



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning



**PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
ANNUAL REPORT
2011-2012**

Front Cover: Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen. The new City Council headquarters building.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
 © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
 Aberdeen City Council - Licence No. 100023401 (2012)

The Ordnance Survey mapping within this publication is provided by Aberdeen City Council under licence from Ordnance Survey in order to fulfil its public function as a planning authority. Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey Copyright for advice where they wish to licence Ordnance Survey mapping for their own use.

contents	page
1 National Headline Indicators (NHIs)	4
2 Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service Open for business High quality development on the ground Certainty Efficient and effective decision-making Effective management structures Financial management and local governance Culture of continuous improvement	6
3 Supporting evidence National headline indicators Defining and measuring a high quality planning service Council service plans	14
4 Service improvements for 2012-13 Delivery of our service improvements actions 2011-12	16
5 Appendix one Planning performance framework official statistics	25
6 Appendix two Workforce and financial information	27

Vision

The vision for Aberdeen is to be a city which is vibrant, dynamic, forward looking, where people can expect high-quality services that meet their needs. This means making a visible difference to the quality of the city's urban and natural environment by promoting high quality development and providing an effective infrastructure to make us a world class strategic location.

To do this we must think strategically, facilitate development, engage positively with communities and the business sector and be open and transparent in our decision making. We also have a key role in delivering the vision for the City and Shire as expressed through regional plans and strategies. We are tasked with seeing that Aberdeen stays at the forefront of planning for the future.

1 National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key Outcomes	2011-2012
Development Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i> development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N) 	Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012 (0.083 years at 31 March 2012) DPS3 (Yes)
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective housing land: years supply effective housing land supply¹ housing approvals² effective employment land supply employment land take-up effective commercial floor space supply³ commercial floor space delivered 	4.4 years (31 March 2012) 8602 units 1326 units 125.3 ha 2.46 ha - 26,441 m ²
Development Management Project Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice⁴ number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan⁵ percentage planned timescales met⁶ Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> application approval rate delegation rate 	See note 1 100% 96.5% 90.9%
Decision-making timescales <p>Average number of weeks to decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> major developments local developments (non-householder) householder developments 	60.7 13.3 8.4
Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time since enforcement charter published/reviewed (months) Requirement: review every 2 years number of breaches identified/resolved 	Published October 2010 (Review due) 106/80

Notes:

1. Both housing land years and land supply are for the Aberdeen Housing Market Area. Figures not available for the City alone.
2. Calendar year 2011.
3. We do not have the figure for commercial floor space supply. This would require monitoring of all commercial lets available at any point in time - the figure is likely to change on a weekly basis and we consider that the value gained would not be worth the effort of doing it.
4. A system was not in place for accurately recording pre-application advice in 2011-12. A new procedure was initiated as of 1 April 2012 and the Council will be able to include this indicator in the next PPF report.
5. Early this year the Council introduced a policy of encouraging all applicants for Major developments to enter into a processing agreement and this figure will increase in future reports on the PPF.
6. Based on the timescale in the processing agreement which was the target date of reporting to Committee with a recommendation on the application.



2 Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

(superscript numbers reference documents in the supporting information section)

Open for Business

The Council has been one of the main participants in the Trinity Group: a high level partnership panel that provides a forum for public and private sector leaders to help facilitate the delivery of development in and around the City in a difficult financial climate. The Trinity Group won a Quality of Service Award in the 2012 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning^{2.1}.

The Service is also actively involved in the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF)^{2.2} and the Scottish Governments Modernisation Programme as one of the pilot local authorities leading the development of three of the strands of Planning Reform: The Next Steps, namely: multiple consents, supporting information/appraisals and processing agreements (as part of driving improved performance).

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP)^{2.4} - February 2012 - was the first local development plan in Scotland to be adopted following the modernisation of the planning system. It has a significant focus on delivery and clearly identifying potential infrastructure requirements, to provide the development industry with a level of certainty and communities with confidence that the infrastructure to support development will be provided. The ALDP was highly commended in the 2012 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning.

Development plan action programmes evidence of efforts and success in delivery

The Action Programme for the Aberdeen Local Development Plan^{2.6} was published in May 2012 and is an active document which will be updated quarterly.

These updates are being supported by development delivery days which have been arranged to allow developers an opportunity to discuss the progress of a site, identify any barriers to delivery at an early stage and meet with the relevant key agencies.

Management structure to facilitate applications meeting business social priorities and promote sustainable economic growth:

Use of project managers

A continuously updated Committee Schedule of more significant and major applications is used by the management team to set and monitor target Committee dates (including those that meet business/social priorities and promote economic growth).

Major applications and other selected significant applications are project managed using processing agreements^{2.14}.

Priority is given to training officers/members in development viability so that they have a good understanding of the challenges of delivering development in a challenging economic climate.

Work exchanges have been encouraged between the planning service and private sector housebuilders and development consultancies (including to Scotia Homes and Ryden) and these have helped to foster understanding and knowledge between the private and public sectors.

A Minor Applications Unit of planning technicians has been established which ensures efficient and speedy processing of minor applications whilst freeing up the time of chartered planning staff to focus on dealing with more significant and complex developments.

Single point of contact allocated for duration of application:

Appropriate level of authority to provide reliable advice

A case officer is established at very earliest point of contact (eg: at first pre-application discussion) and provides a single point of contact for duration of application (professional planners or specialists in householder applications in Minor Application Unit to provide appropriate level of professional expertise).

Project teams are formed (Masterplanning, DM, DP transportation contacts) at the initiation of discussions on some major applications and for major land releases through the Local Plan (Masterplanning process SPG^{2.7}).

Proportionate information requests

The service works in collaboration with Aberdeenshire to prepare Action Programmes and Housing^{1.2} and Employment^{1.3} Land Audits that streamline the type and amount of information requested from the development industry.

Wherever possible the information requirements, timescales and response times for submission of information are established at the pre-application stage and this is a mandatory part of all processing agreements.

Proportionate and reasonable expectations for contributions to infrastructure
The Council uses a Planning Obligations Service (shared with Aberdeenshire, Highland and Moray Councils) which negotiates planning obligations on the basis of an adopted SPG (the Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual). This helps to ensure consistent, independent and proportionate assessment of planning obligations.

Uniquely in Scotland the Council (in conjunction with Aberdeenshire, the regional transport partnership NESTRANS and the SDPA) has set up a Strategic Transport Fund^{2.10}. The aim is to ensure that all traffic generating development contributes proportionately and reasonably to identified key strategic transport interventions in the Aberdeen area. This has been adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the Strategic Development Plan.

The Council is work as part of the Trinity Group to look for alternative means of securing funding for essential infrastructure.

Policy in place on engagement standards

(meeting requests, telephone calls, early dates for meetings etc)

The Service sets these engagement standards in its published Development Management and Enforcement Charters^{2.12} aligned with Corporate standards for response times, complaints etc.



High quality development on the ground

Masterplan process and dedicated team

The Service has a dedicated team dealing with masterplanning design and conservation, including specialist urban design, architectural and conservation advice to developers, agents, applicants, DM colleagues and other Council services.

The Aberdeen Masterplanning Process has been adopted as SPG to the ALDP and is a guide to inform the preparation of Development Frameworks, Masterplans and Planning Briefs. It ensures all masterplans concentrate on design led planning and “place-making” with focus on delivery of national and local design objectives. Each includes a clearly defined scope of work consistent with the requirements of the ALDP and forms the basis of a robust public communication exercise with local communities/ stakeholders following the three guiding principles of “Context, Identity and Connection” and phased delivery to support and inform subsequent planning applications. Continual monitoring of design quality in delivery is carried out through submission of detailed masterplan phases and subsequently through the DM process.

A Conservation and Design specialist provides advice on listed buildings and conservation areas. Conservation Area Appraisals have recently been completed to establish conservation area management plans to assist in DM decision making. The Service maintains an up to date list and digital mapping references for listed buildings in the City.

Design Panel, local design awards

A local Design Review Panel (DRP)^{2.8} has been established similar to the national panel operated by AD&S. Run jointly with Aberdeenshire Council and Cairngorm National Park, the DRP is administered by the Council and meets once a month to assist applicants with challenging design issues early on in projects. This peer review supports improved quality of design and raises design awareness and expectations amongst designers in the North East. The outcomes of the DRP are a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Support training - staff and community interests

Masterplan and design training for staff has been undertaken for both officers and Members. Aberdeen is the only planning authority to have taken all the Scottish Government’s Improvement Service design training modules and participates in the annual AD&S Design Symposium. The service has a representative on the board of AD&S.

Demonstration of investment and benefits

Developer and community feedback has been largely positive about the improvements to design and engagement as part of the masterplanning process.

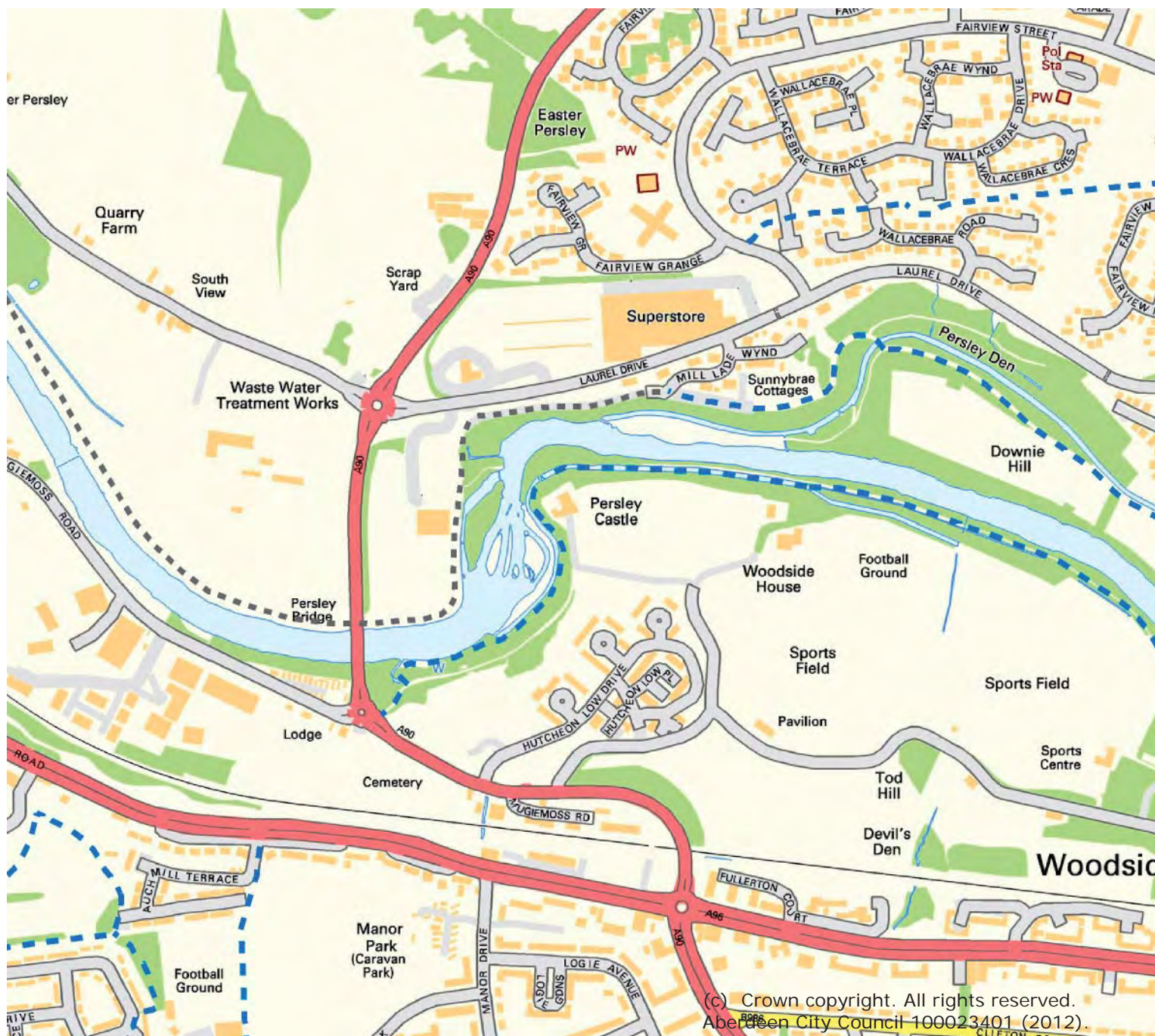
Development of GIS layers to assist in the processing of planning applications

A Green Space Network layer explains why specific areas are designated as part of the GSN and identifies opportunities for environmental or recreational enhancement. A Bat habitat layer uses data from NESBREC to assist in the application of Supplementary Guidance.

Based on an Open Space Audit, the Strategy has led to the adoption of open space standards for new development^{2.5} that take into account existing provision in the surrounding area.

Planning Obligation contributions used as match funding to contributions from NESTRANS, SUSTRANS and Aberdeen Greenspace in the annual programme of Core Path improvements.

An example of GIS mapping
showing Core Paths



Certainty

Protocols and concordats in place with other local authority services and agencies about reliability of advice and working timescales

Service Level Agreement with the Planning Obligations Service^{2.15} (recently reviewed).

Biannual liaison meetings in place with key agencies (SEPA and SNH)^{2.16}.

Monthly liaison meetings in place between DM Manager and Legal Manager - to manage and prioritise S75 Agreements

A structured and easy to navigate web based Development Management Portal^{2.18} based on a process map has been developed to consolidate internal guidance on the operation of the service's DM processes and procedures. This has proved to be an invaluable reference tool for officers and new employees and helps to ensure procedural consistency and clarity.

Clear advice on expected standards for application submissions

Processing agreements specify the plans and supporting information required with major applications.

Applications are assessed against a checklist by both professional planning officers and administration officers to ensure the completeness and quality of the information prior to validation^{2.13}.

Positive support for processing agreements

Processing Agreements encouraged and offered for all major applications based on a standard template and guidance note.

Robustness of development plan

Continuous staff exchange between DM and DP Teams Collaborative working between teams on drafting of Local Plan and supplementary planning guidance.

Business bodies and the community are fully engaged in the development plan process and in developing action programmes to help ensure development delivery.

Communications, engagement and customer service

Customer Service Excellence Award

The Development Management/ Masterplanning team is currently working towards achieving Customer Service Excellence (CSE)^{2.17} - a national standard that offers organisations the opportunity to work through a customer focussed improvement programme. It concentrates on outcomes, the service actually provided to the customer, and acts as a quality improvement tool. Central to the scheme are five key drivers of customer satisfaction - delivery, timeliness, professionalism, information and staff attitude.

The key benefits the Council will strive to achieve through CSE are - to drive service transformation through customer insight; improve customer satisfaction, improve performance, demonstrate continuous improvement and improve the organisational standing of the Council.

Customer surveys and local forums - range of interests - whole service, results inform action plans

As part of CSE Customer and Citizens Panel questionnaires have been sent out - the latter with a specific aim of engaging with hard to reach groups and Agents Focus Groups are being reconvened.

Training and mediation evenings have been held with the Community Council Forum and work is progressing on a Community Council Concordat and twice yearly joint meetings.

Electronic Communication

The Service offer an interactive online development plan (OLDP)

An interactive weekly and extant application list as well as all application related plans, supporting information, reports of handling and decision notices are available online.

Electronic applications via the Scottish E-Planning Portal are imported directly into the computerised planning application system (known as APP). In the last year 26.8 percent of all applications have been submitted online.

An E-Planning Project Manager has been appointed to oversee an Eservice programme^{2.19} of continuous improvement of information systems based on a revised business architecture for the entire service. An E-service Project Team meets regularly to pursue improvements to the service.



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

[Planning Application Search](#) > Planning and Sustainable Development

Planning Applications Search - Disclaimer

Welcome to the online Planning Applications Search facility.

This facility will allow you to:

- Search for plans, consultee responses, reports and other related documents;
- Make comment on the application

The planning application search allows you to search for and access the information for planning applications submitted since 1st April 2009. For applications submitted prior to 1st April 2009, we currently have very little information available online but through time more may become available.

This website uses cookies. By continuing to browse this website you are agreeing to our use of cookies. You may delete and block all cookies from this site, but parts of the site will no longer work. For more information please see our [privacy statement](#) and our [cookie information page](#).

By clicking on the 'Accept' button below, you are agreeing to abide by the terms of the [copyright notice, disclaimer and personal data statements and for Aberdeen City Council](#).

Efficient and effective decision-making

Team Plans^{3.2} and ^{3.3} and weekly team meetings, including the review of the Committee Schedule to determine application prioritisation applications Monthly line manager one-to-ones with all staff to discuss performance against a personal performance review and development plan.

Monthly DM Sub-Committee meetings. Applications subject to site visits determined on day of visit.

High level of delegation to officers allowed by Scheme of Delegation^{2.11}.

Effective management structures

Management and team structures capable of delivering planning/development priorities

The entire planning process is co-ordinated by a senior management team - led by the Head of Service and comprising managers from all the key functions (Transportation, Development Plan/Environmental Strategy, Development Management and Building Standards). This ensures a co-ordinated and joined up approach to the development life cycle from strategic planning stage through to implementation and occupation.

The Council operates a performance management framework^{3.1} informed by Scottish Government Priorities and national outcomes which are a "golden thread" informing the hierarchy of Council plans at all levels (Directorate, Service, Team and Personal Plans). The Service specific plans have been developed within to meet Council priorities including, most pertinently, promoting the city as a place to invest, live and work, providing an attractive streetscape, promoting biodiversity and nature conservation as well as transportation links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world.

Clear lines of management have been established in relation to reviewing caseload including a two way involvement in priority cases between more senior/junior colleagues.

Good support mechanism in place, mobile fluid workforce

Active encouragement and participation in staff exchange/secondment between teams to meet service priorities and provide learning and training opportunities.

Personal development plans are tailored to service needs.

Trainees have been taken on and supported and mentored through education to become Chartered Planners.

The Service is committed to having a highly trained, flexible workforce and ensures that resources are deployed where most required.

Workforce planning is an integral part of service planning.

Financial management and local governance

Resources aligned to priorities; demonstrate drawing on establishment survey

Masterplanning and pre-application consultation process are dovetailed to avoid any duplication (reflected in processing agreements).

Actively working as part of Scottish Government Modernisation programme to investigate joint Building Standards and DM Teams to deal with householder developments and align Roads and Planning Consent Processes.

Priority Based Budget exercise whereby the whole Council's budget is aligned to its priorities - carried out on an annual basis looking five years ahead. Workforce planning aligns human resources with workload. Regular reporting of financial position to the Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure (EP&I) Directorate committee.

Policy to ensure time and resources is proportionate to value added

Guidelines for prioritisation of work set by DM and Enforcement Charter.

A "live view" web based case officer application caseload monitoring system has been developed and assists work allocation and monitoring.

Minor application unit has created an efficient specialist team and freed up professional planners to focus on more significant and complex applications.

Scheme of delegation ensures only certain, potentially more difficult/controversial applications go to committee.

Structures in place to procure services/spend effectively

Shared service on developer contributions, Strategic Environmental Assessment and procurement with Aberdeenshire.

Council procurement rules and procedures are followed. Regular monitoring of budget (monthly meetings with finance team and reporting to EP&I committee).

Culture of continuous improvement

Plan for ongoing development of staff, management and elected members

Training for LRB and elected members on range of planning issues.

Focus on skill deficiency and Service delivery related training for staff.

PDPs tailored to service needs.

Participation of DM and DP managers in the Scottish Government's Leading for Outcomes masterclasses.

Customer Service Excellence.

Evidence of staff, members being well trained and given clear sense of priorities

Training for LRB and elected members
PDPs tailored to service needs

Regular full staff workshops which focus on service priorities, culture and continuous improvement - led by Head of Service.

Service and Team Plans developed with staff involvement and setting out clear priorities.

Regular one to one's held with staff and team meetings.

Previous improvement plan - evidence of delivery

Yes - Service Improvement Plan 2011-12 and full Service Review.



3 Supporting evidence

This report was compiled, drawing on evidence from the following sources.

1 National Headline Indicators

1.1 Aberdeen Local Development Plan

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=42278&SID=9484>

1.2 Housing Land Audit

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/planning/Draft_Housing_Land_Audit_2012.pdf

1.3 Employment Land Audit

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=42068&SID=18624>

1.4 Statistical Reports from the computerised planning application system (APP)

1.5 Enforcement Activity Report (see electronic attachment)

2 Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

2.1 Trinity Group

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/09/3576/8>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00401139.pdf>

2.2 ACSEF (Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future)

<http://www.acsef.co.uk/>

2.3 Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan

<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=423&SID=149>

2.4 Aberdeen Local Development Plan

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=42278&SID=9484>

2.5 ALDP Supplementary Guidance

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/local_development_plan/pla_aldp_supplementary_guides.asp

2.6 ALDP Action Programme

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=44370&SID=18949>

2.7 Masterplaning Process

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=21100&SID=2991>

2.8 Design Review Panel (including minutes)

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning_environment/planning/planning_sustainable_development/pla_design_review_panel.asp

2.9 Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=31772&sID=13446>

2.10 Strategic Transport Fund

<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=963&sID=538>

2.11 Scheme of Delegation

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=44274&sID=13903>

2.12 Development Management and Enforcement Charter

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=14995>

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=27250&sID=6823>

2.13 Validation Checklist for Planning Applications

(see electronic attachment)

2.14 Processing Agreements template and guidance note

(see electronic attachment)

2.15 Service Level Agreement

(see electronic attachment – example SLA with Planning Obligations Service)

2.16 Liaison Meetings with SEPA, SNH and Community Councils

(see electronic attachment)

2.17 Customer Service Excellence Award Documentation

(see electronic attachments)

2.18 Development Management Portal

(see electronic attachment)

2.19 E-service documentation

(see electronic documents)

3 Council Service Plans

3.1 Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Business Plan

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=15616>

3.2 Development Management Team Plan

(see electronic attachment)

3.3 Planning and Environmental Strategy Team Plan

(see electronic attachment)

3.4 Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure organogram

4 Service improvements: 2012-13

In the coming year we will:

- Actively pursue achieving Customer Service Excellence and ISO901 accreditation for the Development Management/Masterplanning Team (as a first step towards full Service-wide accreditation) in accordance with a project plan and a customer consultation plan including community council concordat, customer focus groups and satisfaction surveys in various formats
- In partnership with various stakeholders begin a programme of continuous improvement of the information systems (eService programme) based on a revised Business Architecture for the service with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness: overseen by a eService programme board and implemented via an eService project team
- Continue to develop a project management approach to application handling including aligning consenting processes (masterplanning, roads and building standards) and reducing supporting information requirements as a pilot authority in the Modernisation initiative
- Collaboratively develop and implement continuous improvement of web based planning service (including redesign of the planning pages, enabling e-payment and offering enhanced application tracking).
- Review and update our Development Management and Enforcement Charters
- Review Schemes of Delegation
- Review and update all protocols/service level agreements with other Aberdeen City Council services and key agencies to ensure reliability of advice and working timescales
- Monitor the infrastructure constraints to the delivery of development through the LDP Action Programme and, where appropriate, instigate Action Programme Delivery Meetings with developers and infrastructure providers to overcome barriers



Delivery of our service improvements actions in 2011-12

Committed improvements and actions	Action taken	Evidence	Complete?
Commitment 1: Speed of decision making			
Greater use of delegated powers: Complete review and implement measures	Election delayed implementation of this action. Currently awaiting result of consultation on amendments to planning system before progressing		No
Efficient checking in of applications: On-going monitoring	All applications are checked in with Planning Officers and Application Support Team. We act on opportunity for earlier requests to applicants for any further information required	Staff rota	On-going
Rationalise consultations with key agencies: With the agencies - SNH, SEPA, Transport Scotland, Historic Scotland, Scottish Water and ADS - we will develop 'handbook' agreements to agree respective roles, improved service levels and working arrangements, to avoid duplication and overlap between agencies and our internal consultees	Biannual meetings with Key Agencies have been initiated. Consultation has been rationalised to ensure that we only consult where necessary	Minutes of the meetings with key agencies	On-going
Householder applications - monitoring of speed: We closely monitor our speed of decisions on householder applications, examining carefully the need for further information, so that it is only requested where absolutely necessary and putting time restrictions on this	Now use processing agreements to specify supporting information		On-going

Advice on planning system: Continue to provide advice on-line and on-paper as new legislation (eg permitted development rights) comes into force. Revise and update advice as appropriate. Issue newsletter as appropriate	Links to the new householder permitted development rights and guidance are provided on our website. A web improvement team has been initiated involving ICT and planning staff to redesign and update website	Website contents	On-going
On-line applications: To accept on-line applications for non-householder applications (we already accepted householder applications) straight into APP	All applications now accepted on-line	26.8% of all applications submitted online in the last year	Yes
Commitment 2: Efficiency			
Neighbour notification	Action from last year - We have adjusted weekly list information, and details on web-site to reflect accurately last date for receipt of representations		
Recording pre-application discussions: Set up a system for recording pre-application discussions on a map based system (GIS)	We have set up this system and it is in use	No. of pre-application discussions recorded in system	Yes
Enforcement Action: Where it is expedient we will continue to take firm and swift action against unauthorised development	We have an up to date Enforcement Charter. We record enforcement action in APP	Number and type of action taken as recorded in record of Enforcement action	Yes, on-going
Local Development Plan (LDP) policies to provide clarity for applicants: Development Management continues to work closely with the Development Plan Team. The new Local Development Plan (LDP) will be considered by the full Council in April 2011 with a view to adoption in early 2012	LDP adopted February 2012. DM involvement in producing SG and this is close to being ratified by the Scottish Government	Adopted Local Development Plan and SG	Yes

Reduce delay - Planning gain and legal agreements: Include discussion of terms of legal agreement within Processing Agreement timetable. Review actions with legal colleagues in accordance with Circular	Early warning system in use and included in DM Portal Processing Agreement proforma is finalised and includes legal agreements	Time taken for legal agreements	Yes This is an area in need of further improvement
Sharing services: As part of our Service Review we are looking at the potential for sharing information and staff with Aberdeenshire. Share information about Masterplanning. Discuss implementing similar processes in order to provide consistency for developers. Continue to support ACSEF	We already share planning gain and Strategic Environmental Assessment staff with Aberdeenshire Council and support ACSEF through the Management Team		Yes
Pre-application processes: Co-ordinate Masterplanning and pre-application process for major applications, so as to avoid duplication of community consultation. Including Masterplanning within the Processing Agreement process	Processing agreement proforma has been finalised and this is available on the DM Portal We are engaging in Masterplanning. For major applications, prospective applicants have to carry out pre-application consultation with communities	Pre-application recording system. Processing agreement proforma and guidance	Yes, on-going
Development Management Charter: We will adopt the Development Management Charter	The Charter was adopted in August 2011	Minutes of the DMSC of 18 August 2011	Yes

Commitment 3: Transparency

<p>Explain clearly how decisions are reached: Continue to monitor feedback and ensure that information sought by interested parties is included in reports of handling</p>	<p>We have continued, as required by new legislation, 'Reports of Handling' for each planning application are now prepared and made available for public scrutiny on the web. These reports make clear to non-specialists the evaluation of proposals and the reason for coming to a decision or recommendation. They clearly reference any documentation and legislation. This has been extended to other types of application, such as for Listed Building or Advertisement Consent</p>		Yes
<p>Web publish planning applications and associated documents: Aim to web publish letters of representation when adequate resources become available</p>	<p>We are not required to web publish information from planning application forms and resources do not permit us to web publish letters of representation at present</p>		Keep under review
<p>Provide on-line application search: Provide map based search facility</p>	<p>Map based search has been provided for internal use</p>	<p>GIS system has application overlay</p>	No, not for public use
<p>Improve dialogue with Community Councils: Take current mediation to the next stage and identify appropriate actions</p>	<p>We have held further mediation meetings with Community Councils and elected members to try to develop better understanding</p>	<p>Minutes of meetings with Community Councils</p>	Yes

Commitment 4: Quality of Decisions and Environment

Training for staff: Develop staff by involvement in masterplanning, briefs and supplementary planning guidance	We provide our staff with design training on a regular basis. A number of staff are involved in masterplanning and have produced SG, which is about to be ratified		Yes, on-going
Have available in-house specialist advice on landscape, trees, conservation and historic buildings: Planning and Sustainable Development Service Review to consider this matter and whether services could be shared with other authorities or agencies	We have ensured that specialist advice on conservation and historic buildings and trees is available to us 'in-house'. We are investigating obtaining specialist landscape advice from SNH or by sharing services with Aberdeenshire. Monitoring has not identified any significant problems	Staff list includes, Senior Conservation Officer. Physical development on the ground	Yes, partially
Design Review Panel: Refer appropriate applications to Review Panel in accordance with agreed procedure and use reports as a material planning consideration	The Design Review Panel continues to provide expert peer advice on design of development proposals and reports are used as a material consideration	Minutes of the Design review Panel meetings and reports of handling	Yes
Up-to-date supplementary planning guidance: Continue to update, prepare and web-publish supplementary planning guidance (SPG) to provide more detailed advice on design and environmental issues.	We have updated, prepared and web-published supplementary planning guidance to provide more detailed advice on design and environmental issues. The LDP has been adopted along with SG. A further tranche of SG has been sent to Scottish Government for ratification	Adopted LDP and SG, interim SG	Yes

Training in design and legislation for Councillors: Further training requirements to be identified and carried out, including designing streets and ACSEF workshops	Training has been carried out on the planning system for new Councillors following election in May 2012		Yes, on-going
Engage in Masterplanning to help ensure well designed new development: Continue to use masterplanning approach to plan well designed new communities. Learn from experience and feed this back into future masterplanning exercises	We are actively engaging with developers in the Masterplanning process, including consultation with stakeholders from the key agencies and local communities	Masterplans; minutes of meetings	Yes, on-going
Commitment 5: Positive Relationships and Engagement			
Respond positively to requests for pre-application discussions: Continue to respond positively and to involve consultees as appropriate	We have responded positively to requests for pre-application discussions and have set up a system to record these. We have a proforma processing agreement	Pre-application discussion recording system; Use of processing agreements	Yes, on-going
Increase involvement of key agencies in pre-application discussions: Prioritise engagement to more significant applications in accordance with the respective agencies service standards. Enter into formal processing agreements, including with agencies - as arises			
Promote use of processing agreements: Experience of informal processing agreement - feedback to team and identify lessons learnt. Use processing agreements when appropriate			

Respond to feedback: We will actively continue to seek feedback from agents and applicants and act to make improvements based on the feedback we receive. In particular, we will seek to respond positively to issues raised and suggestions made in the focus groups. Will send out further customer satisfaction questionnaires and use feedback to inform next Improvement Plan	Initiated Customer Service Excellence Award process which includes a review of our current customer service feedback mechanisms and introducing new ways of workings		Not complete
Investigate complaints: Continue to respond to complaints; and to increase understanding of planning system through website information, and other aims in this Plan, in order to reduce complaints	We have investigated complaints and responded in accordance with Corporate guidelines		On-going
Engagement in plan processes and masterplanning: We will continue to engage widely with communities and developers in the local development plan and masterplanning processes	We have engaged widely with communities and developers in both the Local Development Plan process and the masterplanning process		On-going
Commitment 6: Commercial Awareness			
Work towards economic growth: Continuing to contribute towards the goals of ACSEF, including the aim to improve the efficiency of planning decision making			On-going
Develop commercial awareness in staff and Elected Members: Continue to disseminate information on development viability widely to staff. Continue training and placements with key agencies and private sector. Continue to contribute and actively take part in the forum			On-going

Overarching aims

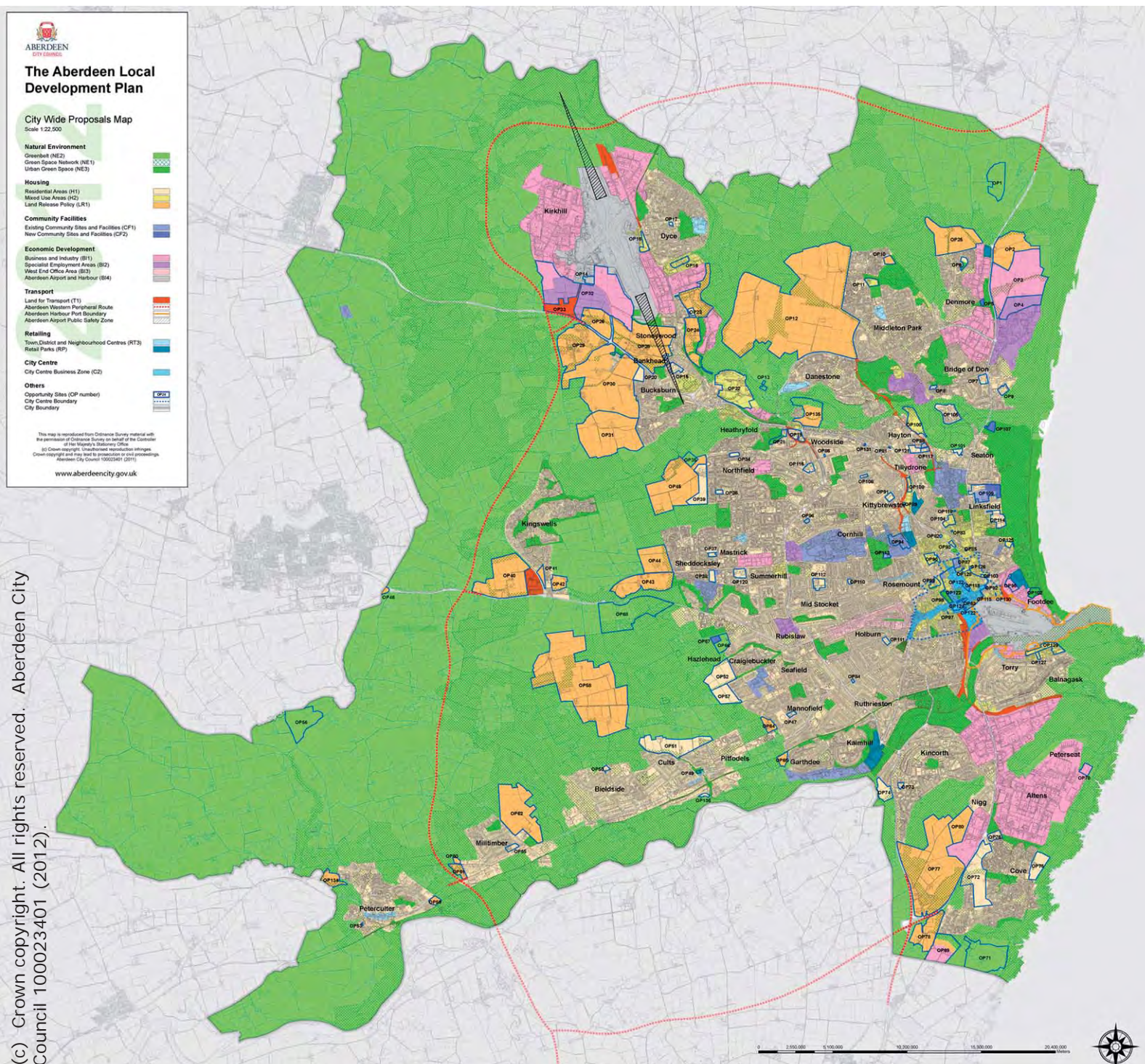
Development of staff through appraisal and appropriate training

Annual appraisals undertaken for staff. Training related to personal development plans. Large number of staff have taken part in Service Review 'brainstorming' workshop

Undertake appraisals. Provide and support training as appropriate

On-going

One of the Aberdeen local development plan (2012) maps



Appendix One

Planning Performance Framework Official Statistics

Decision-making timescales

		Average timescale (weeks)	
Category	Total number of decisions 2011-2012	2011-2012	2012-2013
Major Developments	15	60.7	
Local developments (non-householder)		6.8	
• Local: less than 2 months	224 (54.6%)		
• Local: more than 2 months	203 (45.4%)	21.1	
Householder developments		6.6	
• Local: less than 2 months	809 (87.7%)		
• Local: more than 2 months	113 (12.3%)	21.3	
Housing developments			
Major	5	71.2	
Local housing developments			
• Local: less than 2 months	16 (28.1%)	7.4	
• Local: more than 2 months	41 (71.9%)	35.3	
Business and industry			
Major			
Local business and industry			
• Local: less than 2 months	72 (71.3%)	6.6	
• Local: more than 2 months	29 (28.7%)	25.4	
EIA developments	0	-	
Other consents*	214	15.4	
Planning/legal agreements*	13	94.7	
Local reviews	11	7.8	

* 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 and relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 and 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			
		2011-2012		2012-2013	
		Number	%	Number	%
Local reviews	11	8	72.7		
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	10	4	40.0		

Enforcement activity

	2011-2012	2012-2013
Cases taken up	164	
Breaches identified	106	
Cases resolved	80	
Notices served*	7	
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

Enforcement Activity

Of the 164 cases taken up and investigated, 106 were identified as having planning related breaches warranting further action to resolve either through negotiation or formal enforcement action. The remaining 58 cases were, after investigation, identified to be 'permitted development', or works/activities established to be in compliance with a valid planning approval or permitted planning uses.

Appendix Two

Workforce and Financial Information

Electronic documents are attached to include snapshot information for both Workforce and Finance for the Development Management (including Application Support Team) and Planning and Environmental Strategy Teams

- a staff structure tree indicating vacancies
- a full list of posts, hours, names and vacancies in the service
- giving budget information on income and expenditure in the form of Local Financial Information spreadsheets (LFRs) for 2011/12 and 2012/13



Development Management Team
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Telephone: 01224 523470

Fax: 01224 523180

Email: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk