

## Planning Performance Framework





## THE PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2013



# PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013



## 1. National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2012-2013	2011-2012
<b>Development Planning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i></li> <li>development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N)</li> </ul>	<p>0/9</p> <p>Y</p>	8
<b>Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective housing land: years supply</li> <li>effective housing land supply</li> <li>housing approvals</li> <li>effective employment land supply</li> <li>employment land take-up</li> <li>effective commercial floor space supply</li> <li>commercial floor space delivered</li> </ul>	<p>(Unknown) years</p> <p>(Unknown) units</p> <p>122 units</p> <p>(Unknown) ha</p> <p>15.05 ha</p> <p>(Unknown) m<sup>2</sup></p> <p>1110m<sup>2</sup></p>	
<b>Development Management</b> <b>Project Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice</li> <li>number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan</li> <li>percentage planned timescales met</li> </ul> <b>Decision-making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>application approval rate</li> <li>delegation rate</li> </ul>	<p>Not available %</p> <p>1</p> <p>100%</p> <p>95.5%</p> <p>88.6%</p>	
<b>Decision-making timescales</b> <p>Average number of weeks to decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>major developments</li> <li>local developments (non-householder)</li> <li>householder developments</li> </ul>	<p>0</p> <p>20.6</p> <p>16.6</p>	
<b>Enforcement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i></li> <li>number of breaches identified / resolved</li> </ul>	<p>4 years</p> <p>52/77</p>	

Improved performance in Development Management on land and sea is based on the successful bedding in of back office systems; the systems thinking project; and the commitment to additional resources and training for our business support unit.

At present, we do not have figures on applications subject to pre-applications, though this will be available soon. We do have approximately 270 pre-applications per year.

Our Enforcement charter was scheduled for revision – however, an exceptionally complex enforcement matter has had to be prioritised

Age of LDP - the LDP was approved as the Council's settled view during the year being reported so, it was less than 1 full year old, hence the "0"; the "9" refers to the old style development plan.

Effective land supply - (Context: NB that we will be in a position to provide figures for the "unknowns" next year because we started measuring them after they were inserted into the PPF last year.)





## PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

### 2. Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

#### *Open for business*

We prioritise our biggest economic driver applications like the TOTAL gas plant– at present, one officer is working full time on a resubmission – for a fee of under £200. This development is vital to the local and national economy.

The Developers Meeting, with key developers, agents and architects enables us to understand business needs and issues – for example, the last session discussed the economic cost of delays.

With any delays, the applicant can contact the officer or line manager to seek an explanation. All documentation is on web site so everyone can see where delays occur, and what needs to be done to resolve them.

Aquaculture is a key economic driver locally and nationally. We have a team dedicated to Marine Planning. We are proposing to incorporate our ground breaking Marine Spatial Plan as Supplementary Guidance in the LDP. The National Marine Plan is under consultation at present, and our approach will ensure that the regional marine plan can dovetail seamlessly with the LDP.

We are “front loading the front loading” - during the LDP call for sites project, screening was undertaken by community councils, SEPA, SNH, Historic Scotland, our Roads Services, flooding engineers, and planning officers. More assessment was undertaken than any pre-application. 96 sites were included where no major issues were identified, and for all kinds of development. This process has increased developers’ confidence and encourages development. We have already received a number of applications for sites identified in the settled view of the LDP.

The action programme specifies timetables for progression of individual sites – we will be working with developers to make it happen

We have a commitment to meet developers and consultants, particularly when they may have limited time or arrive with short notice here in Shetland.

#### High quality development on the ground

Our “Shetland House” and associated design guidance has one of the highest hit rates on the Council web site. It has served its purpose by assisting in the noticeable improvement in design, and a raised public interest in the matter. It is now a priority for renewal.

We have moved an engineer from Roads Service to our Planning Service. His priorities will be flooding, and ensuring “Designing for Streets” is built in to our new guidance. He will also be assessing applications, and, critically, be involved in pre-application discussion with a “Designing for Streets” mandate.

Our regular in-house meetings on design focus on good quality on the ground, with particular emphasis on examples where



we have negotiated or conditioned improvements which have demonstrably improved developments.

We were catalysts in, and continue to make a significant staffing commitment to, the successful 'living Lerwick' BIDS project, which has been used as an example of good practice

#### *Certainty*

We have successfully reduced our planning application backlog, with only about 70 live applications at any time. Our improved performance provides a quicker response, and increases certainty. We are acutely aware that time means money.

We have an on-going commitment to our free pre-application service with about 15 non-statutory pre-applications live at any one time.

The 96 sites with development potential in the Local Development Plan have had high level of scrutiny from community and statutory consultees already, thus providing more certainty.

Due to our commitment to negotiating solutions, we have only had 13 Local reviews since the introduction of the new legislation.

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

Our customer survey has shown that all respondents are either "satisfied" or "very satisfied " with the service they have received, irrespective of the outcome, except one who marked us as "neutral" due to the inability to contact an officer.

In response to the question "Did we communicate in Plain English", the same respondent commented "Ridiculous question"

Other quotes include:

- "found staff helpful at all times"
- "found the level of service to be both helpful and friendly"
- "Marine Planning Staff were always accessible, helpful and professional"

In our Planning Service Review, we identified the need to overhaul our web site. The Project Team, including colleagues from our Communications Team, will deliver the new pages next month.

This year, we will undertake a review of the advice available on the website, and for the front desk, on permitted development, listed building consent, ground source heat pumps, and domestic renewables.

We have improved communications with other island and smaller authorities during response to the NPF and SPP consultations by co-ordinating our responses.

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

We have a Planning committee once a month, when the normal Committee cycle is 2 months

We have had special Development Committees, and members seminars and briefings out with the normal cycle to fit reports on the LDP in to our Development Plan Scheme time scales, and to ensure sufficient time for debate which leads to political buy-in.

We have a fluid and mobile work force – our marine planners have taken on land applications. We have provided training to our business support staff as part of our commitment to moving more areas of responsibility from planning officers to this team.

Nearly 90% of the decisions are delegated, which contributes greatly to our improved performance. The majority of applications presented to committee have been “council interest.”

Development management officers have a case load of only 8 applications. This allows them to focus on those applications, when a case load of 30 didn't. They are now actively pursuing information to allow a decision to be made, not passively waiting for submissions. Regular progress meetings drive forward applications and enforcement issues – this speeds up information submissions, consultations and decisions.

Our customer survey responses included:

- “the service was very prompt”
- “the service is the slickest it has ever been”

*Effective management structures*

We do not have the structure we desired, due to circumstances within the corporate body. However we continue to strive to make it work.

Applications are assigned to officers who have the appropriate level of experience and authority to make decisions. We have to balance this with our continued commitment to “growing our own.”

We continue to commit resources to staff development requires an investment in time and money. Due to the 27% budget cut, we have lost specialist knowledge in historic environment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. We now have to invest in training existing staff. We are working with Historic Scotland and HS officer was in Shetland to provide training and support. A further programme of training is to be developed with HS.

We have identified that training on noise issues is required. This will be funded and undertaken.

*Financial management and local governance*

A significant amount of time has been spent on working towards meeting our 27% cut as part of the Medium Term Financial plan, in which targets £36m reduction in revenue expenditure to be made across the Council over 3 years . In effect, we are having to do more with less.

We are participating in the Cost of Planning project – with input from all participants in the planning service and our partners.

Our Planning Service Review benchmarked our activities against similar authorities, and formed part of the evidence to direct where our cuts fell as we focused on our main priorities.

Our day to day activities are driven by the findings of several projects including staff surveys; the systems thinking project; the Planning Service Review, and our Interactions Workshop.

Officers are participating in Council wide initiatives including the Improvement Service “Leading For Outcomes”, CIPFA training on Project Management; and annual appraisals for all staff, underpinned by our Corporate Plan and Service Plans.

*Culture of continuous improvement*

The transition to “Outcomes, not process” continues.

The Minister for Local Government and Finance, Derek Mackay, visited this year. He emphasised to planners that they are critical to the delivery sustainable economic growth. This message has been embedded in to our thinking over the last few years. It directs our priorities in training and budget setting, and our daily activities.

The new Planning Act and secondary legislation meant a need to focus on process. Our new back office systems and systems thinking exercise continued this focus.

Our Planning Service Review was part process driven, but also started looking at outcomes, and whether our processes contributed to outcomes in line with the SOA, our Community Plan and our Corporate Plan.

One action in the Planning Service Review was to hold a Planning Service Interactions workshop, involving people from other departments. One area of focus was Community Planning, and how our activities contribute to the outcomes our community desires.

We are now working to ensure better engagement between planning and community planning. We understand that planning is the earliest intervention, and critical to quality of life, health and well-being, and access to opportunity.

The Shetland Partnership have recently refreshed the community plan and finalised the 2013 Single Outcome Agreement to with our Corporate plan is aligned. We shall ensure the activities of the planning service contribute to the outcomes identified in this agreement

Recently, we hosted a delegation of planners from our neighbouring Nordic countries including the Faroes, Norway, Sweden, and Finland. We shared our knowledge in land use and marine planning, but also in social and health planning.

Please see below for programme for next year



### 3. Supporting evidence

Building on our previous self assessments, we have undertaken two key pieces of evidence gathering. The Planning Service Review, conclusions and actions were produced by an independent external consultant, and were based on interviews with key stakeholders, planning staff and benchmarking with other authorities.

One of the PSR actions led to the second significant piece of work – the Planning Service Interactions workshop which involved our staff and external services in a day long workshop. The actions report is our evidence base, and provides the foundations for our key development actions over the coming year.

Feedback forms from the Developers' Meeting highlight areas for future discussion i.e. the role of statutory pre-application process.

### 4. Service improvements: 2013-14

We have set ourselves an ambitious programme for the coming year. We shall:

- shortly be committing to the 2013 Single Outcome Agreement. We shall ensure our activities contribute to the outcomes identified in this agreement.
- continue the implementation of actions in the Planning Service Review
- develop an action programme from the Planning Service Interactions workshop and start implementation
- the Interactions Workshop highlighted a need to improve knowledge of Community Planning, SOA and out-comes and the relationship to our day to day work - we will identify actions to ensure long term integration into our day to day activities
- identify key stakeholders, and prioritise actions where delays occur
- training on Listed Building and general conservation matters
- noise training was identified as a requirement – funding and training will be identified
- This year, we will undertake a review of the advice available on the website, and for the front desk, on permitted development, listed building consent, ground source heat pumps, and domestic renewables
- Launch our new web pages
- Overhaul our design guidance



Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2012-13:

Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
<i>Implementation of Systems Thinking exercise results.</i>	<i>yes</i>
<i>Implement outcomes of Delivering Planning Reform for Aquaculture.</i>	<i>yes</i>
<i>Implement findings of Planning Service Review (now partly carried in to Planning Service Interactions Workshop Actions)</i>	<i>yes</i>
<i>Benchmarking Development Plan with partner local authorities. (now engaging in new bench marking groups</i>	<i>yes</i>
<i>Undertake a new customer survey at individual services level (Development Plans will be undertaken at adoption of LDP)</i>	<i>no</i>

# PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK OFFICIAL STATISTICS

## Decision-making timescales

Category	Average timescale (weeks)		
	Total number of decisions 2012-2013	2012-2013	2011-2012
<b>Major developments</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Local developments (non-householder)</b>	138 (60.8%)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local: less than 2 months</li> <li>Local: more than 2 months</li> </ul>	89 (39.2%)		
<b>Householder developments</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local: less than 2 months</li> <li>Local: more than 2 months</li> </ul>	57 (82.6%) 12 (17.4%)		
<b>Housing developments</b>			
<b>Major</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>Local housing developments</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local: less than 2 months</li> <li>Local: more than 2 months</li> </ul>	65 (61.9%) 40 (38.1%)		
<b>Business and industry</b>	21 (60%)		
<b>Major</b>	14 (40%)		
<b>Local business and industry</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local: less than 2 months</li> <li>Local: more than 2 months</li> </ul>			
<b>EIA developments</b>	4		
<b>Other consents*</b>	60		
<b>Planning/legal agreements**</b>	1		
<b>Local reviews</b>	2		

\* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 7 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

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

## Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld				
		2012-2013 No.	%	2011-2012 No.	%	
Local reviews		2		0		
Appeals to Scottish Ministers		0		0		

## Enforcement activity

	2012-2013	2011-2012
Cases taken up	77	
Breaches identified		
Cases resolved	52	
Notices served***	0	
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	
Prosecutions	0	

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

## Context

### Budget Issues

A 27% budget cut to meet our Medium Term Financial plan targets have resulted in the loss of 5 posts in the Planning Service.

### Recruitment Issues

We also face difficulties in recruiting experienced staff, which appears to be exacerbated by the lack of houses to rent. We also have significant competition from private sector for some posts. Employment levels in Shetland are exceptionally high with unemployment less than 0.8%. One of the priorities of the 2013 Single Outcome Agreement is to better understand the recruitment issues which exist across all sectors in Shetland and identify an action plan to attract people to live, work, and study in Shetland

### Scale of Development Activity

We continue to receive large scale applications which are unusual, complex, and significant in terms of sustainable economic growth. The types of applications we are dealing with this year alone would challenge any authority of our size if received over a decade.

Significant developments include: retrospective application for major development relating to lifeline services with designated species and sites adjacent

- \* Total gas plant conditions and new applications to make significant changes to existing permission
- \* BP H2S plant and pipeline
- two new BP offices at Sellaness
- pre-application for new high school
- \* pre-applications for a new power station
- \* Accommodation camps
- \* conditions on the electricity convertor station
- \* Viking Energy wind farm conditions, new road applications etc

## Our Corporate Plan

The Council has adopted “Our Corporate Plan 2013/17”

There are 5 main priorities, including:

“Helping build a healthy economy and strong communities” which also includes the adoption of the Local Development Plan as a key action.

“Working with all our partners to achieve the best results possible” which includes progress with the new Shetland Partnership which replaces the Community Planning Board. As part of this action, the Planning Service is working more closely with our community planning partners through membership of Development Partnership and Health Partnership.

**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.*

**As at 31 March 2013**

**Please note - The figures do not have to be exact - we are looking for a snapshot of each authority**

Head of Planning Service (1)	Tier?								
	1	<u>2</u>	3	4					
	Managers (2)		Main Grade Posts		Technician Posts		Office support/Clerical		
	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	No. Posts	Vacant	Totals
Development Management	2		8		1		1		12
Development Planning	1		4.32		1.65		1		7.97
Enforcement Staff			1						1
Cross Service/Other Planning			2						2



Staffing profile	Number
Under 30	5
30-39	7.11
40-49	6.86
50 and Over	4

Committees & site visits (3)	No. per year
Full Council committees	12
Planning Committees	
Area Committees (where relevant)	
Committee site visits	4
LRB (4)	2
LRB site visits	2

Budgets Planning Service	Budget	Costs		Income (7)
		Direct (5)	Indirect (6)	
Development Management	303,766	191,884	304,834	-193,068
Development Planning	167,524	66,309	64,604	
Enforcement	23,928	23,983		

