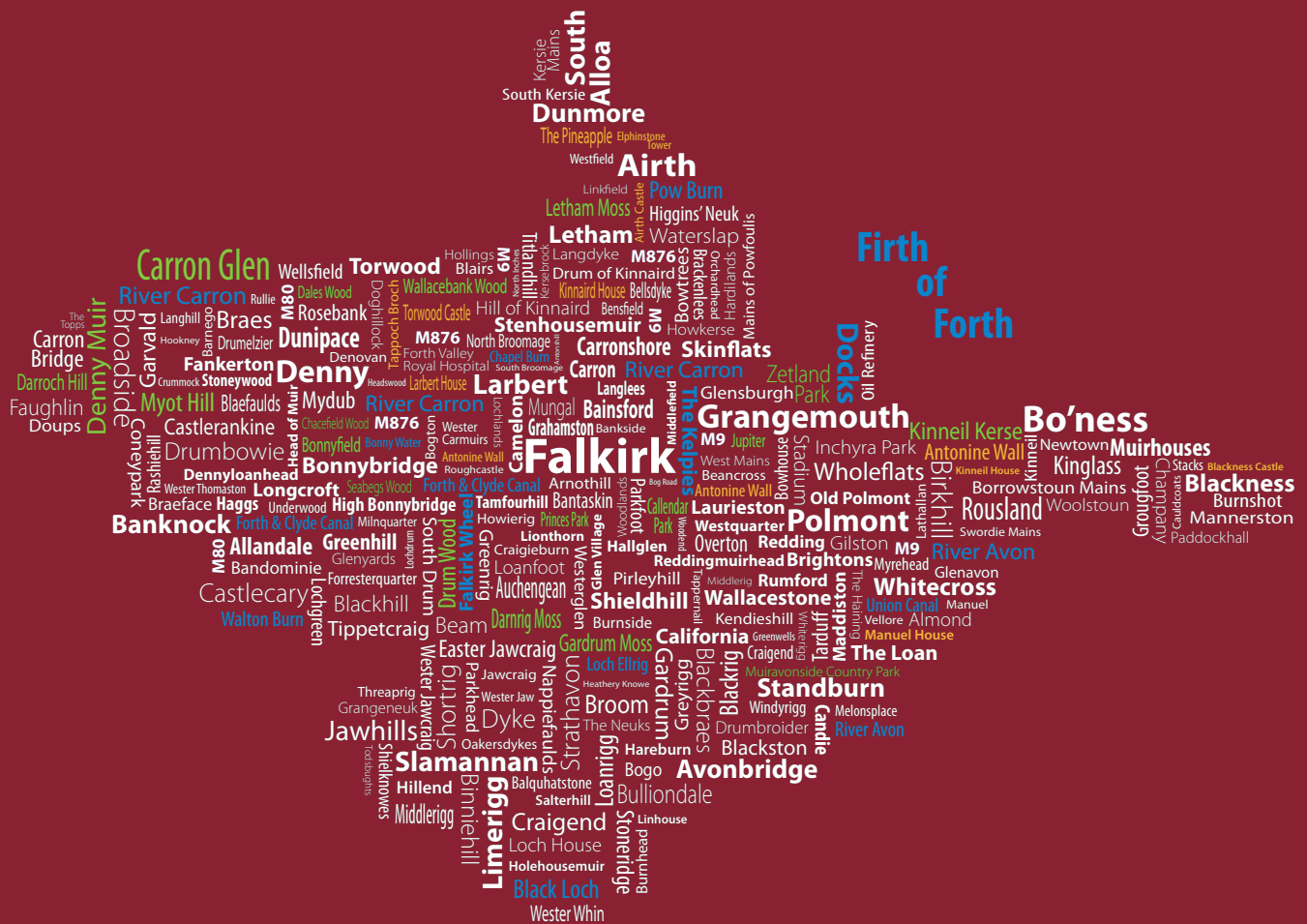


Planning Performance Framework



Falkirk Council

Annual Report April 2018 - March 2019

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Foreword

Falkirk Council is pleased to submit its eighth annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) to Scottish Government.

The PPF is an annual report produced by all Scottish planning authorities. It sets out what we have done during the year to maintain and improve the quality of planning service that Falkirk Council provides and shows our commitment to continuous improvement.

The structure of the report follows the PPF template and guidance produced by Heads of Planning Scotland. The report includes Scottish Government feedback on our performance last year and provides a broad overview of how we are performing and our plans for 2019/2020.

Feedback from Previous Report

The feedback we received from Scottish Government on our seventh PPF for the period April 2017 to March 2018 was very encouraging. It recognised the work we are doing to monitor, maintain and improve the quality of planning service provided by Falkirk Council.

The PPF was assessed by Scottish Government against 13 performance markers agreed by the Scottish Government and Heads of Planning Scotland. A red, amber, green rating of our performance against these markers was provided by Scottish Government. We received 11 green ratings and 2 amber ratings. None of our performance markers was rated red.

The green rates we were commended for included:

- Our timescales for determining all types of planning applications were faster than the Scottish average;
- Our continuing work to encourage pre-application discussions;
- The quality of guidance and advice we publish on the Council website;
- The availability of staff to provide early planning advice and guidance;
- Our willingness to enter into processing agreements;
- Our collaborative approach with stakeholders on development management and development plan matters;
- Our corporate working across Council services.

Where we received amber ratings it was because the Scottish Government considered we had not provided enough evidence in the PPF to demonstrate the work being done to deal with stalled sites/legacy cases and bring them to a conclusion. Scottish Government also considered we had not provided enough evidence to show the work being done to achieve planned future service improvements. These matters are addressed in this year's PPF.

In addition to the Scottish Government feedback we reviewed our PPF with our current peer review partners, West Dunbartonshire Council. The feedback and sharing of knowledge and experience was positive.

Introduction

Context

01 The Falkirk Council area is situated right at the centre of Scotland, at the heart of the road and rail network. It has a growing population (159,380 in 2016) and comprises a network of towns and villages, each with its own strong identity, Falkirk being the principal administrative and service centre. The area retains a strong manufacturing base within a diverse economy. Grangemouth hosts the largest petrochemical complex in Scotland and is also the country's busiest container port. The area has a diverse landscape character and a proud history stretching back to Roman times. The Falkirk Council area is dynamic and forward looking with new popular tourist destinations such as the Falkirk Wheel, the Kelpies and Helix Park.

Our Vision

02 Falkirk Council's planning service is a part of the Council's Development Services which encompasses a range of related services and professional disciplines. It has a key role in achieving the Council's priorities. These are set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2017 - 2022 and Business Plan 2019 - 2024. The key priorities are:

People

- Reduce the impact of poverty on children and their families;

Place

- Grow our economy;
- Improve the neighbourhoods we live in;
- Promote vibrant own centres;

Partnership

- Work with communities to deliver better services;
- Empower and enable people to be self-reliant.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

03 Our Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan sets out a vision for the Council area as 'the place to be'. The planning service is central to the realisation of this vision, driving the ongoing process of regeneration in the area, engaging with stakeholders on the future of the area at all scales, identifying how our network of communities can grow sustainably, adding value to development through the planning application process, facilitating economic growth, and building a quality green network which provides a framework for growth.

04 The Falkirk Local Development Plan provides the overarching direction on placemaking and design quality, supported by its suite of 16 Supplementary Guidance notes which are now embedded in day to day discussion with stakeholders, and provide a firm basis for negotiating high quality outcomes. This continues to be backed up by in-house expertise in urban design, conservation, landscape, outdoor access and biodiversity, providing valuable input to assessment of proposals at the pre-application and application stages

Town Centres

05 Falkirk Town Centre is our principal town centre, and faces the challenges of structural change in the retail sector, exemplified by the recent closure of Marks & Spencer, and the need to enhance and diversify its offer. Our 5 year £5.5m Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) was completed during the reporting year and has now been shortlisted from more than 50 entries for the Scottish Awards for Quality Planning 2019. The THI has delivered a number of quality outcomes including priority building restoration, reuse of vacant space building repairs, shopfront improvements, training and job opportunities, community engagement and innovative interpretation (see case study).

06 A Town Centre Working Group has met over the course of the year and put in place an action plan which will be driven by a new Town Centre Partnership. A key element in the revitalisation of the Town Centre will be the Council's procurement of a new HQ and Arts Centre, which will be located in the Town Centre, and will be initiated in the coming months.

07 Grangemouth Town Centre has been the focus of work through the locality planning process, with a community consultation under the Scottish Government's 'Making Places' initiative being undertaken to formulate actions that are needed to restructure and revitalise the centre. Phase 2 of the Denny Town Centre regeneration is being given further consideration, with the option of Council housing being investigated as a way of complementing the retail, community and public realm investment already completed through Phase 1.

08 To support the Town Centres work, the Council has reviewed its Town Centres Health Check (see case study).

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Case Study Title:	
Falkirk Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative	
Location and Dates:	
Falkirk Town Centre, 2014-2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Outcomes 	
Key Markers:	
12 - Corporate Working Across Services	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public
Overview:	
<p>Falkirk THI drew funding from both HLF and CARS to deliver a £5.5m programme of building and public realm improvements in Falkirk Town Centre's historic core, with a focus on secondary streets forming the key north-south axis through the town centre. Two dedicated THI officers worked with building owners and other partners to deliver a series of building restoration projects, bring vacant properties back into use, offer grants for shopfront improvement, and implement a £1.7m public realm enhancement scheme. This was complemented by an exceptional programme of outreach and engagement with the public and schools, and a range of innovative interpretation projects. The project has been shortlisted for the 2019 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning.</p>	
Goals:	
<p>The project was aimed at regenerating a key part of the Falkirk Town Centre through heritage led interventions, thereby attracting investment and new uses, and raising business and community confidence in the centre at a time of considerable economic challenge.</p>	
Outcomes:	
<p>Improvements to over 80 properties, including the iconic Falkirk Steeple, the restoration of 15 shopfronts and the improvement of over 6,500 sq.m. of public realm, all to a high conservation standard, have lifted the quality and appearance of the Town Centre; providing a quality benchmark for future development. Vacant buildings have been brought back into use, with vacancy rates dropping from 15% to 8% in the THI area, and there has been an increase in planning applications for the conversion of vacant upper storeys for residential use, reflecting increased property values and business confidence. Training opportunities were created for over 100 contractors. School pupils, property owners and homeless groups, and many thousands of members of the public engaged through events and exhibitions. https://vimeo.com/296844279 (by permission of Rob McDougall)</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
Pete Reid	



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Case Study Title:	
Town Centres Health Check	
Location and Dates:	
Falkirk Town Centre and District Centres, 2019	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Service and Engagement 	
Key Markers:	
11 - Production of Regular and Proportionate Policy Advice 12 - Corporate Working Across Services	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Monitoring
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falkirk Delivers
Overview:	
<p>Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) recommends that town centre health checks should be prepared to assess a town centre's strengths, vitality and viability, weaknesses and resilience. They should be updated regularly, preferably every two years. The Council had produced a Town Centres Health Check covering Falkirk Town Centre and the four District Centres in 2016. More recently, concerns have been mounting about the viability of Falkirk Town Centre, heightened by the closure of Marks and Spencer and the bus station. With a working group of town centre stakeholders meeting to discuss the future actions needed to support the town centre, the Council decided that an update to the health check was required, and this was delivered in-house by the planning service. The health check assembled and collated cross service information within the Council, as well as information collected by Falkirk Delivers (BID). A detailed updated floorspace survey was carried out to monitor change in centres over the past five years. The health check used an adapted version of the categories and indicators set out in SPP.</p>	
Goals:	
<p>The primary purpose of the updated health check was to support and provide an evidence base for future action to revitalise Falkirk Town Centre.</p>	
Outcomes:	
<p>The health check has provided an up to date summary of all available information in relation to Falkirk town centre and the four District Centres. The floorspace survey has helped to quantify known trends in retail, services and vacancies and how the function of the town centres are changing. Key issues have been identified, which will be taken forward by the relevant working groups and partnerships.</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
Louise Blance	



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Strategic Growth Areas

09 Major residential growth in the area over the last two decades has been plan-led, with a proactive approach to placemaking through tools such as development frameworks, masterplans and briefs. All of the active Strategic Growth Areas in the Falkirk Local Development Plan (LDP) are supported by a masterplan or development framework. Two of these, at Larbert North (Kinnaird Village), and Overton/Redding are now substantially built out, and the benefits of masterplanning are evident in the development on the ground.

Historic Environment

- 10 Our Historic Environment Strategy was approved February 2018. The Strategy aims to deliver the vision through 33 priority actions set out within an Action Plan under 8 key themes. A cross-sectoral steering group was established to oversee the implementation of the Strategy with the inaugural meeting taking place in April 2018. Significant progress in implementing the Strategy has been made.
- 11 The Rediscovering the Antonine Wall project successfully secured funding from LEADER in May 2018 and from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in December 2018. The project spans the 5 local authority areas covering the entire length of the Antonine Wall and includes a variety of arts, interpretive and access initiatives.
- 12 The Falkirk Great Places Partnership (incorporating Falkirk Community Trust, Falkirk Council, Scottish Canals and Central Scotland Green Network Trust) secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in December 2017 for the Falkirk: Landscape, Industry and Work project. The project's aim is to build capacity, promote engagement, challenge stereotypes and involve the seldom-heard in our areas heritage. Work is progressing under four key projects: Falkirk Heritage Network; Falkirk's Stories; Celebrating our Heritage; and Careers in a Modern Producer Economy.
- 13 The Review of our area's 8 Areas of Townscape Value (AOTV), which represent townscapes of historic or architectural merit which are not Conservation Areas, is a long standing aspiration of the LDP and Historic Environment Strategy. An opportunity arose to work with the Edinburgh College of Art's Architectural Conservation MSC students on gathering the baseline data necessary to both inform our review and meet the learning objectives of the MSC students. Two of our AOTV, in Bo'ness and Grangemouth have been assessed as part of the MSC students' Urban Conservation module and plans are in place to look at more AOTV in future years.



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Greenspace

- 14 Work continues on the implementation of the Scottish Awards for Quality Planning award winning Falkirk Open Space Strategy overseen by the Council's corporate Open Space Liaison Group. Improvements have been made at 7 open spaces identified as priorities for quality improvement; 5 key open space assets; 3 national or regional level open spaces; and 6 green network opportunities. Progress has also been made with a comprehensive grounds maintenance review and with an audit of play space play value. One of our most successful projects this year, which has been shortlisted for the 2019 SAQP awards, has involved collaboration with the public and young people to enhance and celebrate the historic Carron Dams area (see case study).
- 15 The implementation of the Zetland Park Masterplan is identified as a priority of the Open Space Strategy and a green network opportunity in the Proposed LDP2. The Zetland Park regeneration project was awarded development phase funding by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) in December 2017. A project manager, lead landscape architect and activity planner have been recruited to develop a bid for £927k of delivery phase funding from the NLHF and plan for the delivery of the c£2.2m regeneration project which will be submitted in August. The 2015 park masterplan has been revised and approved following extensive community consultation.
- 16 Consultation on the review of our Core Paths Plan began in March 2019. The review identified 128 potential new Core Paths which meet the eligibility criteria and it is proposed that these are added to the Core Paths Plan. The review has also identified 10 Core Paths which, it is proposed, should be deleted and realigned. Once all proposed additions, deletions and realignments have been taken into account, the changes proposed in the Revised Core Paths Plan (draft) equate to over 84 km of additional routes across the path network. Indicators of the success of our Outdoor Access Team over the past decade include the expansion of the path network from 431km to 617km and the Falkirk area winning the Rambler's Association's Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood award 2019. There is a continuing focus on key strategic links, such as the Abbotshaugh Bridge, which was opened during the reporting year (see case study).
- 17 As part of our successful Dig in Falkirk initiative a consultation on our draft Community Food Growing Strategy began in February 2019. Production of the Strategy is a requirement of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and is expected to be finalised in 2019 alongside an Allotment Action Plan.
- 18 Consultation on Second Nature: a Biodiversity Action Plan for the Falkirk Council area concluded in July 2018 and a finalised Action Plan was approved in October 2018. The finalised plan includes:
 - An introduction to the area's wildlife and why we need to conserve it;
 - A vision and targets for local wildlife conservation and enhancement; and
 - A series of 9 action plans. These list 147 actions or projects to conserve and enhance our most important or threatened local wildlife.
- 19 In partnership with Central Scotland Green Network Trust we have produced a Forest Estate Plan for all Council owned woodlands split into 6 distinct Urban Woodland Management Plans. The Plan will allow us to apply for Woodland Improvement Grant and Sustainable Management of Forest Grant under the Scottish Government's Forestry Grant Scheme. Once implemented the Forest Estate Plan will involve: the planting of nearly 40,000 trees; the clearance of 4ha of woodland; the thinning of 93ha of woodland; safety surveys of 67ha of woodland; the creation of over 24,000m² of new paths; and the improvement of over 14,000m² of existing paths.
- 20 The Inner Forth Landscape Partnership (IFLI) drew to a close this year and has been shortlisted for the 2019 SAQP awards. One of the last IFLI projects to come to fruition was a managed coastal re-alignment scheme at Skinflats (see case study).



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Case Study Title:	
Carron Dams	
Location and Dates:	
Area Wide, 2016-2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of Outcomes 	
Key Markers:	
12 - Corporate Working Across Services	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Public Key Agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authority Planning Staff Authority Other Staff
Overview:	
<p>Carron Company was a hugely important global enterprise at the heart of Scotland's industrial revolution. It shaped the development of Larbert and Stenhousemuir from 1759 until its closure in 1981 when part of the site was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Since then, effective planning and management has transformed it into an ecologically-rich habitat that people enjoy visiting. The Local Biodiversity Action Plan's aspiration of establishing the site as a designated Local Nature Reserve was achieved earlier this decade. Since then the focus has been on delivering open space enhancements, improving access to and within the site and good place making.</p>	
Goals:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to and within the site; Create more welcoming entrances to the nature reserve; Encourage active use of the site; Keep the site safe, accessible and easy to use. 	
Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surrounding areas now meet local standards for access to quality open space; The project has filled a gap in the local path network; Staff worked with Larbert High School pupils to celebrate the sites industrial past and its current use as a place for nature to thrive; Pupils worked with local volunteers, history enthusiasts and the management group to design 3 distinctive eye-catching sculptures; Annual family events including our annual "Dam Fine Day Out" and Heritage Lottery funded "Spark & Grit !" promenade theatre production showcase what the site has to offer and help tell the story of how and why the LNR exists; Local volunteers from the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) management group and the neighbouring High School help to keep the site safe, accessible and easy to use. <p>The project has been shortlisted for the 2019 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning. Spark & Grit ! video link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpKTsjd9atw&feature=youtu.be</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
Mandy Brown/Anna Perks	



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Case Study Title:

Abbotshaugh Bridge

Location and Dates:

Falkirk/Carronshore, 2018

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of Outcomes

Key Markers:

12 - Corporate Working Across Services

Key Areas of Work:

- Active Travel

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview:

The Abbotshaugh Bridge provides a new pedestrian and cycle crossing of the Carron, upstream of the Kelpies, improving connections between the communities of Bainsford, Langlees, Carronshore and Carron for recreation, employment and education purposes. It also links these communities to the Helix Park, the Kelpies, and the wider path networks which are part of Falkirk Greenspace. It is one of the largest pedestrian bridges in Scotland, spanning 48 m in length, and has created an iconic structure over the River Carron. The bridge has been constructed to enable cyclists, horses, pedestrians and users with mobility impairments to access the bridge and the wider path network.

Goals:

The delivery of the new bridge was identified as a green network opportunity in the Falkirk Local Development Plan: 'GN08 "River Carron Corridor Improvements"', reflecting the need for improved north-south linkages in the Falkirk Greenspace. The objective was to improve both local and strategic connections in the path network.

Outcomes:

The bridge was opened in June 2018. The overall cost was £842,000. The project was funded by Falkirk Council, the Scottish Government through Sustrans' Community Links programme, the European funding organisation Kelvin Valley and Falkirk LEADER programme. The bridge was named 'Abbotshaugh Bridge' due to its location within the historic grounds of the Abbotshaugh Estate. An official opening event was held 18 June 2018 with 120 community members in attendance to celebrate the new connection. The bridge has been constructed to last in the region of 100 yrs. The bridge will be there to enable current and future generations to enjoy and explore their local area, and is already proving very popular with walkers, cyclists and horse riders. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYaB54BgvAo&app=desktop> (by permission of David Wilkinson)

Name of Key Officer:

Lynn Slavin



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Case Study Title:	
Skinflats Managed Re-alignment	
Location and Dates:	
Skinflats Nature Reserve, Inner Forth Estuary, 2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Outcomes 	
Key Markers:	
3 - Early Collaboration with Applicants and Consultees 12 - Corporate Working Across Services	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSPB • Neighbouring Landowners • Key Agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff
Overview:	
<p>The saline lagoons and saltmarsh at RSPB Skinflats Reserve are important and increasingly rare habitats in the Forth estuary. In 2009, RSPB Scotland installed a regulated tidal exchange scheme at the reserve that allowed for inundation of part of the reserve at high tide, enabling the establishment of some inter-tidal habitat and colonisation of saltmarsh plants. However, infrastructure used to bring water onto the site did not function as planned meaning that the site does not have the regular inundation required to allow the continued establishment of saltmarsh vegetation. A managed realignment was identified as the best option for delivering high quality and sustainable inter-tidal habitat. The project involved creating a 25m breach in the old sea wall to allow water to flow into the site at most high tides, acting as a replacement for the existing regulated tidal exchange system. A key challenge of the project was to allay local fears that by breaching the existing sea wall, flood risk was not being increased.</p>	
Goals:	
<p>The key goal was to create more saltmarsh and lagoon habitats on the Reserve and make it more attractive to breeding waders like common terns and ringed plover.</p>	
Outcomes:	
<p>The project has created 10 ha of new inter-tidal habitat, including a new island will attract breeding terns, ringed plover and other bird species associated with the Firth of Forth SPA.</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
John Milne	



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Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

Canal Regeneration

21 The regeneration of the canal corridor in the Falkirk area has been a focus for some 20 years, taking its impetus from Millennium Link and the Falkirk Wheel, and has been given fresh momentum more recently by the Kelpies and the Helix. Subsequent plans and strategies have identified a series of key nodes and opportunities which are now embedded in the Local Development Plan and which the Council, Scottish Canals and other stakeholders have worked hard to realise over a number of years. The past year has seen marked progress with some of these opportunities. Planning permission has now been granted for the conversion and redevelopment of the B-listed Rosebank Distillery for a new whisky distillery and visitor centre. Permission has also been granted for a new community hub at Lock 16, a canal-based skills and training centre, which Scottish Canals are developing with almost £1m from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund. Meanwhile Persimmon Homes has started work on building 168 homes at the longstanding derelict canal side gas works site at Etna Road. To complement these major investments, Scottish Canals are preparing a package of access and public realm and improvements along the Falkirk Canal Corridor.



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Service and Engagement

Availability of Support and Guidance for Applicants

Pre-application

22 We continue to offer a free pre-application advice service for all types of applications, ranging from small householder applications to major and national applications. In addition to providing written responses to enquiries there is planning advice and guidance on the Council's website which includes links to the Scottish Government website and other websites where planning information and resources can be found. The information on our website is clear and easily accessible. It shows what is required for a valid planning application and what additional information may be requested. The Local Development Plan and supplementary guidance is published and clearly signposted. Our willingness to offer pre-application advice and the availability of information is emphasised in discussions with prospective developers and agents. The use of project plans and processing agreements is promoted.

23 Early engagement with applicants and agents at pre-application stage along with the development plan, supplementary guidance and other information available on our webpages helps to ensure that requests for information to support applications are clear and proportionate.

Processing Agreements

24 An agreement template is published on our website. Although we continue to advise prospective developers of our willingness to enter into agreements there still seems to be little interest in taking up this offer. Applicants and agents are generally satisfied that we have procedures in place to manage and monitor the processing of applications and that there are clear lines of communication. The less formal arrangements we use in the absence of formal processing agreements include regular contact with applicants and agents in person, on the telephone or via email to provide case updates. Case officer contact details are provided on application acknowledgement letters and on all other correspondence.

Legal Agreements

25 Where planning obligations and other legal agreements are needed we continue to progress heads of terms prior to recommendation. There are standard templates for instructions to legal services to draft agreements. This ensures all information needed is provided at an early stage and minimises potential delays. Mindful to grant recommendations are worded to set a 6 month timescale for the conclusion of agreements or review of the planning application. The progress of legal agreements is closely monitored by the planning service and legal services.

Charters

26 Our Development Management and Enforcement Charters are published on our website. They set out what we do, how we do it and provide clear measurable standards. Both documents were updated during our last reporting period and will be updated again during the next reporting period.

Plain English

27 All publications are checked for plain English. Information is published on our website in different formats to meet the needs of users of the site. Guidance on using plain English and report writing is available to all staff on our intranet.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Service and Engagement

Availability of Support and Guidance for Applicants

Customer Service

28 Online surveys are routinely used to collect information from customers about how the planning service is performing. A freepost card survey questionnaire is sent out with all planning decision notices. A link to a customer service questionnaire is provided on staff emails. This helps us improve our services and make sure we are meeting the needs of communities. These are some of the responses we have received this year.

"Can you please thank Catherine and Julie for coming back to me so quickly the other day. I know that you are all busy people."

"Can I personally thank the duty officer today, the service she provided was absolutely perfect."

"I'd just like to take the opportunity to thank you for all your guidance and assistance throughout this process, we really appreciate it."

"Thanks for listening anyway. I am learning as I go along on this subject, which is all new to me, so stupid questions may follow at a later date if this does progress any further! I did have to contact your department regarding a different query last year and have been impressed with the friendly, informative responses I've had. You don't fit the Council department stereotype."

"Thank you for looking into and clarifying this enquiry. I appreciate both you and your department efficiently dealing with and concluding this matter."

"I can't thank you and your team enough for keeping me abreast of notifications etc. it's been very much appreciated."

"I wanted to thank you for all your assistance and support over the years of getting our planning application from germination to approval. I could not have done it without you, and I don't think it would have been such a good application without your guidance either."

29 The planning service and other Council services continue to use the Council's website, and various social media platforms to communicate information and news.

Development Planning

30 The Council has made further progress with the emerging development plan, LDP2, over the course of the reporting year, approving the Proposed Plan in August 2018 and completing an 8 week consultation period in November 2018. Extensive engagement with members on sites and options was undertaken in the run up to the approval of the document. The development plan team has worked hard to keep the timetable on track. Work has involved logging, assessing, grouping into issues and responding to some 187 submissions, containing 408 individual representations, and preparing documentation for the Examination. Consequently, we are on target to submit the plan to Scottish Ministers in July 2019, as originally planned. Our project management approach, involving stage planning, regular team meetings, and project meetings with senior management, and liaising with senior elected members, has assisted greatly in this process.

31 Our approach to the drafting of the Proposed Plan has been to build on the clarity and readability which we felt we had achieved in LDP1, by making further improvements to the structure and graphical presentation of the plan (see case study).

32 The development plan and supplementary guidance clearly set out the circumstances where developer contributions will be sought, anticipated amounts and circumstances where contributions may be reduced or waived.

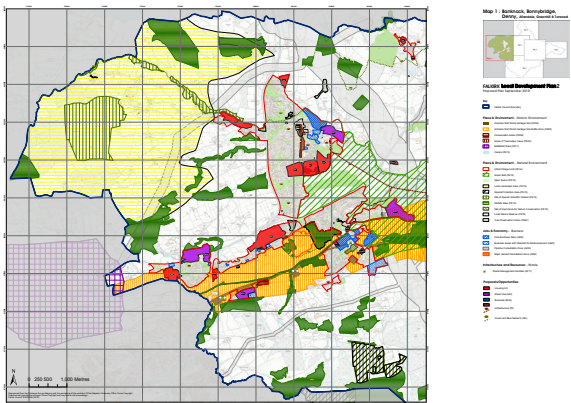
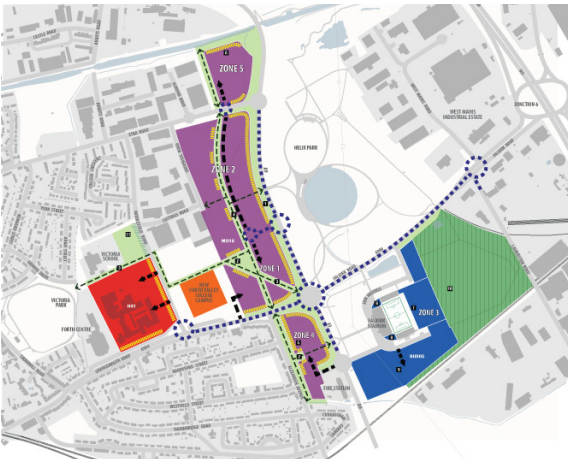
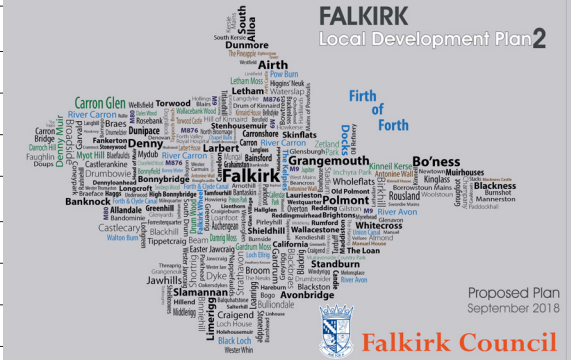
33 We monitor our suite of supplementary guidance (SG) to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date. During the course of the year we reviewed SG12 on Affordable Housing, and the revised version was approved by Scottish Ministers in March 2019. We also embarked on a review of SG10 on Education and New Housing Development. This seeks to revise developer contributions in line with the latest evidence on pupil product ratios and construction costs. It also seeks to reflect changes to the Council's obligations with regard to early years education. A draft revised SG10 was published for consultation in March 2019.

34 Meanwhile, project planning has commenced for the revision of the whole suite of guidance in association with LDP2. Some guidance will only require limited updating, but we have also proposed rationalising and combining guidance where this would encourage a more joined up and holistic approach. A single SG on Developer Contributions will bring together all guidance and rates for all the different forms of infrastructure, making it easier for developers. A single SG on Green Infrastructure and New Development will provide a more comprehensive and integrated approach to guidance on greenspace, biodiversity, access and water management.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Service and Engagement

Case Study Title:	
Falkirk LDP2 Proposed Plan	
Location and Dates:	
Council Wide, 2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of Service and Engagement 	
Key Markers:	
6 - Continuous Improvement	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDP & Supplementary Guidance 	
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authority Planning Staff 	
Overview:	
<p>In drafting the Proposed LDP2, the development plan team sought to learn lessons from the experience of LDP1 which has been operating for four years. By and large, LDP1 has been well-received by users, but there were specific areas where we thought that improvements could be made, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear linkage of the vision and objectives of the plan back to the Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan; Clear, better structured spatial strategy section, with the use of infographics; Better organisation of policy content, with policies arranged under more obvious and logical headings; Introduction of annotated diagrammatic maps to illustrate key development principles in major areas of change; Greater use of photographs to bring the text to life. 	
Goals:	
<p>The aim has been to make LDP2 even more engaging and readable through more maps, plans and diagram, and a greater emphasis on place. At the same time we want to keep it succinct, precise and easily navigable by different types of users.</p>	
Outcomes:	
<p>We believe that LDP2 is a better document than LDP1. Maps and photographs are used more effectively to convey the key messages of the plan. The policy content is better organised, and therefore easier to navigate around.</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
Alistair Shaw	



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Service and Engagement

Infrastructure Investment and Development Delivery

- 35 Provision of infrastructure is critical to realising the Council's regeneration and growth agenda. Since the 2008 recession, the ability of the development industry to front fund necessary infrastructure has been severely curtailed. Consequently, the Council has taken an increasingly proactive role in supporting development through investment in infrastructure.
- 36 The Council's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) continues to focus on major transport, flood prevention and enabling works needed to deliver economic development in the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zones. Improvements to M9 Junction 5, which will enhance access to the Grangemouth Investment Zone, are expected to commence in early 2020. Design of the A9/A904 improvements, which will facilitate development at the Falkirk Gateway and the logistics sector located in the vicinity, is ongoing, including a redesigned pedestrian/cycle bridge which will facilitate active travel between the Falkirk Gateway, the new Forth Valley College, the Falkirk Stadium and the Helix.
- 37 Following a successful marketing exercise, the preferred bidder has been selected by the Council to deliver the first phases of the Falkirk Gateway, the Council's flagship new urban quarter on the eastern edge of the town. A mix of tourism, leisure, retail and affordable housing development will complement the Helix and the adjacent new Forth Valley College campus which is expected to be completed in the next reporting year.
- 38 The Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme, which ranks as the top priority flood risk management scheme in Scotland, is progressing. A preferred scheme has now been developed and has been subject to recent public consultation. The planning service has been closely involved in the ongoing EIA scoping exercise and has, in particular, facilitated discussions with Historic Environment Scotland on the interface of flood storage areas with the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site.
- 39 Grangemouth continues to see major investment in energy projects and infrastructure. Following the granting of consent to CalaChem for a CHP plant using refuse derived fuel (RDF) at Earls Gate Park, Ineos have now also received planning permission for a new £350m power plant. Further investment of £500m is planned in the Forties Pipeline System which comes ashore at Grangemouth. Celtic Renewables' demonstrator Biofuels plant at Earls Gate Park site is under construction. The Council continues to host annual action programme meetings for the Grangemouth Investment Zone National Development. This provides an important opportunity for stakeholders, including Scottish Government, the Council, key agencies and industry to share progress on projects and discuss future actions.
- 40 In terms of housing delivery, seven of the LDP's 12 Strategic Growth Areas are under construction. Design and preparatory work on the upgrading of the M80 Junction 7 slip roads, for which the Council has secured £1.5m from the Housing Infrastructure Fund, is ongoing. This scheme will help to unlock the two stalled Strategic Growth Areas at Banknock and Dennyloanhead. The Council has also committed to front fund the remaining phases of the Denny Eastern Access Road, which will facilitate further development at the Denny South East Strategic Growth Area. Major investment in the school estate is planned at Kinnaid and Maddiston Primary Schools to facilitate ongoing planned development at the Larbert North and Maddiston East Strategic Growth Area. Whilst this investment makes use of developer contributions, it also involves a substantial commitment from the Council's capital programme.
- 41 The planning service is also working closely with Housing Services in the delivery of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), which is aiming to deliver 1,310 affordable houses over the period 2017-22, and consideration of potential supply of sites for future programmes. A key site in this programme is at the former Denny High School where the Council plans to deliver some 200 social rented houses. The site is complicated by the presence of the old school playing fields and the need to justify and compensate for their loss. The development plan team has therefore undertaken a local sports pitch audit to provide essential supporting information for the forthcoming planning application (see case study).
- 42 The Council's further ambitions for economic growth in the area, reflecting its pivotal position in the Scottish economy, are being taken forward through its Investment Zone bid, the preparation of which is now well advanced. A series of stakeholder workshops are underway to develop the projects which will form part of the bid.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Service and Engagement

Case Study Title:	
Denny Sports Pitch Audit	
Location and Dates:	
Denny, 2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Service and Engagement 	
Key Markers:	
3 - Early Collaboration with Applicants and Consultees 12 - Corporate Working Across Services	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenspace
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Falkirk Community Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sportscotland
Overview:	
<p>The Council is preparing plans for the redevelopment of the former High School site in Denny for around 200 social rented homes. A key constraint is justifying and negotiating the loss of several sports pitches which is necessary to maximise the affordable housing potential of the site. In the absence of a sports pitch strategy for the Council area, the development plan team has prepared a local sports pitch study for Denny which will provide the evidence base required by Sportscotland to allow the loss of the pitches, as well as identifying the appropriate level of compensation, and how such compensation can best be spent. The exercise involved close collaboration with Sportscotland, particularly in scoping out the study and agreeing the compensation, and with Falkirk Community Trust who supplied information on pitch usage.</p>	
Goals:	
<p>The aims of the project were to assist the delivery of this crucial part of the Council's affordable housing programme, and to improve the overall quality and usability of sports pitch provision in the Denny area.</p>	
Outcomes:	
<p>The study has confirmed that the key issues with sports pitch provision in the area is one of quality rather than quantity and that the loss of pitches can be justified provided suitable compensation is secured and directed to improving the quality of other pitches in the area. A planning application for the housing is likely to be submitted in the next reporting year, with the study providing supporting information and saving time on what otherwise could have been lengthy discussions with Sportscotland.</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
Andrew McNair	



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Service and Engagement

Engagement

- 43 The engagement activities of the planning service are set within the context of the Council's Strategy for Community Engagement which was recently revised and approved. The planning service sits on the Corporate Participation Group. The Council uses Citizen Space as a corporate hub for managing all online consultation activity, and this is now used for all development planning consultations. The Council is also seeking to relaunch its Citizen's Panel as a more diverse and representative 'People's Panel' which can be used by all services to get feedback on services, as and when required.
- 44 The main engagement activity carried out by the development planning team during the reporting year was consultation on the Proposed Plan. This was publicised through the web site, adverts, Facebook, and a mailshot to around 1,500 stakeholders and members of the public on our customer database. Responses could be made by email, post or online via Citizen Space. The consultation was supported by the Development Plan newsletter which is our long established, biannual digest of planning news disseminated to all our customers.
- 45 We continue to cultivate contacts with schools to enable us to make effective links with young people. We participated again in the 'STEM at the Helix' event where we delivered interactive workshops based on the Place Standard with S1 pupils from across the Council area. Given the challenges involved in engaging with young people, the Council carried out consultation last year to find out how young people wished to be engaged. Overwhelmingly, they indicated that they wanted to use online channels. Accordingly, the Council will be building up a Young People's Forum which can be used for online surveys, and will be of assistance in development plan consultation exercises in the future.
- 46 The Council held its annual Developer's Forum in December 2018. This is intended for developers and agents who are active in the local area, providing them with an opportunity to make comment on the planning service or to raise issues. The Council provides a programme of presentations on current topics of interest. This year it included presentations by Craig McLaren, RTPI National Director for Scotland, on the Planning Bill, Douglas Duff, Falkirk Council Head of Planning & Economic Development, on investing in Falkirk, the Coal Authority, on the impacts of coal mining legacy. There were also updates on Development Management and development plan matters to emphasise our open for business approach, our willingness to have pre-application discussions, the availability of published planning guidance and application validation standards. There was an attendance of around 40 people which included major housebuilders and smaller development companies, local business and a number of planning consultants and agents. The event was well received.

Contact with Development Management

- 47 Development Management officers can be contacted by email, by telephone and in person. Contact details are published on our website, on emails and letters and on business cards. The Development Management Unit also operates a duty officer service which allows customers to contact an officer on the telephone or in person and receive free planning advice and guidance when other officers may be unavailable. This duty service is in addition to the general availability of case officers. There is also extensive planning guidance and other useful information published on our website.
- 48 We continue to acknowledge all planning applications and pre-application enquiries with the contact details for the lead case officer. For all major developments and projects of wider public interest we still set up project teams to ensure stakeholders have a lead contact and an alternative contact if the lead officer is unavailable.
- 49 We set up early dates for meetings and telephone calls are returned timeously. Enquiries are logged and acknowledged on receipt. Replies are given by email wherever possible. This allows enquiries to be acknowledged and answered quickly and has cost benefits for the Council.

Complaints System

- 50 Details of the Council's complaints procedures are publicised on the Council website. There is a 2 stage procedure, the first being to seek frontline resolution of complaints and the second being investigation. The procedures follow the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) model. Each Council service has a nominated lead officer for complaints and a Complaints Officers Working Group. An annual report on the Council's performance in dealing with complaints is published. Our report for 2017/2018 sets out the Council's performance against the indicators set by the SPSO during 2017/2018. It also provides information about how the Council services are learning from complaints. The Local Authority Complaints Handlers Network is currently collating all performance information across the 32 local authorities. This benchmarking information will be included in next year's report.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

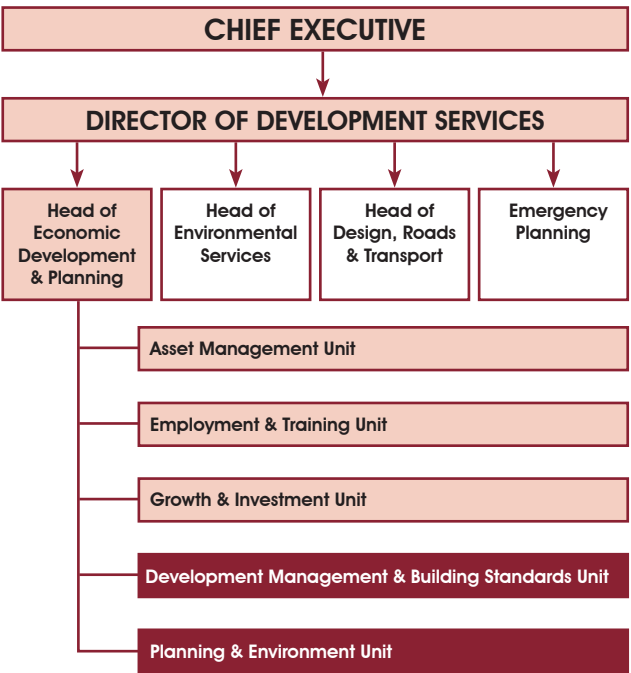
Governance

Service and Unit Structure

- 51 The planning service is part of Falkirk Council Development Services. Following a restructuring during the last reporting period Development Services continues to encompass a broad range of related services and disciplines including economic development, environmental health, building standards, roads and transportation, design, emergency planning and bereavement services. This is bringing benefits in terms of closer integration of development planning, development management, economic strategy and implementation of key strategic economic growth projects such as the Grangemouth Investment Zone.
- 52 The Development Management Unit is loosely split into 2 geographic area teams. Each team has a Co-ordinator but they share work allocation and staff management duties across both teams. The teams are based in an open plan office and deal with work across the whole area as and when work levels require. This arrangement assists professional development and allows officers to have a general knowledge and awareness of case load within the Unit. The flexible area team structure is particularly beneficial for more complex applications, as it allows for effective sharing of information, discussion of issues, promotes staff development and provides continuity of delivery if staff are absent.
- 53 The Planning & Environment Unit includes the Development Plan team, and an environment team which comprises planners and environmental specialists working on greenspace and heritage projects, and offering support to the both the development plan and development management processes.

Council of the Future

- 54 'Council of the Future' is the Council's response to the financial challenges facing local government, and promotes a radical programme of change that will transform the organisation and how it delivers services over the next five years. It is underpinned by a 5 year business plan which was approved in May 2019 and provides a longer term basis for the process of transformation and the delivery of more efficient services. 'Reform of the Planning Service' is one of the projects within the 'Services of the Future' work stream, which will address the need for more efficient and effective service delivery within the service, achieving a saving of £0.5m over the five years, whilst implementing the legislative changes coming through the Planning Bill.



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Governance

Staffing Resources

- 55 Due to the abovementioned financial restrictions, the Development Management Unit and Development Plan team continue to operate with reduced and reducing staff numbers. This is a result of posts becoming vacant through a combination of retirements, voluntary redundancies and voluntary reductions in staff hours. This has required continued flexibility in the ways in which we work and the prioritisation of workloads.
- 56 Workload is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Development & Building Standards Manager and Co-ordinators using Idox Uniform and Enterprise casework systems. This allows work progress to be checked and guidance, advice and support to be offered to officers as needed.
- 57 There has been little movement of staff in recent years. This has meant officers have built up a good working knowledge of the Falkirk Council area and have developed good working relationships with various stakeholders. However, it is recognised given factors such as the age profile of staff and desire for professional advancement that change is likely. Moving forward the planning service has started a graduate planner programme to assist professional development and continuity.

Collaborative Working

- 58 Collaboration between the planning service and other Council services remains an important part of everyday working as can be seen in the case studies. Established liaison groups with Children's Services and Housing Services meet regularly, in addition to normal day-to-day contact. The Council Housing, Planning Delivery Group continues to meet to drive forward the delivery of the Council's affordable housing programme. In terms of external liaison, the Council convenes a quarterly tripartite meeting with Scottish Water and SEPA (see case study). Increasing capacity issues in local primary healthcare facilities, which are partly the result of housing growth in the area, have resulted in a series of liaison meetings with NHS Forth Valley to identify and anticipate these pressures more effectively, and consider the operation of SG11 Healthcare and New Housing Development, which provides for developer contributions where development creates or exacerbates pressure on healthcare provision.

Community Planning

- 59 At a strategic level, the Proposed LDP2 has been drafted with stronger links to the aims of the Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan, showing how planning contributes to the wider vision of the Community Planning Partnership for the area. During the course of the year, locality planning has been continuing in the east locality, with a strong focus on action planning in Grangemouth. Work has also been ongoing in the west locality to identify issues, whilst preliminary work is underway in the central locality. The development plan team continue to support the locality planning process through membership of the key working groups, provision of evidence, and the identification of issues, ensuring that linkages with the development plan are clearly made.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Governance

Efficient and Effective Decision Making

60 The majority of planning applications are determined under the Council's approved Scheme of Delegation. The number of delegated decisions remains high (94.4%). The scheme allows local and major planning applications that are in accordance with the LDP to be determined by officers unless called in by any Councillor for consideration by the Planning Committee following publication of the weekly list of delegated recommendations. Where an application is called in the Councillor must state their planning reasons. The applicant/agent is informed of the call in, who has made the request and their reasons. Councillors are encouraged by the planning service to discuss applications with officers before calling in an application. This Scheme ensures that the number of applications considered by the Planning Committee is generally small and limited to larger more controversial applications where a greater degree of public scrutiny is justified.

61 The Planning Committee meets every 4 weeks. Members not on the Committee and applicants/agents can address the Committee on written request.

Unit and Team Meetings

62 Development Management Unit team meetings are held regularly and attended by all staff. These meetings are structured and minuted with the minutes of the meetings circulated to senior managers. At the team meetings the minutes of senior management team meetings are also relayed to the Unit. The team meetings allow for work updates, discussion of performance issues and other information to be cascaded to officers and issues raised by the teams to be relayed to senior management. The open plan office working arrangements also assist communication and discussion of matters. Within the Planning & Environment Unit, Development Plan team meetings are held regularly as part of the project plan for LDP2.

Financial Management

63 The Planning Service has an important role in helping to deliver the objectives of the Council in a regulatory capacity and with regard to our knowledge and skills in problem solving and flexible working. Annual use of budget review templates has ensured revenue budget bids are scored against the Council's stated priorities. Priorities and objectives are aligned through the Single Outcome Agreement, Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Plan. The Service Performance Plan ensures staff are clear what their day to day role is in meeting the Council's priorities. Spend is guided by the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation and through monitoring by Internal Audit and the Council's Best Value Forum. Council procurement rules and procedures are followed. Regular monitoring of budgets is undertaken between the Unit Managers and the Planning Service accountant.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Governance

Case Study Title:

SEPA/Scottish Water/Falkirk Council Tripartite Meetings

Location and Dates:

Area Wide, since 2014

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Governance

Key Markers:

- 3 - Early Collaboration with Applicants and Consultees
- 12 - Corporate Working Across Services
- 13 - Sharing Good Practice
- 15 - Developer Contributions

Key Areas of Work:

- Collaborative Working

Stakeholders Involved:

- Key Agencies

Overview:

For several years, the Council has held quarterly meetings with representatives of Scottish Water and SEPA to discuss matter relating to both development planning and development management. The meetings provide an opportunity to share progress on plans and strategic initiatives within the respective organisations, as well as to consider more local site specific issues where water and drainage may be an issue. It has fostered personal relationships between officers which allow issues to be quickly raised and more effectively resolved.

Goals:

The objective of the meetings is to foster greater collaboration and sharing of information between the three organisations.

Outcomes:

The meetings have been successful in improving the quality of liaison between the organisations which has had benefits for the preparation of development plans, action programming, and the processing of individual planning applications.

Name of Key Officer:

Andrew McNair



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Culture of Continuous Improvement

Costing the Planning Service

64 A main focus for the planning service during the reporting period has been to look at the cost of the services we provide and how we can maintain and improve our decision making performance for all types of applications. The Council participated in the 'Costing the Planning Service' exercise which was conducted in 12 planning authorities in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), the Improvement Service and Heads of Planning Scotland (see case study).

Training and Development

65 A culture of sharing information and knowledge is encouraged within the planning service and across the Council.

66 The Council recognises the need for lifelong learning to gain new skills, to improve performance and to develop careers. Falkirk Council Employee & Organisational Development Team work in partnership with all Council Services to identify the needs of employees, Services and the Council as a whole and to provide training programmes to meet these needs. These programmes are publicised in a quarterly bulletin, with access being open to all employees and attendance being based on identified training needs and agreement of managers. Opportunities range from half day IT sessions to year long management development/leadership programmes.

67. The Council is accredited to deliver the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) programmes at various levels. It is recognised that attendance at training programmes can be difficult for some people because they work flexible hours or learn in a different way. Learning materials are available in different formats including books, DVDs as well as e-learning material. Most of these resources are work related but there are also resources to help staff with personal development training needs too. Officers in the planning service have attended a range of courses during the reporting period. This has included courses on protected species, coal mining risk assessments, (see case studies) General Data Protection Regulation and permitted development. Course details and notes are shared electronically with other officers by those attending. Officers also regularly attend RTPI Chapter events and Heads of Planning Scotland meetings. Email updates from Scottish Government, Planning Aid for Scotland and others are also circulated and day-to-day issues arising discussed at Unit meetings. We subscribe to the Idox Information Service, and use of the Knowledge Hub is also encouraged.

68 We continue to encourage training for all Councillors. During the reporting period we have carried out training sessions for members joining the Planning Committee. Sessions were organised and run by officers from the planning service, roads service and legal services. The sessions were also attended by officers from children's services and environmental health who may on occasion attend the Planning Committee to offer expert advice.

69 During our next reporting period we will be reporting on a further training event organised for all members on the planning process and planning procedures. The session is planned to cover the assessment and determination of planning applications, planning conditions, planning obligations, developer contributions, the development plan, development valuation.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Culture of Continuous Improvement

Case Study Title:	
Costing the Planning Service	
Location and Dates:	
Area Wide, 2018/19	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of Continuous Improvement 	
Key Markers:	
6 - Continuous Improvement 12 - Corporate Working Across Services	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Improvement
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Scottish Government/Improvement Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIPFA
Overview:	
<p>The Local Government Benchmarking Framework for 2016-17 identified that Falkirk Council ranked 29 out of 32 local authorities for the cost of the planning service per planning application (indicator ECON2). In April 2018 the Council's Scrutiny Committee instructed officers to carry out a review of the costs of service provision. A corporate cost of planning working group was set up to carry out the review and report back in April 2019. The working group embarked on a series of listening events with staff in the Development Management, Development Planning and Environment units as well as with technical and systems support staff to inform the review and staff also participated in the Improvement Service's national Costing the Planning Service exercise.</p>	
Goals:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Council's performance for indicator ECON2 in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework; • Identify areas of service improvement to reduce the cost of operating the planning service; and • Identify opportunities to generate additional income. 	
Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's performance improved from 29th in 2016-17 to 16th in 2017-18 for indicator ECON2; • Cost per planning application reduced from £6,741 in 2016-17 to £4,600 in 2017-18; • Service improvement and income generation opportunities worth a total of £469k per year by 2023/24 were identified; and • To drive the implementation of these improvements forward, the project has been included within the Council of the Future project's Services of the Future work stream. 	
Name of Key Officer:	
Danny Thallon	

make it happen

council of the future

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Culture of Continuous Improvement

Case Study Title:	
Coal Authority - Coal Mining Risk Assessments	
Location and Dates:	
Falkirk Council Offices - 5 and 6 December 2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of Continuous Improvement 	
Key Markers:	
6 - Continuous Improvement 12 - Corporate Working Across Services 13 - Sharing Good Practice	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Collaborative Working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill Sharing
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff • Other Local Authority Planning Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Agencies • Local Developers
Overview:	
<p>The Coal Authority were invited to give presentations on 5th and 6th December on coal mining risk assessments for the benefit of local developers, key agencies, staff within Falkirk Council and other local authorities involved in processing planning applications, building warrants, dealing with contaminated land and development projects. The training session on 5th December was for the benefit of staff within the Council and other local authorities. A general invitation to the staff training session was circulated via Heads of Planning. The session on 6th December was for the benefit of local developers and other key agencies; the coal authority presentation being part of a wider ranging developer workshop event arranged by Falkirk Council Development Services.</p>	
Goals:	
<p>The goal was to improve knowledge of local developers, key agencies and staff within the Council and other local authorities on the role of the Coal Authority, their expertise and of issues related to the coal mining legacy throughout the country and in particular within the central belt.</p>	
Outcomes:	
<p>A better understanding of the legacy and impacts of coal mining and of the role of the Coal Authority in the planning and development process. We have been able to share knowledge with local developers, with Falkirk Council staff and with staff who attended from Fife Council, South Lanarkshire Council and Clackmannanshire Council.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority</p>	
Name of Key Officer:	
Bernard Whittle	



The Coal Authority

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Culture of Continuous Improvement

Case Study Title:	
SNH Training – Protected Species	
Location and Dates:	
Falkirk Council, 21 November 2018	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance 	
Key Markers:	
6 - Continuous Improvement 12 - Corporate Working Across Services 13 - Sharing Good Practice	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill Sharing
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff • Other Local Authority Planning Staff • Key Agency - SNH 	
Overview:	
<p>The Council's biodiversity officer was re-tasked to other work leaving a deficit in knowledge of protected species within Development Management.</p> <p>We aimed to fill the gap in knowledge by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up a project group to create a procedure on dealing with protected species; • Train staff to give them a basic understanding of protected species issues. Open this training up to staff from other departments and Councils; • Split training between the classroom and on site. <p>A procedure has been put in place to ensure all applications are screened by experienced Rangers for potential protected species impacts. Case officers can access advice on protected species from the Rangers. These officers are qualified in dealing with a variety of protected species. This has resulted in skills sharing and collaboration between departments.</p> <p>SNH gave a classroom based training session setting out the legislation, what to look for in relation to protected species. Example surveys were used to show how they should be assessed. This training session was open to those from other departments in the Council and officers from Clackmannanshire Council. A second on-site training session was provided by Falkirk Council Rangers.</p>	
Goals:	
To give case officers an understanding of protected species legislation, how to assess applications in the context of potential impacts on protected species, how to assess protected species surveys and put in place an internal procedure for considering protected species in planning applications.	
Outcomes:	
All case officers have an understanding of what to consider in terms of protected species and planning applications. We have been able to share this with colleagues in other departments and Clackmannanshire Council.	
Name of Key Officer:	
Katherine Chorley	



Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Culture of Continuous Improvement

Digital Transformation

- 70 The use of e-planning for the online submission of planning applications and use of the Council's website for public access to information continues and is encouraged. During the reporting period changes have been made to Committee reports to provide electronic links to background papers and plans. Members have been encouraged to view applications online. Committee papers are issued to members in electronic form, paper copies are not provided.
- 71 The use of the Citrix operating system is being rolled out across the Council. This is allowing the roll out of mobile and flexible working across the service with greater use of laptops, tablets and smart phones as a way to assist in maintaining a high quality service in the context of changes in staffing levels and budget restrictions. However, the prioritisation of this roll out has resulted in our plans to make the planning enforcement register available online being delayed.

Legal Agreements

- 72 The progress of legal agreements to conclusion is closely monitored by officers in the planning service and legal service. During the reporting period communication links between the planning service and legal service have been improved. A spreadsheet is maintained for all legal agreements and available to relevant line managers in the planning service and legal service for monitoring purposes. The spreadsheet includes information on key contacts, heads of terms, timescales and progress to conclusion, causes of any delays. Updates are regularly circulated and highlighted.
- 73 A cross service planning obligations monitoring group has been established to monitor the receipt and spend of developer contributions. The group comprises representatives from the planning service, legal services, financial services and all council services required to implement projects benefiting from monies received.

Part 2: Supporting Evidence

Development Plan Scheme 2018
Falkirk LDP2 Project Plan and Stage Plans
LDP2 Proposed Plan
LDP2 Facebook Page
Development Plan Update Newsletter
Housing Land Audit 2018
Denny Sports Pitch Study
Historic Environment Strategy
Zetland Park Masterplan
Core Paths Plan
Community Food Growing Strategy
Biodiversity Action Plan
Forest Estate Plan
Urban Woodland Management Plans
Falkirk Council Complaints, Annual Report 2017/18
Supplementary Guidance
Development Management Customer Survey
Standing Orders
Development Management Charter
Enforcement Charter
Falkirk Council Complaints Procedure
Development Services Service Plan 2017 – 2022
Corporate Plan
The Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery Plan 2016 - 2020
Tenants Talk magazine
Strategy for Community Engagement 2019 - 2024
Falkirk Council website
Falkirk THI website
Costing the Planning Service Report
Council 5 Year Business Plan

Most of the above have direct url hyperlinks - If you hover over the text a hand will appear with the link - click on the text and this will take you directly to the relevant website/document.

Part 3: Service Improvements 2018-2019

In the coming year we will:

Service Improvement	Timescale	Objective
Submit LDP2 Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers	July 2019	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11
Complete LDP2 Examination	April 2020	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11
Complete Review of SG10 Education and New Development	October 2019	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11, 15
Consult on first batch of LDP2 Supplementary Guidance	March 2020	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11, 15
Publish Development Plan Monitoring Report	March 2020	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11
Establish new Employment Land Audit Process	March 2020	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11
Finalise Core Paths Plan	March 2020	Promoting the plan led system. Performance markers 7 - 11
Make enforcement register available online	March 2020	Driving improved performance. Performance marker 6
Review of old minerals permissions	March 2020	Driving improved performance. Legislative requirement. Performance marker 6
Arrange Developer/Agent Workshop	March 2020	Driving improved performance. Simplifying and streamlining. Performance markers 3, 12, 13
Meet benchmarking partners to review the PPF	December 2019	Simplifying and streamlining. Performance markers 12, 13
Costing the planning service - wide ranging review of processes and procedures	March 2020	Simplifying and streamlining. Performance markers 12, 13
Appointment of Graduate Planner	August 2019	Driving improved performance. Performance marker 6

Delivery of our Service Improvement Actions in 2017-18

Service Improvement	Complete
Publish LDP2 Proposed Plan	Yes.
Complete Review of SG od SG12 Affordable Housing	Yes.
Complete Review of SG10 Education and New Development	Draft published and consulted on.
Publish Development Plan Monitoring Report	Data gathering ongoing. Town Centre Health Check regarded as priority and completed.
Establish new Employment Land Audit process	No.
Make enforcement register available online	No. Council wide roll out of other work on computer systems has taken priority and affected resources available to progress.
Review procedures for drafting and concluding planning obligations	Yes but will be monitored and reassessed if required.
Increase public access to electronically stored planning application information	No. being picked up as part of wider review of process and procedures in costing the planning service project.
Continue review of old minerals permissions	Ongoing.
Arrange developer/agent workshop on application validation requirements	Yes.
Meet with benchmarking partner to review PPF and share best practice	Yes.

Part 4: National Headline Indicators

A:NHI Key Outcomes - Development Planning

Development Planning	2018-2019	2017-2018
Local Development Planning		
Age of LDP at end of reporting period	44 months	32 months
Will the LDP be replaced by its 5th anniversary according to current development plan scheme?	Yes	Yes
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers changed over the past year?	No	No
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	Yes	Yes

Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
Established land supply (units)	5743 units	5865 units
5-year effective housing land supply programming (units)	2850 units	2893 units
5-year housing supply total capacity (units)	4675 units	4521 units
5-year effective housing land supply target (units)	3375 units	3375 units
5-year effective land supply (years)	4.2 years	4.3 years
Housing approvals (units)	511 units	807 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years (units)	2627 units	2671 units
Marketable employment land supply (hectares)		49.6 ha
Employment land take up during reporting year (hectares)		1.5 ha

Source: Draft 2018/19 HLA base date June 2018

Part 4: National Headline Indicators

B:NHI Key Outcomes - Development Management

Development Management	2018-2019	2017-2018
Development Management - Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre- application advice	30.3% (183)	39.9% (242)
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	9.1% (1)	0% (0)
Application approval rate	95.5%	95.8%
Delegation rate	94.4%	96.4%
The percentage of applications valid upon receipt	46.1%	47.9%
Decision making timescales. Average number of weeks to decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major developments • Local developments (non-householder) • Householder developments 	23.3 weeks 10.7 weeks 6.3 weeks	20.3 weeks 9.5 weeks 5.6 weeks
Legacy cases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number cleared during reporting period • Number remaining 	6 12	9 6

Part 4: National Headline Indicators

C:Enforcement Activity

Enforcement Activity	2018-2019	2017-2018
Time since enforcement charter published/reviewed. Requirement: review every 2 years	11 Months	9 Months
Complaints lodged and investigated	65	92
Breaches identified - no further action taken	33	14
Cases closed	26	43
Notices served	1	4
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Part 4: National Headline Indicators

D: Consideration of National Headline Indicators

Local Development Planning

During the reporting year, work on LDP2 has continued, with the Proposed Plan approved in August 2018, and the 8 week consultation period completed by November 2018. Subsequently, the focus has been on collating the submissions received, and preparing the Council's responses (Schedule 4s). Additional time sought by elected Members to scrutinise the Proposed Plan resulted in some delay to the approval and publication of the Proposed Plan, but effective project planning has allowed time to be made up and we expect to submit to Scottish Ministers in July 2019 as per the 2018 Development Plan Scheme, and to adopt the plan in July 2020, within the five year life of LDP1.

Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs

The 5 year effective land supply has remained fairly static over the course of the year, and remains short of an effective land supply. Delays or lack of movement on a number of key allocated sites continue to depress the effective land supply figure. Most of these sites are in the hands of housebuilders or landowners who wish to develop them, but progress remains slow. The Council is doing what it can to support delivery, as discussed elsewhere, but ultimately has limited control over delivery. The total capacity of sites within the 5 year effective supply has increased. Housing approvals have fallen, and the rolling 5 year completion rate is also marginally down, reflecting a lower completion figure for 2017-18.

In relation to employment land, the main activity has been at Earls Gate Park where industrial units and a biofuel demonstration plant have been constructed. There are other energy developments in the pipeline at Grangemouth. There is also active interest in plots within Abbotsford Business Park, and a preferred developer has been appointed for the Falkirk Gateway, which should see take up increase over the coming years.

Part 4: National Headline Indicators

D: Consideration of National Headline Indicators

Development Management

Project Planning

We still encourage developers and agents to seek pre-application advice from the planning service, other Council services and consultees. Currently Falkirk Council does not charge for this pre-application service. The service is publicised on our website. Procedures are in place to record the percentage of planning applications where applicants have sought pre-application advice.

There is a continued reluctance from applicants and agents to enter into formal processing agreements despite the proactive stance we take to encourage their use by providing guidance and a sample template on our website. However, with all applications for major and local developments we continue to use informal project plans. This includes a commitment to enter into pre-application discussions with the applicant and statutory consultees, to identify timescales for submissions, responses and Committee dates, to maintain regular contact with the applicant/agent, to identify and seek to resolve any planning issues that may arise to ensure that statutory timescales are met or where appropriate extensions of time agreed or applications withdrawn.

Decision making Timescales

Regular monitoring of caseload is inherent and has helped us maintain a consistently high level of performance. Our decision making timescales continue to be above the national average for major, local and householder applications. Our delegation rate remains high but we recognise that the number of applications received and complexity of cases can easily skew performance figures.

We are continuing to monitor legacy cases. Although the number of legacy cases is higher than last year they are not all the same cases and are a consequence of delays on the part of applicants and agents and agreed extensions of time. We will be making use of 'stop the clock' procedures to accurately reflect timescales.

Validation

The percentage of applications which are validated on first receipt (46.1%) is disappointing. Despite clear guidance on our website and discussion at this years developer workshop session it still tends to be agents that regularly submit applications who fail to make valid submissions. The same errors continue to be made by agents in haste to submit without adequate information and ignoring pre-application advice.

Enforcement Activity

We currently have one part time planning enforcement officer. Case load is regularly monitored. Planning officers assist with the investigation of enforcement complaints along with other application and planning enquiry caseload.

Part 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics

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

Overall	Total Number of Decisions	Average Timescales (weeks)	
	2018-19	2018-19	2016-17
Major Developments	9	23.3 weeks	7.0 weeks
Local Developments			
(non- householder)	494	8.4 weeks	9.5 weeks
Local: less than 2 months	(79.2%)		
Local: more than 2 months	(20.2%)		
Householder Developments	256	6.3 weeks	6.1 weeks
Local: less than 2 months	(94.5%)		
Local: more than 2 months	(5.5%)		
Housing Developments			
Major	3	34.2 weeks	104.0 weeks
Local Housing Developments	82	14.9 weeks	11.8 weeks
Local: less than 2 months	(43.9%)		
Local: more than 2 months	(56.1%)		
Business and Industry			
Major	2	8.1 weeks	23.6 weeks
Local Business and Industry Developments	11	8.1 weeks	9.0 weeks
Local: less than 2 months	(63.6%)		
Local: more than 2 months	(36.4%)		
EIA Developments	0	N/A	
Other Consents (As listed in the guidance) (right)	98	7.0 weeks	7.4 weeks
Planning/Legal Agreements			
Major: average time	1	38.7 weeks	347.9 weeks
Local: average time	10	37.3 weeks	16.8 weeks

Part 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics

B: Decision-making: Local Reviews and Appeals

Type	Total Number of Decisions	Original Decision Upheld			
		2018-2019		2017-2018	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local Reviews	2	2	100	4	33.3
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	4	2	50	3	50

C: Context

Comments on decision making timescales are provided in Part 4 of the PPF. In relation to timescales for legal agreements it is noted that the figure in this reporting period is slower than last year but still faster than the national average. We continue to closely monitor the progress of legal agreements, set timescales for conclusion, seek withdrawal of applications, determine or agree extensions of time where there are delays.

Part 6: Workforce Information

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
	Chief Executive	Director	Head of Service	Manager
Head of Planning Service			1	

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount	FTE
Development Management	11	10.8
Enforcement	1	0.6
Development Planning	5	4.3
Specialists ¹	7	5.5
Other ² (inc. staff not RTPI eligible)	11	9.6

¹ Includes Environment team

(Biodiversity, Access, Landscape, Design/Conservation Officers and Environment Co-ordinator)

² Includes Planning & Environment Manager, Parks and Bereavement Co-ordinator, Parks Development Officers, Technical Support Officers and Countryside Rangers

Staff Age Profile	Number
Under 30	0
30-39	8
40-49	7
50 and over	21

Part 7: Planning Committee Information

Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full Council Meetings	2
Planning Committees	10
Area Committees	N/A
Committee Site Visits	13
Local Review Body	4
Local Review Body Site Visits	4

1

2

Performance Markers

Driving Improved Performance

	Performance Marker	Council Response/Evidence
1	Decision Making:	<p>National Headline Indicators show that our decision making timescales for major, local and householder developments are above the national average.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Part 4: National Headline Indicators Part 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics</p>
2	Project Management:	<p>We promote the use of processing agreements. There is guidance and a template on our website. Agreements are invited during pre-application discussions and in correspondence with applicants and agents.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Part 4: National Headline Indicators Pre-application, paragraph 22 Processing agreements, paragraph 24 Legal agreements, paragraph 25</p>
3	Early collaboration:	<p>We encourage early dialogue with applicants/agents and offer a free pre-application service. Guidance is provided on our website.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Case studies: Skinflats Managed Re-alignment Denny Sports Pitch Audit SEPA/Scottish Water/Falkirk Council Tripartite meetings Coal Authority - Coal risk assessments SNH Training - protected species Historic environment, paragraphs 12 - 13 Greenspace, paragraphs 14, 20 Canal regeneration, paragraph 21 Infrastructure investment and development delivery, paragraph 41 Engagement, paragraph 46 Service and unit structure, paragraphs 51 - 53 Collaborative working, paragraph 58 Community planning, paragraph 59</p>
4	Legal Agreements:	<p>The progress of applications subject to legal agreements is closely monitored and applications are reported back to Planning Committee for reconsideration if not determined within 6 months.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Legal agreements, paragraph 25</p>
5	Enforcement Charter:	<p>The Charter is up to date.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Charters, paragraph 26</p>
6	Continuous Improvement:	<p>Progress on National Headline Indicators and Service Improvements are set out in the relevant sections of the PPF</p> <p>PPF Reference: Case study - Costing the planning service Part 1: Qualitative narrative and case studies Part 2: Supporting evidence Part 3: Service improvements 2019 - 2020 Part 4: National Headline Indicators Part 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics</p>

Performance Markers

Promoting the Plan-Led System

	Performance Marker	Council Response/Evidence
7	Local Development Plan less than 5 years since adoption	The LDP was adopted in July 2015, and was 44 months old at the end of the reporting period. PPF Reference: Part 4: National Headline Indicators Case study - Falkirk LDP2 Proposed Plan
8	Development Plan Scheme demonstrates next LDP <ul style="list-style-type: none">● On course for adoption within 5 year cycle● Project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	DPS 2019 indicates adoption of LDP2 in July 2020. i.e. within 5 year timescale. Project planning continues through preparation of stage project plans, 3 weekly team meetings, and three monthly senior management meetings. Slippage in the publication of the Proposed Plan in summer 2018 has been made up, and submission to Scottish Ministers should be achieved in July 2019, as per the DPS timetable. PPF Reference: Case study – Falkirk LDP2 proposed plan Development Planning, paragraphs 30 - 34
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Member workshops were held in June 2016 to examine options for inclusion in the MIR and to review the pre-MIR issues responses and 'call for sites' submissions. Meetings were held with a sub-group of the Administration in August and September 2016 to explore key choices and provide a further opportunity for input to the process. Elected member engagement has continued post-MIR with briefings on the consultation response and issues for the Proposed Plan. PPF Reference: Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies Part 4: National Headline Indicators Development Planning, paragraphs 30 - 34
10	Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Pre-MIR consultation took place in 2015/16 with all stakeholders including key agencies, business, housebuilders, community councils and the public using a variety of techniques. This was carried through into the MIR consultation which took place from February 2017 to May 2017. PPF Reference: Part 1: Quality of Service and engagement Case Study – Falkirk LDP2 Proposed Plan Development planning, paragraphs 30 - 34
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through SPGs produced on <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Information required to support applications; and● Expected developer contributions	The Council has a comprehensive suite of 16 SG documents have now been approved by the Scottish Government. Overall, the SGs provide guidance on the detailed implementation of policy, particularly in respect of design and placemaking, built and natural heritage, and infrastructure and developer contributions. Where relevant the SGs provide guidance on the information required to support applications and checklists for applicants to ensure that all the relevant issues have been considered and addressed pre-submission, to give the applications the highest chance of prompt assessment and determination. Those SGs which set out required developer contributions provide clear guidance on the circumstances in which contributions will be required, the scale of those contributions, and how the contributions are derived, thereby demonstrating proportionality. The Council has committed to reviewing contribution rates and thresholds through LDP2. In the meantime, a draft review of SG10 on Education and New Development has been published which takes account of updated information to set revised contribution rates. PPF Reference: Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies Case study - Town Centre Health Checks Quality of Outcomes, paragraph 09 Quality of Service and Engagement, paragraphs 22 - 24, 32 - 34

Performance Markers

Simplifying and Streamlining

	Performance Marker	Council Response/Evidence
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit	<p>Regular liaison meetings between planning and other relevant services are held on housing, education, and open space. A further group meets to oversee the delivery of the council's SHIP programme. These ensure the integration of plans and strategies, sharing of information, and liaison on day to day issues, including current planning applications. Close liaison is also maintained with community planning, with the planning service supporting all aspects of the current locality planning process. The Planning Obligations Monitoring Group brings together colleagues from planning, finance, legal and the various delivery services to ensure that developer contributions are taken forward and applied timeously to relevant projects.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Quality of Outcomes Quality of Service and Engagement Governance Case studies: Falkirk Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative Town Centre Health Check Abbotshaugh Bridge Carron Dams Skinflats Managed Realignment Denny Sports Pitch Audit SEPA/Scottish Water/Falkirk Council Tripartite meetings SNH training - protected species Coal Authority - coal mining risk assessments Costing the planning service Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies, paragraphs 05 - 08, 10 - 13, 19 - 20, 21 - 23, 41, 46, 51 - 53, 58 - 59, 63</p>
13	Sharing Good Practice:	<p>Staff have attended forums, conferences, training events and RTPI Chapter events. The Knowledge Hub is used to share information and experience. We have liaised with our SOLACE benchmarking family members in reviewing our previous and current PPF. Training events have been organised and other authorities invited to attend.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Case Studies: SEPA/Scottish Water/Falkirk Council Tripartite meetings SNH training - protected species Coal Authority - coal mining risk assessments Feedback from previous report Training and Development, paragraphs 65 - 69</p>

Performance Markers

Delivering Development

	Performance Marker	Council Response/Evidence
14	Stalled Sites:	<p>We have cleared legacy cases during the reporting period and continue to work with applicants and agents to keep numbers to a minimum. Deadlines for dealing with applications are set and monitored. Minded to grant decisions are reconsidered within 6 months if not determined. Timescales are discussed and agreed with applicants/agents.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Quality of Outcomes Quality of Service and Engagement Governance Processing agreements, paragraph 24 paragraphs 35 - 36, 40, 42, 46</p>
15	Developer Contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set out in development plan and ● In pre-application discussions 	<p>Our LDP and SGs provide clear guidance on the circumstances in which contributions will be sought, the scale of those contributions and how they have been calculated. We demonstrate that where contributions are sought this is in accordance with circular 3/2012. The LDP and SGs are published on our website. Staff refer to the documents in pre-application discussions and correspondence. We consider impact of developer contributions on development viability in liaison with applicants/agents and the District Valuer. There is regular corporate officer liaison regarding contributions to take account of changing circumstances. Where appropriate, payments are phased to mitigate the impact on development viability and cash flow.</p> <p>PPF Reference: Quality of Outcomes Quality of Service and Engagement Governance Case study- SEPA/Scottish Water/Falkirk Council Tripartite meetings Paragraphs 22 - 26, 30 - 34</p>



Falkirk Council
Development Services