



Community and Enterprise  
Resources

**South Lanarkshire**  
**Planning Performance Framework**  
2021 - 2022

## Introduction

The Planning Performance Framework (PPF) is the Council's annual report on its Planning Service and is used to highlight the activities and achievements of the service between 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The report will be submitted to the Scottish Government who will provide feedback. It is an important tool in managing the performance of the Service and demonstrating year on year improvements in service delivery. In 2021, the Planning Service received seven green, four amber and two red markers which compares favourably to four, seven and two respectively for the first submission in 2013.

The planning system supports the design and delivery of high-quality, successful places which are distinctive, safe, pleasant, welcoming, adaptable, resource efficient and easy to navigate. Distinctive high-quality places are vital to the social, environmental and economic success of our cities, towns and rural communities, and to our health and wellbeing. The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 has the aim of improving Scotland's planning system, to strengthen the contribution planning can make to inclusive growth, to delivering housing and infrastructure and to empowering communities. It also aims to address climate change and the nature crisis and ensuring communities are sustained and supported across Scotland.

The Council's vision to 'improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire' underpins and guides the work of the Planning Service. The Council Plan 'Connect' establishes five ambitions, three of which have direct relevance with the Planning Service. These are:

- Promote economic growth and tackle disadvantage.
- Make communities safer, stronger and sustainable.
- Achieve results through leadership, good governance and organisational effectiveness.

To realise its ambitions, the Council has set out 11 objectives. The Planning Service contributes significantly to the achievement of five of these:

- Improve the availability, quality and access of housing.
- Improve the road network, influence improvements in public transport and encourage active travel.
- Work with communities and partners to promote high quality, thriving and sustainable communities.
- Support the local economy by providing the right conditions for inclusive growth.
- Support our communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration.

A review of both the Council Plan and the South Lanarkshire Community Plan started in early 2021. The Planning Service has been represented in developing these refreshed documents which will ensure spatial planning policy will be embedded in the Council's strategy for the next five years.

Resource and Service action plans establish a strong link between the Council's strategy and the delivery of services. In the case of the Planning Service, our day to day activities are directed to achieving the following Resource objectives:

- Ensure an adequate supply of housing land is maintained.
- Provide Planning and Buildings Standards services which guide and control physical development and land use in the area.
- Sustain the quality of our town and neighbourhood centres.
- Work with developers and public and private sector partners to deliver the Community Growth Areas City Deal project.
- Provide services which help local communities to become more sustainable.

- Regenerate and bring back into use vacant and derelict and contaminated land.

This report describes how the Planning Service in South Lanarkshire has sought to deliver its objectives over another challenging year and how the framework has been used to maintain service delivery and carry out improvements. The accompanying action plan for 2022/23 aims to address the changes required as a result of the new Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 as well as meet other pressures and challenges in the coming year, including the continuing impacts of the Covid19 pandemic.

## **The Planning Service in South Lanarkshire**

South Lanarkshire is Scotland's fifth largest local authority. It covers an area from Rutherglen and Cambuslang, on the boundary with Glasgow, to the Southern Uplands at Leadhills; east to Forth and Biggar; and west to Thorntonhall and Drumclog. Its main towns are Rutherglen, Cambuslang, East Kilbride, Hamilton and Lanark. Within its boundaries there are a World Heritage Site, 30 Conservation Areas, 1,397 Listed Buildings and an extensive rural area which includes the Clyde and Avon Valleys and parts of the Southern Uplands and the Pentland Hills.

South Lanarkshire's Planning Service is part of the wider Community and Enterprise Resource which also includes Roads and Transportation Services, Fleet and Environmental Services and Facilities and Waste and Grounds Services. In turn, the Planning remit sits within the Planning and Economic Development Service which was established in 2016 with a single Head of Service to foster a holistic approach to meeting the Council's aspirations for sustainable economic growth.

The Planning Service's work is undertaken by three teams comprising a Headquarters (HQ) team and two Area Office teams (which also include a parallel Building Standards service under one Area Manager). The centralised service is located in Montrose House, Hamilton. The purpose of the HQ team is the preparation, publishing and monitoring of the Local Development Plan (LDP), assisting the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Planning Authority in its preparation and monitoring of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) (Regional Spatial Strategy going forward) as well as handling the enforcement function and all mineral, waste, energy and large scale windfarm applications. In addition, the team lead on the preparation of the forthcoming Open Space Strategy for South Lanarkshire and work closely with the Council's Countryside and Greenspace team on a wide range of matters relating to green infrastructure and biodiversity. The Council's Strategic Environmental Assessment Officer and technical staff are also located within the HQ team.

The area teams handle the other applications for planning permission, listed building consent, conservation consent, advertisement consent, high hedge applications and certificates of lawful use as well as appeal and reviews. In addition to this work, these teams also assist the HQ team in work on the Local Development Plan and Supporting Planning Guidance.

A team of five Administrative Officers and a Team Leader provide a dedicated service in support of the planning and building standards process. They are located within the body of the planning teams.

## Part 1 – Qualitative narrative and case studies

Part 1 of the PPF provides an opportunity to show how the Planning Service is delivering a high quality planning service over four themes:

- **Quality of outcomes:** The added value delivered by planning.
- **Quality of service and engagement:** The positive actions to support sustainable economic growth, initiatives to work consistently with stakeholders and deliver a positive customer experience.
- **Governance:** Structures and processes are proportionate, effective and fit for purpose.
- **Culture of continuous improvement:** A culture of learning and improving is demonstrated.

Activities that have been carried out by the service in the year between April 2021 and March 2022 are described below in respect of each of the four themes. This includes practices established within the Planning Service over a number of years which continue to evolve and contribute to service delivery and new activities that have been developed in response to emerging issues. The case studies will demonstrate how some of the activities, whether individually or in tandem with others, have contributed to service delivery and improvement.

### Quality of outcomes

The delivery of high quality development on the ground contributes to meeting the needs of communities by providing a high quality of life for residents and creating conditions that encourage investment. This in turn contributes to the objectives of the Council's overall strategy. The following show how the Planning Service is delivering high quality outcomes across the Council area:

The **South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2** was adopted by the Council on 9 April 2021. The Plan's overall strategic vision remains the promotion of continued growth and regeneration of South Lanarkshire by seeking sustainable economic and social development within a low carbon economy whilst protecting and enhancing the environment. Community Growth Areas (CGA), Development Framework and Residential Masterplan Sites will continue to play a significant role in achieving this vision.

Delivery of these key sites is progressing throughout South Lanarkshire.

- Significant output has been maintained at the six CGAs throughout South Lanarkshire and there has been continuous progress on Residential Masterplan Sites such as at Bothwellbank Farm in Bothwell and East Overton in Strathaven.
- The Development Framework site at the former Rolls Royce site in East Kilbride has seen the completion of residential and retail use and the preparation of Supporting Planning Guidance for business use on an extensive brownfield site. Shields Road in East Kilbride and Gilbertfield in Cambuslang are also under construction.
- Work is nearing completion on the redevelopment of a former Council housing estate at East Whitlawburn in Cambuslang which will create over 300 new homes for sale and rent.
- In the rural area, development is taking place at allocated sites, including the former Roadmeetings Hospital in Carluke, Edinburgh Road in Biggar and Muirhead Drive in Law.

In terms of economic development, achievements this year include collaborative working with Economic Development to carry out extensive remediation of contaminated land at Shawfield which will be redeveloped for a range of employment uses, the opening of a new Premier Inn in Hamilton town centre, and new footstores on the site of the former Atholl House in East Kilbride town centre and former Holy Cross High School in Hamilton.

The Planning Service has also worked with colleagues in Economic Development in progressing City Deal projects including a number of transport, educational and community projects in the Community Growth Areas. For example, a new primary school in East Kilbride CGA.

This year saw sustained growth in housebuilding activity despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, however, a five-year land supply is being maintained in each of the four Housing Market Areas. Industrial land monitoring shows there was a decrease in marketable supply as sites begin to come forward to aid economic recovery. However, significant land supply remains at the Strategic Economic Investment Locations and core business/employment areas throughout South Lanarkshire. The Planning Service also undertakes the annual Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey for the Scottish Government. The data is used for various purposes, including allocation of the Derelict Land Fund.

A programme of developing associated non-statutory **Supporting Planning Guidance** (SPG) has been started (case study 3). The Council is taking a lead role in developing guidance alongside NatureScot and East Ayrshire Council in relation to the re-powering of windfarms.

The Council's **Development Plan Scheme** was updated and approved in April 2021. The update this year reflects the changes to the development planning process in the new Planning Act and the transition between the former system and the new. Comprehensive responses were submitted to the Scottish Government on their consultation on NPF4 and the associated regulations and guidance for Local Development Plans. At the same time, work was started on evidence gathering in anticipation of preparing the evidence report.

Planning Officers have worked in tandem with colleagues in Economic Development to meet the challenges of its key **town centres** including Hamilton, Lanark, Blantyre, Larkhall and Cambuslang. The outcome of this work has been incorporated into LDP2 with a key element of the Plan's spatial strategy being to safeguard and protect centres in accordance with the town centres first principle. This has included working in partnership to develop schemes using Scottish Government funding to revitalise derelict land and buildings in a number of centres in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord to develop new housing for rent. Collaboration continued to take place to reflect the relaxation of planning controls supported by the Chief Planner during the last year to enable hospitality businesses to operate as lockdown restrictions were eased, for example, the use of public realm at Castlegate in Lanark as an outdoor hospitality venue.

The Planning Service has worked closely with Housing colleagues to identify appropriate sites throughout South Lanarkshire to achieve the Council's target of **1,000 new homes for social rent**. This includes redeveloping the Council's own land and working with developers to deliver on-site provision.

Sixteen new **Local Nature Reserves** (LNRs) were formally designated by the Council together with an extension to the existing LNR at Langlands Moss in East Kilbride. (case study 2). This covers over 600 ha of designated natural land and will mean the seven main settlements in South Lanarkshire with populations over 10,000 will have nearby access to a LNR. Community involvement and engagement has been a key aspect of this process with over half the sites having a formal associated group. Key outcomes include biodiversity enhancement and climate change adaptation and a contribution to the creation of 20 minute neighbourhoods by providing quality, accessible greenspace close to people's homes that can be used for a range of activities and purposes.

## **Quality of service and engagement**

Providing a high quality and valued service to our varied customer base is the key focus of the Planning Service. The award of Customer Service Excellence in 2014 and its subsequent retention, and year on year improvement in overall outcome, is clear evidence that this is being achieved. The Service seeks to positively engage with customers and stakeholders to understand

their needs and expectations and keep them informed of the work it is carrying out. We continue to engage with communities and partners to seek and address their needs and put in place measures to enhance service provision.

Officers continued to predominately work from home throughout 2021/2022 although opportunities were provided for those wishing to work in the office. A full service has continued to be provided through a range of options, including access to Microsoft TEAMS. Going forward, a form of hybrid working will be introduced in the longer term. This also anticipates the relocation of the service to the main Council building in Almada Street, Hamilton, in a smaller workspace.

The first **Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy** that serves all of the Service's geographical communities and communities of interest was approved by the Planning Committee in June 2021. At the same time, a easy to use **Guide for Community Councils** and other community groups was prepared and published during the year. (case study 5).

98.9% of planning applications are approved by the Service which is a reflection of the 'open for business' culture of the Service to work with applicants and customers to achieve a positive outcome.

**Early engagement** with applicants and developers is still encouraged to provide advice on whether a proposal is likely to be successful and changes that could be made to schemes to improve them and make them acceptable. They also cover the range of supporting information that will be required to assess the proposal. Following the introduction of discretionary charging a review of the process will be carried out in the coming year.

The Council was part of the Scottish Government pilot to help streamline planning services across the country. This encouraged applicants to provide supporting information, such as flood risk assessments or traffic assessments, at the same time as lodging their planning application. Advice on this is found on our website.

Information is set out on the Council's website on the availability and benefits of entering into a **planning process agreement** with the Council and what it involves. The take up has been limited to date but developers are encouraged to use these agreements at pre-applications discussions and throughout the application process.

The Planning Service places a strong emphasis on the **customer experience** by emphasising a smooth process through the application system. An applicant is advised of direct contact telephone numbers and e-mail address of the dedicated case officer when their application is registered or an enforcement enquiry received. The officer dealing with a pre-application enquiry will be responsible for dealing with any application. A Duty Officer system ensures that a professional member of staff is available each day to provide general advice to customers and this continued to be provided in full during lockdown.

**Internal protocols** have been in place for several years with Environmental Services, Roads and Flood Management covering appropriate information required to support and subsequently assess applications and required response times to consultations. Guidance which incorporates principles set out in Designing Streets is available to all developers and applicants. Officers have been involved in a review of parking standards this year.

**Guidance on Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage systems** has been produced in collaboration with the Flood Management team. A closer working relationship with colleagues in Economic Development has been established to facilitate business growth and tackle employability and deprivation through the planning process. A recent graduate will have a key role in providing a link between the two Services. There is also regular liaison with the Countryside and Greenspace team to discuss matters relating to access, biodiversity, open space and the Green Network.

Prior to the issue of **Building Warrant approvals**, applications are cross checked against Planning Permissions to identify potential discrepancies or the need for planning permission. Licensing applications are also cross checked against Planning Permissions. Discussion has taken place with Legal Services to develop a process in association with the introduction of short term lets legislation.

The current edition of the **Enforcement Charter** was approved by Committee in December 2021 and is published on the Council's website. This version of the Charter reflects the significant increase in cases received over the previous two years and now includes a priority system for dealing with complaints to allow resources to be better managed. (case study 8).

A quarterly **complaints** review is carried out to determine if procedural or policy changes are required to address issues raised. This in turn results in changes to procedures and guidance being introduced, where appropriate.

The Planning Service continues to be represented on the **Council's Access Panel/Disability Partnership**. This is a corporate group including representatives from across Council services and volunteers representing disability groups in South Lanarkshire. The aim of the Panel is to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are taken into account in the delivery of the Council's services and functions. Officers have presented during the year on the draft SPG on Development at a Dwellinghouse and on town centre issues. They were consulted on Planning and Building Service's first Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy which resulted in the Strategy and accompanying action plan being strengthened to address issues raised by them. This will include future awareness sessions on how to use the Planning Portal and an overview of the planning system.

## **Governance**

The Planning Service is involved in a range of cross resource working to deliver the objectives of the Council Plan. Weekly meetings of the Corporate Management Team, chaired by the Chief Executive, take place where current issues and policy changes from across the Council are presented by officers. This year reports have been presented on the Scottish Government's consultation on changes to planning fees and placemaking. Within Community and Enterprise Resources, meetings of the Heads of Service and Executive Director occur every three weeks and these are complemented by meetings involving the Head of Service and Planning and Economic Development Managers. Corporate working is helping deliver key projects such as social housing and nursery provision. The delivery of City Deal projects is also kept on progress by liaison throughout the Council.

The following demonstrate how effective governance is delivered:

The Council's key partnership working arrangements are through the **Community Planning Partnership** which has the overall aim of 'improving the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire by working together with communities to design and deliver better services'. Closer working between community and spatial planning activities continues to evolve and opportunities for joint working are being developed. This is particularly relevant with the introduction of Local Place Plans.

The **Strategic Environmental Assessment** (SEA) work in the Council is led and facilitated by the Planning Officer (SEA) based within the Planning HQ team. As well as leading and facilitating SEAs for all Council led plans, including the LDP the SEA Officer is responsible for the production of the biennial State of the Environment Report which provides the SEA baseline for all plans and is an integral part of strategic planning within the Council. Through SEA, Planning has been able to influence the Council's strategic approach to a range of strategies and plans which may impact on the environment, including the review of the South Lanarkshire Community Plan, Council Plan and the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy. (case study 4).

The 2021 edition of the South Lanarkshire **State of the Environment Report** was approved by the Council's Executive Committee in March 2022. This new edition presents new data around the impacts of Covid19 within South Lanarkshire and work to address the climate and ecological crises. The Report will also form a key element of the forthcoming Evidence Report. (case study 6).

A four week and eight week cycle for **Planning Committee and Area Committees**, respectively, is in place to ensure efficient decision making. An application that would otherwise be reported to an Area Committee is presented to the Planning Committee where that Area Committee does not meet within the eight week cycle. The Planning Local Review Body (PLRB) is programmed to meet eight times a year, if required. Meetings of the Planning Committee and PLRB have been held online and streamed since May 2020 and recently recordings have been made available to the public on YouTube.

Planning Officers are working closely with the Council's **Sustainable Development and Climate Change** team in terms of contributing to the overall Council strategy. This included a significant input for the SEA Officer. Officers from both teams attended a Place Standards event in Carluke which had an emphasis on a climate lens.

An awareness session for **elected members** on developer contributions was also held as part of the engagement process for the review of policy and guidance on developer contributions. Putting together a training programme for the new administration in May 2022 forms part of the Service action plan for 2022/2023.

**Council, Resource and Service Plans** identify and programme delivery of the Council's ambitions and priorities. Key work objectives and performance targets are discussed and agreed with staff at annual individual performance and development review meetings. Progress is monitored quarterly by managers and officers and recorded within the Council's bespoke planning and performance platform. This approach to corporate planning and performance management helps ensure the Council's objectives are at the heart of all that the Planning Service does.

South Lanarkshire Council is part of the **Glasgow City Region** which comprises the eight member authorities of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan area. A series of Portfolio Groups are in place and the Head of Planning and Economic Development or the HQ Planning Manager attend the quarterly meeting of the Land Use and Sustainability Group and the Infrastructure Group. In addition, the Council's Director of Community and Enterprise Resources chairs the quarterly Clydeplan Steering Group which drives forward the spatial planning requirements of the City Region. Finally, officers in the policy team attend regular meetings of topic groups.

The Council is a partner within the **Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership**. The focus has turned to the delivery of the 'Blueprint' which is a masterplan for the creation of a Strategic Green Network in the Glasgow City Region. The successful development of Blueprint is a result of close working between the Partnership, Planning and the Countryside and Greenspace Service. A CPD session for Planners on biodiversity, access and open space included a presentation by the Green Network Partnership's Development Officer with a further session looking at real life case studies also proposed. (case study 7).

The Council appointed a Food Development Policy Officer in 2018 with the objective of developing a **Food Strategy** providing a framework for actions to move towards healthier, fairer and more sustainable food systems in the Council's area and to make sure that food plays a positive role in everyone's lives. The Planning Service has worked closely with the Policy Officer in developing the Strategy. A workshop of partners involved in the strategy and the planning service was held in March 2022 to discuss the implications of the new NPF4



## Culture of continuous improvement

The annual Resource Plan reflects the key ambitions and priorities set out in the Council Plan, summarises achievements in the previous year and describes proposals to improve and maintain performance. Action Plans are produced at a Service level which includes measures and timescales for individual areas of work. Outcomes are regularly reported online to inform customers of performance. In this way service improvements and issues are highlighted and actioned in a clear, transparent and timetabled manner. The following show how service improvement continues to be a strong focus of the Planning Service:

Decision making timescales have not improved this year and the reasons for this are described in section 4 of this report. A **review of practices** was carried out in order to streamline development management processes. This included changes to the duty officer rota so that the availability of officers has been reduced to four hours a day while at the same time enhancing the range of information on the website. Consideration is being given to the creation of two new posts that would deal mainly with developer contributions and validation of applications.

Work to retain the **Customer Service Excellence** accreditation continues which in turn has led to identifying a number of changes set out in the Service Improvement Plan for 2022/23.

Elements of benchmarking have been carried out in the last year, including:

- Officers take an active role within Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) by attending and contributing to the work as part of the Executive and the Development Management, Development Planning and Energy and Resources Sub-Committees.
- Clydeplan Steering Group and various topic groups meet quarterly to share and benefit from best practice, for example, Housing Needs and Demand Assessment requirements.
- Improvement Service benchmarking group on Local Place Plans.
- Participation in a Peer Review Group looking at new procedures for the preparation of Local Development Plans.
- The Planning Service is represented on Best Value and Information Governance Groups which aim to ensure procedures across Community and Enterprise Resource are efficient and effective and take account of the potential risks associated with the work of the Service.

The age structure of staff within the Service and the need for **succession planning** has been recognised and the review of the Service has resulted in the creation of a number of graduate planner posts for those who have obtained a planning degree. Several officers have gained promotion this year. (case study 1).

This year, officers have been encouraged to attend a wide range of **online courses** that have been held during the pandemic restrictions. A series of CPD events covering green infrastructure, biodiversity, roads development management, active travel and flood risk management have taken place. (case study 7).

An extensive range of online training courses is available to staff, via the Council's Intranet, with categories including, managing meetings, negotiating skills, effective business writing, information security and complaints handling.

## Case studies

In this section we present case studies which showcase the wide range and variety of work undergone within the Planning Service during 2021 - 2022.

<b>1: Managing change</b>
<b>Location and dates</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Culture of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
6. Continuous improvements 7. Local Development Plan
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance</li> <li>• Development Management processes</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>The 2020/21 Planning Performance Framework submission included case studies on succession planning within the Planning Service and the response to the Covid19 pandemic. The planning system continues to be severely impacted by budget constraints which, in conjunction with the unprecedented impact of the pandemic, has focused the importance of resilience and succession planning to ensure the Planning Service is able to successfully deliver its responsibilities. The case study this year highlights further succession planning that has taken place to maintain and enhance service delivery together with how working practices have developed over the year.</p> <p><b>Succession Planning</b></p> <p>Like many other planning authorities the Planning Service has recently had to address its age structure where more than half of the planning staff in South Lanarkshire are over 50. Last year's case study described the creation of two graduate planning posts within the area teams dealing with planning applications. The posts were successfully filled, one to an internal candidate and the other to an external candidate. The internal candidate was working within the HQ team as an Enforcement Officer and that vacancy was backfilled from this selection process.</p> <p>This year has seen further change with two officers retiring and others changing their working patterns resulting in reduced hours. Together with officers leaving the Council to take other posts</p>

this has challenged the resilience of the service. In recognition of this a review of the resources required to continue to provide a high-quality service was carried out which has resulted in the following changes:

- The creation of a second team leader post in one of the area teams which was successfully filled by an external candidate.
- The promotion of three existing officers to an advanced planner role to manage the increasing workload of major applications.
- The creation of six graduate planner posts on both permanent and temporary contracts.
- The backfilling of two enforcement posts with graduates.

These changes have involved extensive recruitment activity throughout the year. The outcome did not lead to all posts being filled and meant that several vacancies remained at the end of the year. This was due to competition for candidates across Scotland, a reduction in the number of planners graduating and some of the posts involved 23 month fixed term contracts. In order to address this, different approaches to attracting applicants have been undertaken including greater use of social media to highlight the availability of posts. In addition, it is intended to further review the needs of the service in early 2022/23 which may include making all posts permanent; the creation of a post dedicated to developer contributions work; and recruiting a planning assistant to deal with administrative tasks currently carried out by officers.

Notwithstanding these difficulties the officers that have been recruited have made a significant contribution to the operation of the Service. Two of the recent graduates have fitted into the area teams and started to address the backlog of householder applications created by a 51% increase in numbers during 2021/22. This has yet to have an impact on overall performance levels, however, it is anticipated that the effects will be seen during the next year.

A graduate planner has also been employed in the policy team to strengthen its capacity as we move towards the approval of NPF4 and the preparation of the next Local Development Plan and Open Space Strategy. This officer has already made a contribution through her knowledge of community engagement practices and thinking on 20-minute neighbourhoods.

### **Working practices**

Officers have predominantly continued to work from home during 2021/22 although opportunities remain to work in the office if required. Generally, day to day business has been managed well and contact with customers has been maintained to a high level. As noted above, a number of new officers have started. Recruitment has involved online interviews which, while not ideal, has been successful in appointing good quality people. Care has had to be taken to integrate them into the Service and their teams with initial meetings and training carried out face to face. Group chats set up on Microsoft Teams have also allowed the graduates and other officers to raise queries.

In recognition of the resourcing issues a decision was taken during the year to make changes to the duty rota for dealing with general enquiries. Officer availability was reduced from an all day service to one between 9 am and 1 pm. To compensate for the reduced access to an officer a review of the information on the website was carried out and this will be ongoing through 2022/23.

The building which currently accommodates the Service is closing later in 2022 and as a result it will be relocated to the main Council building close by. This will result in a of ratio workstations available to the number of officers of about 1:2 which will inevitably mean hybrid working will become the norm. Consideration will be given on how to accommodate officer requirements while maintaining customer service levels. The Planning and Building Standards Service will

share workspace with colleagues in Economic Development which will allow working relationships developed over the last few years to be retained. The building also houses colleagues in Housing, Legal Services and Community Planning.

### **Goals**

Succession planning has been on the agenda for several years and the approach of employing graduates and developing their skills in the longer term has in the main been successful. Challenges remain in terms of ongoing recruitment, however, further work will be implemented in 2022/23. Practices will continue to evolve as the wider work environment undergoes change.

### **Outcomes**

The case study demonstrates the difficulties in recruiting suitable candidates to deliver a high quality service and implement and manage the upcoming changes to the planning system. The Service will continue to review its processes to address this. Nevertheless, the outcomes have been very positive in terms of promoting existing officers and working with enthusiastic new planners in their first roles. The changes to working practices will continue to evolve as the planning service enters into a new era and, together with the upcoming relocation, will result in further development during the coming year.

### **Names of key officers**

Tony Finn, Planning and Building Standards HQ Manager  
Bernard Darroch, Planning and Building Standards Manager

<b>2: Local Nature Reserves</b>
<b>Location and dates</b>
South Lanarkshire wide. 2015 - 2022
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Quality of service and engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
<p>7. Local Development Plan</p> <p>12. Corporate working across Services</p>
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenspace</li> <li>• Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> <li>• Authority other staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>During the preparation of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (SLLDP2) the provision of 16 new Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and an extension to the only existing LNR in South Lanarkshire was proposed. The process commenced in 2015 when initial discussions regarding the preparation of the new Local Development Plan (LDP) highlighted the fact that the Council were not using the Local Nature Reserve designation process as effectively as other authorities. The designation of LNRs has since been identified as an action in the Council's Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan (2018 - 2022). In addition, the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy (2018 - 2022): Strategic Outcome 2 states that designated and locally important sites are to be conserved and that Local Nature Reserves are to be identified and designated.</p> <p>The process of identifying and designating Local Nature Reserves has been a corporate exercise involving staff in the Council's Planning and Building Standards, Countryside and Greenspace (CAG) and Legal Services. Partners including NatureScot have been key in this process and will continue to be involved as site plans are developed, particularly with regard to sites with other designations; two include Sites of Special Scientific Interest. NatureScot were extensively consulted on the LNR proposals which resulting in their formal endorsement of the plans.</p> <p>Sites were selected by the CAG team on the basis of Council owned land that meets criteria set by NatureScot and recognised national thresholds:</p>

- The sites provide accessible and positive opportunities for raising people's awareness, understanding and enjoyment of, and involvement with, their local natural heritage.
- Sites are of special natural heritage interest in the area, which is to be retained and improved through good management and safeguarding.
- All settlements with a population of more than 10,000 should have direct access to a LNR.
- An additional target is 1 ha per 1000 population: the population of South Lanarkshire population is about 320,000; the target is, therefore, 320 ha of LNR.

The key aim of the new LNRs is to recognise and protect greenspaces which are important for biodiversity, habitat connectivity, recreation, education, community use, climate change adaptation and are of cultural and/or historical significance. Using the LDP as the vehicle for consulting and progressing site designation allows their incorporation in the LDP and helps ensure their long-term value is recognised by the Council and the public. The potential sites were first identified in the LDP Main Issues report (2017) and then confirmed in the Proposed Plan (2018). LDP2 was adopted by the Council in April 2021.

Extensive public consultation took place at both LDP stages and the proposals received considerable public support. One additional site came forward as a result of the consultation on the MIR and was added as a proposal for designation. Neighbours to the sites were directly notified of the LNR proposals as part of the consultation on the LDP Proposed Plan, and there was extensive consultation and engagement with the general public and community groups associated with particular sites. The results of consultations were taken on board and resulted in additional land being incorporated within the boundaries.

In parallel with the LDP preparation process, a draft Management Statement was prepared for each site which gives information on its importance in nature conservation terms and sets out the aims for the site in the future. This document includes information about all the sites and describes the work carried out to date, the extent and type of community involvement, and plans for the future. These Statements were agreed with NatureScot and are available on the Council's website. The formal Declaration of the sites as Local Nature Reserves was approved by Planning Committee on 5 October 2021 and the formal declaration was carried out in early 2022.

## Goals

The creation of new LNRs links to Council Objectives and Values:

- Improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire
- Make communities safer, stronger and sustainable
- Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- Encourage participation in physical and cultural activities
- Work with communities and partners to promote high quality, thriving and sustainable communities
- Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent

The creation of new LNRs also supports the key LDP objectives of enhancing and safeguarding the environment and meeting the needs of communities and contributes to the Plan's overarching theme of addressing the land use issues arising from the impacts of climate change.

## Outcomes

The key outcome is the designation of 16 new LNRs, and an extension to the existing LNR providing over 600 ha of designated natural land.

The fulfilment of criteria associated with LNRs will be met, including providing a minimum area of LNR for the population that is close to many people's homes. The seven settlements in South Lanarkshire with populations over 10,000 will have nearby access to a LNR (Blantyre; Cambuslang; Carluke; East Kilbride; Hamilton; Larkhall and Rutherglen). In addition, the large settlements of Stonehouse; Bothwell and Uddingston will also have a Local Nature Reserve.

This easily meets the project target of 1ha of designated land per 1000 population.

Within three years of the formal designation of a LNR, the Council is required to prepare a full Management Plan for each site. This will expand on objectives and actions outlined in the existing management statements providing detailed information on projects, timelines and potential funding sources. These documents commit the Council to consult, engage with and involve communities in the designation and management of proposed LNRs, and to provide opportunities for all to engage with nature, use sites for volunteering, education and health improvement.

The designation of the LNRs will also deliver positive outcomes in relation to:

- Community involvement and engagement. Currently 52.9% of sites have a formal associated group and the Council will look to develop this, where appropriate, by involving people at various events, work days, and with schools and existing groups. Working with communities will increase representation and give people buy in to their local areas. It also facilitates funding opportunities to progress identified actions and objectives within the Management Plans.
- Biodiversity enhancement and climate change adaptation. The sites will be managed to deliver multiple benefits but with biodiversity and adaptation to a changing climate at its centre.
- Creation of 20 minute neighbourhoods. LNRs tie in well with this by providing quality, accessible greenspace close to people's homes that can be used for a range of activities and purposes. The forthcoming Council Open Space Strategy will build on this concept by identifying improvements that can be made to local outdoor access provision at sites that contribute to multiple goals.

#### **Names of key officers**

Sheila Alderson, Planning Officer  
Chris Waltho, Countryside and Greenspace Manager  
Louisa Maddison, Biodiversity Officer

<b>3: Supporting Planning Guidance</b>
<b>Location and dates</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
7. Local Development Plan
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance</li> <li>• Development Management processes</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>The preparation of the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 was carried out during the period of the reform of the planning system and was adopted in April 2021. The first iteration of the Plan included a suite of Supplementary Guidance (SG) on a range of topics that sat alongside it. However, when it became clear that the ability to produce SG was going to be withdrawn in the new legislation, the view was taken to incorporate matters previously covered in SG into a volume 2 of LDP2.</p> <p>At the same time, the emerging direction of spatial planning policy at a national level identified a number of issues and themes that were not addressed in the proposed LDP2 due to timing. As a result, the view was taken to begin a programme of preparing Supporting Planning Guidance (SPG) based on the guidance on this process in the Development Plan circular. Indeed, reference is made in the adopted plan to this course of action being required to be carried out on a number of specific topics. The case study on Local Nature Reserves is an example of this.</p> <p>The decision was taken to carry out a comprehensive review on guidance on carrying out extensions and other works to dwellinghouses that had previously been set out in the LDP. The extant guidance was out of date and failed to reflect new emerging types of development carried out by householders, for example, decking and garden rooms and changes to permitted development rights. The SPG also provides advice on short term lets and running businesses from a house in terms of the criteria to be taken into account determining whether a material change of use would take place and, if so, the matters to be taken into account in assessing the application.</p> <p>SPG has also been prepared on electric vehicle charging (EVC) infrastructure to reflect the Scottish Government's objective of cutting emissions from vehicles through the phasing out of petrol and diesel vehicles and support policy on climate change in LDP2. The SPG was prepared at a time when a consultation was being carried out on changes to the Building Regulations to incorporate the requirement for EVC at new development. The standards set out in the document, therefore, mirror the direction established by the Government. The SPG also</p>



sets out the information required to be submitted with a planning application to help officers consider whether appropriate infrastructure levels would be provided.

Finally, a review of the earlier SG on developer contributions resulted in an updated version of the guidance on this topic. The main change involves the incorporation of a methodology to identify whether contributions are required in relation to community buildings and libraries and, if so, the amount that is required. This detail was developed in association with work carried out by consultants in response to an appeal decision. The guidance also incorporates revised thresholds for seeking developer contributions which saw the minimum number of units requiring payments to be made being reduced from 20 to five.

In each of these cases engagement took place with planning officers at several stages of the process and, in the case of developer contributions, an awareness session and workshop was held with elected members. Committee approval and public consultation on draft documents also formed part of the process.

Going forward work is being carried out on 20 Minute Neighbourhoods; as well as town centres in terms of revisioning their future role, promoting centres as liveable places, including opportunities for residential development and achieving a net-zero approach.

### **Goals**

The programme of SPGs came out of necessity following changes to legislation and the adoption of LDP2. A gap in detailed guidance was identified and advantage was taken of the advice in the circular. While not having the statutory basis that SG previously had the SPGs represent the Council's approved position on key planning matters until the next Local Development Plan is adopted.

### **Outcomes**

The case study shows a pragmatic and programmed approach to overcoming a change in legislation by developing detailed guidance on a number of important policy issues. A robust process has been developed that will be taken forward in future phases of the programme, including making sure planning officers in Development Management have been able to make a contribution based on their experience. Lessons learned can also be used during the preparation of LDP3.

### **Names of key officer**

Pamela McMorran, Planning Officer

4: Strategic Environmental Assessments – principal plans
<b>Area covered</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Quality of service and engagement</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Culture of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decision making</li> <li>6. Continuous improvement</li> <li>12. Corporate working across services</li> <li>13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge</li> </ol>
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Collaborative working</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> <li>• Authority other staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>The Planning Officer (SEA) led the Strategic Environmental Assessment process for the South Lanarkshire Council Plan, the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership's Community Plan and the South Lanarkshire Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy during 2021/2022.</p> <p>Although three separate SEAs were carried out, collaborative working across the three disciplines, enabled a proportionate and pragmatic approach to be taken in terms of identifying relevant key policies, as well as setting SEA objectives, rationales and the assessment criteria. The South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report provided the SEA baseline for the assessment of the three plans.</p> <p>As well as supporting the SEAs of the plans, the three scoping workshops helped to engender greater knowledge and understanding of environmental issues which is particularly important given the climate and ecological emergencies, Covid19 impacts and recovery and the emerging cost of living crisis. Officers who participated in the workshops provided feedback that they had benefited from the process and that their understanding on the purpose of the plans, what they are planning to achieve and the interrelationships between them and other plans was significantly increased. This capacity building was also augmented by the inclusion of relevantly new Council staff members being involved in the process, including, a Planning Graduate who acted as a scribe at one of the workshops.</p>

Members of the Corporate SEA Working Group and others who participated in the workshops, reviewed draft scoping and environmental reports and providing useful insights and comments which were reflected in the final reports. Giving the Group and workshop participants the opportunity to review these reports before submission enabled them to see the value of their contributions to the SEA process for the three plans.

Carrying out the SEAs on the three plans led to greater synergy and understanding of environmental issues and how the plans could support and safeguard the local environment. This approach to SEA has contributed to a more holistic and collaborative approach to strategic planning within South Lanarkshire.

### **Goals**

The purpose of the SEA was to assess how the principal plans might affect the environment and to consider how potential significant negative environmental effects could be avoided, reduced or mitigated. The assessments also sought to identify potential positive significant effects and how these could be enhanced. The primary goal was to carry out high quality assessments on three principal plans with a proportionate and pragmatic approach.

### **Outcomes**

As all three major plans were due to be refreshed alongside similar timeframes, it facilitated joint working across the three disciplines and reduced the work burden. This was particularly evident in terms of collating and reviewing the interrelationships across policy agendas, setting the assessment criteria and for the collation of the SEA baseline.

Led by Planning, this collaborative approach across the Council and with the Community Planning Partnership has facilitated greater awareness and understanding of local environmental issues and engendered more focussed holistic actions to deal with the climate and ecological emergencies, recovery from Covid19 and the emerging cost of living crisis.

The SEAs resulted in a number of key improvements to the three principal plans and strengthened the importance of environmental protection across the Council, with partners and communities.

### **Names of key officers**

Jennifer Murphy, Planning Officer (SEA)  
Rhonda Leith, Community Engagement Manager  
Neil Reid, Research and Improvement Manager  
Lesley Hinshelwood, Sustainable Development Officer

<b>5: Planning and Building Standards Community Council Guidance</b>
<b>Location and dates</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Quality of service and engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
9. Stakeholder engagement 12. Corporate working across services 13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative working</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Councils</li> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>Following an awareness session with a local community council on spatial and community Planning, the community council indicated that a guide covering the main aspects of planning and building standards would be useful. It was decided to prepare a guide for circulation to all community councils setting out what planning and building standards do and how community councils can interact with the Planning Service and contribute at the relevant stages to planning processes. Following consultation with the community council on an initial draft of the guide, a finalised version has been produced.</p> <p>The guide covers topics such as the planning and building standards systems, development plans – what they are and how to get involved, local place plans, the principles of development management, the scheme of delegation, the planning application process including flowchart, finding information on applications of interest to the community council via the Planning Weekly List, pre-application consultation involvement with major developments, requesting consultations, commenting on planning applications, including valid material considerations, appeals and local reviews, the enforcement function and how to report potential breaches of control. In addition, information on the Building Standards Service is included, explaining what their roles and responsibilities are. Contact details of officers, a glossary of terms and details on how to register on IDOX Public Access to submit online comments to applications are also covered.</p> <p>The guide is now ready for circulation to all 35 community councils in South Lanarkshire. As it covers a range of planning topics in one document, it has also been made available to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee, as well as copies being made available for members</p>

to view. It is also intended to place the guide on the website as it contains information which is relevant to the general public as well as being specifically aimed at community councils.
<b>Goals</b>
To enhance community councils' knowledge of the planning and building standards systems and to highlight how and when they can get involved in the planning process. It is hoped that the guide will provide a greater understanding of the respective roles of planning and building standards and promote easier and more informed input to development plans, local place plans and development management.
<b>Outcomes</b>
A draft guide was prepared which includes a clear explanation of the functions and roles of planning and building standards. It sets out the stages at which community councils can get involved in the planning process through development plan preparation, local place plans, pre-application consultation, planning applications and enforcement. It was circulated to the original community council who suggested the guide for comment and feedback was taken on board. A finalised guide has been prepared and is ready for issue to all 35 community councils in South Lanarkshire. Copies have also been made available to elected members.
<b>Names of key officer</b>
Karen Brown, Planning Officer

<b>6: State of the Environment Report 2021</b>
<b>Area covered</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Quality of service and engagement</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Culture of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
7. Local Development Plan 12. Corporate working across services
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Collaborative working</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> <li>• Authority other staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) work in the Council is led and facilitated by the Planning Officer (SEA) based within the HQ Team. As well as leading and facilitating SEAs for all Council led plans, including the Local Development Plan, the SEA Officer is also responsible for preparing the biennial State of the Environment Report which provides the SEA baseline for all plans undergoing assessment and is an integral part of strategic planning across the Council. This work is overseen by the Corporate SEA Working Group, which acts as the Council's 'panel of experts' on environmental matters. The South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report has been produced since 2009 and the 2021 edition was approved by the Council's Executive Committee in March 2022.</p> <p>The Covid19 global pandemic has had far reaching impacts on South Lanarkshire across environmental considerations, particularly related to people and their health, local air quality, waste services and climate change. The 2021 edition of the Report presents new data around the impacts of Covid19 within South Lanarkshire and work to address the climate crisis. This includes data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid19 deaths and vaccinations</li> <li>• Cycling activity before and during lockdown</li> <li>• Care homes</li> <li>• Impact of Covid19 on local air quality</li> </ul>

- Youth Forum on Climate Change and Sustainability
- COP26 Climate Emergency Newsroom.

The 2021 edition provides an initial insight to these environmental impacts and has contributed to the development of actions to support post-pandemic recovery.

With the declarations of ecological and climate emergencies, the State of the Environment Report is a vital resource in outlining South Lanarkshire's progress in reducing its contribution to global warming and associated impacts from climate change on people, communities, the natural environment and inclusive growth and for protecting and enhancing the area's biodiversity assets.

The Report and its key findings across 55 indicators are widely reported and will be presented to senior management teams within the Council as well as the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Board.

A review of the 55 indicators is planned for 2022/2023 to reflect the availability and accessibility of new data and to support the monitoring programmes of key Council led plans which have undergone SEA. The 2021 edition will also be updated within Glow) the national educational digital platform used in South Lanarkshire's schools) in 2022/2023.

Importantly, the State of the Environment Report will be a vital element within the Evidence Report to be produced as part of the preparatory work for the Local Development Plan 3.

### Goals

The purpose of the South Lanarkshire State of the Environment Report is to provide robust and up-to-date data on the condition of the local environment across ten key environmental considerations to inform future plan-making and to support the production of high quality Strategic Environmental Assessments of Council led plans.

### Outcomes

The State of the Environment Report helps in the understanding of the condition of South Lanarkshire's environment and provides an effective means of monitoring changes within it and to make plans for how we deliver services in the future. The collaborative work to promote the Report and its findings has helped to further raise the profile of SEA work across the Council and with partners. Importantly, it has helped to engender discussion on environmental issues, such as the climate crisis and the ecological emergency and ensures that the environment is considered alongside societal issues and the economy.

### Name of key officer

Jennifer Murphy, Planning Officer (SEA)

<b>7: CPD sessions</b>
<b>Location and dates</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Quality of service and engagement</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Culture of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
6. Continuous improvements 7. Local Development Plan 9. Stakeholder engagement 12. Corporate working across services 13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interdisciplinary working</li> <li>• Staff training</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority Planning staff</li> <li>• Authority other staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>During 2021, the Planning HQ team worked with colleagues from across the Council and with partners to prepare and deliver two comprehensive CPD sessions for planners and other services on several important issues. Due to Covid19 restrictions, it was agreed to hold the sessions via MS Teams which enabled a larger group of people to attend, including colleagues from Countryside and Greenspace, Building Standards, Roads and Transportation, Housing, Education, Environmental Services, Leisure and Culture and Support Services.</p> <p>The first of these half day sessions had a strong focus on biodiversity, access and open space with speakers from Countryside and Greenspace and the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership. Topics presented and discussed were planning considerations, the Green Network's Blueprint and Strategy, the Council's forthcoming Open Space Strategy and access rights. A panel session and questions and answers followed the presentations.</p> <p>The focus of the second session was Roads Development Management, Flood Risk Management and Active Travel. As well as planning considerations, topics covered included Flood Risk Management legislation and regulation, flood risk assessments and current and proposed activities and projects; Roads development management issues, using the planning validation checklist and parking; the strategic context for active travel, Active Travel Studies and Spaces for People. A panel session and questions and answers also followed these presentations.</p>



Following each session, participants were invited to complete an evaluation form. All participants who completed the form marked each one as being 'very good' or 'good'. Feedback from the CPD sessions included the following comments: 'Lots of interesting information, including a good overview of the policy context which I am particularly interested in', 'All presentations were clear with lots of good visuals to make it very engaging', 'Although I'm not a planner, I would like to be invited to join future sessions for my own personal development', 'I acquired new knowledge', 'Good range of subject matter and how it relates to the planning process', 'Interesting to see how other departments work/link together towards common goals', 'The information provided was good and will be useful going forward', 'It clearly set out the range of biodiversity, open space and access issues that we will need to address in the next LDP and in dealing with planning applications going forward', 'A good cross section of subjects which have bearing on the work we undertake', 'Good overview of subject areas which can help support my role without needing to know more detail'.

Copies of the presentations were disseminated to participants and to planners who were unable to attend.

### **Goals**

The purpose of the CPD sessions was to provide planning staff and other Council colleagues with information and engender discussion on a wide range of topics. The main goal was to increase knowledge, understanding and confidence in these subjects, particularly given the forthcoming legislative changes as well as their role in dealing with both the climate and ecological emergencies.

### **Outcomes**

Feedback demonstrates that the CPD sessions achieved their overall goal of supporting planners and other colleagues in their roles. The panel sessions and question and answer discussions across the various disciplines helped to facilitate the sharing of wider perspectives and greater understanding of challenges and opportunities which the new Planning Act will introduce across these topic areas. Following the success of these CPD sessions, further events are being planned for this year which will include colleagues from across the Council.

### **Names of key officers**

Jennifer Murphy, Planning Officer (SEA)  
Tony Finn, Planning and Building Standards HQ Manager

<b>8: Enforcement Charter update</b>
<b>Location and dates</b>
South Lanarkshire wide
<b>Elements of a high quality Planning Service this study relates to</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Quality of service and engagement</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Culture of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Key markers</b>
5. Enforcement Charter 6. Continuous improvements
<b>Key areas of work</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement</li> <li>• Process improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders involved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General public</li> <li>• Authority planning staff</li> </ul>
<b>Overview</b>
<p>Section 158A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires a planning authority to prepare an Enforcement Charter. It should contain the Council's policies for taking enforcement action; how members of the public can report breaches of planning control; and information on how the enforcement system works. The Charter must be kept under review and be updated and re-published at least every two years.</p> <p>Whilst reviewing the Charter within the required two years and following on from increased workloads and staffing pressures, the Council took the opportunity of the review to update the Enforcement Charter to review the current process for dealing with enforcement cases. Planning complaints had increased from 188 a year in 2019/2020 to 280 in 2020/2021. In the period from April to December 2021, the number of complaints received significantly increased to 270.</p> <p>This current review has resulted in the development of a new process for categorising complaints into the level of impact/harm the perceived breach may have (Low, Medium and High) to allow officers to prioritise the complaints received as well as informing what level of action may then be taken – 'Breach Minor or acceptable in Planning terms', 'Breach could be acceptable with modifications/planning conditions' and 'Breach Unacceptable – formal action to be taken'.</p> <p>This amended approach to Enforcement has been designed to streamline procedures and processes to ensure focus is maintained on where it is considered there is an unacceptable impact on public/road safety and/or public amenity and are causing significant harm. The process is set out in a clear and concise manner within the Charter referring to the relevant legislation and provides the reasoning behind the need for the revised process.</p>

Goals
<p>To ensure that staff resources are used on the cases where they are most needed as well as setting out the rationale behind the process to inform members of the public. The required two-yearly review of the Enforcement Charter was viewed as an opportunity to address the increase in Enforcement complaints being received whilst dealing with decreased staff resources. This was considered to be the best use of resources and would provide the greatest community impact.</p>
Outcomes
<p>As complaints continue to increase, the Enforcement Team has found that prioritising the cases has enabled them to focus on the cases where the greatest harm has been caused. Having the reasoning and process set out clearly in the Charter allows officers a resource that provides additional information to members of the public as to why their case/complaint may incur delays has, in the main, allowed a greater understanding and reduced the time spent dealing with enquiries.</p>
Names of key officers
<p>James Wright, Team Leader, Planning HQ Karen Brown. Planning Officer</p>

## Part 2 - Supporting evidence

This section provides weblinks to the evidence which supports Part 1 of the PPF.

### Quality of outcomes

- [South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2](#)
- [Development Plan Scheme](#)
- [Planning portal](#)
- [Clyde Gateway](#)
- [Approved Statutory Supplementary Guidance and Supporting Planning Guidance](#)
- [City Deal](#)
- [Housing Land Audit](#)
- [LDP2 - Final SEA Environment Report](#)

### Quality of service and engagement

- [Guide to the Decision Making Process](#)
- [Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy](#)
- [South Lanarkshire Council maps \(arcgis.com\)](#)
- [Pre application discussions](#)
- [Planning Process Agreements](#)
- [Enforcement Charter](#)
- [Development Management Charter](#)
- [Customer Service Excellence](#)

### Governance

- [Community and Enterprise Resources Resource Plan](#)
- [South Lanarkshire Council plans and policies](#)
- [South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership](#)
- [GCV Green Network Partnership 'Blueprint'](#)
- [Annual Performance Spotlights](#)
- [South Lanarkshire Good Food Strategy](#)

### Culture of continuous improvement

- [Planning Portal](#)

## Case study synopsis

The following table sets out the various key areas of work covered within the case studies presented.

Case Study Topics	Issue covered in PPF11	Case Study Topics	Issue covered in PPF11
Design		Interdisciplinary working	X
Conservation		Collaborative working	X
Regeneration		Community engagement	X
Environment	X	Placemaking	
Greenspace	X	Charrettes	
Town centres		Place standard	
Masterplanning		Performance monitoring	
LDP and Supplementary Guidance	X	Process improvement	X
Housing supply		Project management	
Affordable housing		Skills sharing	
Economic development		Staff training	X
Enforcement	X	Online systems	
Development Management processes	X	Transport	
Planning applications		Active travel	
Other:			

### Part 3 - Service improvements 2022/2023

This section details the key commitments and actions for the coming year for service improvements within the Planning Service.

- **Local Forum:** Following an absence of two years it is intended to resurrect this forum. It will be attended by both Planning and Building Standards officers. It is intended this year to seek views on how developers can contribute to the Council's climate change and sustainability agenda.
- **Customer Service Excellence:** Prepare a submission for re-assessment of Customer Service Excellence accreditation in the autumn of 2022. The key action this year will be to address the three areas of partial compliance noted in the assessment of the Service in order to achieve full compliance and to reaffirm CSE accreditation.
- **Service delivery:** Continue to develop ways to improve the joint delivery of Planning and other Council services to customers in order to promote South Lanarkshire as a place to invest and grow and to reflect the needs of our communities. Planning will be closely involved with consultants looking at revisioning and creating net-zero town centres.
- **Service review:** Carry out a review of existing procedures for assessing planning applications to identify ways in which the process can be streamlined. Staff resources to be kept under review with opportunities to add to the establishment including the introduction of officers to deal with developer contributions and validation. The review will also include looking at new ways of working as a return to office working takes place.
- **Relocation of the Planning Service:** The Service will be moving to a new location in the main Council building in Hamilton. It will be located on the same floor as Economic Development and the same building as colleagues such as Legal Services, Community Planning and Estates. This will result in a hybrid working pattern which is to be developed.
- **Digital planning:** Continue to review and develop essential IT systems, including consideration of mobile working solutions. Consider amendments to processes and new software/hardware to address legislative change and the implementation of the Scottish Government's digital transformation programme.
- **CPD:** Organise and deliver a programme of CPD events for Planners, including re-arranging sessions postponed due to lockdown restrictions. Topics to be covered will include climate change, environmental health and strategic and corporate planning.
- **Member training:** A programme of training for the new administration following the Local Government elections in May 2022.
- **Environment:** Translate the 2021 edition of the biennial State of the Environment Report for South Lanarkshire to Glow, the educational intranet platform, for use in schools. Work with colleagues in community planning to prepare an Environment Pledge for the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership.
- **Community Councils:** Further develop awareness training for community organisations and prepare and publish a guide in relation to the Planning and Building Standards Service.
- **Developer contributions:** Seek committee approval for the SPG on Developer Contributions following consultation on the draft. Arrange training for officers and members.

- **Internal stakeholders:** Continue to review and develop better working practices with internal consultees. In particular planning officers and corporate colleagues will be invited to CPD events to widen their knowledge of the planning system and increase understanding of the forthcoming changes in NPF4.
- **Review of Residential Design Guide:** This work reflects the emerging themes of placemaking, achieving high quality design and access to active travel options and quality open spaces.

## Delivery of Planning Service Improvement Actions 2021/2022

The Planning Service produces an annual Service Improvement Plan which sets out a series of actions for improvement in service delivery. The plan for 2021/2022 identified 14 actions of which nine were completed over the year and five were partially completed. The challenge to complete actions has largely been the result of restricted working arrangements due to the pandemic, however, they have been rolled over to 2022/2023 with an expectation they will be completed this year.

The following table provides our assessment of how we consider we have delivered on our service actions and objectives identified in PPF10. Additional details and information on many of these are reported in this PPF.

Committed improvements and actions	Comments
<b>Local Forum:</b> Subject to restrictions being lifted it is intended to re-introduce a Local Forum with agents and other key stakeholders. This will be attended by both Planning and Building Standards officers. It is intended this year to seek views on how developers can contribute to the Council's climate change and sustainability agenda. As an alternative an online meeting will be explored.	Due to Covid19 restrictions, this event was postponed but it is intended to hold it later in 2022/23. A focus of the event will remain to seek the views of participants on how they can contribute to the Council's climate change and sustainability agenda.
<b>Customer Service Excellence:</b> Prepare a submission for re-assessment of Customer Service Excellence accreditation. The key action this year will be to address the three areas of partial compliance noted in the assessment of the Service in order to achieve full compliance and to reaffirm CSE accreditation.	The CSE assessment has been postponed until autumn 2022 due to Covid19 and other considerations.
<b>Service delivery:</b> Continue to develop ways to improve the joint delivery of Planning and Economic Development services to customers in order to promote South Lanarkshire as a place to invest and grow with particular emphasis on helping economic recovery following the restrictions on businesses during lockdown, especially in relation to town centres.	Managers from both parts of the Service meet with the Head of Service every four weeks. In addition, regular liaison takes place with the project team to ensure the effective delivery of key proposals. The Planning Service were involved in a bid for Levelling Up Funding It is also a partner in consultancy work looking to revisoning town centres and making them net-zero.
<b>Service Review:</b> Carry out a review of existing procedures for assessing planning applications to identify ways in which the process can be streamlined. This will include consideration of benchmarking with other authorities. Staff	The impact of the Service Review completed in August 2020 has been assessed. This has resulted in further structural changes (case study 1) and operational changes such as a revised duty officer system and improvements to

Committed improvements and actions	Comments
resources to be kept under review with opportunities to add to the establishment including the introduction of graduate apprenticeships within the Planning Services to be explored.	the website. Further changes will be rolled out in 2022/2023.
<b>Covid 19 Review:</b> Consider the impact of the restrictions on working practices during the period of lockdown and assess whether procedures need to be updated in the event of future events. This will also consider whether changes introduced in 2020/21 can be retained and/or amended. Future working practices including the location of the workforce will also be explored.	The measures introduced at the start of the pandemic have been kept under review as home working remains the norm. The lessons learned have been instructive in managing the future relocation of the Service to a new office with restricted numbers of workstations. All officers were provided with smartphones during the year.
<b>Digital Planning:</b> Continue to review and develop essential IT systems, including consideration of mobile working solutions. Consider amendments to processes and new software/hardware to address legislative change and the implementation of the Scottish Government's digital transformation programme.	As above, the impact of the pandemic has facilitated regular changes to working practices including the introduction of smartphones. A review of systems that will be necessary for the preparation of LDP3 has highlighted further updates and changes required.
<b>Open Space Strategy:</b> Work will continue on the preparation of the OSS although progress may be affected by the implementation of the provisions of the 2019 Act and the associated secondary legislation and guidance. In this respect, it will be important to respond to consultation by the Scottish Government on this topic in 2021/22 and highlight lessons learned to date from the work the Council has been carrying out.	The audit of open space was approximately 90% complete by March 2022 and an extensive information base has been created to enable an analysis of this output. Officers continue to liaise with colleagues in the Green Network Partnership.
<b>CPD:</b> Organise and deliver a programme of CPD events for Planners, including re-arranging sessions postponed due to lockdown restrictions. Topics to be covered will include biodiversity, climate change, environmental health and strategic and corporate planning.	Several online CPD events took place during the year including, roads and flooding issues, green infrastructure and biodiversity. (case study 7). Sessions also took place with officers to roll out and seek feedback on the new SPGs and a presentation from a major housing developer also took place.
<b>Climate change and sustainability:</b> Develop supporting planning guidance in support of the Local Development Plan and the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy action plan to ensure new buildings are designed to be as carbon neutral as possible and resilient to climate change and to encourage the retro fitting of appropriate technology in existing buildings.	This action has been put on hold pending the publication of the draft NPF4 in late 2021 in order for the Council's supporting guidance to reflect emerging national policy. Nevertheless, the service has continued to work with the Sustainability and Climate Change team to develop ideas for tackling climate change. A workshop took place as part of the review of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy.
<b>Environment:</b> Prepare the 2021 edition of the biennial State of the Environment Report for South Lanarkshire for Committee approval by March 2022.	The 2021 State of the Environment Report was approved by Executive Committee in March 2022. (case study 6).



Committed improvements and actions	Comments
<p><b>Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy:</b> Finalise, and submit to Committee for approval in June 2021, Planning and Building Standards' Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy. The Strategy will set out how we will effectively consult, communicate and engage with customers, staff and colleagues. Review and update local surveys and other forms of customer engagement carried out to measure customer satisfaction with both the Planning and Building Standards services and the preparation of an action plan to address procedural and performance issues raised.</p>	<p>Planning and Building Standards' first Consultation, Communication and Engagement Strategy was presented to the Planning Committee for approval in June 2021.</p>
<p><b>Community Councils:</b> Further develop awareness training for community organisations and prepare and publish a guide in relation to the Planning and Building Standards Service.</p>	<p>This action has been delayed due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. However, a Guide for Community Councils has been completed. (case study 5).</p>
<p><b>Developer contributions:</b> Review current guidance and procedures on Community Infrastructure Assessment and prepare revised supporting planning guidance for committee approval and public consultation.</p>	<p>A draft SPG was approved by the Planning Committee in February 2022. It will be the subject of consultation and a final version presented to committee for approval later in 2022.</p>
<p><b>Internal stakeholders:</b> Continue to review and develop better working practices with internal consultees. In particular planning officers and corporate colleagues will be invited to CPD events to widen their knowledge of the planning system and increase understanding of the forthcoming changes in NPF4.</p>	<p>Regular meetings take place with the Roads Development Management Team Leader. Guidance on Flooding and SUDS has been completed this year. In addition, closer working practices with Community Planning and Countryside and Greenspace have been developed.</p>

## Part 4 - South Lanarkshire Council National Headline Indicators

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

### A: National Headline Indicators (NHI) Key outcomes – Development Planning

Development Planning	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022
<b>Local and Strategic Development Planning</b>		
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	5 years and 9 months	Strategic Plan will cease to exist in 2022. LDP2 was adopted in April 2021
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	No	Unknown – awaiting NPF4 and regulations and guidance for LDPs to be approved
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	N/A	N/A
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)	N/A	As above
<b>Effective land supply and delivery of outputs</b>		NB - Draft 2022 figures
Established housing land supply	14,550	13,512
5 year effective housing land supply programming	7,121	7,568
5 year effective land supply total capacity	9,524	8,199
5 year housing supply target	1,058 (758 private 300 social rented)	1,058 (758 private 300 social rented)
5 year effective housing land supply (year's supply to one decimal place)	6.7	7.2
Housing approvals	1,232	1,146
Housing completions over the last 5 years	7,247	7,400
Marketable employment land supply	91.93 ha	75.27 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	1.85 ha	2.75 ha

## B: NHI key outcomes – Development Management

Development Management	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022
<b>Project planning</b>		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	22% (310)	20% (331)
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	0 (0%)	1 (7.6%)
<b>Decision making</b>		
Application approval rate	97.8%	98.9%
Delegation rate	94.8%	96.3%
Validation	58.6%	61.2%
<b>Decision-making timescales</b>		
Major developments	77.4 weeks	66.3 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	18.8 weeks	23.2 weeks
Householder developments	9.1 weeks	13.1 weeks
<b>Legacy cases</b>		
Number cleared during reporting period	34	54
Number remaining	87	115

## C: NHI key outcomes – Enforcement activity

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 22
Time since enforcement charter published/ reviewed	0 months	4 months
Requirement: review every two years		
Complaints lodged and investigated	320	397
Breaches identified – no further action taken	114	117
Cases closed	379	401
Notices served	13	10
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	1
Prosecutions	0	0

## D: NHI key outcomes – commentary

The main aspects of these outcomes are summarised below.

**Project management:** In 2021/22 there has been a reduction in the percentage of pre-application discussions undertaken. Due to increasing application workloads, focus was placed on assessing applications, with a lower priority given to pre-application discussions. It is hoped that greater priority will be given to these when the existing backlog of applications is cleared. The number of processing agreements remains very low and again more focus will be placed on encouraging applicants to enter into these in 2022/23.

**Development management:** The Council's application approval rate remains consistently high and has increased slightly from 97.8% to 98.9%, continuing the desire to negotiate acceptable solutions and to facilitate new development and investment. The delegation and validation rates also increased slightly, reflecting the greater number of householder applications being determined and the continuing increasing percentage of applications now being submitted online.

**Decision-making timescales:** While 2021/22 saw an improvement in figures for determining major applications, timescales for processing both householder and local non-householder applications took notably longer. To a large extent, these timescales continue to reflect the difficulties in clearing the backlog of applications which built up during the Covid19 period. In particular, the significant increase in householder applications received during the second half of 2020/21 and which has continued throughout 2021/22. The appointment of new graduates and officers was undertaken in 2021/22, but the service experienced difficulties in attracting appropriate candidates which, together with the departure of other officers to other authorities or through retiral, has meant that a number of vacancies remained throughout the reporting period. This has exacerbated the ability to process applications timeously and although greater numbers of applications have been determined than at any point in the last five years, the number of legacy applications continues to increase. This position has been recognised and a review of the needs of the Service has been carried out to create additional posts.

**Enforcement:** The Enforcement Charter was updated in December 2021 and published in February 2022. The revised version sets out a four-stage process for dealing with enforcement complaints in the context of the receipt of an ongoing increase in numbers of alleged breaches received. The process clearly sets out how complaints will be prioritised and investigated within specified timescales and the options of actions which may be taken, depending on the impact and severity of the breach. The number of complaints received in 2021/22 was an increase of 24% on the figure for 2020/21, which, in itself, was a 58.4% increase on the previous year. (case study 8).

**Development Planning:** South Lanarkshire LDP2 was adopted on 9 April 2021. The Strategic Development Plan - Clydeplan will cease to be part of the development plan following publication of NPF4.

A formal start on the preparation of LDP3 has not been made due to delays by the Scottish Government in terms of the reform of the planning system namely the approval of National Planning Framework 4 and the associated regulations and guidance for preparing LDPs and the Open Space strategy.

Nevertheless work has started on considering the range of data and information required to prepare the first stage evidence report and the implications for SEA and the Fairer Scotland Duty. This has included starting discussions with colleagues in other services and partners such as NHS Lanarkshire to understand the contribution they can make to this process. Officers have also been exploring the planning issues related to emerging themes such as 20 Minute Neighbourhoods, Community Wealth Building and Climate Emergency. This has included completing or developing Supporting Planning Guidance on a number of topics. (case study 3). SPGs on Carrying out development at a dwellinghouse, Electric vehicle charging points and community infrastructure and approved by the

Planning Committee during 2021/22. They have subsequently been subject to public consultation and will be reported back to committee for final approval during 2022/23. A SPG on Local Nature Reserves is also expected to be approved while work has started looking at 20 Minute Neighbourhoods, town centres revisioning and net-zero centres.

The Council continues to take an active role at a City Region level through participation in the various Clydeplan strategic planning forums. This will help inform the Regional Spatial Strategy and develop partnership across a number of themes. Work has been carried for example on the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment 3.

### **Effective land supply and delivery of outputs: Housing**

Planning permission for 1,146 houses was approved during 2021/2022 which includes the granting of permission for some of the phases in the East Kilbride and Hamilton CGAs. Despite the pandemic, house completions and starts across South Lanarkshire continue with over 1,500 units completed (all tenure) since April 2021, across all four housing market areas. There has been development of several smaller sites across the Clydesdale HMA which gives some degree of choice and flexibility to the smaller rural settlements. The Community Growth Areas continue to be developed and the main section of the East Kilbride CGA has now commenced. Across South Lanarkshire, all the CGAs are now producing housing units.

In terms of a five-year land supply there is a healthy supply of sites across all housing market areas and levels available continue to be in excess of the five year requirement. In the private sector, there is currently around 6.2 years supply. All tenure shows 7.2 years supply.

### **Effective land supply and delivery of outputs: Employment**

There was a slight decrease in the amount of marketable employment land in the 2021/2022 period, mainly due to the ongoing re-categorisation of sites. One of the larger sites currently on the marketable supply, the former Freescale semiconductor plant in East Kilbride (10 ha), received consent in 2022 for formation of a car storage depot (Class 6) for the storage, distribution and processing of vehicles, erection of ancillary buildings, car parking, access and associated infrastructure. This site will be removed from the land supply when construction work commences. The site preparation and infrastructure works for phase 2 of the Shawfield strategic economic investment location have commenced. When these are complete this will add a range of sites to the marketable supply in the Cambuslang/ Rutherglen area. Similarly, two longer term large industrial sites have been identified at Langlands West in East Kilbride which will become part of the supply when site preparation and servicing is undertaken.

The take up for class 4/5/6 developments in 2021/2022 showed a slight increase from the previous years but is still low compared to pre-pandemic. The take up was generally small-scale class 5 and 6 units, mainly in the East Kilbride area.

## Part 5 – Scottish Government official statistics

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

Timescales	2021 - 2022	2021 - 2022	2020 - 2021
<b>Overall</b>			
<b>Major developments</b>	13	66.3 week	77.4 weeks
<b>Local developments (non-householder)</b>	437	23.2 weeks	18.8 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	(8.2%)	6.6 weeks	6.7 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	(91.8%)	24.7 weeks	22.5 weeks
<b>Householder developments</b>	975	13.1 weeks	9.1 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	(30.1%)	6.4 weeks	6.7 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	(69.9%)	15.9 weeks	22.5 weeks
<b>Housing developments</b>			
<b>Major</b>	7	62.3 weeks	130.9 weeks
<b>Local housing developments</b>	206	25.9 weeks	23.7 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	(7.3%)	7.0 weeks	6.9 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	(92.7%)	27.4 weeks	27.1 weeks
<b>Business and industry</b>			
<b>Major</b>	0	-	36.6 weeks
<b>Local business and industry developments</b>	48	20.6 weeks	16.8 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	(0.0%)	-	6.8 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	(100.0%)	20.6 weeks	20.4 weeks
<b>EIA developments</b>	2	67.1 weeks	19.4 weeks
<b>Other consents</b>			
• As listed in the guidance	191	12.4 weeks	12.9 weeks
<b>Planning/legal agreements</b>			
• Major: average time	6	85.0 weeks	153.0 weeks
• Local: average time	3	34.4 weeks	101.1 weeks

### B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions No.	Original decision upheld			
		2021 - 2022		2020 - 2021	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	5	5	100.0%	8	88.9%
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	5	3	60.0%	3	42.9%

## C: Context

### Key points

#### Decision-making timescales

As set out in the NHI Key Outcomes for Development Management, South Lanarkshire managed to improve its decision-making timescales in the major development category but experienced increases in the time taken to determine householder and local non-householder applications. There was also a significant reduction in the percentage of those householder and local non-householder applications dealt with in two months. These timescales need to be considered in the context of the Council determining its greatest number of applications since 2015/16 and the ongoing increase in numbers of applications received.

The Council determined 1659 applications in 2021/22. This is a 17.6% increase on the previous year (1410) and is its highest figure determined in five years. There was a 4% increase in the number of applications received, rising from 1923 in 2020/21 to 1999 in 2021/22. Although this is not a significant increase, it follows on from a huge increase in applications received from October 2020 onwards. This created a backlog of applications which is still being added to due to the increase in applications continuing to be received. While the backlog is being addressed, it is inevitably resulting in older applications now being determined, with the resultant impact of longer determination times. A relatively high number of legacy cases remain outstanding and this is likely to continue to impact on the ability to significantly reduce decision-making timescales in 2022/23.

- The number of major applications determined was almost the same as 2020/21 but with an improvement in determination times from 77.4 weeks to 66.3 weeks. This was largely attributable to a significant reduction in the time taken to determine major housing applications.
- The number of householder determinations increased from 781 in 2020/21 to 975 in 2021/22 (a 24.5% increase) and accounts for 58.7% of all decisions. The significant increase in numbers of householder applications being received has resulted in determination time increasing from 9.1 weeks in 2020/21 to 13.1 weeks in 2021/22.
- Whilst there has been a minor overall reduction in the number of local non-householder applications determined, decision-making timescales have increased from 18.8 weeks in 2020/21 to 23.2 weeks in the current reporting period. About 60% of the legacy applications cleared in 2021/22 were local non-householder, with a few longstanding applications included. This has inevitably impacted on the overall average timescale for determination.
- The 'Other consents' category has seen an ongoing increase in determinations, with numbers rising from 163 in 2020/21 to 191 in 2021/22. In particular, certificates of lawfulness have increased from 76 to 101 determinations. In spite of the increase, overall determination times have fallen slightly from 12.9 weeks to 12.4 weeks.
- The number of legacy applications cleared has increased in 2021/22 but the number outstanding is also increasing.

This year has been challenging and the performance in decision making timescales is largely attributable to difficulties in resourcing the Service. Recruitment drives has taken place over the previous 12 months, however, this has only been partially successful. This has meant that the capacity to deal with an increased workload has continued to be below what is appropriate.

**Legal Agreements:** The average time taken to conclude applications with legal agreements decreased significantly for both major and local applications. For major, from 153 weeks to 85 weeks and for local, from 101.1 weeks to 34.4 weeks.

**Decision-making, local reviews and appeals:** There has been a slight reduction in the number of local review cases (from 8 to 5) and a minor increase in those appeals to the Scottish Ministers (3 to 5). Overall, the numbers continue to remain low. The percentage of cases where the original decision was upheld increased for Planning Local Review Board cases from 88.9% to 100% and increased for appeals to Scottish Ministers from 42.9% to 60%.



## Part 6 - Workforce Information

South Lanarkshire's Planning Service is part of Community and Enterprise Resources. The Service's work is undertaken by three teams with a total of 40 staff. Support is provided by six administrative staff managed through the Resource's Support Services. The Council's SEA Officer is also embedded in and managed through the Planning Service sitting within its HQ Team. The HQ team deals with Development Plan preparation, publishing and monitoring, and produces the associated Supplementary Guidance (SG). The Council's input to the preparation and monitoring of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), through the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Planning Authority, is also co-ordinated through the HQ Team. It also handles all the minerals, waste, energy and large-scale windfarm applications and the enforcement function is located within the HQ team.

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

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
<b>Head of Planning Service</b>			<b>X</b>	

Note: Tier 1= Chief Executive, Tier 2= Directors, Tier 3= Heads of Service, Tier 4= Managers

<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Development Management	26*	24.5
Development Planning	5**	4.1
Enforcement	3	3
Specialists	3	3
Other	3	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37.2</b>
<b>RTPI Qualified Staff</b>	24	

\* Includes 5 vacancies; \*\* includes 1 vacancy

## Part 7: Planning Committee information

Committee and site visits	Number per year
Full Council meetings	4
Planning committees	9
Area committees	16*
Committee site visits	0
Local Review Body	5
Local Review Body site visits	0

\* SLC has four Area Committees

## Appendix 1: Correlation of performance markers

	Performance Marker	Part of PPF report demonstrating evidence
<b>Driving improved performance</b>		
1	Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types.	Parts 4 and 5
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications <b>and</b> availability publicised on planning authority website.	Quality of service and engagement
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications</li> <li>- clear and proportionate requests for supporting information.</li> </ul>	Quality of service and engagement
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within six months of 'resolving to grant'. <sup>1</sup>	Governance
5	Enforcement charter updated/ re-published.	Quality of service and engagement Case study 8
6	Continuous improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators</li> <li>- progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report.</li> </ul>	Quality of service and engagement Culture of continuous improvement
<b>Promoting the plan-led system</b>		
7	LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption.	Quality of outcomes Quality of service and engagement
8	Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on course for adoption within five year cycle</li> <li>- project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale.</li> </ul>	Quality of outcomes Quality of service and engagement
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation.	N/A
10	Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation.	N/A
11	Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications.	Quality of service and engagement Case studies 2 and 4
<b>Simplifying and streamlining</b>		
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example, protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice).	Quality of service and engagement Governance

	Performance Marker	Part of PPF report demonstrating evidence
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities.	Culture of continuous improvement
<b>Delivering development</b>		
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one-year-old.	Governance
15	Developer contributions: clear expectations - set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and - in pre-application discussions.	Quality of service and engagement

## Appendix 2: Planning Service Structure

### Planning Service Structure

