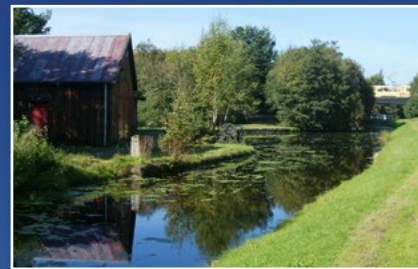


planning performance framework annual report 2013-2014





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Introduction

We are pleased to provide our third annual performance report on our planning services, continuing the improvement theme set out in the White Paper “Modernising the Planning System” 2005.

We are again reporting on our performance across a broad range of areas.

As well as looking at speed of decision making, we cover other key factors, including, quality, workloads, resources, organisation and outcomes.

We also welcome this opportunity to highlight our achievements, successes and individuality.

North Lanarkshire

North Lanarkshire stretches from Stepps to Harthill, from the Kilsyth Hills to the Clyde, and includes Airdrie, Bellshill, Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Kilsyth, Motherwell, Shotts and Wishaw.

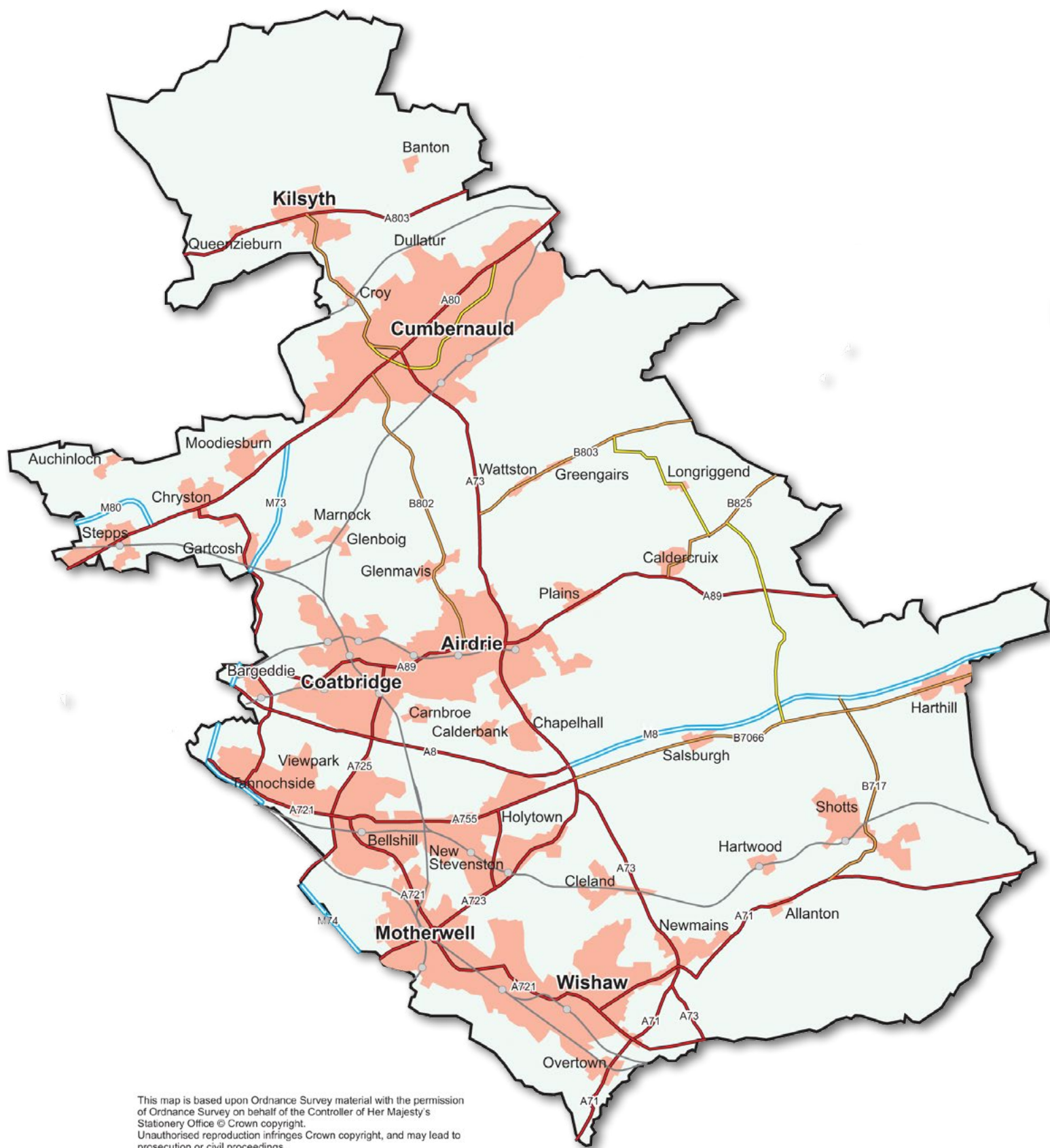
North Lanarkshire forms a geographically diverse area between the urban conurbation of Glasgow which we border to the west, and the moorlands of central Scotland to the east. The southern part of our area is heavily populated, particularly in the south west around the large town of Motherwell, and adjacent settlements.

The towns of Airdrie and Coatbridge form the central area, while Cumbernauld, our largest town, is situated to the north. The south eastern and northern parts are more rural in character with lower population densities and more extensive areas of open countryside. Although agricultural land accounts for over 18,000 hectares, the population density is 6.8 people per hectare, making us the fifth most densely populated local authority area in Scotland.

With a land area of approximately 47,000 hectares, and a population of over 326,000, we are the fourth largest planning authority in Scotland

North Lanarkshire’s historical development of the coal, steel and heavy engineering industries has resulted in vacant and derelict land accounting for over 1,000 hectares ; among the larger amounts for any local authority area in Scotland.

These traditional industries have now largely been replaced by a modern business infrastructure and newly formed sectors. We now face new economic challenges of slow economic growth and higher than average unemployment and youth unemployment rates.



Part 1: National Headline Indicators

Our information on the national headline indicators is provided in the following table

These are indicators that all of Scotland's planning authorities have been asked to provide. They relate to our performance in development plan-making, and in making available land for housing and employment.

The indicators also cover aspects of our performance in dealing with planning applications both in processing and decision making. They also cover our performance in enforcement.

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK Annual Report 2012-2013

1. National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2013-2014	2012-2013
Development Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age of local/strategic development plan(s) Development plan scheme on track 	Local plan (17 months old) New strategic development plan (20 months old) Yes	Local plan (5 months old) New strategic development plan (8 months old) Yes
Effective Land Supply and delivery of outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective housing land (supply in years) Effective housing land supply Housing approvals Effective employment land supply Employment land take-up 	tbc tbc 691 units tbc tbc	7 years 8191 units 516 units 343.65 ha 17.93 ha
Development Management Project Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice Number of applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan Percentage planned timescales met Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application approval rate Delegation rate 	21% 0 n/a 99% 87%	21.65% 0 0 98% 83%
Decision - making timescales - average number of weeks to decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major developments Local developments (non householder) Householder developments 	21 9.7 7.3	21 15.3 9.3
Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time since enforcement charter published/ reviewed number of breaches identified/resolved 	2 months 120/79	36 months 151/139

Context

Development planning: Our [local development plan scheme](#) was published on 12 June 2013. This scheme included early engagement with elected members and all stakeholders at key stages in plan production. Nearing the end of the 13-14 business year, it became necessary to update the timescales in light of events outside the council's immediate control that took place since publication of the scheme. Firstly, the Scottish Government published Circular 6/2013 Development Planning, replacing Circular 1/2009 with a combination of more detailed and new guidance on how councils are expected to prepare local development plans

The main consequence was a requirement to make a detailed assessment of all 179 sites submitted in response to the Call for Sites. Secondly, the Scottish Government agreed to jointly fund a "Places for Business & Industry Charrette" to explore an issue specified in the Report of Examination for North Lanarkshire Local Plan as requiring to be addressed in any forthcoming local development plan. The Charrette commenced in March 2014.

These new circumstances, while not impacting on the overall timetable, affected the timescale required to produce the main issues report (expected now to be January 2015).

Effective land supply and output delivery:

An audit has been taking place on employment and housing land supply, and the results will be known in October 2014.

Development Management - project planning:

We continue to offer pre-application advice to all cases, and over a fifth of planning applicants took up this opportunity. Although there were no processing agreements, we have been offering them for all major developments and will continue to do so in the coming year, together with complementary publicity through web communication.

Development Management - decision making:

Our delegation approval rate has improved since last year, from 83% to 87%. This has been helped by the introduction of our new delegated scheme in late 13-14, and we hope this figure can improve further once the scheme has been in place over the entire year.

Development Management - decision making timescales:

We have maintained our performance level on the average number of weeks to make decisions on major applications, still well up from two years ago, despite a reduction in staff resources. We consider that this reflects well on the manner in which major developments are handled, through a team specifically dedicated to dealing with major developments and the council's flagship projects, allowing these significant proposals to be the subject of focused action. However, we still realise that this figure is sensitive to slight changes to the type and number of major applications received.

The average time for decisions on householder developments has improved significantly from 9.1 weeks to 7.3 weeks. We feel our updated traffic light tracking system has helped us to highlight lack of progress with cases, and to focus on applications that are taking longer to handle than expected.

The time for deciding other local applications has significantly improved by almost 6 weeks to 9.7 weeks. This movement is largely due to our dealing more directly with legacy cases and applications involving legal agreements. As regards any remaining ones, and other applications subject to legal agreement, we now have a regular monitoring of all cases within our fortnightly service managers meeting, in order to maintain momentum and progress.

Enforcement: The enforcement charter was published in 2013-14. Our work rate, good performance and efficiency in enforcement and continues to be borne out in our enforcement activity figures where breaches are resolved without the need for formal enforcement proceedings.

Part 2: Defining and measuring a high quality planning service

There are many ways of defining and measuring a high quality planning service. The Scottish Government has asked that we cover our:

- [open for business approaches to support positive actions in support of sustainable economic growth;](#)
- [achievements in securing quality development on the ground;](#)
- [consistency and certainty in our services;](#)
- [customer communications;](#)
- [decision making processes;](#)
- [effective management structures;](#)
- [financial management; and](#)
- [culture of continuous improvement.](#)



Open for business

Sustainable economic growth remains at the heart of our planning services, as North Lanarkshire continues to move from a predominantly industrial past to a new diverse environment with vibrant communities.

Our adopted single [local plan](#) is our most important up-to-date and relevant planning tool for driving this growth. Of the planning decisions made last year, 99% were consistent with the development plan.

At the same time, we have produced our first [local development plan scheme \(LDP\)](#).

As one of the larger authorities in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley, we have also played a key part in the delivery of the approved [Strategic Development Plan \(SDP\)](#).

Along with our new and wide range of [Supplementary Planning Guidance \(SPG\)](#), our local plan remains our effective and succinct guide for

the developer, providing clarity for development opportunities, and a real focus for our own implementation work.

As for our own actions towards the effective implementation of the plan, the main focus remains the continuation of the successful process of urban renewal through environmental improvements, together with [masterplanning](#), the promotion of [Ravenscraig](#), (Scotland's biggest regeneration site and a national development within National Planning Framework 3), and our identified [community growth areas](#). In the latter respect, we have produced concept statements for our three community areas, and we have developed a draft [Strategic Development Framework \(SDF\)](#) for the Gartcosh: Glenboig area.

As part of taking forward the delivery of our local plan's intentions, and also as a basis for the forthcoming local development plan, we have been directly involved in the new charrette process for two areas of work.

The outcomes of the [South Wishaw Mini-Charrette](#) helped to form the basis for new procedures and processes during the [Call for sites](#) (completed in November 2013) and will further inform the spatial strategy being developed for the [Main Issues Report](#) stage in the forthcoming local development plan. The Scottish Government agreed to jointly fund a [Places for Business and Industry Charrette](#) to explore this important issue specified in the Report of Examination for North Lanarkshire Local Plan as requiring to be addressed in any forthcoming local development plan.

We are also continuing to invest successfully in regenerating our seven [town centres](#) to help improve their accessibility and resilience - working with local traders and regeneration, roads and town centre activity staff. Following extensive consultation, Coatbridge, Airdrie, Kilsyth, Bellshill and Wishaw town centres now have draft socio-economic profiles and health checks, frameworks and action plans. A final round of consultation with our partners and the public will take place before adoption. The socio-economic profiles and health checks, frameworks and action plans for Motherwell and Cumbernauld town centres will be recommended for adoption in the new business year.

In support of the visions identified for Coatbridge and Airdrie town centres, we have submitted Conservation Area Renewal Scheme and Townscape Heritage bids. The frameworks and action plans will be used to support bids to external funding sources and to direct the council's capital investment programme.

We now have adopted Character Assessments and Management Plans for all six of our conservation areas.

In development management, our major development team continues to handle major planning applications and building warrants - this dedicated team joins up planning services with building standards to provide a wide range of expertise and focus for handling major development proposals. It is designed to provide a more effective mechanism to deal with major proposals, as they make their way through our statutory consents process. This new set up continues to have a positive knock-on effect on the development management area teams, who have been freed up to handle the large number of other applications that do not fall into the major category. However, we are still mindful that all areas of development management should remain robust, and the crossing over of staff and workloads is



Major Development Team 2013-14

applied as necessary to ensure that all parts of the service are appropriately resourced at any given time. The contribution of our major development team was recognised by the council when in October 2013 it was nominated in the corporate awards short list under the category "Team of the Year".

In development management in general, we have well established processes for the handling of applications from receipt to decision. More information can be found under the separate heading, "Certainty".

We are also open to all approaches and calls for advice and meetings, with an all day open door reception service as well as a quick turnaround for any requests for appointments. During office hours there are always appropriate professional officers available to answer any visitor or telephone enquiries. We continue to embrace the value and benefits of pre-application discussions. As proposals develop into planning applications, we then have an easy single point of contact for each case.

Despite the challenges of a slow growth economy and continuous efficiency savings, we strive to be even more responsive to the needs of the development community. We are now located under the one roof at Cumbernauld, to obtain maximum efficiency with a reduced workforce, while we also operate a flexible service by using council accommodation in other areas where a local presence is required. We have also enhanced our [website presence](#) and are continuing to promote e-planning and to develop more on line improvements with our corporate service partners in line with the Scottish Government's "Pendleton recommendations". Within our e-planning system, over 26,000 searches are being carried out each month, providing access to the public to view and comment on planning applications. This year we have also provided access to the register of enforcement notices and site constraints.

In fact, this year, in sharing good practice, we helped our own council partners develop a new council website, to complement the work we had

already done on planning services. This now introduces a new “top tasks” structure, which makes all our services more easily open and accessible to customers, with our own [planning applications page](#) being in the top 10 of our website hits, and our [Plans, policies and projects page](#) being in the top 50.

From the corporate level, we contribute to delivering many of the council’s local outcomes deriving from the Single Outcome Agreement at the national level. In particular, our work contributes to environment and regeneration related national outcomes. Through our commitment to the council’s Service and People First programme (see “Culture of continuous improvement”), we also closely follow the national outcome for high quality public services.

We are also directly involved in climate change action and initiatives. We continue to lead the council on the delivery of sustainable development and practices. The council is now implementing the Sustainable Development Delivery Framework developed by our planning service. This will help us, along with our partners, to develop and deliver on the outcomes of a Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, Low Carbon Strategy and Action Plan, and to embed sustainability in future iterations of the Single Outcome Agreement and Corporate and Community Plans.

Linked to this work, our planning service leads the council in the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process. We have now launched our web based SEA guide on our new internal web system and launched council wide training for staff involved in this area.

Through Climate Ready Clyde, we are also now directly involved a regional partnership approach (first in Scotland) to climate change adaption, analysis and action planning.

As part of the [CLIMSAVE](#) project (launched in 2014), we are one of two authorities in Scotland developing a European Union wide analysis and action plan tool for the implications of climate change. With Scotland being case study area, we have benefitted from the expertise of climate change professionals from across the globe.

Partnership and sharing good practice is also key to our “open for business” approach. We regularly work in partnership with our colleagues and others in order to share good practice and enhance the delivery of the services that we and others provide. For example, over the last year, we:

- completed our recent successful business and industry charrette whose experience will be offered to other authorities as an effective way of establishing new policy outcomes;
- established a call for sites process and shared this with other authorities and partners as an effective way of streamlining information gathering;
- established an application submission Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) checklist as a good example that could be followed by other authorities;
- introduced (as the first to do so in Scotland) a digital recording of curtilages of listed buildings and shared this practice with other authorities;
- undertook pioneering work on identifying healthy walking routes to schools, health centres and surgeries using the network analysis tools on ArcGIS for the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Green Network;
- provided resources for innovative work on identifying and mapping networks of open spaces within the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan (GCVSDP) area;
- learned from and took forward the Glasgow open space audit template shared by Glasgow City Council;
- provided expertise and resources in early 2014 in order to develop and lead the initial analysis of the updated National Survey of Local Shopping Patterns (NSLSP) for the upcoming Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan;
- helped, as part of our housing land audit, to produce the guidance note for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area; and as part of this process, took colleagues from other authorities around locations to highlight sites and the issues we face;
- led the Glasgow and Clyde Valley (GCV) wind turbine capacity study for all authorities in the GVC area;
- chaired the local authorities aspect of the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Working Group in January 2014 and helped in the review of national guidance in this area;
- participated in various groups in support of the GCVSDP- discussing and sharing good practice;
- offered our land supply data to all services internally as a useful resource for projects;



The council and its community planning partners received RTPI recognition for its work in Cumbernauld.

- entered joint working with the Antonine Wall Management Group in regard to the preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance;
- participated in, and contributed to, the Scottish Planning Enforcement Forum; a very useful reciprocal medium for authorities to review difficult cases and seek and take advice on how to proceed;
- sourced and organised regional training on retail impact with the Improvement Service;
- initiated a national Project Management for Development Plans training programme by the Improvement Service.

High Quality development on the ground

With much dereliction and vacant land of our industrial past, we again are continuing to seek improvement in the standard of urban design and development within North Lanarkshire.

We retain our challenging commitment in “[Designing North Lanarkshire](#)” towards raising standards and achieving places of which we can be proud. “Designing North Lanarkshire” outlines our approach for managing change within the built environment in a positive way, and is focused on the urban design issues arising from new development.

Our new Supplementary Planning Guidance has been taken through public consultation to help promote best practice and high quality design, and the understanding of issues so as to influence positively the development process.

We continue the theme of working closely with other partners in the council to deliver ambitious projects such as the new house building programmes, and the schools and Centres 21 project, through the provision of advice on design and heritage issues.

This year we led on the production of nine development briefs for the council’s Building for the Future Programme with Housing and Social

Consistency and certainty

In order to achieve reasonable levels of certainty for the development industry and others affected by the development process, we value consistency in our advice, engagement, processes and decision making.

Our local plan promises a sound and robust basis for more consistency in both decision-making itself and in our advice to any party interested in new development

As well as covering expected standards of development, every [SPG](#) includes a clear checklist of matters that require to be addressed and the documents to be included within a planning application submission. The guidance forms an essential element for consistency, not only in the area of decision making, but also in pre-application advice and submission making.

This being the case, however we do still take a tailored approach during pre-application discussions so as to ensure the developer does not incur any unnecessary time and costs.

Another important area for consistency in advice and decision making that a further SPG will cover is the impact of development – and mitigation through developers’ contributions (in line with our local plan policy DSP3). We had intended to finalise and introduce the first element of guidance in the business year. This element was to cover an evidence based education contributions matrix, taking into account the viability aspects. Once developed, it would be an effective consistent guide which will ensure we apply our requirements equally. It would also help developers in regard to feasibility judgments as new developments are brought to our area. However, this guidance is still being prepared as negotiations over details are still taking place with our education service colleagues. We intend to agree this element of the policy in the new business year, as well as work on the SPG as a whole.

Nevertheless, in the meantime, we are still achieving negotiated and agreed developer contributions based on our existing development planning policies. These contributions have been in many areas such as education provision, road improvements, affordable housing and environmental mitigation

For instance, based on our planning policy on affordable housing, over the last year we have secured agreement to the provision of 151 affordable housing units over five separate planning applications, and agreed significant commuted sums. Provision through seven other planning applications is still pending. In addition, following agreement in principle, we are close to securing significant financial contributions by housing developers towards the maintenance of a local nature reserve associated with a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), at Frankfield Loch in Stepps. A significant contribution was also secured recently to effect important road improvements at Old Edinburgh Road in connection with new housing development.

We also recently negotiated a significant a monetary contribution towards off-site play provision by Sanctuary Housing in relation to the Cumbernauld High Rise Project (5/6 application sites) throughout the Seafar area of Cumbernauld.

On measuring the consistency of the pre-application advice, we can see that over the last year 40% of applications were valid at the point of submission. Another important measure for consistency of advice is the number of decisions taken against officer recommendation. Over the last year there were only 4 such cases.

As for decision making, consistency levels remain reasonably positive. Of the decisions made last year, 99.4% were consistent with the development plan.

Recognising that our rate of decision making through delegation procedures needs to be significantly higher, we have successfully widened the current [scheme of delegation](#).

In development management in general, we have well established and regularly monitored processes for the handling of applications from receipt to decision. While we value our processes as reliable, our recent staff consultation sessions on the planning performance framework have recognised some elements of inconsistency in the practices between local development management teams. We now intend to review all processes in detail to ensure maximum consistency in the system.



*Local nature
reserve site (sinc) at
Frankfield Loch in
Stepps.*

We also follow ISO accreditation requirements for the planning applications process, appeals process and the enforcement process and building standards applications.

Good early communication and protocols with our partners to smooth the process of decision making is undertaken. For example, we have twice yearly meetings involving managers from Development Management, Strategy and Greenspace/Landscape Services in order to discuss current issues and how to ensure effective liaison between the services.

The council has its own Greenspace Services section which is able to advise on instances relating to protected species which require to be considered by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH); this provides specialist knowledge, and can help reduce the number of unnecessary consultations with SNH.

We also have an established protocol with SNH itself for development and protected species - Consideration of Development Proposals Affecting Protected Animals in Lanarkshire (including European Protected Species) within the Scottish Planning System.

Similarly, we have an agreement with Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on standing advice.

And we have an established protocol with the Coal authority regarding consultation requirements and coal risk assessments.

We also have an established protocol between ourselves, our housing services and legal services for the effective and smooth implementation of our policy on affordable housing.

The following complementary factors also help to reinforce our overall consistency:

- the one single location for all staff in planning services
- the dissemination of information through regular team meetings;
- our customer focus events with agents; and
- staff development and training

Communications, engagement and customer service

Understanding our customer and providing positive customer experiences are essential for the way we provide our service, and are an integral part of our Service and People First programme. (See “Culture of continuous improvement”). We regularly and openly communicate with our customers so as to make our services effective and easily available, and to ensure we get feedback that can help with improvements.

Having moved all our services to the one office location, we provide a one stop shop for all planning and development enquiries.

We have customer charters for enforcement and development plans. In development management, we follow ISO accreditation requirements in applications processing, appeals and enforcement.

We engage with our customers on various levels appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups. We seek regular feedback, through development management focus groups and customer questionnaires.

On customer engagement, we have successfully developed customer consultation covering five key customer indicators - satisfaction with the overall service; what we promised; the timeliness of the service; information easy to understand; staff professionalism; and staff attitude.

We reviewed the customer consultation results over 2013-2014, with the aim of identifying possible key areas for improvement. A high survey return was noted (20%), demonstrating that the quarterly postal and electronic survey monkey consultation is successfully yielding a much higher return than previous methods. Positive feedback was recorded with levels of responses ‘very good’ and ‘good’ being in the majority. Overall satisfaction levels were also noted as being positive. Positive comments were recorded as follows:

- The service received was first class and the E planning website kept me informed right up until planning decision was made

- I was very satisfied with all aspects. First class

Although the majority of customers were satisfied with the service received, a significant number of customers felt they did not receive the best service possible and expressed their dissatisfaction.

Comments expressing dissatisfaction were recorded as follows:

- Very bad! Staff consistently used school holidays and understaffing and would only give ‘worst case scenario date for decisions’
- Application taken to maximum deadline date with need to chase up enquiries

To make sure we aim for continuous improvement and to address issues raised by our customers we will take steps in the new business year to ensure all development management staff complete the Log in to Learn online Customer Care module. The course learning objectives are as follows:

- To highlight the importance and benefits of customer care
- To give a range of customer handling skills and techniques
- Help you deal with complaints and difficult customers
- Identify and address customer needs
- Provide customers with a quality service

Customer engagement is also a key aspect of our town centre enhancement projects, with greater user-friendliness being built in to our web presence, including short url links, on-site consultation relating to town centre frameworks, and use of local office and twitter.

On our town centre enhancement works, we continue to engage actively with customers and traders at various stages in the project planning and implementation process using such media as community forums, elected members’ meetings, public exhibitions, standpoints, newsletters and the internet. At present, throughout the business year, we have been consulted extensively on future frameworks and action plans for our town centres.



Community engagement at the Business and Industry Charrette

The development plan process naturally has community engagement at its core as part of the statutory participation requirements.

The [Stakeholder Engagement Strategy](#) (which also includes a facility to subscribe to email updates on the development plan) is an essential partner to the development plan scheme. Driven by statutory requirements, this strategy has helped to reinforce the strong engagement culture that prevails throughout all the planning services we provide.

In addition, our customer engagement activities relative to the plan making process have been complemented by the successful running of the respective charrettes on community growth and industry and business (see under separate heading “Open for business”).

We have also created a new on line [consultations hub](#) to help and encourage customers to take part in consultation exercises on all planning policy and implementation documents.

As well as encouraging involvement in specific consultation exercises, we also realise we should try and engage our customers further by keeping them informed in any newsworthy events in regard to planning and development. Therefore we will explore the introduction of developing an email alert system to interested subscribers using the govdelivery.com facilities.

We are fully committed to the promotion of e-planning in development management and to

the provision of an [on line local plan](#). We already have more than 50% of our applications submitted electronically (56% in the business year) and we are among the best in Scotland in this respect. We have also recently provided an online fully interactive local development plan.

The customer experience extends beyond applicants to all those engaging in the electronic systems. Indeed, 43 % of representations made this year were submitted on line.

To enhance the customer’s electronic communications options, we are continuing to build on the new web site home for planning and building. This website work (a clear, attractive user friendly facility that is very accessible for our customers, colleagues and partners) was recognised by the council corporately and formed the basis and impetus, (after being nominated for a corporate award) for a completely new council “top tasks” based [website](#) introduced in the business year. See “Open for business”.

We have also successfully trained our support staff in Customer Service Professional, and planning staff in data protection and data management, and will provide refresher training at regular intervals. We are committed to training new staff and other development management staff in the same way.

In development management during 2013-14, we responded to 14 stage one complaints of which ten were not upheld and four were

escalated to stage two. In the same year we also responded to six stage two complaints (some carrying forward from the previous year) of which one was partially upheld and five not upheld. In strategic planning, we responded to two stage one complaints, with one being upheld and one unresolved.

To complement our focus on customers, we have produced our own Supplementary Planning Guidance on community engagement which stresses the importance of community engagement at all levels and the contribution it can make to providing an efficient planning service.

Efficient and effective decision making

We have robust structures and regularly monitored processes to ensure high efficiency in decision making.

We are structured so that we have three teams covering development management: two dealing with local planning applications and related issues in the northern and southern parts of the council area, and one specially dedicated team dealing with all our major developments, and other developments specifically linked to the council's own programmes, such as the new build council housing programme and schools and Centres 21.

This structure is based on the principle of concentrating appropriate and proportionate resources on the larger, more complicated and complex applications, while freeing up resources within the two local teams to concentrate on swift decision making on smaller applications using our delegated powers. Within this context, we are still mindful that all areas of the development management should remain robust. Therefore, the crossing over of resources is still applied to ensure that all parts of the service are appropriately resourced at any given time. For example, at the end of the business year, we agreed to transfer two members of staff (one officer and one senior officer) to the southern area local team to address high workloads of retiring or departing staff. This process is supported by close monitoring of workloads and resources and performance, through our regular Development Management Service Manager's meetings with our three Assistant Business Managers. This process is also

informed by our regular staff performance review and development (PRD) discipline.

We now have a new [scheme of delegation](#), which we expect will increase the number of applications decided under delegated powers. Over the last year, 87% of applications were fully decided under delegated powers. We recognise that this figure is still lower than the national average and we are expecting it to increase once the new delegated powers are allowed to kick in over a sustained period of time.

To complement this new scheme, any further delay factors are minimised, with the Planning and Transportation Committee meeting on a four weekly cycle, and there being regular special meetings of the Committee outside the cycle to deal with applications continued for site visits or hearings, and to deal with any particularly urgent matters.

As covered under separate headings, we have established processes in place for efficiently handling both paper and electronic planning applications from receipt to decision, and they are regularly monitored to ensure good performance.

We comply with the International Standards Organisation (ISO) accreditation requirements for the planning applications process, appeals process and the enforcement process.

Development management officers can access a case list of their applications, which uses a **Red - Amber - Green** "Traffic Light" system to flag up time-critical cases. Performance is also a standing agenda item for the fortnightly meetings between the Business manager and our three Development Management Assistant Business Managers.

We also are committed to the development of protocols with consultees involved in the development management process (see "Certainty").

We continue to provide training on our processes, which we also complement with time management training as part of a new training programme for all staff through our regular staff performance review and development (PRD) process.

Effective management structures

We clearly set our priorities and we are equipped with the management structure and skills to deliver them.

Our planning services merged with council's regeneration services in the summer of 2013 to form Planning and Regeneration; part of the council's Regeneration and Environmental Services Directorate. This merger brings the benefits of a greater focus on and awareness of land use needs of inward investors, indigenous businesses, start up businesses, as well as the connectivity of issues that need to be addressed through planning and the impact of development on the economy. It also shows better use of resources in terms of our work on town centres, and the direct delivery of other physical resources.

Our planning services are led by the Head of Planning and Regeneration who reports to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environmental Services.

Our planning services are structured into two clearly defined management streams:

1. Development Management - dealing with all types of planning applications and all related matters, including enforcement
2. Strategic Planning - dealing with development plans and all related work, sustainability, town centres and other enhancement projects, and heritage and design

Our planning and regeneration operational plan drives the priorities and monitors progress of outputs and key aspects of our performance. The priorities for the business year, for example, have related to: the local development plan scheme targets; strategic development plan monitoring; supplementary guidance on developer's contributions; development management process reviews; delegation schemes; processing agreements; town centre frameworks and action plans and; staff training.

Our services are supported by our business development team which, as well as providing all technical and administrative support, drives continuous improvements.

Despite pressures from efficiency savings, we continue with a well experienced staff base; a stable, reliable and multi-skilled workforce. In

continuity planning, we practise regular staff rotation of planning assistants, always seeking a healthy balance between reasonable continuity of a high quality service and staff development.

We value continuous staff development. We are committed to our Investors in People (IIP) status, and to ensuring the right numbers and skills available to meet future needs.

In management, we value good relationships with other partners in order to deliver our work and priorities. We are formal partners in both the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority and the GCV Green Network Partnership which in itself is a partner in the Central Scotland Green Network, derived from the national development identified in NPF2. We also work closely with partners in the Clyde Valley Waste Project, in which our service takes the lead on planning issues, and with the Glasgow and Clyde Valley councils on developing the City Deal.

We have also been instrumental in securing the presence of external partners from the Green Networks, other environmental partners and Key Agencies on the Corporate Environmental Partnership Group and its sub-groups as part of our drive to embed their presence and the joint aims we have within our outcome delivery frameworks (Single Outcome Agreement and Corporate and Community Plans).

Within the structure of the council, we work closely with Housing, Education and Regeneration colleagues, amongst others, in developing responses to their statutory duties to produce Housing Strategies, manage the educational estate and provision of schools and the regeneration and development of vacant and derelict land. We have also taken a lead in the embedding of sustainability in internal and external partnership arrangements.

See "Open for business" for other partnership and joint working in which we are involved.

We also work very closely with our local communities. For example:

- we work with local traders, town centre property owners, Town Centre Activities and other partners in delivering the town centre programme of works - recognising that town centre issues go beyond purely physical works.

This includes regular reports to Local Area Partnerships and officers contributing to the North Lanarkshire Community Partnership through the local area teams;

- we have successfully completed the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) in Kilsyth, and in Cumbernauld village, in close co-operation with the community.
- we meet twice a year with local heritage groups.

Financial management and local governance

Our staff continue to abide by the council's Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders, the framework of internal financial controls.

Our budget setting process is undertaken each financial year where budgets are allocated to appropriate cost centres and account codes for expected expenditure and income throughout the year.

We review our previous year's budgets and we make adjustments made for efficiency savings and changes in requirements for the new year. The requirements for the new year will be based on our priorities. These priorities will be reflected through our operational plan. (see "effective management structures").

All our purchases are made through the PECOS procurement system where expenditure is limited to amounts agreed in the Authorised Signatories lists.

Management accounts are produced every 4 week period by the Finance section, where our spend is reviewed for correctness, and projections are made for the likely full year spend and compared to the original budgets. Business Managers are present at this review. As our employee costs make up 85% of the total revenue expenditure budget, each period a review is undertaken of the employee costs to date, and projections made based on current employment information, current vacancies and known future changes to the establishment.

Each period the management accounts are discussed and reviewed with our Head of Service and the Portfolio Manager to ensure full completeness of current information is included in the setting of projections, and to determine if we need to do any remedial action to ensure adherence to the budget.

Culture of continuous improvement

We form an integral part of a local authority whose desired outcomes through "service and people first" are:

- Enhance communication and engagement with employees, citizens and service users;
- Improve access to council services;
- Increase efficiencies through the delivery of our financial planning and savings budget;
- Ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to deliver services and meet challenges;
- Achieve service delivery that realises value for money and improved outcomes; and
- Utilise management information to inform decision making and improvement

With these outcomes as a solid base, we are committed to the continuous improvement in our planning services.

We have our own now enhanced business development team whose main remit is to lead our continuous improvement activity.

We are wholly committed to training and staff development, through our Investors in People status (IIP) whose standards we are fully meeting. We are also committed to the training of council members through our members training events. We value good communication as a two way process between management and staff. We carefully monitor our performance and appreciate the importance of good service processes for delivering what customers want.

Among our service improvement activities, we have again further developed and enhanced our new style operational plan; an essential working tool for providing a clear sense of priorities for all staff and a sharp focus for continuing improvements to our service. This plan combines our service actions and outputs with all relevant information for monitoring, including performance, customer engagement and staff development; It also links to the Environmental Services service plan and the council's corporate plan.

We have also recently assisted the council in providing a much enhanced "top tasks" website, building on previous achievements within planning and building standards in terms of pursuing the "Pendleton requirements". In this regard, our new

on line local plan achieved the successful shortlisting for a corporate award in the category “developing the organisation”.

On staff communication and service development, we will continue to consult with staff. Our staff newsletter continues to prove to be a useful and welcome tool for keeping staff informed on what is happening within the service, and has given all staff a better insight on service priorities and other related work of the planning service. A recent survey of staff has shown that this communication mechanism is operating effectively, particularly in the light of the merger with regeneration services.

In preparation of this planning performance framework report, we ran specific staff sessions to seek ideas views and contributions regarding the delivery and demonstration of high performance within our planning services.

On customer engagement, we have successfully redeveloped fresh customer consultation covering six key corporate indicators and we have introduced electronic customer engagement in eplanning. Action will be developed in the new business year to tackle issues raised from the customer engagement exercise. We have also successfully trained our Assistant Business Managers in the Management Development course, and this is also still being rolled out to all senior planning officers, with some continuing this

to a higher level. Our Business Managers have undertaken a Leadership Development Programme run by the Improvement Service. Many of our support staff have trained in Customer Service Professional.

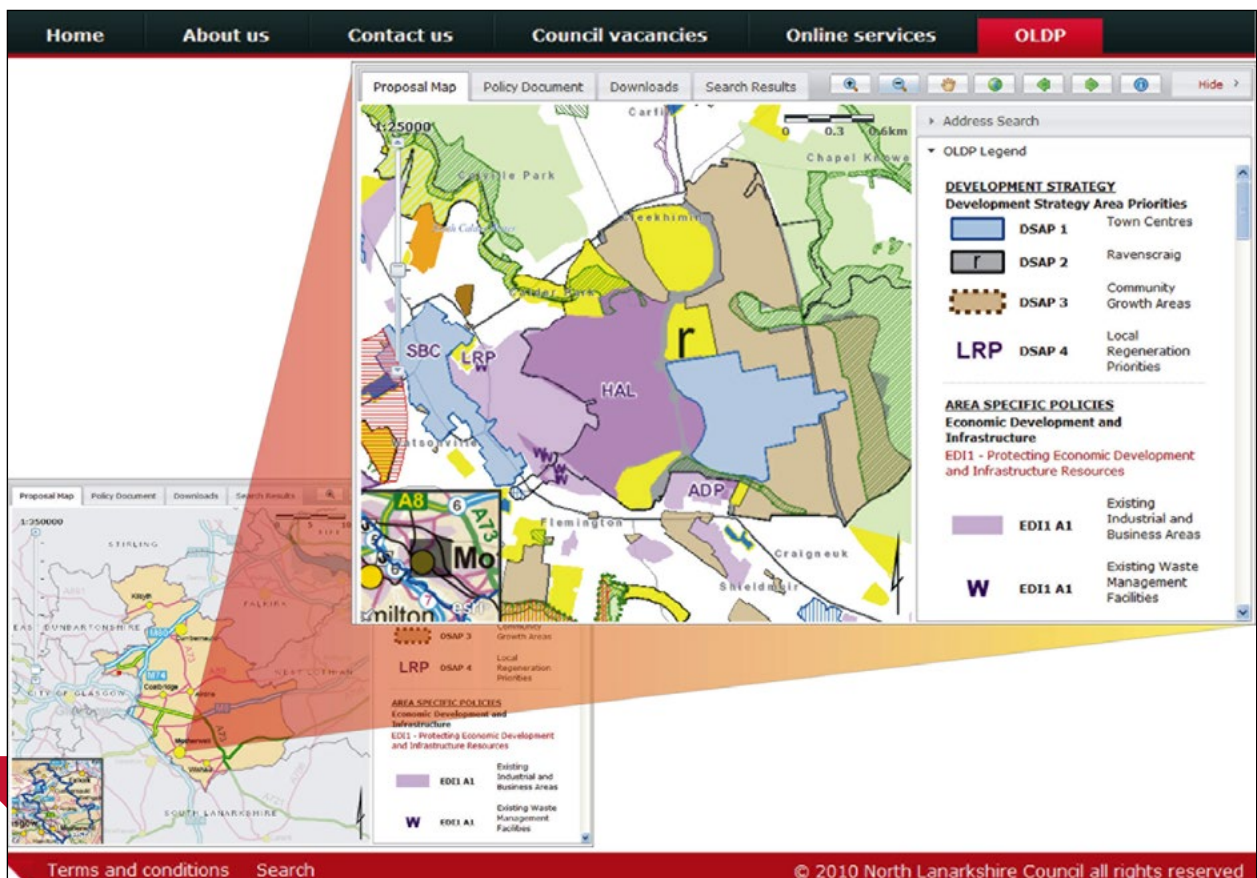
In processes, we have been successfully implementing our new street naming and numbering process; we have reviewed the appeals process and are continuing the review of development management processes. We also continue to develop the e-planning system.

In response to a positive IIP assessment report, we are now implementing our action plan, and we have recently developed a training plan for all staff across our planning and building standards service.

We provide training on local development planning and on development management within the council’s formal programme for elected members’ training. Topic related briefing sessions are given to the Planning and Transportation Committee as required.

To complement our IIP accreditation, we follow ISO standards in handling planning applications, appeals and enforcement.

We also utilise the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) model to review our activities and results.



Part 3: Supporting Evidence

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

Link to website presence:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/planningandbuilding>

Link to local plan:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/localplan>

Link to local development plan:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=23656>

Link to strategic development plan:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/strategicplan>

Link to supplementary planning guidance:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/spg>

Link to our new planning consultations hub at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/consultations>

Link to masterplanning at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/masterplanning>

Link to Ravenscraig at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/ravenscraig>

Link to community growth areas at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/communitygrowth>

Link to conservation areas and draft assessment management plans:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/conservation>

Link to town centre frameworks:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/towncentres>

Link to “Designing North Lanarkshire” at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/designingnl>

Link to Scheme of Delegation at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/planningdecisions>

Link to SPG 16 Community Engagement at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/spg>

Link to complaints/compliments procedure at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/complaints>

Link to customer charter enforcement at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/planningenforcement>

Link to community growth area at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/gartcoshglenboigcga>

Link to main issues report at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/issues>

Link to call for sites at:

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/callforsites>

Link to processing agreements at:

www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/

Part 4: Service improvements

In the coming year, we will:

1. review of our processes in applications handling, appeals and enforcement;
2. review of our Committee related processes (including handling of representations beyond committee deadlines, and protocols for dealing with requests for site visits and hearings);
3. continue to pursue the offering of processing agreements relating to our major development planning applications; including promotion of them;
4. secure the completion by all development management staff of the in-house “Log in to Learn” online Customer Care module;
5. introduce supplementary planning guidance on developers’ contributions; and
6. investigate the possibility of introducing a developer’s draft for legal agreements.
7. further develop our community engagement and communication by introducing an email alert system for local planning and development news using govdelivery.com

Delivery of our service improvement actions during 2012-13:

Committed improvements and action	Complete?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our Scheme of Delegation to gain wider delegated powers, comparable with other authorities; <p>This was successfully approved by Committee and can be viewed on line at http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/planningdecisions</p>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our Committee related processes (including handling of representations beyond committee deadlines, and protocols for dealing with requests for site visits and hearings); <p>This review was not completed and will be pursued in the coming business year.</p>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue the offering of processing agreements relating to our major development planning applications; including promotion of them; <p>We commenced this action in the business year, and processing agreements are directly offered through our website at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/processingagreements</p>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Supplementary Planning guidance on developer’s contributions <p>We are still developing this guidance in liaison with our Leisure and Learning colleagues (regarding school capacities), and there are still some issues to be resolved. In the meantime, developers’ contributions are still an active part of development management on a case for case basis, using local plan policy and separate Supplementary Planning Guidance.</p>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the Improvement Service pilot scheme to measure and benchmark the costs of our planning services <p>This was successfully completed, and we will be sharing our experience with Borders Council who will be doing the exercise for the first time.</p>	Yes

Appendix I: Planning Performance Framework Official Statistics

Planning Authority Performance Statistics

Decision-making timescales		Average timescale (weeks)			
Category	Total number of decisions 2013 - 2014	2013 - 2014		2012-2013	
Major Developments	31	21		21	
Local developments (non-householder)	413	9.7		15.3	
Local: less than 2 months	(78.5%)	6.8		7.4	
Local: more than 2 months	(21.5%)	20.3		27.5	
Householder developments	504	7.3		9.3	
Local: less than 2 months	(94.8%)	7		7.9	
Local: more than 2 months	(5.2%)	12.8		17.2	
Housing developments					
Major	16	21.1		20.9	
Local housing developments	105	11.9		20.3	
Local: less than 2 months	(72.4%)	7.3		7.6	
Local: more than 2 months	(27.6%)	24		32	
Business and industry					
Major	4	22.9		24.3	
Local business and industry	121	7.9		13.8	
Local: less than 2 months	83.5%	6.9		7.4	
Local: more than 2 months	16.5%	13.2		26	
EIA developments	0	0		0	
Other consents*	107	12		9.6	
Planning/legal agreements**	13	26		75.8	
Local reviews	2	7.1		7.7	
Decision-making: local reviews and appeals		Original decision upheld			
Type	Total number of decisions	2013 - 2014 No. %		2012-2013 No. %	
Local reviews	2	0	0	1	100
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	21	21	66	14	57
Enforcement activity FIGURES TO COME					
	2013 - 2014		2012-2013		
Cases taken up	170		159		
Breaches identified	120		151		
Cases resolved	79		139		
Notices served***	21		25		
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0		1		
Prosecutions	0		1		

* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 8 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

** Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

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

Appendix II: Workforce and Financial Information

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

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Head of Planning Service			1	7.5

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

		Development Management	Development Planning	Enforcement	Other
Managers	No. Posts	4	3	0	0.5
	Vacant	0	0	0	0
Main grade posts	No. Posts	21.5	23.4	3	8
	Vacant	1.1	1	0	2
Technician	No. Posts	4.5			0.5
	Vacant	0	0	0	0
Office Support / Clerical	No. Posts	8.4			5.6
	Vacant	0.7			0.5
Total					83

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

Staff Age Profile	Number
Under 30	5
30-39	23
40-49	32
50 and over	14

Committee & Site Visits*	Number per year
Full council meetings	3
Planning committees	16
Area committees (where relevant)	n/a
Committee site visits	17 (14 committee meetings)
LRB	3
LRB site visits	0

	Total Budget*	Costs**		Income
		Direct***	Indirect****	
Development management	930,741	1,310,439	851,956	-1,251,709
Development planning	3,721,939	1,077,315	3,236,601	-194,077
Enforcement	151,913	115,282	36,726	0
Other				
Total	4,804,593	2,503,036	4,124,923	-1,445,787

* Budget is net budget figure - DM has significant income budget that is why net budget smaller than DP.

** Costs - direct, indirect and income are actual figures

*** Direct cost include all employees costs eg basic, Ers Pension Ers NI. Also included is the allocated share of P & D admin staff costs.

**** Indirect costs include all other costs and an allocation of ES and NLC apportioned expenses.

DP indirect costs high as they include depreciation charges for the capital programme that they deliver.

Appendix III: Case studies - Quality Development on the ground

Case study: Motherwell Town Centre Environmental Improvements

Phase 3: Muir Steet/Hamilton Road

Project Summary

Streetscape works Muir Street, Motherwell Town Centre - from Motherwell railway station to Motherwell Cross and the town's central shopping area.

Issues the project set out to address

1. Poor appearance and function of a main access point to and route through the town centre.
2. Localised traffic congestion and associated conflict between through traffic, on street parking, taxis, buses and access to the station.
3. Restricted pedestrian access along the street at peak travel times due to narrow footways.
4. Restricted pedestrian access crossing the street due to double kerbs, guard rails and unregulated on street parking.
5. Unwelcoming entrance to the train station and conflict between pedestrian access, the taxi rank and customer drop off.
6. Poor condition of the waiting environment at the bus stops.
7. Paving surfaces in poor condition in need of updating and upgrading.

Main elements of the scheme developed in response to the issues identified

1. Good quality paving and street furniture of simple design with street trees and gateway feature used to brighten the street and added interest.
2. Reduction of the carriageway from two lanes to one to create formal loading bays, parking bays and a taxi rank. Realigning the kerb to the bus stop to make it easier for buses to pull up and out of the flow of traffic.

3. Reconstruction of the carriageway to remove the double kerb and widen the footways.
4. Better regulated on street parking through the provision of parking bays with crossing points in between and the removal of pedestrian guard rails.
5. Resurfacing the station forecourt to tie in with the wider streetscape and unify the space. Provision of a feeder taxi rank within the street to ease pressure on the rank in the forecourt and reduce conflict between taxis and cars dropping passengers off.
6. Combining two adjacent bus stops to provide a single stop closer to the train station entrance with a larger shelter, bus border, new paving and lighting and more seating.
7. Upgrading the quality and appearance of the footway by laying natural stone paving in a simple design to tie in with earlier phases of streetscape works in the town centre.

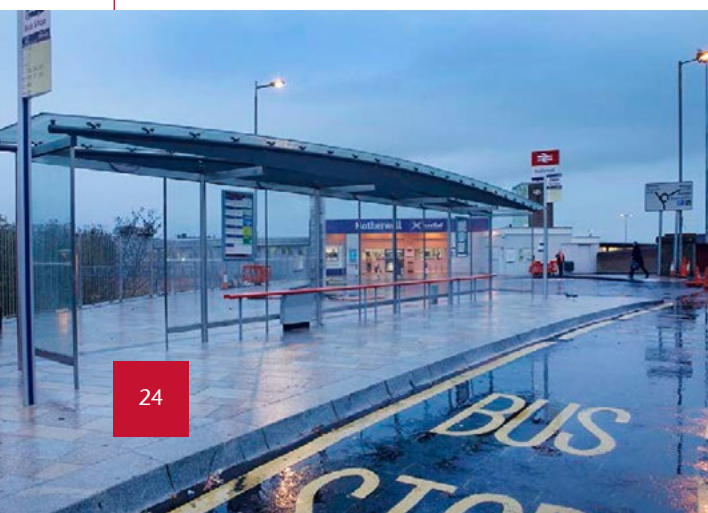
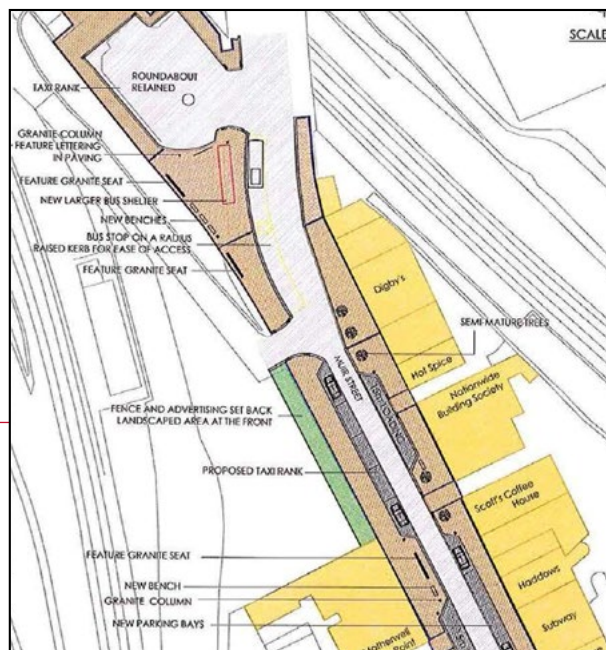
Partnership working

The project was delivered in partnership with SPT, Network Rail and First Scotrail.

Benefits

- Enhanced appearance of the street and approach to the station
- Improved pedestrian access and pedestrian priority
- Better interchange facilities for train and bus passengers
- Improved traffic management, although congestion for through traffic still an issue at peak times
- Associated improvements to shop frontages
- Reduction in shop vacancies

Scheme Design



Case study: New Build Housing Programme

Former Albert Primary School and West Canal Street

The council is in the process of creating 1000 new homes across the authority area by 2020. The programme aims to meet particular social needs within local communities and improve the range of properties within the council's housing stock. The range of matters to be addressed from a housing perspective is diverse, encompassing the geographical areas of need, providing housing for varying needs, particular specifications within construction, requirements under secure by design and ambitious timescales. This is in addition to resolving physical requirements and constraints within sites, such as ground conditions and drainage, and, all in an environment of budgetary constraints and the application of best value across the board.

The planning service takes a pro-active and engaged role as part of this programme, both to assist in the effective delivery of the corporate aims of the council, but also specifically in respect to the land-use nature of the programme and the desire to effect a positive influence on quality development on the ground. The

planning service is represented directly within the new build team, and plays a fundamental role in the preparation of site briefs, the tender evaluation process, and in carrying out its statutory functions in assessing applications. These are all areas where the planning service endeavours and does effect positive changes on design. While this may not be in the context of architectural awards, it is in the context of the crucial provision of social housing where there are many requirements to balance, and in the uptake of new development. Of course, design is one of those requirements and we can point to examples where the input of the planning service has had a direct influence on satisfying policy and improving design.

Two such sites are within Airdrie and Coatbridge, the site of the former Albert Primary School, Airdrie and the site of a former community building in Coatbridge, both lying on the periphery of Conservation Areas. From the inception of designs, the planning service has provided direct input and dialogue on specific design aspects including frontages, building lines, ridge, eaves, set lintel and sill heights, elevational treatments, perimeters and boundary treatments, Retention of established features, vertical emphasis to windows, consideration of finish materials and landscaping. Some examples are provided below.



Case study: Forgemasters, Calderwood, Coatbridge

In 2010 the national policy document Designing Streets (DS) was launched as the first policy statement in Scotland for street design. It marked a change in the emphasis of guidance towards placemaking and away from a system focused upon accommodating the movement of motor vehicles.

The policies within Designing Streets moved away from a prescriptive standards-based approach, to one where designers and local authorities should collaborate to unlock the full potential of streets to become vibrant, safe and attractive places. The premise upon which the document is based is that good street design should derive from an intelligent response to location, rather than rigidly applied standards, regardless of context.

The planning service has engaged with Designing Streets and proactively sought to bring forward developments more focussed on design. While the emergence of Designing Streets was during a significant downturn in the housing market, the first 'on-the ground' examples of developments influenced by the policy are now appearing. One example is the former Sheffield Forgemasters site in Coatbridge, which benefitted from an earlier outline planning permission for residential development and is now in the early stages of construction.

As pre-application discussions commenced, the planning service actively sought to ensure the principles of Designing Streets were used and then worked collaboratively with the Developers in the evolution of a layout which pragmatically balanced both commercial and design aspirations, as well as the input of other key stakeholders. The planning service was fundamental in securing this approach, and along with the positive engagement of the developers worked towards a layout less dominated by conventional prescriptive standards and the car, to one which includes enhanced frontages and alternative parking solutions, a street layout which will work efficiently in lowering vehicle speeds and give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists, a layout which has greater emphasis on street design and thoughtful building positions creating an attractive environment, a layout which incorporates strategic landscaping specifically designed to contribute to the concept and a residential area which has good linkages within, and to the wider area. The outcome has also influenced the way in which the development has gone on to be marketed.

This is one example of several sites that the Planning Service is engaging with developers with a view to realising the positive and lasting benefits of more robust design policy on the ground.





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skontaktuj się z nami, żeby przedyskutować Twoją potrzebę.

اگر آپ کو دوسری زبان میں یہ معلومات درکار ہو تو براے مہربانی ہم سے مندرجہ ذیل پتہ پر رابطہ کریں

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