice. The meeting dates that we host are available 6 months in advance and are on the website. Dates are circulated to all internal and external consultees to assist with their availability. Dates will also be circulated in future to our regular developers to encourage an increase in the take-up of the service on offer. If the date booked is not suitable for a developer we are more than happy to arrange a special meeting and to accommodate their travel times by varying the meeting start time.

The meetings are attended by representatives of all our internal departments including Transportation, Contaminated Land, Environmental Health, Building Standards, Flood Risk Management, Public Access Manager, Education, Housing & Developer Obligations Officer. Our key partners externally that attend on a regular basis are SEPA, SNH and Aberdeenshire Archaeology Officers. We are seeking to get attendance from Scottish Water, Historic Environment Scotland and Transport Scotland to attend future meetings and are looking into the increased use of teleconferencing to facilitate this. As we share boundaries with Aberdeenshire and Highland as well as covering a small part of the Cairngorms National Park, colleagues are invited as and when appropriate.

The meetings held are informal and the developer is offered the opportunity to present their proposals and then each consultee has the opportunity to ask questions and to provide some initial feedback. Any written comments received by the meeting are also read out. Following the meeting, the responses are collated into a detailed response which is forwarded to the developer to assist with ensuring that, before any major application is submitted, they are aware of the statutory process such as the need for a PAN, the suite of documents required to accompany the application over and above the statutory minimum. The pre-application process also builds in a quality audit process aimed primarily at residential developments and the response includes a section on developer obligations referring to the adopted Supplementary Guidance.

Should a follow up meeting be required, this is offered prior to the submission of the application and may relate to one or two key topic areas. The meetings are also used as an opportunity to promote the use of processing agreements, as often national and major developments have time critical dates that can be built into the process from day one.

The preliminary enquiry process is the subject of a service review commitment in 2017/18 as the meetings are invaluable in ensuring that major applications are delivered smoothly through the planning process.

CASE STUDY 6

WORKING TOGETHER WITH TRANSPORTATION & ENFORCING PLANNING CONDITIONS

Throughout 2016 there has been a specific focus placed on monitoring and enforcing planning conditions imposed mainly on decisions approved for single dwellings in the countryside. In the calendar year 2016 there were 225 enforcement cases in total.

Out of them, 49 (22%) of the cases related to Transportation conditions and were identified by Transportation officers as part of our monitoring procedures. The conditions in question typically related to the creation and surfacing of accesses/passing places as well as the formation and maintenance of visibility splays.

Of the 49 cases, 34 (70%) were closed with the work completed following correspondence and negotiation by the Planning Enforcement Officer. Of the remaining, 5 of these related to unauthorised works with the remaining ongoing with a commitment from the developers to complete.

As an example of the improvements that have been delivered, photos below show an access before and after a surfacing condition has been complied with.

Compliance with these conditions without the need for formal enforcement action is as a result of placing high priority on highway safety and working together to deliver a positive outcome. This will be used as a model in other areas of condition monitoring.



1.3 GOVERNANCE

The Planning & Regulatory Service Committee meet every two months and the Local Review Body meet every 6 weeks. All of the Committee meetings can be viewed by web cast. There were 5 special meetings arranged to meet developers timescales. During 2015/16 97.2% of applications were determined under the approved scheme of delegation, of which 92.6% were approved. The scheme continues to work well and will be the subject of review in 2018. The Local Review Body dealt with 27 cases, 45% of which were allowed.

The council has a formal complaints process and customers are directed to the web site. All complaints are the subject of reporting to Committee. Any improvements/actions as a result of a complaint being upheld are carried out. There was 1 SPSO investigation throughout the reporting period and the complaint was not upheld.

The management structures have been the subject of change over the last 12 months within Development Plans with a Principal Planning Officer post changed to a Senior Planning Officer post. These are set out in full under part 6 of the document.

We are proud of the improvements that have been made in our average performance figures across all development types and this has been achieved by staff returning from maternity leave and spending more time reviewing caseloads weekly. We have maintained the level of legacy cases and this has only been achieved by being strict with decision timescales post Committee and keeping a close watch on the progress of S.75 agreements. A decision with a S.75 can become stalled for a number of reasons but by setting deadlines, progress can be tracked.

1.4 CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Development Services is committed to continuous improvement in improving the quality of its planning service for all users. The service plan is updated annually and contains service improvements for the next 12 months which gives focus and direction to areas in need of improvement.

Over the last 12 months we have prepared planning guidance on windows in Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. This has helped the Development Management team deal more effectively with these types of enquiries during desk duty and at the preliminary enquiry stage as well as being able to deal more effectively with applications by front loading the process.

In March 2017 the developer obligations function was taken in-house, ending the previous service level agreement with Aberdeenshire Council. The Council has appointed a Developer Obligations Officer who prepares and co-ordinates developer obligation assessment reports for planning applications.

An Infrastructure Delivery Group has been set up to co-ordinate and help implement longer term infrastructure planning. The Group includes representatives from Council Planning, Transportation and Education services, NHS Grampian and will expand to include other organisations such as Scottish Water in the future.

We have also introduced online forms for Development Management preliminary enquires as well as a form available on the web site to make enforcement enquires. These were introduced to increase the way customers can access our services and will be the subject of review.

ERDP interviews have been held with all staff and form a basis for future training to be pulled into an overall training plan as well as individual learning opportunities. For Development Management service, improvements and contributing to team targets form a part of this work review. Keeping up to date with changes to legislation is a day to day necessity as well as being part of the planning review. For Development Plans, team training opportunities have been identified for Place Standard, Effective Engagement techniques, Development Viability and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

In terms of management, the Leadership forum continues to meet on a regular basis and is a forum for third tier managers, Heads of Services and Directors to work together to identify solutions to wider corporate issues.

In 2016/17 Officers from the Planning service attended the following training/CPD events:

- Improvement Service workshop on EIA legislation
- Morton Fraser in house planning law update on planning review implications & EIA
- Flood Risk & Planning SEPA seminar
- Improvement Service workshop on Place Standard
- Improvement Service workshop on Effective Engagement
- Stimulating Housing Development in the Highlands and Islands
- Linking Place Standard with Community Planning

Officers also attended the following forums:

- North of Scotland Development Plans Forum
- Heads of Planning Development Management Sub-committee
- Heads of Planning Development Plans Sub-committee
- Heads of Planning Enforcement forum



PART 2

Supporting Evidence

Part 2 of this report was compiled using evidence from a variety of sources including:

- Development Services Service Plan
- A range of committee reports
- Results from customer feedback and telephone survey

To assist with the 15 key performance markers, relevant hyperlinks have been added in below under the four sub-headings and when combined together, define and measure a high-quality planning service along with our own summary of evidence/comments in the form of a markers report:

QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning 2016 – Findrassie Masterplan and Creating Places in Moray

www.moray.gov.uk/newsroom/news.html#/pressreleases/council-lands-coveted-planning-awards-1645129

Developer Obligations Supplementary Guidance – approved 2016

www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file108112.pdf

Replacement Windows & Doors Guidance – approved

www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file108153.pdf

Town Regeneration

www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_85062.html

Findrassie Masterplan Supplementary Guidance

www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_100634.html

QUALITY OF SERVICE & ENGAGEMENT

Moray Local Development Plan Scheme 2016

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file103463.pdf>

Housing Land Audit and Employment Land Audit 2017

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_1858.html

Making a preliminary enquiry – local developments guidance and form

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_41735



Major Developments Pre-application Advice

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_79962.html

Planning Enforcement Complaint Form

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file112048.pdf>

Processing Agreements

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_105746.html

Moray Council Complaints

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_1379.html

Planning Enforcement Charter – March 2016

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file103308.pdf>

Customer Care

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_98953.html

Development Management Service Charter

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file93673.pdf>

Elgin South Masterplan

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_104521.html

Development Briefs

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_110623.html

GOVERNANCE

The Moray Council Corporate Plan 2015-17

www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file98504.pdf

Scheme of Delegation:

www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file60539.pdf

Committee Diary:

www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file81765.pdf

CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Development Services Service Plan 2015 Report to Committee & Service Plan 2015/18

www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/RX20170627/Item%202a-Service%20Improvement%20Plan-R.pdf

Planning Performance Framework 2015/16 – Feedback Committee report – S.75 Targets

www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/RR20170117/Item%2012-PPF%20Feedback%202016%20Report-R.pdf



Performance Markers Report 2016/17

No.	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE/COMMENTS
1.	Decision-making Authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	Official stats in the PPF. There has been continued improvements in reducing average timescales in all development types.
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	Processing agreements offered in advance to all applicants submitting major planning applications and are publicised on the web site. Standard template and guidance note available. Numbers of agreements being entered into have increased.
3.	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: • Availability and promotion of pre-application discussion for all prospective applications; and • Clear and proportionate requests for supporting information	Pre-application advice is recorded in Uniform and the figures show that 24% of applications were subject to pre-application advice. Major Pre-application advice offered, link on the web site to form, guidance and calendar of meeting dates. Pre-application advice for local development is provided in a template form similar to major applications which has provided a more consistent level of advice. Regular engagement with developers has been established before the pre-application stage, with a specific emphasis upon promoting the Council's new Primary Policy on Placemaking, which supports Creating Places and Designing Streets. Case study to demonstrate how pre-application advice is clear and proportionate requests for supporting information.
4.	Legal Agreements: Conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant'	Official Statistics. Improvements in timescales for applications subject to a legal agreement and targets for them to be within 4 months from date instructions issued to legal. Agreed by Committee in 2016 and targets to be monitored along with review meetings.
5.	Enforcement Charter	Link to website to revised updated/re-published Enforcement Charter reviewed in March 2016 and approved by SG.

No.	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE/COMMENTS
6.	Continuous Improvement: Show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; Progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report	Improvements have been made to average timescales for all development types. Service improvements progress has been detailed in the PPF report Section on service improvements.
7.	Local development plan • Less than 5 years since adoption	The Local Development Plan is less than 5 years old since Adoption.
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	The Development Plan Scheme approved in February 2016 identifies key milestones in the early preparation of the next Local Development Plan, with work started on the new Housing Need & Demand Assessment. Links to minutes and report on Development Plan Scheme.
9.	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Not relevant during 2016/17.
10.	Cross sector stakeholders, including industry Agencies & Scottish Government, engaged Early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Not relevant during 2016/17.
11.	Production of regular and proportionate policy, advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	See Council website as regards what a developer needs to consider before submitting an application. Supplementary Guidance on Developer Obligations prepared and approved by Committee in June 2016. The availability of Processing Agreements gives prospective applicants the opportunity of obtaining clarity about timescales and the extent of supporting information which is expected from them. All PANS that are submitted are reported to committee and any comments received are reported back to the applicant to help front load the application.
12.	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	The Street Naming and Numbering function has transferred to Development Plans now forming part of the duties of the GIS/CAG officers. Planning & Transportation liaison meetings are held regularly. We have joined up pre-application advice service, continue to offer a duty officer service and have an up to date protocol with Cairngorms National Park.

No.	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE/COMMENTS
13.	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Benchmarking meetings - SOLACE family Group 2. CNPA Liaison meetings. Attendance at HOPS DC and Development Plans Sub Committee, Active Participation and chairing of meetings on a rotational basis of the North of Scotland Development Plans Forum, HOPS representative on SPSO Working Group.
14.	Stalled Sites/legacy cases: Conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old	One new legacy case over 12 months in the system subject to a S.75 agreement and processing agreement. One application withdrawn.
15.	Developer Contributions: Clear expectations set out in development plan and in pre-application discussions	Supplementary Guidance on Developer Contributions was adopted in September 2016. Pre-application advice is available through pre-arranged meetings attended by the Planning Obligation Officer and information is available on the website including FAQ's.



PART 3

Service Improvements 2017/18

In the coming year we will:

- Review Preliminary Enquiry process for Major planning applications
- Review Project Management Approach to Major Planning Applications & Integration of Other Consents.
- Continue to review Development Management procedures since eplanning (on going review)
- Introduce Standard Validation Guidance & Review procedure for Validation Applications.
- Implement EIAS Regulations 2017 with standard templates.
- Review, update and adopt the Developer Obligations Guidance, final draft to be reported to Committee in December 2017.
- Report the Main Issues Report to Committee in December 2017.
- Finalise and adopt guidance on Open Space, report to Committee August 2017.
- Carry out a pilot Gatecheck and report back to Scottish Government by end 2017.
- Develop proposals for engaging with a new audience by the end of 2017 to inform Main Issues Report consultation during January- March 2018.
- Revise the Quality Audit process to reflect learning since its introduction 18 months ago.

Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2016-17:

Looking back at the Service Improvements we identified for 2016/17 we are proud of the progress made against the vast majority of these:

Commitment: Engage with Community Planning Partnership on the programme for the next Local Development Plan to promote joint working and longer term strategies

Progress: Completed - Officers from Development Plans presented to the Community Planning Operational Group in December 2016 on the purpose of the Local Development Plan. Further engagement in advance of the Main Issues Report is being planned.

Commitment: Set up an Infrastructure Delivery Group, to support preparation of the next Local Development Plan and longer term co-ordinated infrastructure planning

Progress: Completed - the Infrastructure Delivery Group has been set up and meets every 6 months, informed by the housing land audit and is identifying future infrastructure requirements to align with the next local development plan and the annual review of the Developer Obligations Supplementary Guidance.

Commitment: Set up sub-group on Engagement and ICT requirements for next Local Development Plan

Progress: Completed - sub-group meets regularly and is working to ensure new interactive approach is taken for the online version of the next local development plan. Officers are also looking at a completely new way of carrying out consultation events and how to attract a new audience.

Commitment: Prepare Supplementary Design Guidance on shop fronts and signs in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings

Progress: No longer required.

Commitment: Introduce an annual training day for the Planning Service covering a range of topics

Progress: This has not been implemented yet, but is planned for Autumn 2017, with proposals at the moment to cover the emerging new Housing in the Countryside Policy, Open Space requirements and the updated Quality audit process.

Commitment: Introduce a process for monitoring of Processing Agreements through Uniform.

Progress: Completed.

Commitment: Investigate the use of online forms for Development Management Enquiries

Progress: These have been introduced for enforcement and preliminary enquiries.



PART 4

National Headline Indicators (NHI's) 2017/18

KEY OUTCOMES	2015/2016	2016/2017
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING		
• Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years and Months) at the end of the reporting year.	1 year	Two years since the MLDP 2015 was adopted
• Will the local/strategic development plan be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? (Y/N)	Yes	Yes
• Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past Year?	No	No
• Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)	Yes	Yes
• Established housing supply (units)	13,123 units	13,141 units
• 5-year effective housing land supply (units)	4,958 units	4,094 units
• 5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)	9.2 years	7.6 years
• Housing approvals (units)	704 units	479 units
• Housing completions over the last 5 years (units)	1695 units	1615 units
• Employment land take-up during reporting year (hectares)	4.41 ha	1.23 ha

KEY OUTCOMES	2015/2016	2016/2017
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT		
Project Planning		
• Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	24%	24% 165
• Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	6	100% 2
Decision – Making		
• Applications approval rate	91%	92.6%
• Deligation arte	97.6%	97.2%
Validation		
• Percentage of applications valid upon receipt	-	42%
Decision – Making Timescales		
Average number of weeks to make decisions:		
• Major developments	20.0	16.9
• Local development (non-householder)	7.5	6.7
• Householder developments	6.3	5.7
Legacy Cases		
• Number cleared during reporting period	0	1
• Number remaining	1	1
Enforcement		
• Time since enforcement charter published/reviewed	4 months	16 months
• Number of cases identified/resolved	243/255	222/212

EXPLANATORY NOTES

All the average decision-making timescales are lower than 2015/16 and significant improvements have been made in determination rates for both local and householder developments. For local developments, average timescales have been reduced by 0.8 weeks and householder developments by 0.6 weeks. Major applications have an average of 16.9 weeks and are also below the national average. The use of processing agreements has increased and the percentage of timescales met for major applications is 100%. However, timescales being met for processing agreements is down to 33% and this is due to applicants going beyond the original agreed time periods due to submissions of additional information.

PART 5

Official Statistics

5.1 Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

CATEGORY	TOTAL NUMBER OF DECISIONS 2016-17	AVERAGE TIMESCALE (WEEKS)	
		2016-17	2015-16
Major Developments	2	16.9	20.0
Local Developments (non-householder)			
Local: less than 2 months	379	6.8	7.1
Local: more than 2 months	25	13.0	12.9
Householder Developments			
Local: Less than 2 months	192	5.7	6.3
Local: more than 2 months	0	-	10.8
Major Housing Developments	1	24.4	33.3
Local Housing Developments			
Local: less than 2 months	220	6.9	7.1
Local: more than 2 months	13	14	13.0
Major Business and Industry	0	-	13.9
Local Business and Industry			
Local: less than 2 months	105	6.5	7.2
Local: more than 2 months	9	11.8	12.9
EIA developments	0	-	42.6
Other consents*			
All Other Consents	89	6.4	7.4
Listed Buildings & Conservation Area	64	6.8	7.7
Advertisements	22	5.1	6.7
Hazardous Substances	0	-	-
Other consents and certificates	3	5.1	3.0
Planning/legal agreements**			
(major applications)	0	-	N/A
(local applications)	0	-	23.1
Local Reviews	27	12.2	11

5.2 Decision-making: Local Reviews and Appeals

TYPE	TOTAL NUMBER OF DECISIONS	ORIGINAL DECISION UPHELD			
		2016-17		2015-16	
		No	%	No	%
Local reviews	27	10	37.0%	10	37.0%
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	2		100.0%		0.0%

5.3 Enforcement Activity

TYPE	2016-17	2015-16
Complaints lodged	222	243
Cases Taken Up	222	243
Breaches identified	192	255
Cases resolved	212	-
Notices served ***	3	1
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and conservation area consents. Control of Advertisement consents. Hazardous Substances consents. Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification of overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & related to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licenced 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.

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

Context

In general, performance on planning application determination timescales has improved significantly for all development categories major, local and householder in comparison to last years figures and also compares favourably with the national average and in all instances being well below the national average.

There has been an increase in the number of processing agreements but numbers are still relatively small when compared to the overall total number of applications determined.

PART 6

Workforce Information

The information requested in this section is an integral part of providing the context for the information in part 1-5. Staffing information should be a snapshot of the position on 31 March.

	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3	TIER 4
Head of Planning Service	0	0	1	2

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

		DM	DP	ENFORCEMENT	OTHER
Managers	No. Posts	1	1	Covered by DM Manager	0
	Vacant	0	0		
Main grade posts	No. Posts	10.3	9	1	0
	Vacant	0	0	0	
Technician	No. Posts	1	1	1 (part time assistant)	0
	Vacant	0	0	0	
Office Support/Clerical	No. Posts	3.5	1	Covered by DM Management	0
	Vacant	0	0		
TOTAL	29.4	15.8	12	1.6	0

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

STAFF AGE NUMBER	PROFILE
Under 30	4
30-39	8
40-49	10
50-59	8
60 and over	2
Grand Total	32

COMMITTEE & SITE VISITS*	NUMBER PER YEAR
Full council meetings	6 + 5 specials
Planning committees	6 + 4 specials
Area committees (where relevant)	Not applicable
Committee site visits	6 + 4 specials
LRB**	9
LRB site visits	9

Notes:

* References to committees also include National Park Authority boards. Number of site visit is those cases where visits were carried out by committees/boards.

** This relates to the number of meetings of the LRB. The number of applications going to LRB are reported elsewhere.

CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE
Rhona Gunn

HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Development Management, Development Plans, Building Standards, Community Safety,
Economic Development, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Museums
Jim Grant (HOPS)

Manager (Development Management)
Beverly Smith (MRTPI) (HOPS)

Principal Planning Officer
Angus Burnie (MRTPI)

Principal Planning Officer
Neal MacPherson (MRTPI)

Listed Buildings/
Conservation
Planning Officer
Craig Wilson
(MRTPI)

West Team
(All major and mid
range applications
in area)
Planning Officer's
Maurice Booth
(MRTPI)
Shona Strachan
Lisa MacDonald
(MRTPI)

Systems Technical
(All Moray
Applications)
Teresa Ruggeri

Enforcement Team
(All Moray, all types
of applications)
Enforcement Officer
Stuart Dale
Enforcement Asst.
Harry Gordon

East Team
(All major and mid
range applications
in area)
Planning Officer's
Richard Smith
(MRTPI)
Iain Drummond
(MRTPI)
Emma Mitchell
(MRTPI)

Householder Team
(All householder
applications in
Moray)
Planning Officer
Cathy Archibald
(MRTPI)
Planning Assistant's
Fiona Olsen
Amanda Cruikshank

