

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2018-2019



JULY 2019

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INTRODUCTION

This is the eighth Planning Performance Framework (PPF) prepared by Scottish Borders Council for its Planning Service and covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. Whilst the report provides information on the performance of the Council's Planning Service against National Headline Indicators and on Scottish Government Official Statistics, it also sets out the work and activities of the wider Planning, Housing & Related Services division in delivering the Council's corporate priorities; enabling good quality development in the right locations, balancing the needs of the community, economic growth and protecting the environment. The report also highlights how we are continuing to improve performance in the challenging budgetary environment and adapting the service to meet the needs of the Borders.














The Performance Markers RAG (Red/Amber/Green) report issued by Scottish Government in respect of last year's PPF awarded 12 Green, 2 Amber and 1 Red RAG ratings. This was an increase of 3 Green ratings from the previous year which reflects the continuation of the positive improvement journey the Planning Service has been on in recent years. The one Red marker related to the number of legacy cases (applications more than a year old) still in the planning system. A number of concerted actions have been taken to reduce the backlog in applications and improve performance in this area, which will improve our rating in this Performance Marker.



PART 1 - DEFINING AND MEASURING A HIGH-QUALITY PLANNING SERVICE

QUALITY OUTCOMES

- 1.1 Improving Design quality continues to be a key theme for the service. We held a well-attended award event at Marchmont House to present the 2018 Design Awards and Commendations following the assessment of the entries submitted last year; a total of 5 awards and 3 commendations were presented. There were a total of 26 high quality entries in four categories: new build -residential, new build – commercial, placemaking and works to existing buildings and the winners in each category are set out below. For the first time the award scheme was sponsored externally by the private sector.

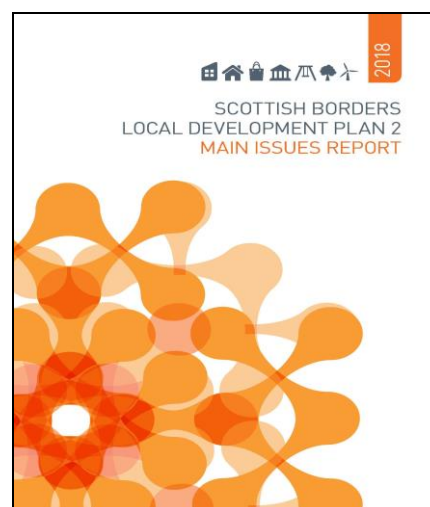
<p>AWARD NEW BUILD: RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>Presented to: Alan and Gill Wilkinson</p> <p>Applecross, The Loan, Gattonside</p> <p>Designed by: Camerons Architects, Galashiels</p> <p>Constructed by: Fjordhus Ltd, Galashiels</p>  	<p>COMMENDATION NEW BUILD: RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>Presented to: Mr & Mrs Dobson</p> <p>Singdean, by Bonchester Bridge</p> <p>Designed by: Ray Cherry Architect</p> <p>Constructed by: Self-build with John Elliot, Newcastleton</p>  
<p>AWARD NEW BUILD: COMMERCIAL</p> <p>Presented to: Scottish Borders Council</p> <p>Broomlands Primary School Kelso</p> <p>Designed by: Stallan-Brand Architecture, Glasgow</p> <p>Constructed by: McLaughlin & Harvey, Bellshill</p>  	<p>COMMENDATION NEW BUILD: COMMERCIAL</p> <p>Presented to: Scottish Borders Council</p> <p>Leader Valley School, Earlstoun</p> <p>Designed by: SBC Architects Scottish Borders Council</p> <p>Constructed by: Esh Construction, Livingston</p>   
<p>AWARD WORKS TO EXISTING: COMMERCIAL</p> <p>Presented to: The Three Stills Company Ltd</p> <p>Borders Distillery, Hawick</p> <p>Designed by: Gray Macpherson Architects LLP, Edinburgh</p> <p>Constructed by: M & J Ballantyne Ltd, Kelso</p>  	<p>AWARD WORKS TO EXISTING: RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>Presented to: Mr and Mrs Hodge</p> <p>Fellowshill Farmhouse, Horndean</p> <p>Designed by: Kathleen Hallquist (Associate Director; Squire & Partners)</p> <p>Constructed by: Prime Building Ventures Ltd, Berwick</p>  



1.2 The Design Awards Scheme was itself shortlisted for the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning 2018 but unfortunately we were not successful in receiving an award this year. We are currently developing plans for the running of 2020 Borders Design Awards and staff have also supported Dumfries and Galloway Council in the delivery of their second Design Award competition this year.

1.3 The Planning Service has a design toolkit to improve and promote design quality. This includes Supplementary Planning Guidance on Placemaking & Design and other policy and design guidance, planning briefs, training for officers and members and suitable policies within the Local Development Plan.

1.4 We published the Main Issues Report (MIR) for Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) in November 2018 and carried out consultation on the document until January 2019. The forthcoming new Local Development Plan will replace the existing adopted LDP1 2016. The MIR was prepared following a call for sites, extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation and members briefings. The MIR sought public views on a range of key material considerations, asked a series of key questions and set out, where possible, suggested preferred and alternative approaches for addressing identified issues.



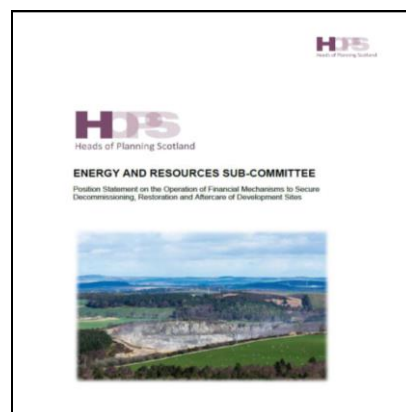
1.5 Public engagement on the MIR was undertaken during the consultation period and included a series of 9 drop-in sessions and 7 workshops across the Scottish Borders. The responses received are currently being considered by officers and these will help guide the production of the LDP2. The Development Plan scheme sets out our programme of works to deliver the new Local Development Plan and we remain on schedule to produce the new Local Development Plan in 2021.



- 1.6 We commenced work to incorporate the findings of the [Tweedbank Masterplan](#) into Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for the Lowood Estate at Tweedbank. The Council has purchased Lowood Estates as a strategic economic and housing development site and is progressing a marketing strategy for the development of the site in conjunction with the production of the SPG. The SPG will identify site issues and constraints, address infrastructure requirements, identify developable areas and appropriate land uses within them. The SPG will confirm how on-site works should be phased and lay down good planning practice and placemaking and design principles to ensure a high quality development is achieved. The SPG builds on the work undertaken in the production of the [Central Borders Business Park SG and SPZ](#) for Tweedbank.
- 1.7 The findings of the [Galashiels Masterplan](#) are also being used to inform the development of the Local Development Plan proposals and policies for Galashiels.
- 1.8 We continue to roll out our programme of conservation area based regeneration schemes. Following the success of our schemes at Hawick, Kelso and Selkirk we are currently running a [CARS scheme in Jedburgh](#). This 5 year project commenced in summer 2017 and will secure a total investment of around £2.5m through CARS grants, associated public works and private investment to deliver a number of key regeneration projects within the town. The second year of the project has resulted in a number of completed projects on the ground as well as a series of well-attended technical lectures and progress is being made with the priority buildings.
- 1.9 We have also been successful in a joint bid with Economic Development colleagues for a CARS scheme for [Hawick Town Centre](#). This scheme is centred on the High Street and aims to stimulate a total of £4.5m of investment through the use of £1.5m of public investment over the next five years. This will be the fourth CARS scheme undertaken by the Council in recent years. This project highlights collaborative working within the Council to deliver the [Hawick Action Plan](#). The Action Plan, funded by a Scottish Government grant of £3.26m, will assist in delivering a variety of business infrastructure projects, helping drive the local economy and encouraging business growth and new investment in the town. There is on-going work to ensure that we co-ordinate this work with the opportunities being afforded by the [Hawick Protection Flood Scheme](#), including the delivery of a £3/4m active travel scheme through the town funding by SUSTrans and other regeneration proposals in the town.
- 1.10 We continued to support Council projects over the last year, in particular environmental assurance and detailed design of works associated with elements of the Hawick FPS including flood wall design and public realm works at the new bridge crossings. The service has also

continued to provide design services in support of the Galashiels central area public realm works and associated establishment of a Coulter's Candy Trail.

- 1.11 As part of the work of Heads of Planning Scotland's Energy & Resources Sub Committee the service has contributed to the updating and revision of the Position Statement on the Operation of Financial Mechanisms to Secure Decommissioning, Restoration and Aftercare of Development Sites (revised October 2018)

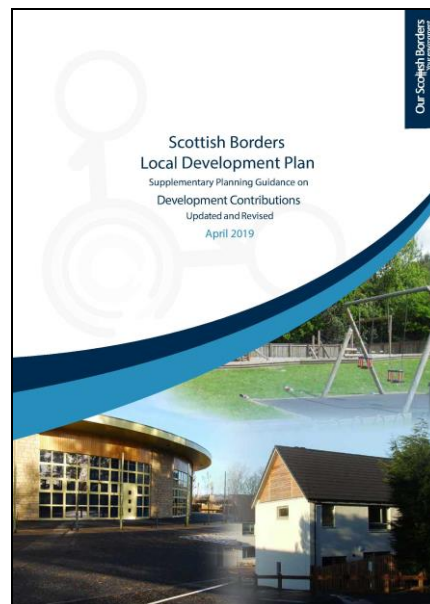


QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

- 1.12 From 1 April 2018 we introduced an enhanced pre-application enquiry service on a more formalised basis with a charging schedule which enables clearer and more focussed engagement with the Planning Service. This service has been well received by customers and will mean that in future years we are able to increase the percentage of applications subject to planning advice. The new service has introduced standards that will ensure improved quality of guidance and a more consistent approach than the previous informal arrangements, including early engagement on development contributions and the use of processing agreements, enabling developers to proceed with greater confidence. This process also allows early engagement between applicants and the range of Council services relevant to their development. Meetings may also be attended by other statutory stakeholders such as SEPA, SNH and Scottish Water.
- 1.13 We provide an on-line form to submit a pre-application enquiry and have guidance notes on the web site which set out the fee charges (when applicable), the proportionate information requirements in submitting a request and what the Council will provide in terms of a response and the timescale for doing so.
- 1.14 As part of a review of Council services the Housing Strategy, Policy and Development Team have now been incorporated into the Planning Service with the new division being re-branded as Planning, Housing & Related Services. This new arrangement has enabled us to provide renewed focus on the delivery of affordable housing and the opportunity of closer working on the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and on a range of associated issues including energy efficiency, fuel poverty, defective buildings, older peoples and young people's strategies. We also continue to work closely with Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) through the Borders Housing Alliance and we have a specific partnership working approach with Eildon Housing Association and Hart Builders Ltd for the assessment and delivery of their projects. We are looking to develop this approach with other developing RSL's. Some of that joint working within the service and with Eildon Housing Association is demonstrated in the redevelopment of 121-123 High Street Selkirk highlighted in Case Study 1 below.
- 1.15 We continue to make extensive use of planning processing agreements for both local and major planning applications and provide guidance on their use to our customers. We determined 405 applications with agreements last year: 4 major applications, 350 local applications and 51 for other consents. A total of 87.2% of applications with processing agreements were determined

within the agreed timescales. All of the major applications were determined within agreed timescales.

- 1.16 We continue to refine the development contributions system. We monitor funds on a monthly basis and report periodically to Corporate Management Team and the Council. Supplementary Planning Guidance on Development Contributions is available on-line that sets out a consistent and transparent approach to implementing the Council's policy. The most recent update of the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Developer Contributions is available on the Council website. The SPG was updated in January 2019 to reflect cost indexation. As part of the Council's quality assurance process we will be auditing the service in 2019. This will test the embedding of this policy aspect within a number of Council services.



Case Study 1:	
REDEVELOPMENT OF 121-123 HIGH STREET, SELKIRK	
Location and Dates:	
Works completed on site in Spring 2019 which was the culmination of over 7 year's active engagement by the planning and housing services in promoting the redevelopment of the site.	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Quality of service and engagement 	
Key Markers:	
Performance Markers 3, 10, 11 & 12	
Key Areas of Work	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Conservation • Regeneration • Town Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing • Collaborative Working • Placemaking • Housing Supply
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eildon Housing Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBC Planning and Housing Staff
Overview:	
<p>The building on the site was originally built in the mid-19th century as The Selkirk Co-operative Store and continued to operate until about 20 years ago when the Co-op relocated to another nearby site, leaving the building vacant. It lies in a prominent corner position within the Selkirk Conservation Area.</p> <p>A scheme to convert the building to housing in 2006 did not progress beyond obtaining planning permission. The condition of the building deteriorated and it was added to the national Buildings at Risk Register in 2008. Some cosmetic works were carried out to the window openings to improve its appearance as a result of local concern. The building was identified as a "priority" building within the bid to establish a Selkirk CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) as its condition was blighting</p>	

the adjacent buildings including the category B Victoria Halls.

The award of funding to establish the Selkirk CARS scheme in 2013 resulted in the project officer engaging with the building owner and his architect to develop a scheme to refurbish the building and convert it to housing. It became clear that the overall condition of the building had worsened and that significantly more funding than was available from the CARS scheme would be needed to meet the “conservation deficit”. A funding bid by the owner was made with the help of the CARS Project Officer to the Town Centre Empty Homes Fund, but was unsuccessful. Thereafter, with the support of the Council’s Housing Strategy Manager, further options for both refurbishment and new build were explored using National Housing Trust /Local Authority Variant. Whilst not successful the opportunity was taken to discuss the project to Eildon Housing Association and they followed this up with the building owner and their agent. Ultimately Eildon took forward a scheme to provide a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom flats in a new development.

The total cost of the scheme was £1.374m including a grant of £773k provided by Alia Ltd, through their arrangements with the Scottish Government to assist in the funding of new social housing provision.

Goals:

The initial goal had been to repair and refurbish the existing building on the site to both enhance the appearance of the conservation area and bring back the floor space into use for housing as a priority project of the Selkirk CARS.

Once it was established that the retention and conversion of the existing building was not economically viable but there was still an opportunity for the redevelopment of the site to be undertaken with the building owner working in partnership with the local RSL Eildon Housing Association, the focus changed to encouraging a high quality new building on a prominent site that both respected the conservation area but also was clearly contemporary. A key early decision was to use a circular town feature on the corner as a “hinge” to turn the corner and echo a tower structure at the far end of the High Street.

Outcomes:

The project has now been completed on site, providing 11 flats for affordable rent in the town centre. The new building makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the conservation area and the adjacent buildings are no longer blighted by the derelict building. As a bonus, at the same time, another cleared site on the opposite site of the adjacent Victoria Halls has been redeveloped for a private house, and the Selkirk CARS scheme funded rebuilding the gatepiers to the Halls, resulting in a much improved setting for this building which is a focus for the annual Common Riding events. Although not directly funded by Selkirk CARS, the redevelopment of the site has left a lasting legacy in the town. It has been delivered due to positive and collaborative working between planning and housing officers at the Council, a local RSL, the property owner and Scottish Government.

The quality of the redevelopment has been acknowledged within the industry by the project being awarded the “Small Affordable Housing Development of the Year (social rent) 2019” in the Scottish Home Awards. <https://www.scottishhomeawards.com/sha/winners/winners-2019>

Before:After

Name of key officers

Mark Douglas, Lead Officer - Heritage & Design

Gerry Begg, Lead Officer - Housing Strategy, Policy & Development

- 1.17 There is an extensive range of planning information available on the Council's web site and customers are encouraged to self-serve and utilise the benefits of the [web site](#) and [Public Access](#). All Community Councils now interact with us electronically. We have also provided training for Community Councils and other groups on our electronic services to enable them to access information 24/7. We provide case officers contact details for applicants, consultees and respondents on all correspondence. All information on planning applications is made available on the [Public Access Portal](#), including details of specialist officers from the wider planning

service who have commented on the application. The service has developed Local View Fusion which is badged as [Find it](#) on the Council's website, which makes environmental information available to customers in a spatial format. We are also looking to develop story maps related to the Local Development Plan and other projects.

- 1.18 Electronic delivery of services is a key service aspiration and we continue to promote [electronic submission of applications](#) with agents and developers through stakeholder meetings and offers of training on the system. The yearly average of planning applications received on-line now stands at 81.4% for planning, an increase from 65% in 2017/18 and 78.3% of Building Warrant applications are now received on-line. In 2016/17 we re-engineered our working practices in ePlanning and eBuilding Standards. The re-design was to ensure we took full and effective use of our IT systems and streamlined business processes. Both the Development Management and the Building Standards Services have now transferred to a fully electronic application management and processing system, including mobile working. We are implementing the Enterprise case management system and a mobile working solution for staff in Building Standards and Development Management in the autumn of 2019. We aim to roll out mobile tablet devices for staff in other service areas in due course.
- 1.19 We submitted three projects for last year's [Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning](#) which were Borders Baywatch - The management of Coldingham Beach, Partnership Working – Delivering Affordable Housing and our Design Awards Scheme. Whilst the Design Awards scheme was short listed unfortunately we did not received an award this year.
- 1.20 The [Housing Land Audit 2018](#) confirms that the established land supply has increased from 8,585 in 2017 to 9,342. Part of the reason for this increase is the inclusion in the audit of sites within the Council's [Supplementary Guidance on Housing 2018](#) . The 5-Year Effective Housing Land Supply figure is 3,668units, which equates to 5.11 years of land supply. Completions have reduced from 659 in 2008 to 222 in 2017/18, and is a decrease of 28 units on the number of houses completed in 2016/17. This is the lowest ever recorded completion rate and the level of development activity within the Borders is mainly being sustained due to publically funded projects being delivered by Registered Social Landlords. At present, there remains limited activity by private sector housing developers.
- 1.21 The figures in the Employment Land Audit 2018 confirm that we are comfortably meeting employment land need. The established Employment Land Supply is 103.48Ha, down marginally from last year's figure of 107.42 Ha. The volume of employment land take up was 3.85Ha, up from 2.51 Ha last year and a significant increase from just 0.7Ha in 2016/17. Both Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and SESplan set a requirement to provide a broad range and choice of sites for differing type of business and industrial use. Whilst the overall land supply is healthy there have been difficulties in parts of the Borders in providing the necessary range and choice of sites for all uses. This issue is particularly acute in Peebles and the Tweeddale Area and as part of the Local Development Plan process we engaged consultancy support and worked very closely with colleagues in Economic Development to refine the policy framework for business/commercial development and identify sites to meet business needs. A range of options and questions have been asked on this topic in the Main Issues Report and we are currently assessing the result of the MIR consultation, the findings of which will be incorporated in the Proposed Local Development Plan.
- 1.22 We have a Development Management Charter and an up to date [Enforcement Charter](#) which is available on the Council's web site.

- 1.23 As a result of pressures for wind turbines development, and to allow development to proceed, the Council developed a strategy of both on and off site mitigation or compensatory environmental works by means of specific development contributions being paid to the Council. The developments to date have resulted in the establishment of two funding streams; one for ecological / habitats projects and one for cultural heritage. A case study for the Penmanshiel Compensatory Planting scheme is included as Case Study 2 below. The cultural heritage contributions have been used to seed fund the Whiteadder Archaeological Project.

Case Study 2:	
PENMANSHIEL COMPENSATORY REPLANTING SCHEME	
Location and Dates:	
Currently 20 landholdings in various locations across the Scottish Borders. A Section 69 Agreement was established between the Council and RES Group (Penmanshiel Energy Ltd); in 2014 which established the Penmanshiel Compensatory Replanting Scheme.	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Governance 	
Key Markers:	
Performance Markers 12, 13 and 15	
Key Areas of Work:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary Working • Collaborative Working
Stakeholders Involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC Consulting • Scottish Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • RES Group
Overview:	
<p>The proposed development of the Penmanshiel Windfarm (11/01464/FUL) was approved at appeal in 2013. This scheme involved the need to fell over 177ha of coniferous forestry but retaining a small area of broadleaves. Condition 28 of the consent required implementation of a compensatory replanting scheme to replace woodland lost as a result of the development, in accordance with the Scottish Governments Control of Woodland Removal and the Council's policy as set out in the Scottish Borders Woodland Strategy. A fund totalling nearly £950,000 was set up to provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replanting Fund (both amenity / environment planting and commercial planting (£707,883)) • Management Fund (£200,000) • Legal Fees Fund (£40,000) <p>SAC Consulting were awarded the project facilitation contract and have worked with the Council, who also received a management fee which allowed for backfilling of the Ecology Officer's post to project manage the scheme. This scheme has demonstrated extensive collaborative working between the partners in the public and private sector and set a template for off-site compensatory planting that could be utilised by other local authorities. Information on the scheme can be viewed at:</p> <p>http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120104/forestry_management/1704/penmanshiel_compensatory_replanting_grant_scheme_pcrs</p> <p>A system was established to assess applications and score them on the basis of location (within 20km of Penmanshiel wind farm gives additional points) and benefits delivered (landscape,</p>	

biodiversity, access, water quality, natural flood protection). The Council's Land Use Framework mapping tool is used to identify some of the multiple benefits. This can be viewed using the following link:

<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20013/environment/723/biodiversity/5>

Up until the end of May 2019 a total of 23 schemes have been approved totalling 109ha of which 76ha have been planted. Current projections indicate targets will be exceeded when the scheme closes in 2020.

Goals:

The key goal was to provide planting to compensate for the loss of woodland for the wind farm development, made up of 79.2ha Productive Planting and 40.9ha Amenity planting.

Outcomes:

The scheme is on target to provide over 110ha of compensatory planting on the ground across various sites in the Scottish Borders, including 13.16ha of mixed woodland at Ladhope and 4ha productive broadleaf at Copland as well as 55.75ha of productive conifer at Headshaw.

In addition, to planting on the ground, the scheme has provided 4 work placements to individuals which have led to subsequent employment in the sector. The majority of tree planting and fencing contractors used by applicants were from the Scottish Borders, thus providing a welcome contribution to the local community.



Name of key officer

Dr Andy Tharme, Ecology Officer

- 1.24 We hosted a visit from Scottish Government's Chief Planner in August 2018 where we looked at and discussed key economic development opportunities in the central Borders linked to City Deal and the Borders Railway Blueprint and had a walking tour around Hawick examining key regeneration sites linked to the Hawick Action Plan and the Hawick Flood Scheme. We finished the tour with a visit to the newly opened Hawick Distillery.



- 1.25 We have been successful in securing of external funding for the final year of the HER (Historic Environment Record) Polygonisation project, which featured as a [Case Study 2](#) in last year's PPF, for 2019-20. All the polygons for the Stirling and Clackmannanshire HER were completed by 31 March 2019.
- 1.26 The GIS team continue to develop the spatial information to support the service and are expanding the role in producing information available corporately and to the general public through web-maps, 'Find it' and 'WebGIS'. Work has progressed towards upgrading the system to new technology, ArcGIS Online/Portal. We plan to use the new system to expand and improve the use of our spatial data on the Council's website and engage with the public in new ways using Story Maps.
- 1.27 The Council has a formal complaints procedure and has the facility for customers to complain using an on-line form. We received 51 complaints about Planning, Housing & Related Services last year, which is an increase of 23 from 2017/18. The majority of the complaints were not sustained but those that were upheld all related to a failure to respond timeously to a customer's enquiry or complaint. Procedures have been reviewed to ensure that customers receive responses within a reasonable timescale or are advised of any delay, together with the reasons why this has occurred.

GOVERNANCE

- 1.28 We are continuing to develop our member training programme which will focus on design matters. This includes a review of existing development within the Borders, in-house and external training and workshop sessions. Training is available to any new members prior to service on Planning and Building Standards Committee and Local Review Body. The Council has

an established Planning Working Group, which engages members in the Development Plan process from an early stage. Members' briefings are also provided on a corporate basis and these include updates on planning matters.

- 1.29 The Planning & Building Standards Committee and the Local Review Body are held on a monthly basis, normally sitting on the first and third Monday, respectively, of each month during the day. In 2018/19 the Planning & Building Standards sat 11 times to consider 26 case reports and undertook 2 site visits and the Local Review Body met 11 times to determine 40 case reports and undertook 3 site visits.
- 1.30 A high percentage of planning applications 97.4% were determined by officers under delegated powers and we had an approval rate of 95.5% for all applications. This approval rate has increased 2.1% over last year and has been sustained consistently at this high level over a number of years.
- 1.31 The figures reported in the National Headline Indicators in 2018/19 demonstrate that for the main reporting categories of planning applications we delivered slightly slower determination times to that achieved in 2017/18. This was influenced by a period of restructuring for the service, turnover in staff, the reduction in overall staff compliment to deliver services and only having a full complement in the Development Management Team in the last reporting quarter of the year. Despite this we have again sustained figures that are better than the annual national performance for Scotland as a whole in all reported application categories.
- 1.32 In Development Management, the traffic light system we introduced two years ago, continues to help us manage performance, prioritising action and staff resource to avoid unnecessary delays in determining applications. We continue to refine this system to ensure we maintain a focussed and effective management of outstanding legacy cases, particularly those subject to outstanding legal agreements. This process will be further enhanced with the implementation of the Enterprise case management system and mobile working for staff.
- 1.33 As identified in our improvement actions last year there has been a concerted effort to reduce the number of legacy cases (applications more than a year old) in the system. This has resulted in the number of legacy cases cleared almost doubling to 81 from 43 in 2017/18 and this has resulted in a significant reduction in the backlog of applications from 100 to 19. Of the remaining cases, many of these have been tied into a Planning Processing Agreement to enable their effective management to a determination.
- 1.34 The services proactively uses Planning Processing Agreements for the management of planning applications, and this approach has been embraced by developers/applicants. Of those applications subject to an agreement, 100% of the major applications were determined within the agreed timescale in the processing agreement and for all applications, 87.2% overall were determined within the agreed timescale.
- 1.35 Guidance on our use of processing agreements, together with agreement templates, is available on the Council's website. We continue to refine our internal processes and dialogue with applicants to ensure that all applications subject to such agreements are determined on time.
- 1.36 We twin-track planning applications and the legal process of concluding section 69 or 75 agreements, and this led to further improvement in determination times in recent years. Many of the legal agreements are managed by using processing agreements. The requirements of the Council's development contributions policy means that we enter into a large number of legal agreements to secure contributions and it is critical that there are discussions at an early stage

between the Planning Service and applicants/developers to allow the effective managing of this process.

- 1.37 The implementation of our People Plan and the outcomes of Council services review in creating the new Planning, Housing & Related Services division has led to improvement in cross sector collaborative working, highlighting where we should direct resources and potential models for future service delivery. This has been in areas such as the SHIP, Older People's Strategy, homelessness, extra care housing, affordable warmth and a range of energy efficiency schemes. The service integration we have delivered already means we can provide more effective responses to development proposals, have greater consistency of decision making and achieve a wider understanding of the cross linkages and relationships within the Council that help deliver planning and corporate objectives.



- 1.38 We continue to face significant budget pressures into 2019/20 and beyond. We have stringent budget monitoring processes to monitor and report on budget pressures on a monthly basis. A close working relationship between budget holders and finance staff has developed to address these issues. The Council's new financial management system Business World, provides more effective financial control and greater self-service ability for managers to monitor and control their budgets.
- 1.39 The Planning Working Group of members and officers is a mechanism for debate and discussion on issues, policies and procedures. As a direct result of the Working Group's deliberations, planning policy was adapted to take account of the changing circumstances and role of Town Centres. This led to a one year Town Centre Core Activity Pilot Scheme being implemented in Galashiels and Hawick and some changes introduced on a wider basis. The findings of this pilot scheme will be taken forward for consideration into the next LDP.
- 1.40 Key members of staff are also involved with a range of corporate transformation projects and projects within the Council's capital investment programme, and the development of the City Deal, Borderlands and the creation of the new South of Scotland Enterprise Agency.

- 1.41 The skills, knowledge and design capabilities developed in the Selkirk Flood Scheme, along with the strong corporate working ethos, have allowed the Planning Service to add value to the flood scheme for Hawick. The development of strong links between planning, flood risk management and the project team has been important in developing a positive approach to collaborative working to deliver these two major Flood Protection Schemes and delivering the added benefit through the incorporation of an active travel scheme with the wider flood project bringing multiple benefits to Hawick.
- 1.42 We continue to explore ways to work more effectively and we positively engage with other authorities and agencies to share knowledge, information and best practice. There are a number of working protocols in place with bodies such as SNH, SEPA and Scottish Water and a selection of the key organisations and groups that we are involved with. We engage with a wide range of working groups, agencies and stakeholder and are involved in a number of multi-disciplinary/agency initiatives, which were set out in the partnership working table included in [last year's PPF](#) .
- 1.43 In addition to involvement with the groups listed in that table, there is regular dialogue with peers from other authorities about case specific applications, such as the cross border implications of renewables development but also on general matters of policy and procedure.

CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- 1.44 How we delivered last year's improvement actions is set out in Part 3 of this document, as is the list of improvements actions we intend to deliver this year.
- 1.45 The Council is undertaking a fundamental review of service provision and recently launched its "Fit for 2024" programme. This is one of the biggest transformation programmes the Council has embarked on and will reshape the whole Council and how it operates. Staff information sessions are being held to update staff on the programme and to set out the opportunities and challenges the organisation faces.
- 1.46 We have a central training budget to ensure staff meet their Continuing Professional Development obligations and have access to relevant training opportunities. We have provided funding for staff to undertake longer term study which is funded in full, or in part, by the Council and have just approved a part time planning course for one of our staff. Staff in Building Standards, who have recently received their degrees, have now been successful in obtaining Surveyors posts within the service. We are assisting our Roads Planning Technician in undertaking a BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering Graduate Apprenticeship.
- 1.47 Our People Planning process has identified that we have an ageing workforce and that we need to provide opportunities for young people. In last year's PPF we recorded that we only had three members of staff under 30. We have managed to create technician/support posts and maintain some Modern Apprentices and this has seen an increase in staff under 30 to 7 and also increases in the 30-39 age group as well. We will continue to look for ways for the service to "grow its own" staff and to encourage more young people to enter the service.
- 1.48 The lunchtime CPD training sessions we run have been very successful and attendance has been opened up on a wider Departmental basis so that they do not principally focus on planning matters for planning staff. We have had sessions on topics such as GIS, the implementation of CARS schemes, public transport issues and energy efficiency. These are well attended and the programme will continue for 19/20. We also continue to run training and skills sessions through

the Jedburgh CARS scheme and we have had lectures on Property Repair and Maintenance and Scottish Brick History plus a 2 day lime render workshop.



- 1.49 Team meetings are used as a method to ensure that all staff are aware of relevant changes at both national and local level. Information from a weekly manager meeting is cascaded down to the relevant teams. This meeting provides a valuable medium for discussion and feedback.
- 1.50 The Council's staff appraisal process enables planning managers to reinforce the performance culture at all levels of the service. Using this process, staff have been encouraged to be involved in projects to deliver the aims set out in this Planning Performance Framework, but also wider departmental and corporate objectives.
- 1.51 We continue to develop our ePlanning and eBuilding Standards services and officers now use a fully electronic application management systems along with mobile devices for their site visits. We continue to refine our processes and procedures and will be implementing the Enterprise case management system and mobile App later in 2019.
- 1.52 Effective engagement with other authorities and organisations to consider best practice and shared learning has been set out already in this document.
- 1.53 The case studies identified already in this document along with the submission we made to the Quality in Planning Awards highlights our clear determination to examine and investigate new ways of working and engaging with stakeholders and highlight good practice and design quality.
- 1.54 Training is available for all new members in advance of their sitting on the Planning & Building Committee and the Local Review Body and we are continuing to develop our training programme for members specifically focussing on design matters. This continues to be supplemented by presentations to members on particular topics and the production of members briefing notes.

PART 2 - SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

2.1 Part 2 of this report was compiled drawing on evidence from the following sources:

- [Scottish Borders Council Planning Performance Framework 2018/19](#)
- [Scottish Borders Housing Land Audit 2018](#)
- [Scottish Borders Retail Survey 2018](#)
- [Scottish Borders Employment Land Audit 2018](#)
- [Scottish Borders Town Centre Footfall Report 2018](#)
- [Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Audit 2018](#)

- [Scottish Borders Village Services Audit 2016](#)
- Place GIS Systems - [Find It.](#)
- Regulatory Services budget
- Uniform data management system.
- [Public Access ePlanning system](#)
- Development Management / Building Standards Workload and Performance Briefing Notes. Monthly bulletin for members.
- Building Standards Balanced Scorecard
- [Scottish Borders Council Web Site planning information pages](#)
- Development Management Improvement Plan 2014
- Development Management Charter 2018
- [Enforcement Charter 2018 & Guide to Enforcement Charter 2018](#)
- [Scottish Borders Council Corporate Plan](#)
- [Regulatory Services Business Plan.](#)

2.2 The documents and information mentioned above are available on-line or by approach to Planning & Related Services.

PART 3 - SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS 2019-20

- 3.1 The Planning Service has identified a number of key service and performance improvement measures for **2019-20** and these are set out below:
- 1 Roll out the next stage of our staff and members training programme.
 - 2 Complete review of on-line service delivery.
 - 3 Complete the roll out of Enterprise Case Management System and Mobile App.
 - 4 Complete final actions of People Plan II and examine new service delivery options through "Fit for 2024" programme.
- 3.2 To ensure the improvements set out in the PPF are monitored effectively a 6 monthly priority update report will be prepared for the service to ensure that we are on track to deliver the identified improvements on time.

DELIVERY OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS 2017- 18

- 3.3 The specific commitments made in the PPF last year, along with the actions taken and progress made, are set out below:

COMMITTED IMPROVEMENTS AND ACTIONS 2017/18	Complete?
1. Develop and expand our staff/member training programme Action: Work has been completed in terms of the roll out of lunch time training sessions and their availability to a wider number of staff. The officer and member training on design is still being developed and will be rolled on in the later part of 2019. This is to include provision of training by external providers, workshop sessions and visiting development sites throughout the Borders.	On-going
2. Complete re-engineered eDevelopment processes for Development Management/Building Standards and implement Enterprise case management system and mobile working for staff.	Complete in part

Action: Business process re-engineering has been completed and staff in Development Management and Building Standards have moved to fully electronic management of applications and mobile working through use of tablet devices. The further refinement of this service will be provided through the implementation of the Enterprise Case Management software and a Mobile App. This has been agreed by IT and will be implemented in the late Autumn of 2019.	
3. Undertake case management and capacity review including priority action on legacy cases and cases subject to outstanding legal agreements. Action: A full and thorough review of the outstanding cases has been carried out by the service manager and a case review held with the relevant case officers. Priority action for the disposal of such cases have been identified and carried out. This has resulted in 81 being removed from the system and 19 remaining to be determined. Of these, many are being managed through the use of processing agreements.	Complete
4. Undertake People Planning II process for service to further review workforce, service and budget priorities for the coming period. Action: The second People Planning review for the service has been completed and was published and shared with staff in January 2019. There are a range of key actions that have been delivered already from the action programme and the small number of outstanding actions have been delayed due to the Fit for 2024 review process that the Council is embarked upon.	Complete
5. Commence review of on-line service delivery. Action: Work has started and is on-going to develop our web pages and realise the full potential of GIS and Story Maps.	On-going

PART 4 - NATIONAL HEADLINE INDICATORS

A: NHI Key outcomes - Development Planning:	2018 -2019	2017 -2018
Local and Strategic Development Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of reporting period (Requirement: less than 5 years) Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year? (Y-earlier/Y-later/N) Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? 	SESplan (Approved June 2013) 6 years 1 months old SESplan 2 Rejected by Scottish Ministers Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (Adopted May 2016) 3 year 2 months old Yes No Yes	SESplan (Approved June 2013) 5 years 1 months old SESplan II with Scottish Ministers Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (Adopted May 2016) 2 year 2 months old Yes No Yes

(Y/N)		
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established housing land supply 5-year effective housing land supply programming 5-year effective land supply total capacity 5-year housing supply target 5-year effective housing land supply housing approvals Housing completions in the last 5 years 	Housing Land Audit 2018 9,342 units 3,668 units 7,735 units* 3,589 units** 5.11 years 904 units*** 1,405 units Employment Land Audit 2018 103.48ha 3.85ha	Housing Land Audit 2017 8,586 units 3,469 units 6,979 units 3,898 units 4.45 years 171 units 1,489 Employment Land Audit 2017 (draft) 107.42ha 2.51ha
Development Management	2018 -2019	2017-2018
Project Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> application approval rate delegation rate validation 	50.9% 100% / 4 95.5% 97.4% 60.1%	0%***** 70% / 7 93.4% 97.2% 68.6%
Decision-making timescales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> major developments local developments (non-householder) householder developments 	13.9 weeks 9.0 weeks 7.0 weeks	12.4 weeks 7.7 weeks 6.8 weeks
Legacy Cases (applications more than a year old) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of cases cleared during reporting period Number remaining 	81 19	43 100
C: Enforcement Activity	2018 -2019	2017-2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) Requirement: review every 2 years Complaints lodged and investigated Breaches identified - no further action taken Cases closed Notices served 	14 months 206 98 170 13	2 months 154 118 156 8

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Action • Reports to Procurator Fiscal • Prosecutions 	3 0 0	1 0 0
D: NHI Key outcomes – Commentary		
Notes *This figure includes all sites which commence programming within Years 1-5 and any residual capacity thereafter. The figure also includes 608 units from small sites, as within the HLA 80% of all small sites are considered to be effective. The remaining 20% of the small sites are not included within this figure, as they are considered to be potentially effective (Years 6-7). **Based on the SESPlan Housing Land Supplementary Guidance (November 2014), Table 3.1 Housing Land Requirement by LDP Area. *** The number of units approved between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019. This includes LRB and DPEA decisions. It should be noted that this is a different methodology to the previous year.		

PART 5 – SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL STATISTICS

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

Category	Total number of decisions 2018-2019	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2018/19	2017-2018
Major developments	4	13.9	12.4
Local developments (non-householder)	639	7.9	7.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	500 139	6.4 13.3	6.9 11.8
Householder developments	354	7.0	6.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	299 55	6.3 11.3	6.5 9.6
Housing developments			
Major	1	15.4	n/a
Local housing developments	51	12.2	9.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	29 22	7.3 18.7	7.2 14.1
Business and industry			
Major	0	n/a	n/a
Local business and industry developments	38	8.3	6.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: less than 2 months • Local: more than 2 months 	26 12	6.4 12.5	6.3 9.1
EIA Developments	0	n/a	n/a

Other consents*	185	7.0	6.3
Planning/legal agreements**			
• Major: average time	2	13.9	n/a
• Local: average time	3	53.5	22.9
<p>* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 7 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.</p> <p>** Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973</p> <p>*** All applications subject to processing agreements are excluded from the official statistics</p>			

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

		Original decision upheld			
Type	Total number of decisions	2018-2019 No. %		2017-2018 No. %	
Local reviews	32	12	37.5	25	67.6
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	10	2	20	1	20

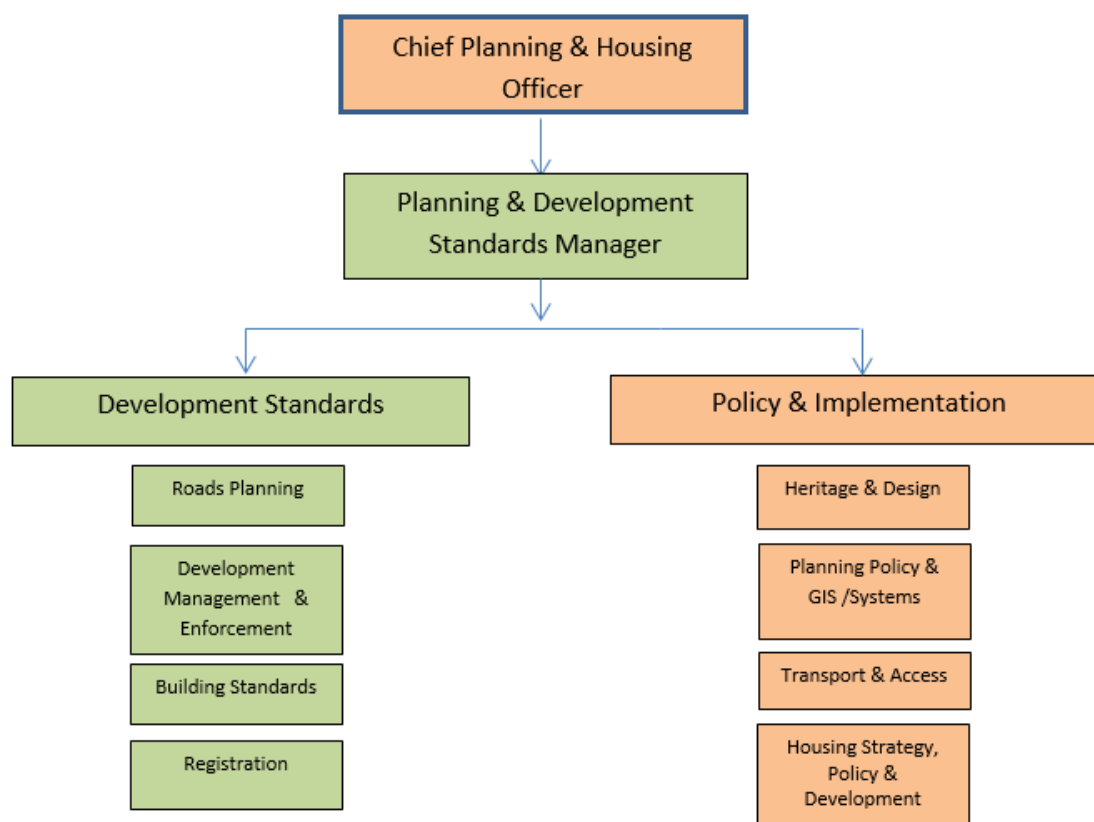
PART 6: WORKFORCE INFORMATION

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

Staff Age Profile	Head Count
Under 30	7
30-39	17
40-49	18
50 and over	30
Total	72

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount
20 (4 Licentiate members)	72

Planning, Housing & Related Services



PART 7: PLANNING COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full Council meetings	11
Planning committees	12
Area committees	24
Committee site visits	2
Local Review Body	11
LRB site visits	3

PART 8 - PERFORMANCE MARKERS

- 8.1 The following table sets out the performance markers that the Scottish Government use to consider performance by local planning authorities. This PPF highlights the evidence submitted by Scottish Borders Council to demonstrate how it has sought to meet those markers.

	Performance Marker	Evidence
DRIVING IMPROVED PERFORMANCE		
1	Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	Part 1 – paras – 1.18, 1.31, 1.32, 1.33, 1.34, 1.35 & 1.36 Part 3 – para 3.3 & Committed Improvement & Action 3 page 19 Part 4 – NHI Table page 20 Part 5 - Table A page 22
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications <u>and</u> availability publicised on planning authority website	Part 1 – paras 1.15, 1.17, 1.34 & 1.35 Part 4 – NHI Table pages 20
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: - availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications - clear and proportionate requests for supporting information	Part 1 – paras 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.16, 1.17 Part 1 – Case Study 1 page 8 Part 4 – NHI Table page 20
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of ‘resolving to grant	Part 1- paras 1.16, 1.33 & 1.36 Part 5 – Table A - page 22
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Part 1 – para 1.22 Part 4 – NHI Table page 20
6	Continuous improvements: - show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators - progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report	Part 1 – paras 1.44 – 1.54 Part 3 – para 3.3 & Committed Improvement Actions 2017/18 Table page 19 Part 4 – NHI Table pages 20 Part 5 - Table A page 22
PROMOTING THE PLAN-LED SYSTEM		
7	LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Part 1 – paras 1.4 & 1.5 Part 4 – NHI Table pages 20
8	Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: - on course for adoption within 5-year cycle - project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	Part 1 – paras 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 1.18, 1.19, 1.20 Part 4 – NHI Table page 20
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Part 1 – paras 1.4, 1.5 & 1.39
10	Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	Part 1 – paras 1.4, 1.5, 1.42 & 1.43 Part 1 - Case Study 1 page 8 Part 1 – case Study 2 page 12
11	Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	Part 1 – paras 1.3, 1.6, 1.11, 1.13, 1.16, 1.17, 1.20, 1.21, 1.26, 1.35, 1.36 & 1.39 Part 2 – Supporting Evidence para 2.1
SIMPLIFYING AND STREAMLINING		
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Part 1 – 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12, 1.14, 1.19, 1.23, 1.26, 1.34, 1.35, 1.40, 1.41, Part 1 - Case Study 1 pages 8 Part 1 - Case Study 2 page 12
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Part 1 – paras 1.1, 1.2, 1.11, 1.19, 1.24, 1.25, 1.40, 1.42, 1.43
DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT		

14	Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one-year-old	Part 1 – paras 1.32 & 1.33 Part 3 – para 3.3 Service Improvements 2018/19 – action 3 page 19 Part 4 – NHI Table pages 20
15	Developer contributions: clear expectations - set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and - in pre-application discussions	Part 1 - paras 1.12, 1.16, 1.23 & 1.36 Part 1 – Case Study 2 page 12