Planning and Building Standards Services

Planning Performance Framework
2011 - 2012

SOUTH
LANARKSHIRE
COUNCIL

Community and Enterprise
Resources

Contents

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to Performance Framework

1.1.1 Published in 2005, the White Paper 'Modernising the Planning System' identified the central role planning had to play in the delivery of a sustainable pattern of economic growth. It went on to describe how in order to achieve this objective a modern planning service needed to aim at being fit for purpose, efficient, inclusive and sustainable. This was followed by the comprehensive reform of the Scottish Planning System in 2006, based on the 2006 Planning Act. Thereafter, in March 2007 a consultation paper was published on 'Developing a New Planning Performance Framework'. The paper identified the need for a mix of measures and indicators that could provide a more comprehensive and balanced assessment of the way in which the planning function was performing.

1.1.2 Meanwhile, in October 2008, in order to ensure that the momentum generated by these changes was maintained the government published "Delivering Planning Reform". This required each Planning Authority to prepare a Planning Service Improvement Plan. The purpose of the plan was to identify areas for service improvement particularly aimed at making Planning fit for purpose, efficient, inclusive and sustainable. The Council prepared Improvement Plans for 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12.

1.1.3 Thereafter in September 2011 Audit Scotland published its report on 'Modernising the Planning System'. This specifically highlighted how, when measuring the performance of the planning system, it was important to go beyond simply measuring the throughput of planning applications against timescales and identify 'a more comprehensive performance measurement framework'.

1.1.4 In response the Heads of Planning Scotland together with the Scottish Government have developed a new framework which has built on the earlier work described above. It outlines a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures. These include reporting not only on how effective and efficient the Service is in processing applications but also on the way in which, through its operational methods and practises, it seeks to deliver a service which is accessible and can also provide its customers with certainty and consistency. The framework is also required to set out the actions to be taken by the Planning Service over the next year to improve the way in which it delivers its functions. This performance framework can be used to portray a more comprehensive picture of the way in which individual Planning Services are operating and simultaneously provide a more effective scorecard for the scrutiny and assessment of their performance.

1.2 The Planning Service

1.2.1 South Lanarkshire covers a diverse area. It sits to the east and south of Glasgow conurbation and covers approximately 1800 square kilometres. Its many communities include Royal Burghs, a New Town, market towns, weaving, mining and agricultural villages which are spread throughout an area extending from the Southern Uplands, through the Clyde Valley to the edge of the City of Glasgow. This area is home to just over 311, 000 people.

1.2.2 South Lanarkshire's Planning Service is now part of Community and Enterprise Resources. This follows a merger, in January 2012, of the two previously independent Resources. The Council's Planning Service's work is undertaken by 4 teams with a total of 45 staff. These staff are based within four teams with a Headquarters team and three Area Office teams.
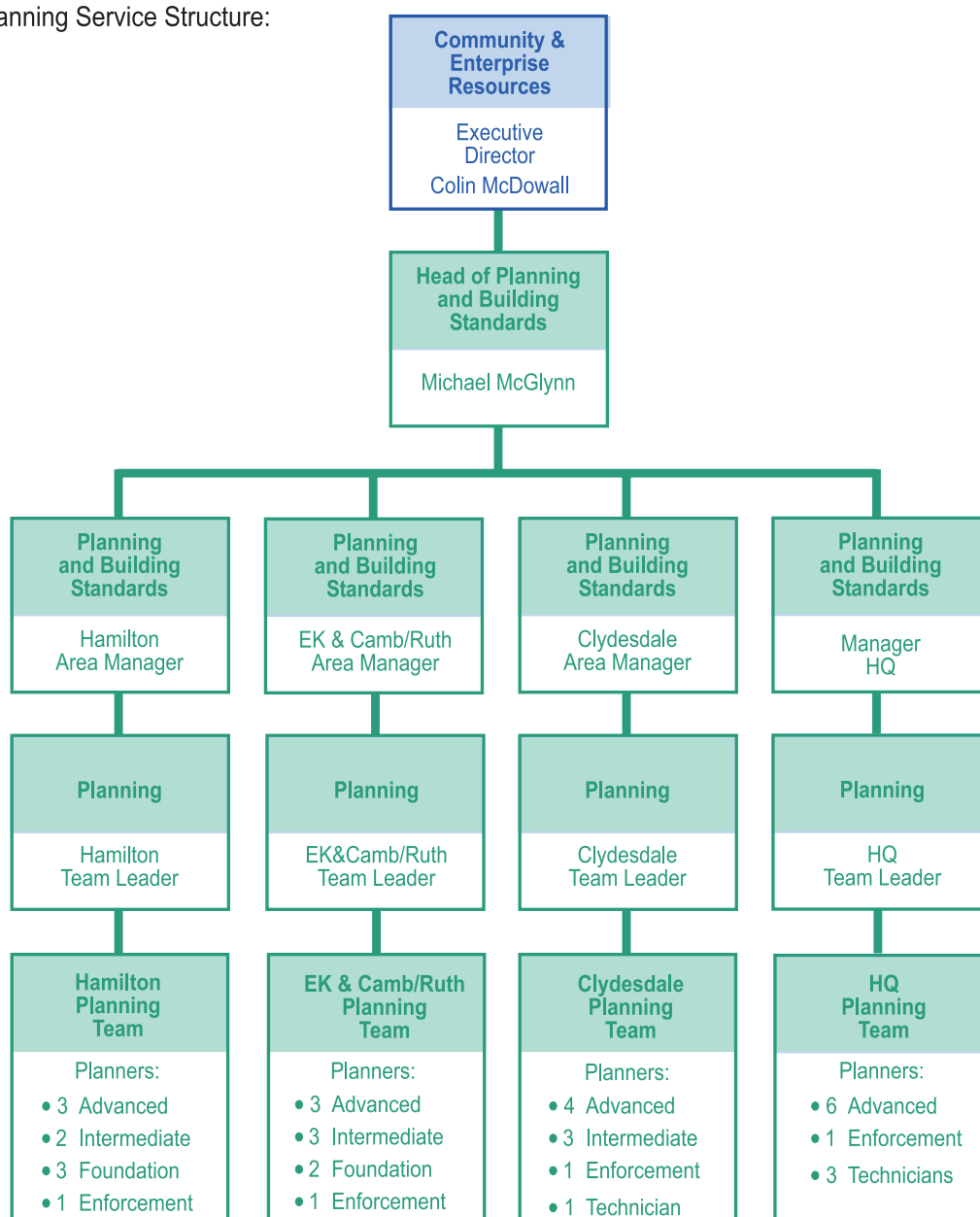
1.2.3   The HQ team is based in the Community and Enterprise Resources HQ building in Hamilton. It deals with Development Plan preparation, publishing and monitoring, and produces, where necessary, appropriate Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The HQ team also coordinates the Council's input to the preparation and monitoring of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), via the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Planning Authority as well as handling all mineral, waste and large scale windfarm applications.

1.2.4   The 3 other Area teams, located in Lanark, Hamilton and East Kilbride, handle the vast majority of all the planning applications submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and other associated legislation. This includes applications for planning permission, listed building consent, conservation consent, advertisement consent and certificates of lawful use. In addition to this work these teams also assist the HQ team in work on the Development Plan, SPGs and the SDP.

1.2.5   Planning Service Structure:

Community & Enterprise Resources
Executive Director Colin McDowall

Head of Planning and Building Standards
Michael McGlynn

Planning and Building Standards	Planning and Building Standards	Planning and Building Standards	Planning and Building Standards
Hamilton Area Manager	EK & Camb/Ruth Area Manager	Clydesdale Area Manager	Manager HQ

Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning
Hamilton Team Leader	EK&Camb/Ruth Team Leader	Clydesdale Team Leader	HQ Team Leader

Hamilton Planning Team	EK & Camb/Ruth Planning Team	Clydesdale Planning Team	HQ Planning Team
Planners: • 3 Advanced • 2 Intermediate • 3 Foundation • 1 Enforcement	Planners: • 3 Advanced • 3 Intermediate • 2 Foundation • 1 Enforcement	Planners: • 4 Advanced • 3 Intermediate • 1 Enforcement • 1 Technician	Planners: • 6 Advanced • 1 Enforcement • 3 Technicians

1.2.6   The Planning Service is combined and managed jointly with the Building Standards Service. The Area Offices also include the Council's Area Road's Teams. This allows the Council to deliver, through its decentralised structure, a co-ordinated service which can advise and guide applicants, developers and investors both on their proposals and on the application process, covering planning permission, building warrant and roads construction consent.

1.2.7   The role of the Council's Planning Service is to establish a land use framework that can be used to inform decisions made on planning applications and consequently, through the development management process, direct development to the right place at the right time and of the right quality. This requires a balance to be struck between encouraging and facilitating development whilst at the same time not only protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment but also acknowledging the views and concerns of the area's communities and established businesses. The effective and efficient application of these principles to the specific tasks the Service undertakes will play a critical role in creating the right conditions to deliver sustainable economic growth both in South Lanarkshire and Scotland.

1.2.8   In fulfilling these tasks the Service therefore is aware of the need to have up to date, clear and ambitious plans which can provide developers and investors with the guidance they need to identify investment proposals which can get through the development management process with the minimum of delay, but above all provide certainty and minimise risk. The Service is equally conscious of the need for its working practices and methods to be responsive to and conscious of the demands of all its customers, and for its staff to have the skills and knowledge required to deliver quality outcomes.

1.2.9   Accordingly when seeking to improve the way in which this work is done the Service has focused on the need to :-

a)   Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service;

b)   Raise the Quality and Effectiveness of our Business Processes; and

c)   Raise our Effectiveness in Assessing the Quality of Development Proposals.

These priorities reflected the values, objectives and improvement themes set out in previous Council Plans and are reflected in the current Resource and Service Plans. In particular, the need to be people focussed, pursue the efficient and effective use of resources, and improve the quality of the physical environment. Similarly in fulfilling these aims the Service can make changes to the way in which it operates that will deliver on the priority areas of certainty, consistency, communications and contactability.

1.2.10 The Service directly contributes to the work of the Resource through participation in achieving a number of key objectives, namely:

 • Set out and implement strategy for development and land use across the whole of the Council's area;

 • Provide services and infrastructure which help local communities to become more sustainable;

 • Promoting jobs, economic development and social inclusion;

 • Promoting sustainable development and reducing carbon emissions;

 • Embed governance and accountability; and

 • Promote performance management and improvement.

1.3 Planning Performance Framework

1.3.1 The key components of the PPF for 2011- 2012 are:

Part 1   National Headline Indicators such as age of Development Plan, number of housing approvals and decision making timescales for planning applications.

Part 2   The performance assessment across 8 areas of agreed activity that define and measure a high quality planning service. These activity areas cover the following topics, Open for Business, High Quality Development on the Ground, Certainty, Communications, Engagement and Customer Service, Efficient and Effective Decision Making, Effective Management Structures, Financial Management and Local Governance and Culture of Continuous Improvement.

Part 3   Supporting evidence and links to related reports and studies such as customer survey results, Resource and Service Plans and Planning Service Improvement Plan.

Part 4   Service improvements and timescales for the delivery of improvements. This is covered through the Planning Service's Improvement Plan.

Appendix I   Official Statistics – decision making timescales such as percentage of decisions made on major and householder planning applications and percentage of Planning/legal agreements progressed.

Appendix II   Workforce and Financial Information. As this is a first submission this is to be a snapshot of the Council's workforce and finance.

1.3.2 In terms of Part 2 of the PPF, the current actions, processes and procedures identified against each of the activities have been categorised in order to identify how they contribute towards delivering on the priority areas described in paragraph 1.2.9 above i.e. certainty, consistency, communications and contactability.

2. South Lanarkshire Council National Headline Indicators – Part 1

2.1   The table below provides performance figures for key indicators within both development management and development planning. Within development planning the performance of the Planning Service can be measured through the assessment of key outcomes such as the age of the local plan and the number of housing units that can be delivered. Within development management performance can be measured through the assessment of key indicators such as the average number of weeks to make a decision on a planning application and the rate of planning approval.

Key outcomes	2011-2012	2012-2013
Development Planning:		
• Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) *Requirement: less than 5 years*	**3**	
• Development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N)	**Y**	
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs:		
• Effective housing land: years supply	**5 years (4515 units of which 78.4% has consent)and 7 years (6731 units of which 72% has consent)**	
• Effective housing land supply	**These figures are for all tenure**	
• Housing approvals	**865 units**	
• Effective employment land supply	**156 ha** (does not include 74 ha at Poneil)	
• Employment land take-up	**7.8 ha**	
• Effective commercial floor space supply	**56712 m2** (live consents retail only)	
• Commercial floor space delivered	**2750m2** (take up retail only)	
Development Management: **Project Planning** • Percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice	**Not recorded 2011/12**	
• Number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan	**0**	
• Percentage planned timescales met	**N/A**	
Decision-making • Application approval rate	**97.9%**	
• Delegation rate	**89.1%**	
Decision making timescales: **Average number of weeks to decision:** • Major developments	**91.8 weeks**	
• Local developments (non-householder)	**16.1 weeks**	
• Householder developments	**8.2 weeks**	
Enforcement: • Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) *Requirement: review every 2 years*	**29 months**	
• Number of breaches identified / resolved	**410/375**	

The Service has not previously recorded the % of applications subject to pre-application discussion. This is being addressed and a system will be implemented in 2012/13 to record this information.

The application approval rate for 2011/12 was 97.9%. This figure is consistent with that of previous years and is the second highest figure in Scotland, as well as being well above the Scottish average of 92.2%.

In terms of decision-making timescales, these figures relate to the average time taken to determine applications in weeks. As these figures have not been recorded previously, it is difficult to comment on them as there are no other figures to compare them against. These figures act as an initial benchmark against which future performance can be assessed.

However, it is noted that the average time for determining householder applications is 8.2 weeks. This reflects the fact that 87.2% of householder applications are dealt with in 2 months.

The average figure of 16.1 weeks for determining local non-householder applications is significantly longer as it takes account of more complex applications, albeit they are relatively small-scale. In particular, the determination of significant numbers of small-scale wind turbine proposals is often delayed due to requirements for further information from the applicant, allied to the need for legal agreements.

3.   Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service – Part 2

3.1   Part 2 of the PPF provides an opportunity to demonstrate within 8 areas of activity how the Planning Service delivers a high quality planning service and how the quality of this service is measured. These activity areas cover:

- **Open for Business** – evidence to demonstrate the policies and procedures in place ensure the Planning Service is supportive of sustainable economic growth and achievements made;

- **High Quality Development on the Ground** - evidence to demonstrate that the policies and procedures in place ensure the delivery of high quality development;

- **Certainty** – evidence to demonstrate that a consistent service through advice, process, engagement and decision making is delivered;

- **Communications, Engagement and Customer Service** – evidence to demonstrate that a high quality customer service is provided;

- **Efficient and Effective Decision Making** – evidence to demonstrate that the decision making structures and processes deliver a good service;

- **Effective Management Structures** - evidence to demonstrate that management structures in place are fit for purpose;

- **Financial Management and Local Governance** – evidence to demonstrate that governance and financial management is effective; and

- **Culture of Continuous Improvement** – evidence to demonstrate that there is a culture for learning and improving.

3.2   In terms of Part 2 of the PPF, the current actions, processes and procedures identified against each of the activities have been categorised in order to identify how they contribute towards delivering on the priority areas described in paragraph 1.2.9 above i.e. certainty, consistency, communications and contactability.

Current Position

RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDING September 2012

Area of Activity: **Open for business**

Certainty

- Up to date adopted Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan
- Minerals Plan published and adopted in line with timetable set in the Development Plan Action Plan.
- Up to date adopted South Lanarkshire Local Plan
- Main Issues Report (MIR) on Local Development Plan published in line with the timetable set in the Development Plan Action Plan.
- Supplementary Guidance on Affordable Housing and Housing for Particular Needs approved
- Supplementary Guidance on Renewable Energy Development approved
- Supplementary Guidance on Residential Development and Design approved
- Proportion of applications approved 97.9%.
- Key Applications and those prioritised for action are recorded on the Service's Key Application List. List used by Case Officers, Team Leaders, Area Managers, Head of Service and Executive Director to review and monitor progress at meetings held on 3 week cycle.
- Applications for 3 out of 5 of the Local Plan's CGA sites, totalling 5,600 proposed houses, approved, subject to Section 75 agreements. Revision to infrastructure requirements, reflecting current economic climate, being progressed.
- Applications for 8 out of 15 and 6 out of 7 of the Local Plan's Masterplan and Development Framework sites respectively approved.
- Planning ensures that Building Standards, Environmental Services, Flood Prevention Unit and Roads input to pre-application discussions, assessment and determination process is co-ordinated and programmed.
- Liaison with Regeneration and Estates Services to facilitate effective delivery of economic priorities and regeneration objectives, in particular, Clyde Gateway.

Consistency

- Internal consultation process with Environmental Services reviewed in Spring/Summer 2012 to establish appropriate level of information required to support applications. Agreed protocol cascaded to Teams and Case Officers.
- Case Officers received training from Historic Scotland, Countryside and Greenspace and SNH with a view to improving capacity to assess appropriate level of supporting information required to cover Heritage/ Environment issues.
- Guidance available on pre-application consultation process.

Communications

- Applications with outstanding Section 75 agreements identified with view to identifying action needed by Council or applicant to progress.
- Coordinated working with other Council Services to ensure specific proposals are progressed timeously such as Schools Modernisation Programme

Contactability

- Decentralised office structure provides ready access to Planning advice across the Council area.
- Applicant advised of direct contact numbers/e-mail address of their dedicated case officer when application registered.
- Service Manager for each Area Office and HQ ensures responsive and effective decision making.

Current Position

RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDING September 2012

Area of Activity: **High Quality Development on the Ground**

Certainty

- Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design, produced in partnership with Council's Roads & Transportation Service, used to describe design standards and to provide basis for negotiating improvements to housing applications.

Consistency

- Training received by case officers from Historic Scotland on improving design quality.
- The Service's Development Management Planning Policies and Procedures Group's (DMPPG) review and discussion of cases includes design issues.

Communications

- Local Plan requires Community Growth Area applications to be the subject of masterplans, based on clearly defined 'Masterplan Development Frameworks' prepared by Council.
- Local Plan requires applications for Development Framework Sites to be subject of small scale masterplans, based on clearly defined key considerations set out in Local Plan.

Area of Activity: **Certainty**

Certainty

- Proportion of applications approved contrary to current Local Plan 1.5%.
- Proportion of applications approved in accordance with officer's recommendation 100%.
- Timescale for processing priority applications monitored through Key Application process.
- Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee regularly briefed on applications programmed for Committee.
- Early involvement of building standards and roads in discussion/assessment process provides advance indication of requirements for Building Warrant and Road Construction Consent process.

Consistency

- Protocol agreed with Environmental Services covering advice required by Planning Service to progress applications.
- Supplementary Guidance on Affordable Housing and Housing for Particular Needs approved.
- Supplementary Guidance on Renewable Energy Development approved.
- Supplementary Guidance on Residential Development and Design approved.

Current Position

RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDING September 2012

Area of Activity: **Communications, Engagement and Customer Service**

Certainty

- Complaints upheld by Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) – zero.

Consistency

- Complaints handled in accordance with approved Council procedure. Responses reviewed to establish if pattern or frequency of complaints indicates need for procedural changes.
- Online scheme of publications providing guidance on matters such as the decision making process, pre-application consultation and Residential Design Guide.

Communications

- Enforcement Charter and Development Management Charter setting out process, contact points and response standards in place.
- Enforcement Charter Crystal Marked.
- Customer Forum held with agents on an annual basis.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey sent out with each decision and results collated annually.
- Proportion of agents/applicants identifying the overall level of service provided by Planning as 'excellent or good' was over 90%
- Mystery Shopper exercise undertaken annually to evaluate council response to inquiries.
- Outcomes from Forum and Surveys feed into Planning Service Improvement Plan
- Preparatory work and consultation and engagement work completed for preparation of MIR.
- Consultation forums established and events held to produce Consultation and Engagement report. Included events specifically designed for schoolchildren and seniors.
- Online submission of applications through National Planning Portal (now over 40%),
- Online submission of appeals through National Planning Portal,
- Online submission of planning fees available
- Implementation of e-consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees,
- Online submission of representations through Council's Planning Portal
- Online enforcement register
- Electronic Data and Record Management (EDRM) system provide means of ensuring that all documents held by Service can be immediately viewed at any planning office across the Council area.

Contactability

- Proportion of applications submitted electronically currently 43%.
- Planning Portal usage audited and number of visits currently averages 6,200 per month.
- Duty Officer system ensures that a professional member of staff is always available to advise customers at each office.
- Decentralised office structure provides ready access to Planning advice across the Council area.
- Applicant advised of direct contact numbers/e-mail address of their dedicated case officer when application registered.

Current Position

RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDING September 2012

Area of Activity: **Efficient and Effective Decision Making**

Certainty

- 4 week Committee cycle for Planning Committee established and diarised.
- 8 week Committee cycle for Area Committees established and diarised
- Deadlines set for checking and submission of reports to the committees and for reviewing with Chair/Vice Chair.
- Scheme of Delegation reviewed and updated May 2012.
- The managers' meeting and 1-2-1 meetings with managers and Head of Service, held on 3 week cycle, review position regarding applications going forward for approval either via Committees or under delegated powers.
- Journey mapping of delayed applications produced on monthly basis. Used to identify if organisational reasons for delays.
- Protocols with Environmental Services and Roads reviewed within past 6 months to improve effectiveness and efficiency of response process.

Consistency

- Prior to issue Building Warrant approvals and Roads Construction Consents cross checked against Planning Permissions to identify discrepancies.
- Licensing applications cross checked against Planning Permissions to ensure consistency.

Communications

- Applications with outstanding Section 75 agreements identified with view to identifying action needed by Council or applicant to progress.
- Electronic filing and work flow of all documents associated with applications allows immediate and direct access to this information across the entire service.
- Council approved guidance available on the planning permission 'Decision Making Process'.

Current Position

RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDING September 2012

Area of Activity: **Effective Management Structures**

Certainty

- System of 1-2-1 meetings between Executive Director/Head of Service/Managers/Team Leaders/Case Officers – all held on 3 week cycles, used to review and programme work loads.
- Heads of Service meetings and Mangers meetings, also held on 3 week cycle, jointly review work loads and identify where resources may need to be directed.

Consistency

- Annual Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) for all members of staff used to review skills and identify training or development needs. Progress reviewed after 6 months.
- Service has worked with Housing, Roads and Environmental Services to improve application procedures.
- Schools Modernisation Programme progressed with Education Service through Joint Project Team.
- Affordable Housing, Residential Design Guide and Renewable Energy SPGs developed in co-operation with Housing, Roads, Environmental Services, Estates and Legal Services.

Communications

- Regular liaison meetings held with Countryside and Greenspace to review and monitor joint areas of interest/ activities.
- Regular liaison meetings held with Support Services to monitor work loads and priorities.
- Liaise with the Central Scotland Wind Turbine Forum and Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) Forum
- Joint training events held with neighbouring Authorities.
- Planning Service works with other Authorities through the Strategic Development Planning Authority, West of Scotland Archaeology Service, Clyde Gateway and the Green Network Partnership.

Area of Activity: **Financial Management and Local Governance**

Certainty

- Revenues Budgets reviewed with Finance via 1-2-1 meetings with Head of Service and Managers on a monthly basis.
- Budget and financial resources is reviewed at all Heads of Service and Managers meetings.
- Allocation of resources to meet priorities and demands on Service reviewed by Head of Service and mangers through 1-2-1 meetings and management meetings.
- Service representative attends Resource Procurement Meetings to review current activities and practice.

Current Position

RETURN FOR PERIOD ENDING September 2012

Area of Activity: **Culture of Continuous Improvement**

Certainty

- Elected member training on role of Planning held in June 2012.
- Council/Resource/Service Plans identify and programme the Council priorities. Plans cascaded to staff via managers and Team Meetings.
- Development Management Policy and Procedures Group reviews the robustness, relevance and use of the Service's processes and procedures.
- Best Value Working Group ensures Planning Services processes and procedures are efficient and effective.
- Learning and Development Board which ensures staff receive appropriate training when necessary and stay abreast of good practice.

Consistency

- PDRs identify and monitor progress on training and development needed to ensure each member of staff can deliver the Service's priorities.
- Service wide training held on conservation and listed buildings, biodiversity. Seminars/workshops held on development economics, with District Valuer and Homes for Scotland.
- Planning Service completed Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) exercise in 2011. Feedback from customer surveys, Customers Forum and PSIF exercise used to develop Service Improvement Plan. Improvement Plan for 2011/12 identified 17 actions. 11 completed and 6 carried forward to 2012/13 Plan.

Communications

- Employee Audit and suggestion scheme allows employees to identify options for improving delivery of the Council's services.
- Customer Forum held with agents on an annual basis used to secure feedback on potential Service improvements.
- Response to Customer Satisfaction Survey and Mystery Shopper exercise used to identify potential Service improvements.
- Lean Thinking exercises undertaken with staff in June 2007, June 2010 and December 2010 identified 64 actions - 56 are now complete.

4. Supporting Evidence – Part 3

4.1 This section lists the evidence to support the actions and activities set out in the PPF.

Customer Survey Results	Results obtained from applicants, agents and objectors are collated on an annuals basis and the outcomes used to identify actions in the Service Plans and the Planning Service Improvement Plan.
Customer Forum Results	Feedback from the informal sessions held with agents and architects is used to identify actions in the Service Plans and the Planning Service Improvement Plan .
Employee Audit and Employee Audit Action Plan	Feedback used to identify actions in the Service Plans and the Planning Service Improvement Plan.
Lean Thinking Exercise Actions	Lean thinking Events held in June 2007, June 2010 and December 2010. These focussed on the planning application process. Actions identified have been incorporated, where appropriate, into Service Plans and the Planning Service Improvement Plan
Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) Action Plan	The Planning and Building Standards Service piloted the use of the PSIF and it has been used to guide the preparation of Service Plans and the Planning Service Improvement Plan .
Resource and Service Plan	Used to set out the Resource and the Service's actions aimed at delivering the Council's objectives.
Planning Service Improvement Plan	Used to identify areas for service improvement and how best they can be tackled, on annual basis.
Audit Scotland:- Modernising the Planning System	Audit Scotland's report assessed whether the recent reform and modernisation of the planning system had made it more economic, efficient and effective. The report identified a number of actions. These provided a basis for considering actions to be included in the Resource and Service Plans and the Planning Service Improvement Plan.
Planning Service Scheme of Publications	Used to guide applicants, agents and objectors on approved policies and procedures. Reviewed and updated when necessary.

5.   Service Improvements 2012/13 – Part 4

Service Improvements 2012/13

5.1.1   The tables below detail the key commitments and actions for the coming year for future service improvements within Planning. The headings at the top of these tables also highlight how these commitments and actions link to and support the Council's vision, values, objectives and improvement themes as set out within the Council's Plan which are embedded within the Resource and Service Plans. Furthermore the tables also demonstrate within the 'What will be achieved' box how the Service will deliver on the priority areas of certainty, consistency, communications and contactability.

Council Value: People Focused

Corporate/Resource Action: Demonstrating governance and accountability

Improvement Area	Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service				
What will we do?	Why will we do it?	When will we do it?	What will it achieve?	How will we monitor and assess progress?
Continue to hold the Local Forum with agents to provide service users with an opportunity to scrutinise the quality of the Planning Service.	To provide the Service with an opportunity to directly engage with customers on a regular basis and identify potential ways of responding to their concerns.	Ongoing – and on a yearly basis.	Regular discussions regarding the needs and concerns of customers and an opportunity to identify responsive and customer focussed business process. (Communications)	Regular appraisal and review of the actions taken in response to the issues raised at Forums by the Planning and Building Standards Managers (PBSMs); and a review of the changes generated by the Forums.
Continue to survey applicants, objectors and consultees.	To evaluate and test their experience of the planning application process and to identify ways of improving the process.	Ongoing – and on a yearly basis.	Provide systematic feedback on the performance of the planning application process from those directly involved. (Communications)	Regular appraisal and review of the actions taken in response to the issues raised in the survey by the PBSMs and the Development Management Policies and Procedures Group (DMPPG); and a review of the changes generated.
Implement new complaints procedure in line with Scottish Public Services Ombudsman requirements.	To ensure that the Council complaints procedure is aligned with the requirements of the SPSO.	By December 2012	It will be a less complex and therefore more concise system for responding to customer complaints. (Certainty)	PBSM will review the response to complaints and the outcome of referrals to the SPSO.
Undertake member training on Planning Local Review Body (PLRB).	To provide Body members with an understanding of the operation of the review process and the roles played by the participants.	By November 2012	Clearer understanding of the Review process and the correct and proper scrutiny of cases by the Body. (Certainty)	Council's Legal, Administration and Planning services will assess the conduct of reviews and the decisions.

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5.   Service Improvements 2012/13 – Part 4

Council Value: Accountable, Effective and Efficient

Corporate/Resource Action: Pursuing the efficient and effective use of resources and managing and improving performance

Improvement Area	Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service			
What will we do?	Why will we do it?	When will we do it?	What will it achieve?	How will we monitor and assess progress?
Review the Enforcement Charter	To ensure that the content remains valid and relevant and that the standards set remain appropriate.	Complete January 2013	It will ensure customers can access a document that correctly describes the service standards we have set and the role of the Service in undertaking enforcement activities. (Certainty)	PBSMs to require the Enforcement Group to review Charter, in accordance with a timetable to be agreed with the managers.
Provide planning advice - via the web – on validation of applications.	To improve the content and quality of the submissions received from applicants.	Prepare brief for discussion with IT by October 2012. Agree content and timetable for implementation with IT February 2013.	It will provide applicants with a clear guide to submission requirements and the necessary criteria that apply to the process. (Consistency)	PBSMs to make a sub group of the DMPPG responsible for assessing options and implementing with Support Services.
Assess IT based options for a system that will allow applicants to be regularly updated on their application's progress.	To improve the quality of the service provided to applicants.	By December 2012	It will provide customers with a better understanding of the current position with their applications. (Communications)	Via regular meeting with PBSMs to make a sub group of the DMPPG responsible for assessing options and implementing with Support Services.
Review planning guidance/ advice on Council web Site, with particular regard to the criteria set by the Pendleton Report	To identify where the guidance/advice presented does not accord with the detailed requirements of the Pendleton Report.	By December 2012	Guidance /advice will be presented on the web site that is in accord with the requirements set by Pendleton. (Communications)	PBSMs to agree a timetable for implementation with IT and monitor progress.
Introduce an interactive on-line link to the Local Development Plan.	To provide a map based link to Local Development Plan Policies	By January 2013	It will provide customers with a more immediate and accessible link to Planning Policies (Communications)	PBSMs to agree a timetable for implementation with IT and monitor progress.

5.   Service Improvements 2012/13 – Part 4

Council Value: Accountable, Effective and Efficient

Corporate/Resource Action: Pursuing the efficient and effective use of resources and managing and improving performance

Improvement Area	Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service				
	What will we do?	Why will we do it?	When will we do it?	What will it achieve?	How will we monitor and assess progress?
Continue to develop and review the technical performance of the EDRM system.	To ensure that the system is fit for purpose.	Ongoing.	A system that is responsive to the needs of management, case officers and customers. (Communications)	EDRM project team to regularly update PBSMs on progress.
Create a plan based system for recording Enforcement Activity.	To provide a record of the cases referred to Monitoring and Enforcement Officers (MEOs) on Maplook.	Commence input of information: September 2012. Complete: December 2012.	It will provide a readily accessible record of the cases investigated by MEOs, together with a record of notices served and the outcome of investigations. It will allow officers to respond more effectively and efficiently to enforcement enquiries. (Communications)	PBSMs to make the Enforcement Forum responsible for developing and installing the system, in co-operation with the HQ team - in accordance with a timetable to be agreed with the managers.
Undertake a networking event for staff.	To ensure staff views are considered when the effectiveness and efficiency of business processes and procedures are reviewed and revised	By March 2013.	It provides the PBSMs with feedback on the way staff are carrying out our business, and an opportunity to use their experience to develop better processes. (Contactability)	PBSMs to agree a timetable for preparation and holding of the event. PBSMs to monitor the implementation of actions identified at event.
Record and process enforcement inquiries and cases through the electronic development management (DM) system.	To ensure that these cases are effectively and efficiently recorded and progressed.	By December 2012.	It allows cases to be more rigorously monitored, standard documentation to be produced electronically and the planning portal to be populated directly from the DM system. (Communications)	PBSMs to make the Enforcement Forum responsible for developing and installing the system and procedures in co-operation with IT services.

5.   Service Improvements 2012/13 – Part 4

Council Value: Accountable, Effective and Efficient

Corporate/Resource Action: Pursuing the efficient and effective use of resources and managing and improving performance

Improvement Area	Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service			
What will we do?	Why will we do it?	When will we do it?	What will it achieve?	How will we monitor and assess progress?
Ensure that Performance and Development Review (PDR) Process includes a skills audit of planning staff and an assessment of skills needs.	To clearly establish specific areas in which training is needed.	By July 2012.	A detailed assessment of the more technical areas in which training is needed. (Consistency)	PBSMs to review PDR outcomes and develop a programme of training
Introduce electronic (e)-consultation for all Community Councils.	To allow for more direct exchange of information on applications.	By July 2012.	A more robust and efficient consultation process with Community Councils. (Communications)	PBSMs to review implementation with Corporate and IT.
Establish protocol for recording the purpose and pursuing the outcome of pre-application discussions.	To ensure that information needed to assist in the preparation and subsequent assessment of development proposals is recorded.	By February 2012.	A more systematic regime for case officers to follow up on the preparation of applications, and that they are then accompanied by the required information. (Certainty)	PBSMs to monitor the progress of the work via the DMPPG.

5.   Service Improvements 2012/13 – Part 4

Council Value: Sustainable Development

Corporate/Resource Action: Improving the quality of the physical environment and Support the local economy by providing the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability

Improvement Area	Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service				
What will we do?	Why will we do it?	When will we do it?	What will it achieve?		How will we monitor and assess progress?
Continue joint training on habitats, landscape and the with Council's Countryside and Greening Service.	To improve case officers' knowledge and understanding of these issues.	Ongoing	Will fill the knowledge gap left by the withdrawal of SNH from some aspects of planning work. (Consistency)		PBSMs to agree programme and monitor implementation
Continue with training available thorough Historic Scotland on historic buildings and environment.	To improve case officers' knowledge and understanding of these issues	By November 2012	Will fill the knowledge gap left by the withdrawal of HS from some aspects of planning work. (Consistency)		PBSMs to agree programme and monitor implementation
Assess alternative options for funding of infrastructure works.	To assess potential ways of unlocking stalled development sites.	By February 2012	Will establish if there are reasonable/practical ways of funding essential infrastructure. (Communications)		Head of Service and PBSMs to assess and review methods currently being used/proposed.
Provide training on development economics focussing on valuation/ development appraisals .	To improve case officers' knowledge and understanding of these issues.	By July 2012	It will improve planners capacity to understand the importance of the financial background to proposals and the implications it has for the development. (Communications)		PBSMs to agree programme and monitor implementation
Introduce protocols to cover guidance provided on roads and flooding issues associated with applications.	To clarify the respective roles of housing, estates planning flooding unit and roads in respect of the flood and traffic issues raised by applications.	By December 2012	It will allow both planning and roads officers to assess these issues more proportionately and consistently. (Certainty)		PBSMs to agree programme for implementation

5.   Service Improvements 2012/13 – Part 4

Council Value: Sustainable Development

Corporate/Resource Action: Improving the quality of the physical environment and Support the local economy by providing the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability

Improvement Area	Improve the user's experience and increase their understanding of the Planning Service			
What will we do?	Why will we do it?	When will we do it?	What will it achieve?	How will we monitor and assess progress?
Provide practice notes and guidance on the implementation of the Council's affordable housing policy.	To clarify the respective roles of housing, estates planning and legal in respect of affordable housing issues.	By December 2012.	It will allow planning and housing officers to implement the Council policy consistently and proportionately. (Certainty)	PBSMs to agree programme for implementation
Improve awareness of the use and relevance of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.	To improve Service's knowledge and understanding of these issues.	By December 2012.	It will improve planners understanding of the relevance and importance of the SEA process. (Certainty)	PBSMs to agree programme for implementation
Publish Guidance on: 1) Developers Contributions 2) Rural Design Guide	To ensure that planning applications are assessed within a development plan framework and that the statutory planning system promotes sustainable development.	1) By February 2013. 2) By December 2012.	They will provide guidance to developers on how to ensure that these matters are properly addressed in their applications. (Communications)	PBSMs to monitor the progress of the work via the DMPPG.

5.2 Delivery of Planning Service Improvement Plan Actions 2011/12 – Part 4

5.2.1 This section of the PPF sets out the commitments made on the previous year's service plan and the specific actions carried out in relation to these commitments as well as the results of these actions.

5.2.2 The plan for 2011/12 identified 17 separate actions. Of this total 7 were aimed at raising the users experience and understanding of the planning service, 7 at raising the quality and effectiveness of our business processes with the remaining 3 being directed at raising our effectiveness in assessing the quality of development proposals.

5.2.3 Of this total 11 were completed over the year. One other was partially completed. The training sessions with Historic Scotland, the Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service (covering Biodiversity) and the Bat Conservation Trust were of particular value. These improved the Service's knowledge and awareness of a number of more technical and specialist areas which have a significant role to play in the consideration and assessment of proposals. The knowledge gained will give staff more confidence in discussing and where necessary challenging the views of developers or objectors when processing and determining applications which raise these issues.

5.2.4 In addition, the publication of the Council's Development Management Charter has established a framework against which the Service can assess its decision making processes and ensure that they are transparent and accessible to its customers. The work which the service continues to do in order to seek and survey the views of its external customers, particularly applicants, objectors and agents, also contributes to this process. The results have shown that over 90% of those returning questionnaires rated the service as good or excellent. Nevertheless, the survey has also helped identify areas in which some improvements are possible – particularly through keeping applicants more regularly informed on progress with their applications and the more widespread use of IT to communicate with customers.

5.2.5 Progress on one of the outstanding actions – aimed at providing planning advice to householders - was partially dependant on the new Permitted Development Regulations for Householders being published. These were published in January 2012 and were accompanied by comprehensive guidance from the Scottish Government (SG) itself. Consequently, after reviewing the information on the Council's web site the decision was made to direct customers to the SG advice rather than provide separate Council guidance. Significant improvements were, however, made to the style of the plans sent out with neighbour notifications, in order to make them clearer to customers.

5.2.6 The Rural Design Guide and guidance on Developers' Contributions were not published in 2011/12. The former, however, is now at the final draft stage and will be used to provide guidance for case officers on the assessment of rural developments. The latter is nearing completion with publication being likely in October 2012.

5.2.7 The introduction of a plan based system for recording enforcement activity continued to present issues for the Council's IT systems. A revised specification has however been prepared and it is hoped that this will be capable of implementation later this year. Similarly the introduction of an interactive on-line link to the Local Development Plan has encountered IT issues. However, a test version of the system has been evaluated, but will require further IT development before it can be fully deployed.

5.2.8 The Service's Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRM) was also the focus of work with IT Services and Support Services aimed at improving its operational capacity and widening its use. This saw enhancements to the system that allowed for the on-line submission of comments by third parties, the automatic generation of formal reasons for decisions when consents were issued, and significant improvements to the search facility, making document searches faster and more reliable. The EDRM system continues to provide opportunities for identifying and improving ways of improving service delivery.

Planning Performance Framework Appendix I

South Lanarkshire Council Official Statistics

Decision making timescales

Category	Total number of decisions 2011-2012	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2011-2012	2012-2013
Major developments	23	91.8	
Local developments (non-householder) • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months	(325) 49.1% (337) 50.9%	6.6 25.3	
Householder developments • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months	(676) 87.2% (99) 12.8%	6.1 23.1	
Housing • Major housing developments • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months	10 (91) 43.8% (117) 56.3%	119.6 6.7 31.9	
Business and industry • Major business and industry • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months	2 (69) 54.8% (57) 45.2%	48.1 6.7 21.5	
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) developments	0	-	
Other consents*	132	10.0	
Planning/legal agreements**	17	150.4	
Local reviews	8	8.6	

* 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: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld	
		2011-2012	2012-2013
Local reviews	12	(3) 25%	
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	11	(5) 45%	

Enforcement activity

Type	2011-2012	2012-2013
Cases taken up	391	
Breaches identified	410	
Cases resolved	375	
Notices served***	13	
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	3	
Prosecutions	2	

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

Context

In 2011/12, South Lanarkshire Council experienced a continuing reduction in the number of applications received and determined. The greatest reduction in numbers relates to householder applications (falling from 913 determined in 2010/11 to 776 in 2011/12). These reduced numbers have assisted in the improvement in performance of determination within two months, increasing from 82.1% in 2010/11 to 87.2% in 2011/12.

The average timescales listed have not been recorded before and as such, will act as a benchmark against which to measure future performance.

Numbers received and determined in the other non-householder categories are not significantly different from 2010/11. Performance is slightly down on 2010/11, but has reduced by only one or two percent. Increases in the number of more complex local developments such as wind turbines, has contributed to longer decision-making, particularly as these often involve delays caused by requirements for section 75 agreements.

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In terms of Local Reviews and Appeals to Scottish Ministers, the percentage of local reviews allowed in the applicant's favour was 25% - this being similar to the Scottish average of 27%. Appeals to the Scottish Ministers have resulted in 45% being sustained in the applicant's favour. This is comparable to the Scottish average of 42%.

Enforcement activity is similar in terms of overall numbers of cases taken up in 2011/12 to 2010/11. However, of cases taken up, only a small percentage resulted in formal notices being served, reflecting the general policy of negotiation and resolution of breaches. The Council did, however, have two successful prosecutions in court. The Planning Enforcement function is carried out by three monitoring and enforcement officers located in each area office and a minerals enforcement officer based in HQ.

Planning Performance Framework Appendix II

South Lanarkshire Planning Service – Workforce and Financial Information

1.   South Lanarkshire's Planning Service is part of Community and Enterprise Resources. This follows the merger, in January 2012, of the two previously independent Resources. The Service's work is undertaken by 4 teams with a total of 45 staff. The HQ team is based in the Community and Enterprise Resources HQ building in Hamilton. It deals with Development Plan preparation publishing and monitoring, and produces, where necessary, the appropriate Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The Council's input to the preparation and monitoring of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), via the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Planning Authority, is also co-ordinated through the HQ Team. It also handles all the minerals, waste and large scale windfarm applications.

2.   The 3 other Teams, located in Lanark, Hamilton and East Kilbride, handle the vast majority of all the applications submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and other associated legislation. This includes applications for planning permission, listed building consent, conservation consent, advertisement consent and certificates of lawful use. They also assist the HQ team in the work on Development Plans, SPGs and the SDP.

3.   The Planning Service is combined and managed jointly with the Building Standards Service. The Area Offices also include the Council's Area Road's Teams This allows the Council to deliver, through its decentralised structure, a co-ordinated service which can advise and guide applicants, developers and investors both on their proposals and on the on the application process, covering planning permission, building warrant and roads construction consent.

4.   The fee income received for planning applications in 2011/12 was £1,313,913.19. The cost for operating the Planning Service over the same period was £4,323,938.11.

Community and Enterprise
Resources