Stirling Council

Planning Performance Framework

2015-16

Introduction

This last year has been another busy year for the planning service and has highlighted the difficulty of maintaining service improvement/performance in successive years following a well received Planning Performance Framework the previous year.

In a number of areas, it has not proved possible to maintain the levels of performance in determining planning applications at the previous years level. As always, there are various reasons for this, many outwith the control of the planning service, but I am confident that with further monitoring of performance over this coming year and corrective action as necessary, performance will can improve. I am pleased to report that an area which attracted attention in last years PPF feedback, performance on Major developments, has improved significantly, despite the fact that we have had to deal with a number of complex major development applications. For example, this last year has seen a number of major developments come to a conclusion, such as the proposals at Park of Keir, Airthrey Kerse and Cambusbarron. These have been resource intensive over this last year and following decisions on these applications, they have now moved to the Appeal stage.

With regard to development planning, in the last year, the Main Issues Report moved successfully through consultation with the assistance of Planning Aid and greater use of social media. The Proposed Plan has recently been approved by Council and the Plan is now in the final consultative stages before progressing to Examination of the Plan in 2017.

With regard to customer service, I am pleased to report that we have a Customer Survey up and running and feedback so far, although limited, has been positive. The amalgamation of the Planning and Building Standards teams under one Manager has also raised the potential for having joint meetings with Architects/Agents to provide a greater focus to meetings and to further enhance our contact with customers.

In the last PPF, I reported on the changes that had been made to the organisational structure of the Council. This last year has seen further organisational changes taking place as the Council seeks to respond to budget pressures and the need to meet the needs of local residents and customers. The Planning and Building Standards teams will move to a new Localities and Infrastructure service under a new Director who is to be appointed soon. I am pleased to report, however, that in the midst of this, steps have been taken to put additional resources into the planning service as a reflection of the importance planning makes to the delivery of infrastructure and sustainable economic growth.

Brian Roberts
Senior Manager, Infrastructure Delivery

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

1. National Headline Indicators (NHI's)

Key Outcomes	2015-16	2014/15
Development Planning:		
• age of local/strategic development plan(s) (*requirement – less than 5 years*)	1 yr 6 months	6 months
• Will the local/strategic development plan(s) 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? (Y-earlier/Y-later/N)	Yes - later	No
• Were development plan scheme engagement/ consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)	Yes	N/A
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
• Established Housing Land Supply	7653 units	7905 units
• 5 Year Effective Housing Land Supply	1624 units	2374 units
• 5 year Housing supply target	2080	2303*
• 5 Year Effective Housing Land Supply	3.9 Years	5.2 years*
• Housing approvals	264 units	492 units
• Housing completions over last 5 years	1540	1531
• Marketable Employment Land	60.55 Ha	47.05ha
• Employment Land take up during reporting year	0 ha	0 ha

*Based on 2015 Audit for period up until 30th June 2015

Development Management

Project Planning

• percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice	35%	30%
• number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan	One	One
• percentage planned timescales met	N/A	N/A

Decision–making

• application approval rate	93.8	96.3%
• delegation rate	77.7%	77.7%

Decision Making Timescales
Average number of weeks to decision:

• Major developments	26.4	97.3
• Local developments (non householder)	12.4	11.8
• Householder developments	8.3	7.5

Legacy Cases

• Number cleared during reporting period	6	3
• Number remaining	13	19

Enforcement

• Time since Enforcement Charter published/ Reviewed (months) *Requirement:review every 2 Years*	1yr 8 months	8 months
• Number of breaches identified/resolved	143/40	142/49

Development Planning

After the adoption of the Stirling Local Development Plan in October 2014, the Council agreed to an early review of the plan relative to the housing land requirement for the Stirling Core Area. This was as a result of reporter's recommendations at Examination and in light of SPPs requirement for 10-20% generosity level above the housing supply target to be identified in arriving at the housing land requirement.

Work on preparing the new plan is progressing well. In June 2015, a Main Issues Report presenting three options to boost the supply of housing in the Stirling LDP area was published. Whilst housing

issues featured heavily in the MIR, options for other matters such as wind energy and the network of centres were also presented. Alongside the MIR, a Development Plan Scheme was also published which provided an ambitious timetable for the plan's preparation.

Just under 400 responses were received in the consultation period which ran from June – October 2015 with a significant proportion of these being related to housing land supply issues and the identification or non-inclusion of housing sites. Work on summarising and analysing representations took place from October – December 2015.

The Development Plan Scheme 2015 scheduled publication of the Proposed Plan for March 2016. However, work on a transport appraisal for the reviewed LDP, in line with Transport Scotland's DPMTAG, was being undertaken to inform the plan and it suffered delays. Given that this research is such an important evidence base for demonstrating the plan's deliverability, publication of the proposed plan was delayed by three months to June 2016 to allow this work to be completed.

It should also be noted that in July 2015 the Planning & Policy Team Leader who managed the development planning function left the employment of the Council and was not replaced until October 2015.

In early 2016, work on preparing the Proposed Plan began. As the preparation of the Council's Local Transport Strategy was being undertaken concurrently, a joint LTS/LDP Members Officer's Working Group was established and met four times to discuss issues relating to both documents. This proved to be a particularly useful process in securing the views and ideas of members. Officers also met with Scottish Government planning officials and Homes for Scotland to discuss the forthcoming Proposed Plan during this period.

The Proposed Plan was approved by full Council on 30 June and consultation will take place from 11 July to 23 September 2016. An updated Development Plan Scheme 2016 has been published which anticipates adoption of the plan in December 2017.

A review of 37 Supplementary Guidance documents is currently being undertaken with a view to amalgamating and simplifying the amount of guidance that will sit alongside the new adopted plan.

Effective Land Supply

The 2015 Housing Land Audit was agreed with Homes for Scotland in November 2015 with no sites being disputed. At June 2015, the position with the effective housing land supply is that there is a 3.2 years effective supply (when measured against the housing land requirement of the adopted LDP) and 3.9 years supply (when measured against the housing supply target). Annual housing completions 2010 to 2015 have averaged 308 units per annum whereas programmed completions 2015 to 2024 are an average 420 units per annum.

Development Management

Pre-application discussions have remained relatively stable in relation to last year's figures. Unfortunately, this is due to the fact that it has not been possible to capture all the recorded pre-application discussions due to workload pressure on the planning support team. As such, an improvement action for this year again is to ensure that all forms of pre-application discussion, including phone calls, are properly recorded.

With regard to **major development applications,** in line with previous years, Stirling Council has received very few applications. 5 applications were submitted with an average determination time of 26 weeks which is an improvement on last year's figure of 97.3 which was skewed by one application only. This figure is now within the Scottish average of 38 weeks.

Of the **major development** applications determined in 2015/16 only one was the subject of a processing agreement and even then, this timescales were extended dramatically from the original

agreement due to the need for further information from the applicant. Processing agreements are highlighted on our website and officers are instructed to raise this matter with applicants.
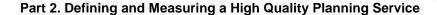
With regard to other legacy cases, whilst some of the underlying applications remain in this category, there has been an effort made to ensure that other applications have not fallen into this timescale.

Decision making timescales for 2015/16 have remained relatively stable in comparison with the previous year with the average number of weeks to decision for **local developments (non-householder)** increasing slightly to 12.4 weeks from 11.8 weeks in 2014/15.

Householder developments have shown a drop in performance since last year with an average time of 8.3 weeks compared to 7.5 in 2014/15. The current average is only slight increase but serves to highlight the need for continuing with targeted improvement actions otherwise timescales can begin to slip back.

The **percentage of applications delegated to officers** has remained at the previous years level. The previous years PPF highlighted the reasons why this may be but it has not proven possible to amend the scheme of delegation in this past year to rectify this. Despite this, it appears that this is not adversely affecting performance with decision making timescales remaining the same or improving in some instances from the previous year. This issue therefore remains as an improvement action for the 2016/17 Planning Performance Framework.

The **percentage of applications approved** has dropped slightly from the previous year (96.3%) currently is on a par with the national average (93.9%).

Part 2. Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

Quality of Outcomes

A Plan Led Approach

- The Approved LDP provides a clear policy context for placemaking and quality design and includes specific policies entitled 'Placemaking', 'Site Planning' and 'Design Process' highlighting the significance of these issues in achieving high quality development on the ground.

- Over 70 pieces of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SG) have been produced in association with the Adopted LDP, the majority of which are aimed at improving the quality of development, which support the LDP. This can be broken down into;

    - 37 Supplementary Guidance documents – these support specific policies in the Plan.
    - 26 Conservation Area Appraisals/Statements
    - 13 Site Development Frameworks/Masterplans/Briefs

Planning and Design Interventions

Urban Case Study

- The Planning service can draw upon expertise in urban design, conservation and landscape to ensure that new developments are of a high quality design. An example of how these skills come together can be highlighted by a recent flatted development within the Stirling City Centre. Providing 64 mid-market rent apartments in a car free environment, the development at Goosecroft Road features facing brick facades interspersed with interesting artwork commissioned especially for this development. Planning Officers were involved in a design team set up at the pre-application stage to provide input on the design, scale and materials of the building. The Goosecroft Road development is a striking new intervention into the historic urban environment.

Rural Case Study

1. Applications for housing in the rural area are assessed against Supplementary Guidance which provides detailed guidance on the issues which prospective applicants should consider when submitting applications for new housing development in the countryside. http://www.stirling.gov.uk/__documents/temporary-uploads/economy,-planning-_and_-regulation/sg-august-2014/sg10-design-guide.pdf

    The design of such properties is important in ensuring that they fit well into the rural context. The Council's Supplementary Guidance relating to the design of rural housing allows for both contemporary and traditional house design. Examples of rural housing are shown below

Infill Case Study

2. In well established residential areas, it is important that new infill development is complimentary in scale and design to that which surrounds it and that the pattern of plot sizes and frontages is maintained as far as possible. In this example, guided by Development Plan policy and Supplementary Guidance on house extensions, officers commented on the need for the development to reflect existing plot and building sizes, orientation and spacing and the definition between public and private space. This resulted in an amended design which better reflects the character of the Conservation area.

House Extension Case Study

3. Good design is not just restricted to new houses but is equally important in extensions and alterations to existing properties, particularly where these are within Conservation Areas or attached to Listed Buildings. In this example, there was a negotiated design solution to ensure that the materials and scale of the extension better matched the existing house whilst at the same time retaining a contemporary approach which provides an interesting design contrast.

Regeneration Case Study

4. Regeneration of certain residential areas through physical as well as social interventions is key to improving the living standards of local residents in these areas. Whilst the Raploch area of Stirling is perhaps the best known regeneration area, other areas in Stirling, such as Cultenhove, have also been subject to regeneration initiatives aimed at improving the area generally. The Council's Urban Designer has been involved in shaping the plans for new residential developments which have replaced the existing housing schemes and provided comments on the resultant planning applications.

Quality of Service and Engagement

General Advice and Information

- Information to support potential applicants for planning permission is available through the Council's website including online submission of applications, public access to planning applications, Development Advice Notes, forms etc http://www.stirling.gov.uk/services/business-and-trade/planning-and-building-standards/planning-applications-warrants-and-certificates/planning-applications

- The Development Management team operate a single point of contact/case officer for all applications, direct dial and e-mail contact details are provided in all correspondence and applicants are encouraged to enter into pre-application discussion at an early stage in the process. Senior Planning Officers are allocated to the more complex/larger scale applications.

- Information to support potential applicants for planning permission is available through the Council's website including online submission of applications, public access to planning applications, Development Advice Notes, forms etc http://www.stirling.gov.uk/services/business-and-trade/planning-and-building-standards/planning-applications-warrants-and-certificates/planning-applications

- The availability of Processing Agreements to aid the determination of 'Major Development's is highlighted on the Planning website together with the standard template produced by Scottish Government. http://www.stirling.gov.uk/services/business-and-trade/planning-and-building-standards/planning-applications-warrants-and-certificates/processing-agreements

- Availability and encouragement of Pre-Application discussion is highlighted on the Council's Planning webpage. Pre-application discussions have shown a slight increase on the previous years figure and now indicate that around 35% of all applications have been the subject of some form of pre-application discussion. The majority of applications are 'householder' in nature and as such, tend not to involve pre-application discussion. http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/planning-and-the-environment/planning-and-building-standards/planning-applications-warrants-and-certificates/planning-applications

- As part of the commitment to continuous customer improvement, the Planning service has produced a Development Management Charter outlining commitments and service standards that will guide engagement with customers. http://www.stirling.gov.uk/__documents/temporary-uploads/economy,-planning-_and_-regulation/customer-services/devmanagecustomchart.pdf

Open for Business Approach

- As part of planning's support for new business development, officers assisted in the production of a new Business Development Guide aimed at small businesses who are looking to set up in the area. The guide provides some basic advice on planning issues and also provide pointers to where further information can be obtained from within the planning service.

http://www.stepstirling.co.uk/files/8914/4483/4025/business_engagement_Stirling_Councl.pdf

- The Council established a Fast Action Response Team in February 2016 to act as a 'one-stop shop' for all inward investment enquiries for Stirling. This is being coordinated by the Council's Economic Development Project Manager with assistance from colleagues in Estates and Planning. Such an approach enables a quick, coordinated and robust response to be provided to potential investors by suggesting sites which will meet their development needs, commenting on the suitability of land for specific uses as well as providing details to allow contact to be made with land owners.

Communication and Engagement

- An example of positive engagement with communities was the consultation undertaken on the Local Development Plan Main Issues Report. In addition to notifying by mail over 1000 local groups, agencies, businesses, developers and properties neighbouring proposed new development, a programme of consultation events was devised. A total of six 'drop-in' events were held, in Bridge of Allan, Dunblane, Kippen, Plean, Strathblane and Stirling, focusing chiefly on those communities where new development was proposed.

  The assistance of PAS (formally Planning Aid Scotland) was sought for the events in Bridge of Alllan (Wallace High School) and Dunblane due to the identification of sites in these areas

as additional housing allocation options and in anticipation of a high level of engagement during the MIR consultation in communities with a typically a strong level of community participation.

PAS assisted in the design and delivery of the consultation events, including providing volunteers to assist in clarifying and making accessible the information about the MIR process; encouraging considered responses on housing options and other issues within the MIR; and gathering written and map-based feedback in the session to inform the MIR consultation.

In a new departure for consultation on planning matters, PAS also delivered high school workshops in both locations to engage with 4th and 5th year students. PAS's involvement is documented in an Engagement Report available on the website.

Nearly 200 people attended the two five-hour sessions in Bridge of Allan and Dunblane and in total, 318 residents attended the six events. A further 72 students participated in the school engagement sessions, contributing to over 400 individuals, businesses and groups formally making submissions on the Main Issues Report.

- In order to engage Elected Members in the new LDP process, a Member Officer Working Group was established to provide an Elected Member overview of the process and also to use the group as a sounding board for discussion of issues that were emerging in the Plan. This was established post MIR but this allowed for more focussed discussion around the issues which had emerged from this consultations stage of the Plan. Due to the fact that the Council's Local Transport Strategy was being prepared at the same time, Elected Members were keen that both of these matters should be discussed within the Member/Officer Working Group

- The ability for customers to comment on the service they receive in relation to the determination of planning applications has been improved with the introduction of an online customer survey. Using a hyperlink in all e-mail and web address in decision notices issued, all those who have participated in the planning application process are able to provide feedback on the service. To date, there has been a very positive response to the service provided. http://bit.ly/PlanningCustomerSurvey2015

  An example of a comment from the Customer Survey

  "*Great to be able to easily speak to planners for pre-application guidance. Have found staff very helpful. - Very good experience with Council Archaeologist*"

- Social media ie Facebook, Twitter were used extensively in the MIR consultation process. There will be a greater use of social media moving forward in the Proposed Plan stage in an effort to reach out to as many people as possible, particularly the young people in the Stirling area.

- As part of an awareness raising exercise related to traditional skills in the conservation of historic buildings, the Council's Conservation officers led a party of local high school children to Stirling Castle and Tradstocks, a local stone supplier, to witness at first hand, traditional techniques in stone masonry and construction. The experience was greatly appreciated by pupils and teachers alike.

- The Council has supported the community in Dunblane to prepare a vision and strategy for Dunblane town centre and its immediate environs through a community-led charrette. In addition to making a financial contribution to facilitate the appointment of a professional design team, members of the Planning and Community Engagement services have joined representatives from community groups on a Steering Group, taking the project forward from inception to now, arising from the Charrette, the development of a Community Town Centre Action Plan

  http://www.stirling.gov.uk/__documents/planning-and-the-environment/approved-ldp/main-issues-report/16.02.03-pas-engagement-report-v2.pdf

Planning Confidence and Assurance

- In line with legislative requirements, a Local Development Plan Action Programme has been produced which supports the delivery of the LDP and sets out the actions and partnerships that are necessary to implement the strategy of the Plan. In order to oversee the Action Programme, a Corporate Infrastructure Delivery Working Group has been formed with representatives from Council services as well as relevant external agencies. http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/planning-and-the-environment/planning-and-building-standards/local-and-statutory-development-plans/local-development-plan

- South Stirling Gateway is a major LDP housing allocation on the south side of Stirling. Due to the different landownerships across the site, it became apparent that a lack of co-operation between the landowners was not going to deliver a Masterplan required by the LDP. The Planning Service has therefore acted pro-actively to fill this void by preparing a Masterplan in house, in consultation with the landowners. The Masterplan was approved by Council in February 2015 and will be a material consideration in the determination of forthcoming planning applications.

http://www.stirling.gov.uk/__documents/temporary-uploads/economy,-planning-_and_-regulation/approved-ldp/sg-teith-house-jan-2015/ssg-masterplan-part-1.pdf

- An extensive amount of Supplementary Guidance is available on line to ensure that prospective applicants have access to all the available advice and guidance which should be taken account of in their application. A link to the Supplementary Guidance is part of the Planning Applications webpage and prospective applicants are encouraged to view this prior to submitting an application. http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/planning-and-the-environment/planning-and-building-standards/local-and-statutory-development-plans/local-development-plan/statutory-supplementary-guidance

Governance

Decision Making

The overall performance of the Planning service in 2015-16 compares well with the National average in a number of areas and in general, performance has matched previous years. Decision making times in relation to Major developments have improved from last year, whereas other areas have shown mixed results, with some areas of improvement and others where there has been a drop. These figures are highlighted in Appendix 1.
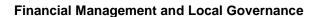
- Progress meetings are held every two weeks with the Development Management team to monitor progress of applications against timescales. Officers are required to report on reasons for delays on applications going over the 2 month determination period and this is discussed at catch up meetings with the DM Principal Planner/team leader.

- Due to the submission of a number of significant applications in the last year, steps were taken to procure specialist advice in the areas of flooding, transportation and minerals in order to provide much needed expertise in the assessment of these applications. Internal budgets were re-aligned to account for this. This ensured that the applications were appropriately assessed and a robust determination process carried out.

- The E-Planning system is highlighted both on the Council Homepage and the planning webpage. The system is fully embedded allowing submission and payment of applications on-line. Around 48% of applications were submitted online in 2015-16 which is 3% up from last year. Last year, the online planning system moved to an all IDOX based system allowing submitted plans to enter straight into the back office system without the need for drawings to be scanned before being inputted as was previously the case. The new system has also provided an improved customer experience for users of the online system when viewing submitted applications.

- The Local Development Plan's statutory Supplementary Guidance – Developer Contributions (para 5.3), states that local developments subject to S75a Obligations will now be subject to a 6 month timescale for completion following a minded to approve decision and 12 months for Major Developments. This is intended to reduce the number of future 'legacy' cases, the majority of which are as a result of a failure to conclude legal agreements.

  http://www.stirling.gov.uk/__documents/temporary-uploads/economy,-planning-_and_-regulation/sg-august-2014/sg16-developer-contributions_sep-2014.pdf

Management Structure

- Since 2014, the management and service structure within the Council has been radically re-shaped in order to better focus activities and priorities towards achieving the Council's Corporate objectives, one of which is achieving sustainable economic development. As part of this re-structure, the Planning service is now located within the Corporate Operations 'directorate' and specifically within the Infrastructure Delivery team, recognising the role planning plays in the delivery of infrastructure development which in turn can support economic growth. A benefit of this is that the planning process is now embedded into decision making on Council priorities with regard to major capital projects and initiatives.

- In the past 6 months, the Planning and Building Standards teams have been brought together and a new post of Planning and Building Standards Manager created. The creation of this new team recognises the strong relationship between Planning and Building Standards when dealing with new development. Benefits are already being seen from this closer working relationship in terms of the handling of dangerous buildings, Listed Building applications and the provision of advice and guidance. Going forward, it is anticipated that there are further benefits to be obtained from this closer working relationship in terms of the delivery of major Council infrastructure projects.

- Strong collaborative working with other Council Services continues to take place in both pre-application consultation/discussion on planning applications and in joint working on development frameworks and planning briefs. Recent examples have included an application for residential development on the site of a former mill, the South Stirling Gateway allocation and a major residential development in Cambusbarron.

- Joint working with Clackmannanshire Council on the provision of Archaeological advice for planning applications. This arrangement has now been extended into a formal agreement with North Lanarkshire Council to provide Archaeological advice on planning applications and development plan policy as required.

Financial Management and Local Governance

- Monthly budget outturns are produced by the finance team to enable Managers to monitor income and expenditure. Greater scrutiny is now taking place on budget outturns in order to predict likely levels of under or overspend with a view to managing budgets better.

- A holistic approach to budget management has recently been introduced whereby underspends (income above target) in one part of the planning service can be re-directed to another in order to finance specific projects or commissions.

- Fee income from planning applications has exceeded budget targets over the last two years, in part due to the increase in planning fees. This additional income has been used to help commission consultants to assist in a number of planning application assessments where current Council resources were not available.

- Planning administrators check the required application fee and contact applicants within 2 working days if the fee is incorrect.

- Bi-monthly meetings held with the Service accountant to ensure that budgets are on track and fee income is monitored.

- The Development Management and Planning and Policy teams have adequate staff and financial resources to undertake statutory requirements. Time recording is utilised to provide Management with a picture of how much time is being spent on particular areas of work.

Culture of Continuous Improvement

- In March, Elected Members underwent training on Local Review Body procedure, legislation and good practice. The event was facilitated by CMS, the Council's external solicitors.

- In 2015-16 officers from the planning service attended the following training courses/CPD :

    o Wind Power and Wildlife Symposium
    o Project Management Course
    o Flood Risk Management Conference
    o District Heating Seminar, Scottish Cities Alliance
    o Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) on the Firth of Forth

  Officers also attended the following Forums;
    o Local Authority Urban Design Forum
    o Development Plans Forum
    o Habitats Regulations Forum

- Personal Development Plan's (PDP's) are prepared as part of the PRD process and are aligned to continuous professional development training and staff are matched to training opportunities as they appear, in line with their PDP

- Benchmarking of the Planning service's activities takes place informally through attendance at the HOPS Development Management Sub Group and the Development Plans Sub Gr

3.   Supporting evidence

All sources of evidence used to compile Part 2 of this report are included as hyperlinks in the main body of the document. In addition to this, evidence was also drawn from the following sources:

- Stirling Council Key Priorities
  http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/council-and-government/council-information-performance-and-statistics/key-priorities

- Stirling Council Improvement Plan 2013-16
  http://www.stirling.gov.uk/   documents/chief-executive-office/performance- and -research/annual-reporting/stirling-council-improvement-plan-2013-2016final.pdf

- Stirling Council Local Development Plan and Main Issues Report
  http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/planning-and-the-environment/planning-and-building-standards/local-and-statutory-development-plans/local-development-plan

- Stirling Council Annual Housing Land Audit
  http://my.stirling.gov.uk/services/business-and-trade/planning-and-building-standards/local-and-statutory-development-plans/planning-monitoring/housing-land-audit/housing-land-audit-2015

- Stirling Council Statutory Supplementary Guidance
  http://www.stirling.gov.uk/services/business-and-trade/planning-and-building-standards/local-and-statutory-development-plans/local-development-plan/statutory-supplementary-guidance

- Stirling Council Development Management Charter
  Insert hyperlink

- Scottish Government Planning Authority Performance Statistics

4.   Service Improvements: 2016-2017

In the coming year we will:

- Progress the new Local Development Plan through the Proposed Plan stage in line with the approved Development Plan Scheme and look to continue engagement with young people in the plan making process.

- Seek to embed the 'Place Standard' approach in the review of Supplementary Guidance and encourage it's use generally amongst users of the planning system through practice and promotion.

- Continue to reduce the number of 'legacy' applications in the planning system by reviewing the case and instigating contact with the applicant with a view to bringing the application to a conclusion.

- Monitor S75a Obligations to ensure that outstanding cases are resolved within 6 months in line with new Supplementary Guidance/Policy.

- Continue to develop 'social media' by linking into the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts and introduce a 'planning blog' for the Proposed Plan stage.

- Continue dialogue with neighbouring authorities on benchmarking of the planning function in association with the Improvement Service and independently, in order to identify and learn from best practice and implement this where possible.

- Use experience from other authorities to amend the Scheme of Delegation to ensure that a greater number of applications are delegated to officers and thus improve the performance indicator relative to the number of applications determined which were delegated to officers

- Monitor feedback from the online customer survey of Development Management and adjust processes as necessary.

- Ensure all pre-application discussions are properly recorded in the Uniform system

Delivery of our Service Improvement Actions in 2015-16

Service Improvements	Complete?
Progress the new Local Development Plan through the Main Issues Report stage in line with the approved Development Plan Scheme.	Yes
Continue to reduce the number of 'legacy' applications in the planning system by reviewing the case and instigating contact with the applicant with a view to bringing the application to a conclusion Further progress has been made in the reduction of legacy cases but there are still a number outstanding. This remains an ongoing service improvement	In part
Monitor S75a Obligations to ensure that outstanding cases are resolved within 6 months in line with new Supplementary Guidance/Policy. There have been fewer S75 applications, however, those that have gone through have been processed more quickly.	Yes
Utilise 'social media' by linking into the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts and introduce a 'planning blog' in order ensure that our customers are more aware of current planning issues, consultations and significant planning applications in their area. Social media was used in the MIR consultation process. The 'planning blog' did not progress but is being considered for the Proposed Plan stage	In part
Use experience from other authorities to amend the Scheme of Delegation to ensure that a greater number of applications are delegated to officers and thus improve the performance indicator relative to the number of applications determined which were delegated to officers No progress	No
Carry out dialogue/benchmarking with other planning authorities in order to identify and learn from best practice. Benchmarking has taken place through the Improvement Service's Benchmarking Group and useful information exchanged on other authorities policies and procedures. The HOPS DM sub group has provided useful examples of good practice which have been utilised	Yes
Develop and publish a Development Management Charter.	Yes
Review and re-introduce an online customer survey of Development Management on all relevant correspondence.	Yes
Ensure all pre-application discussions are properly recorded in the Uniform system Some improvement but problems persist in inputting this information into the Uniform system	In part
Review purpose and content of annual Agents Forum in consultation with users and arrange meeting. Decisions on Agents Forum meeting pending as a result of Planning/Building Standards merger and potential for refocussing these meetings to cover both planning and building standards processes.	No

Continue to provide a formalised structure via the Personal Review and Development (PRD) process to ensure that staff have the appropriate training and skills to meet the requirements of a modernised planning system.	Yes

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
OFFICIAL STATISTICS 2015/16

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

	Total number of decisions	Average Time (weeks) 2015 - 2016	Average Time (weeks) 2014 - 2015
Major Developments	5	26.4	97.3
Local Developments (Non-Householder)	290	12.4	11.8
Local: Less than 2 months	162	6.8	6.6
Local: More than 2 months	128	19.5	20.6
Householder Developments	307	8.3	7.5
Local: Less than 2 months	244	6.5	6.1
Local: More than 2 months	63	15.3	14.7
Housing Developments	111	15.4	
Major	4	21.1	17.1
Local: Less than 2 months	51	7.3	6.7
Local: More than 2 months	60	22.3	23.9
Business & Industry	92	10.8	8.1
Major	-	-	259
Local: Less than 2 months	52	6.5	6.6
Local: More than 2 months	40	16.4	12.8
OTHER CONSENTS			

Listed bldg.+con.area consents	81	12.4	14.0
Advertisements	21	6.3	6.2
Hazardous substances consents	0	-	-
Other consents and certificates	32	4.4	6.0
EIA Developments	-	**-**	
Planning/Legal Agreement			
Major: Average Time	-	-	259
Local: Average Time	5	28.3	87.2
Local Reviews	6	18.4	18.6

Enforcement Activity	2015 -16	2014-15
Cases Taken Up	143	142
Breaches Identified		92
Cases Resolved	40	98
Notices Served	7	11
Reports to the Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Decision Making: Local Reviews and Appeals

Type	Total No of Decisions	Original Decision Upheld			
		2014-15		2014-15	
		No	%	No	%
Local Reviews	6	4	68	3	60
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	4	1	25	3	50

Context

In general, performance on planning application determination timescales has levelled off in 2015-16, with most areas showing a slight increase in the average number of weeks timescale. Although there is no clear reason for this, this slight drop in performance could be attributed to a combination of factors which saw the Development Management team handle a number of complex and high profile cases within this period, namely the Park of Keir, Airthrey Kerse and Murrayshall Quarry applications. All of these applications have subsequently progressed to Appeal. This, combined with staff resourcing issues at the start of this year, did result in the team being very stretched during this period and this has probably contributed to performance being down on last years figures.

Despite this, it is considered that the Development Management team continues to perform well despite the relatively small size of the team. The workload on officers (c157 applications per officer) is still considered to be comparatively high in comparison with other authorities having reference to the costing the planning service carried out by the Improvement Service carried out several years ago now.

WORKFORCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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

		DM	DP	Enforce-ment	Other
Managers	No. Posts	1	1		
	Vacant				
Main grade posts	No. Posts	4.65	3	2	2.6
	Vacant				
Technician	No. Posts		3		
	Vacant				
Office Support/Clerical	No. Posts	5.2			
	Vacant				
TOTAL		**16.2**	**7**	**2**	**2.6**

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

Staffing profile	Number
Under 30	1
30-39	8
40-49	8
50 and Over	4

Committees & site visits (3)	No. per year
Full Council committees	-
Planning Committees	10
Area Committees (where relevant)	N/A
Committee site visits	8
LRB (4)	8
LRB site visits	5

| Budgets | Budget | Costs | | Income (7) |
Planning Service		Direct (5)	Indirect (6)	
Development Management	385000	489231	151568	487,607
Development Planning	552740 Inc with	570400	16300	23800
Enforcement	DM above	-	-	-
Total				

Notes on Completion:

1 In relation to service structure, 1st tier post holders are Chief Executives, 2nd tier are Directors, 3rd tier are Heads of service and 4th tier are managers.

2 Managers are those people who are responsible for the operational management of a team/division. They are not necessarily line managers.

3 References to committees also include National Park Boards. Number of site visits are those cases where were visits carried out by committees/boards

4 This related to the number of meetings of the LRB, application numbers going to LRB are reported elsewhere.

5 Direct staff costs covers gross pay, including overtime, national insurance and the superannuation contribution. The appropriate proportion of the direct cost of any staff member within the planing authority concerned spending 30% or more of their time on planning should be included in costs irrespective of what department they are allocated to. (For example: Legal advice, Adminstration; Typing)
Exclude staff costs spending less than 30% of their time on
planning.

6 Indirect costs include all other costs attributable to determining planning applications. Examples (not exhaustive) are:

- Accommodation

- Computing Costs

- Stationery

- Office machinery/Equipment

- Telephone charges

- Print

- Advertising

- T&S

- Committees

- Elected Members' expenses
- The relevant apportionment of Support Service
costs

7   Income - include planning fees for applications and deemed applications. (exclude income from property and planning searches)