# Planning Performance Framework

**PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL**

## 2015-2016

# Introduction

Perth & Kinross Council is pleased to publish our fifth Planning Performance Framework (PPF), covering the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. This publication has built upon all of our previous PPF's and the feedback we received from both the Scottish Government and from within our Benchmarking Group, to strive towards further improving the service we deliver.

Our feedback from PPF4 was admirable, receiving a scoring of fourteen green and one red marker (feedback based on RAG ratings) and we continue to work on improving the service we provide.

The case studies we have included throughout PPF5 convey our steady momentum towards achieving better performance during the past year while our committed service improvements for the year ahead ensure we will continue to make progress. We have also included a checklist in PPF5 (Appendix 1) which clarifies how we have achieved each of the fifteen Performance Markers.

## Get in touch

We welcome any comments you may have about our service and suggestions about how we can improve. This might include comments about things that have gone well, what has not, and what we should continue to do.

Please feel free to contact us with your views:

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# Contents

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| Key Outcomes | 2015-16 | 2014-15 |
|---|---|---|
| **Development Planning** | | |
| • *Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of reporting period* | 26 months | 14 months |
| *Requirement: less than 5 years* | | |
| • *Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? (Y/N)* | Y | Y |
| • *Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year? (Y-earlier/Y-later/N)* | N | N |
| • *Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)* | Y | Y |
| **and Delivery of Outputs*** | Effective Land Supply | |
| • *Established housing land supply* | 15,287 units | 15,869 units |
| • *5-year effective housing land supply* | 4,929 units | 4,004 units |
| • *5-year housing supply target* | 4,035 units | 4,035 units |
| • *5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)* | 6.1 years | 4.96 years |
| • *Housing approvals* | 611 units | 593 units |
| • *Housing completions over the last 5 years* | 2,132 units | 1,935 units |
| • *Marketable employment land supply* | 167 ha | 302 ha |
| • *Employment land take-up during reporting year* | 5.8 ha | 2.25 ha |

*\* The most up-to-date approved figures are to be supplied*

| Key Outcomes | 2015-16 | 2014-15 |
|---|---|---|
| **Development Management** | | |
| Project Planning | | |
| • *Percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice* | 20.4% | 11.6% |
| • *Number of major applications subject to processing agreement* | 6 | 0 |
| • *Number of applications subject to other project plan* | 0 | 0 |
| • *Percentage planned timescales met* | 83.3% | n / a |
| Decision-Making | | |
| • *Application approval rate* | 90.4% | 90.6% |
| • *Delegation rate* | 96.9% | 96.0% |
| **Decision-Making Timescales** | | |
| Average number of weeks to decision | | |
| • *Major developments* | 23.7 | 42.2 |
| • *Local developments (non-householder)* | 11.3 | 11.8 |
| • *Householder developments* | 6.3 | 6.8 |
| **Legacy Cases** | | |
| • *Number cleared during reporting period* | 51 | 49 |
| • *Number remaining* | 20 | 38 |
| **Enforcement** | | |
| • *Time since enforcement charter reviewed and published (months)* | 17 | 9 |
| *Requirement: review every 2 years* | | |
| • *Number of breaches identified/resolved* | 296/167 | 361/212 |

# Development Planning

Our Development Plan Scheme is on track and we are currently preparing our Proposed Plan for Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2).

# Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs

### 5-year Effective Housing Land Supply

For 2015 the first draft of the housing land audit figures were used in error to calculate the number of years effective housing land supply as opposed to the final audit figures (actual figures for 2014/15 were 4,495 units/5.6 years).

### Marketable Employment Land Supply

The decrease in marketable employment land supply in this reporting period is largely due to a change in the new methodology we now use for the employment land audit (ELA) and the way we capture the data. The ELA is now a much clearer representation of the current marketable employment land supply.

# Development Management

### Project Planning

We are able to monitor the percentage of applications received which were subject to pre-application advice, which was 20.4% last year. This represents a significant increase (8.8%) compared to the previous year, although it is partly due to improvements in the way enquiries are linked to subsequent planning applications in our database.

Processing agreements have been offered since April 2013 and are routinely offered at the pre-application stage to all

prospective applicants for major developments and now also for more complex local applications, particularly where these are likely to require a planning obligation. Advice on processing agreements is provided on the Council's website in the form of a guidance note together with a downloadable template . During 2015/16, six processing agreements (covering both major and local applications) were concluded with applicants, compared to none during the previous year. We will continue to promote agreements where appropriate and emphasise the positive benefits for the applicant.

## Decision-Making

The application approval rate dropped very slightly and the delegation rate increased by 0.9% in 2015/16, although there are no obvious reasons behind these statistics.

# Decision-Making Timescales

Major developments performance improved significantly again from an average of 42.2 weeks to 23.7 weeks. Project planning and better monitoring of cases has once again helped, together with the improved management of the planning obligation process. Local development (non-householder) applications also took less time to determine on average (down by 0.5 weeks to 11.3), achieved again through project planning and better monitoring. Over the same period there was also an improvement in the percentage of (non-householder) local applications being determined within 2 months (71.5% compared to 59.5%).

Tighter timescales for dealing with all applications involving planning obligations were introduced in 2013 and further improvements in performance were consequently achieved in subsequent years. Last year, the average number of weeks for these applications improved significantly from 53.2 to 28.7.

Performance for householder applications has again improved, this time from an average of 6.8 weeks to 6.3 weeks. The percentage of householder applications being determined within 2 months also continued to improve (97.6% compared to 91.0%). This has been due primarily to the continued operation of previously improved workload management and a fully resourced, efficient and dedicated team.

# Legacy Cases

At the end of 2013/14, 88 of our undetermined applications were over a year old. A year later, the number remaining had dropped to 49. During 2015/16 that number was further reduced to 20, notwithstanding that several *'new'* applications entered the *'legacy'* category during the course of the year. The number of stalled and legacy cases continues to be regularly monitored and actioned in accordance with the protocol introduced in 2013. Nevertheless, it is recognised that the time taken to negotiate legal agreements is still a significant factor affecting application determination times and further improvements to the process are continually sought. It is worth noting in this regard that the average time to decide a local application with a legal agreement improved substantially from 54.6 to 27.6 weeks.

# Enforcement

The Enforcement Charter was reviewed and re-published in June 2014 in electronic format on the Council's Planning Enforcement webpage and is currently being reviewed again. Enforcement activity was quieter during 2015/16 than in the previous year, with a decrease in cases being both reported and resolved. The number of formal notices served also dropped, from 37 to 23. We continually aim to reduce breaches of planning control through giving our enforcement work a high profile, particularly with regard to monitoring compliance with planning consents.

# Part 2
# Defining and Measuring a High-Quality Planning Service

## Quality of Outcomes

### Kinross High Street Regeneration

As a result of significant investment in the Kinross Relief Road and less traffic in the town centre, Perth & Kinross Council were able to take forward proposals to improve the public realm within Kinross High Street . The aim of the project was to enhance pedestrian safety, support local businesses and provide a space for local events.

*See Case Study 1 for further information.*

### Weekly Review Meetings

As part of the project planning process, weekly meetings are now held between the relevant Development Management and Local Development Plan Officers, as well as Officers from other relevant departments to review the progress of major applications.

## Case Study 1 :
## Kinross High Street Regeneration

The regeneration of Kinross High Street was completed in October 2015. Recently there has been significant investment in the infrastructure in Kinross - the relief road was constructed in 2012 and the business park infrastructure was constructed in 2014/15. The environmental improvements in the High Street were the final piece in the jigsaw to complement these other investments in Kinross, providing a sustainable town centre environment to help the High Street and the local businesses to thrive.

These vital improvements to the public realm in the town centre of Kinross were developed, designed and delivered with three key aims in mind: improving the environment to *enhance pedestrian safety*; creating an attractive High Street to encourage shoppers to *support local businesses*; and creating a shared space to facilitate *local community events*.

The project was delivered by a multi-disciplinary team from various professionals internal and external to the Council. In order to ensure good project governance, we appointed a Project Board alongside a Project Manager. The project team was made up of representatives from Roads Infrastructure, City Development, Community Greenspace, Traffic and Network and Property teams. Through an enhanced relationship with Dundee City Council, the opportunity to utilise capacity within the Council's engineering department assisted with the efficient procurement of this project.

We also worked closely with the Street Lighting Partnership and Rainton Construction Ltd, who carried out the construction works. The project proved to be a very good example of project management, inter-team working and partnership working with another local authority.





*Top: Kinross High Street - Before*

*Below: Kinross High Street - After*

## LDP Policies and Supplementary Guidance

We continue to prepare Supplementary Guidance to support the LDP policy framework and the outcome-focussed strategic objectives of the Council and its Community Planning Partners. Landscape Supplementary Guidance was adopted in June 2015 and became statutory supplementary guidance to the Adopted Local Development Plan . The SG has been produced to include the review and update of Local Landscape Designations in Perth and Kinross into the Council's planning policy framework. It also provides further advice on the implementation of Local Development Policy *'ER6: Managing Future Landscape Change to Conserve and Enhance the Diversity and Quality of the Area's Landscapes'* within the 11 Special Landscape Areas, and will help to bring forward land management initiatives to protect and enhance these areas.

As part of the policy review undertaken to inform the Main Issues Report for LDP2 , the effectiveness of the existing Supplementary Guidance was considered and the findings of this have informed a revised programme for the preparation of Supplementary Guidance approved by the Enterprise & Infrastructure Committee in January 2016. The review highlighted which pieces of guidance have been operating well and should remain unchanged, those pieces of guidance which are to be dropped or amended due to policy changes, and areas where new guidance is required. Continued implementation of the programme of Supplementary Guidance will ensure a robust policy framework is in place to deliver high-quality development and protection of the areas valuable assets. In line with the recommendation from the Chief Planner, we are reducing the number of Supplementary Guidance.

Perth & Kinross Council had three pieces of Supplementary Guidance on Developer Contributions, Transport Infrastructure and Affordable Housing. Overall each of the individual adopted areas of Supplementary Guidance worked well however a review

identified a number of changes which have been made to support the further sustainable development while securing appropriate mitigation. All three pieces of Supplementary Guidance have now been condensed into one document , acting as a one-stop-shop, and the revised document is over 30 pages shorter, clearer and more user friendly.

*See Case Study 2 for further information.*

## Validation

We continue to encourage applicants and agents to submit a satisfactory initial planning application by promoting our pre-application service and our specific guidance on making a valid application.

## High-Quality Design

We also promote a high standard of design quality during pre-application discussions, and, if necessary, during the application process. Examples of where we have pro-actively sought to influence the quality of development on the ground are listed below:

- Muirton *- Following pre-application discussions, the development of 203 houses forming part of a wider regeneration scheme at Muirton, Perth, has been designed carefully to meet both 'Designing Places' and the 'National Roads Development Guide'.*



*Artist Impression of Muirton*

It contains a number of areas of functional open space and a play area at key locations within the site. The entrance into the site from Dunkeld Road is of high-quality contemporary design and the finishing materials used throughout will



*Site Layout of Muirton*

provide a very modern look and feel to the area.

- Cherrybank Gardens - *The approved development of a greenfield site between Cherrybank and Broxden in Perth utilises the existing landscape features and topography to shape the layout of the site. Following discussions between the applicant and the planning authority, the development follows the framework and guidance laid down in the previously approved masterplan.*



Consequently, the site layout has sensitively taken account of existing field boundaries, planting, watercourses and natural features and includes reasonably generous open space. In doing so the development takes account of the site's importance as a gateway into the City of Perth.

- Single House in Glenfarg - *This is an example of a householder application which was resubmitted and approved following an earlier refusal and subsequent discussions with the applicant about making significant improvements to the original design:*

PERTH
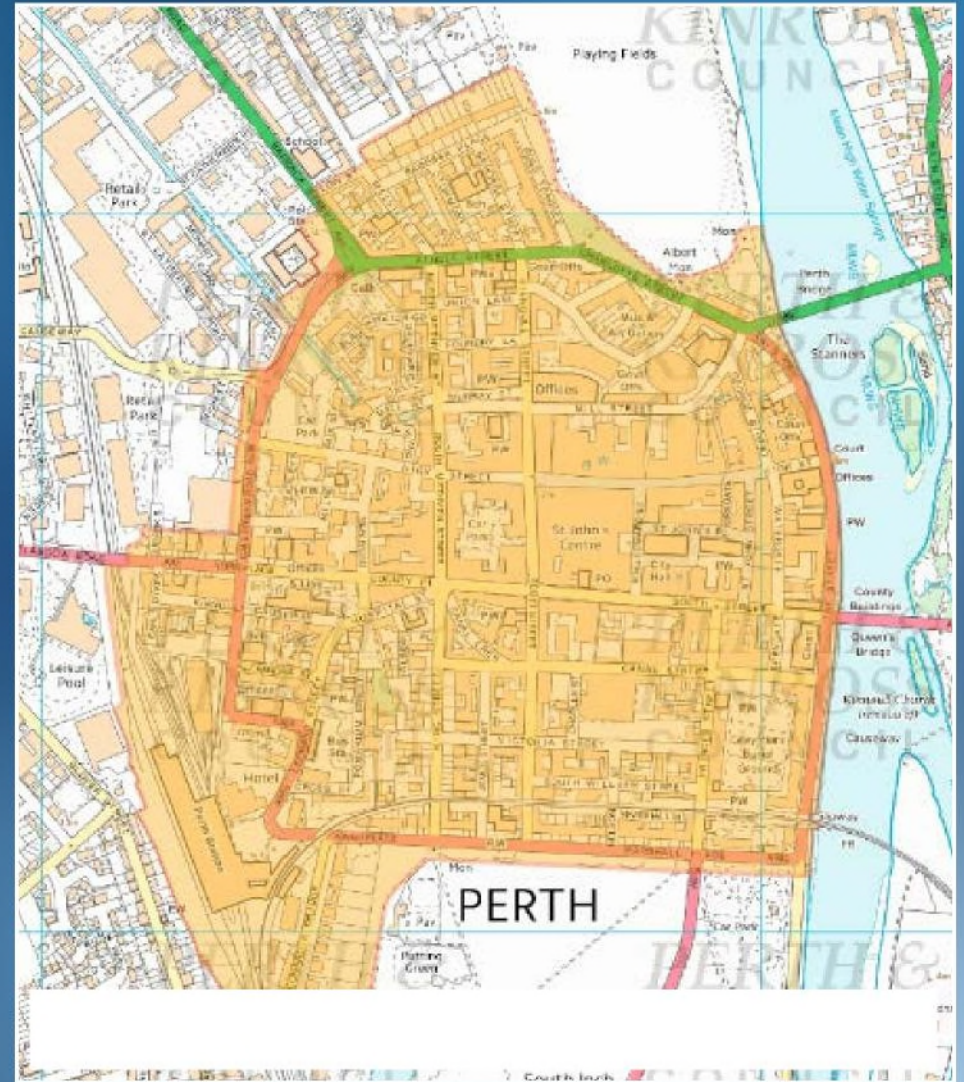
Developments of 20+ residential units or non-residential developments will have the contribution requirement assessed individually. Discussions with applicants have provided a positive response with a view that it will help with the delivery of new development in the City Centre.

## Primary Education

Through a review of the costs associated with the construction of primary school infrastructure the contribution level has been increased to £6,460. This is the first increase since 2011. In addition to the cost review further work has been carried out to align the future school estate requirements with the adopted Local Development Plan. This review has identified a number of primary school catchments which are under pressure, and as a result, contributions will only be required from school catchments that are currently operating at over 80%, but projected to be operating at over 100% in the future. This ensures that contributions are only sought where mitigation is required.

## Transport Infrastructure

To support the economic development of Perth and encourage the delivery of new employment uses the application of the Transport Infrastructure contributions to new employment uses on brownfield land will be exempt from the contribution requirement. All other employment proposal will be determined individually.

## Affordable Housing

To enable the delivery of affordable housing within new developments a revision of the affordable housing tenures has been undertaken. The revised tenures now include a Council-run Shared Equity option. The mortgage affordability figures were also reviewed and updated. Each of these changes provides additional options to support the delivery of affordable housing on the ground.

# Quality of Service and Engagement

## Service Provision

Planning staff are available from 9.00 am until 5.00 pm Monday to Friday with a duty officer available to give planning advice, without an appointment. In addition, the planning service is always available through our website which provides:

- *advice on* what requires planning permission *;*
- *information on the* submission of planning applications *;*
- *a facility to submit and* view applications *(through ePlanning.scot and PublicAccess);*
- *advice on and a means of* making representations *about planning applications;*
- *the ability to view the* Local Development Plan *and Supplementary Guidance; and*
- *a facility to view* Enforcement Notices *.*

Development Management has a dedicated case officer to deal with applications identified as being a priority in terms of assisting the development of businesses and being important to the local economy.

## Clear and Proportionate Advice

We promote our pre-application service to prospective applicants on our website and an increasing number of customers who are intending to carry out householder developments make use of our popular *'permitted development'* questionnaires *.* The advice on the website includes a guidance note which assists applicants in seeking pre-application advice from the Council and sets out the form and extent of the advice which will normally be provided. As a part of any pre-application advice in respect of relevant developments, the potential requirement for developer

contributions is always highlighted. There is also comprehensive advice on the Council's website as regards what a developer needs to consider before submitting an application.

There is a dedicated webpage providing pre-application guidance on major developments and those involving Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) . There is also a form available on the same webpage to request a pre-application meeting with officers in respect of a major development.

The use of case conferences, when a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) has been submitted for a major planning application, has ensured the applicant is aware of consultee issues and requirements at a very early stage in the process. The availability and promotion of processing agreements also gives prospective applicants the opportunity of obtaining clarity about timescales and the extent of supporting information which is expected from them.

> *"I wanted to write to thank you for all your help and advice on our existing project, Ashintully Castle - it's so exciting for us to be able to work on a project like this. We would not be able to rescue these buildings without the help and support of yourself and colleagues – so thank you!"*
>
> The Building Workshop, February 2016

## Online Twitter Surgeries

With dedication to improving our social media presence, we introduced online Twitter surgeries for the Main Issues Report consultation. This allowed increased access to the consultation and further opportunities to engage with the Main Issues Report, and planning within Perth and Kinross in general. We held two surgeries, one at the start of the consultation and one towards the end, each lasting for 3 hours, from 4.00 pm - 7.00 pm. While initial participation was limited, we will continue to offer this service with the aim of engaging more young people and offering a flexible way for stakeholders and communities to engage with us.

## Perth West Charrette and Masterplan Framework

As a large section of unallocated white land in the LDP, Perth West is a unique site with a complex history. A Steering Group was created to aid delivery and ensure effective community engagement. The group secured funding from the Scottish Government to hold a charrette and design workshop throughout March and April 2015. A masterplan framework was developed as a result of this engagement to help clarify the future opportunities for the whole area.

*See Case Study 3 for further information.*

## Engaging with Elected Members

Workshops were held with Elected Members in November 2015 to discuss the proposed content of the Main Issues Report. This followed on from sessions held in June 2015 informing them of the comments received to the Pre-MIR Call for Sites and Issues consultation. In addition to the workshops, Elected Member briefings were also undertaken prior to the Main Issues Report being considered by Council in December 2015.

## Main Issues Report Engagement

Our Main Issues Report was published in December 2015 and the consultation period ran until 16 March 2016. Due to previous comments on our mapping techniques, we decided to use the MIR consultation period to also gauge some thoughts on the type of mapping stakeholders and communities as a whole would like to see feature in the Proposed Plan, and subsequently our second Local Development Plan.

*See Case Study 4 for further information.*
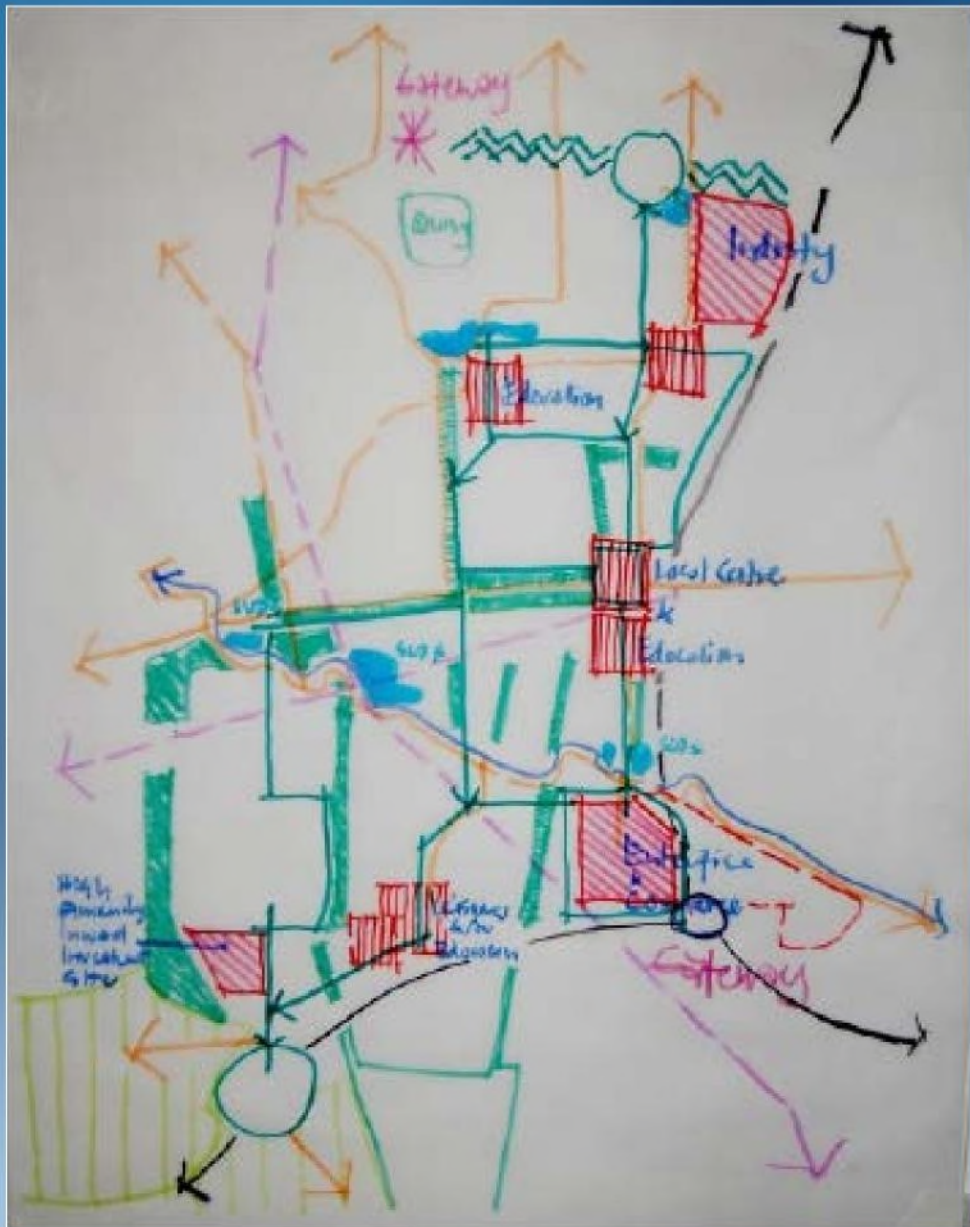
## Planning Users Forum

We continue to run our Planning Users Forum to communicate with a wide range of our customers to ensure we are providing a quality planning service for our customers. The Planning Users Forum meets twice a year and aims to focus on a range of planning issues which are of interest to our customers. The Forum, whose attendees include developers, agents and community councillors, brings forward and considers proposed improvements to the Planning Service.

## Community Council Training Workshops

Due to the success of the events held during the past two years, the Community Council Training Workshops have now become a regular annual occurrence. These events allow planning officers and community councillors to advise and update on planning processes, procedures performance and improvements. In addition to question and answer sessions, there are also practical exercises, such as clarifying material considerations and focusing on community interests. Specific advice for Community Councils is always available on our online Community Council planning portal .

# Governance

## Development Management Performance

There has been an improvement in the average time taken to determine both major and local applications (both householder and non-householder). The average time taken to determine applications which are subject to a planning obligation has also improved during 2015/16.

Our scheme of delegation remains effective with the percentage of delegated decisions rising from 96.0% in 2014/15 to 96.9% in 2015/16. Both the Development Management Committee and the Local Review Body meet once a month which helps to minimise delays in determining applications and reviews referred to them.

In 2015/16 five applications were determined by the Development Management Committee contrary to the case officer's recommendation (representing 9.3% of the 54 applications decided by the committee). In 2014/15 the corresponding figures were 10 and 13.3%. Given that only 3.1% of all applications were decided by committee last year, this represents a very small proportion of the total applications determined. There is no readily identifiable reason for the smaller proportion of overturned recommendations last year.

## Local Review Body

During 2014/15 the Local Review Body (LRB) upheld 67.9% of the 53 decisions originally taken by planning officials which was a slight decrease on the previous year's figure of 69%. The average time taken to determine reviews increased from 18.5 to 19.9 weeks. A Senior Planner continues to attend all LRB meetings and prepares a feedback summary note of the decisions that were taken and any specific issues which arose from that. This note is circulated to all relevant officers and, where appropriate, discussed at a team meeting. This provides a useful understanding of areas where a review of policy or procedure needs to be addressed and in turn assists in a more responsive approach to dealing with planning applications.

## Collaborative Working

All major development proposals involve collaborative working across various departments within the Council and with key stakeholders. Case conferences continue to be used for such proposals and have proven to be beneficial for all involved. Examples of developments where case conferences have been successfully used include:

- 'T in the Park' Music Festival *at Strathallan Castle Estate, Strathallan, Perthshire - establishment of new site);*

- *300 houses and associated works at* Lathro Farm, Kinross *;*
- *improvements to roads infrastructure at* A9/A85 Junction, Perth *.*

## Managing Development Management

We have effective structures in place to support efficient decision making and this is supported by flexible approaches to the workforce, enabling us to respond to priorities. This is achieved by regularly monitoring and reviewing the workload of each team through weekly meetings and allocating new applications to the team which has spare capacity. This may mean that in practice some major applications will be dealt with by a suitably experienced member of the local applications team and some, usually more complex, local applications may be dealt with by the major applications team. A similar arrangement exists between the (local) non-householder and householder teams.

## Procuring Services and Spending Effectively

Managers are responsible for ongoing budget monitoring to ensure that we are efficient and effective in procuring services and in spending. Monthly meetings with the Finance Team ensure budgets are on target. The Council uses the *'PECOS'* system for procurement and purchasing.

# Culture of Continuous Improvement

## Staff Development

The Council believes that maintaining a culture of continuous improvement requires a highly trained and motivated staff resource. The Council maintains a strong commitment to staff training with the annual training budget having been protected during a time of budget cuts.

We have a strong commitment to staff development comprising of the Employee Review and Development appraisals, an annual target of five days staff development per officer and bespoke monthly training workshops.

Full staff workshops are held annually which focus on service priorities, culture and continuous improvement - led by the Head of Service. Service and Team Plans are developed with staff involvement and these set out clear priorities. The 2015 workshop focused on communication and collaboration between all teams within the service and was delivered by a local company, Blue Sky Experiences .

## Recognition Awards

Perth & Kinross Council run Securing the Future Awards annually where employee recognition is celebrated as a key element in the approach to achieving excellence through people. Planning & Development had 2 projects shortlisted for 2015/16: *'Repairing Our Historic Tenements'* and *'Kinross High Street Regeneration'* (as discussed in Case Study 1).

## Sharing Best Practice

The Council encourages staff to play an active role in inter authority groups such as the Scottish Cities Alliance and Heads of Planning Scotland, both of which provide a platform for sharing best practice. In addition the Council hosted a learning session with Fife Council to discuss our approach to the delivery of strategic sites. An outcome from this session was a commitment to the creation of a Team Leader post to co-ordinate not just the Development Management of Major Applications but also their subsequent delivery.

We are also in SOLACE Group 2 Benchmarking which is co-ordinated by Heads of Planning Scotland and the Improvement Service.

## Transformation Strategies

In 2015 the Council committed £9.159M towards its Transformation Strategy. Bids were, and continue to be, sought from staff or groups of staff to deliver transformational change which will equip the Council to deliver quality services in new and more efficient ways to meet the challenges ahead. The planning service has attracted support through this programme to review the Development Management Validation Process and work is underway on this project.

Not all change requires funding and to support the Transformation agenda a virtual Centre for Innovation and Improvement, which was launched, branded, *'Learn, Innovate, Grow'*, the Centre's focus to date has been about placing innovation and improvement at the heart of everyday business. Almost everything which is offered on the programme capitalises on willingness of staff to share their expertise and time, for the benefit of colleagues. The programme is predominantly delivered by Council staff for Council staff. This creates opportunities which go beyond attendance at a learning event - such as networking, sharing of good practice and identifying potential for collaborative working, both within the Council and beyond. Our focus on learning will be extended via a newly formed Leadership and Learning Network within the Council. This brings together key individuals who are involved in supporting learning in the various service and professional areas across the Council. The aim is to maximise available resources and expertise, as well as ensure a collective and joined up focus on all matters related to learning and development. Staff are encouraged to utilise this support and many have also actively participated supporting staff in other services by sharing our experience and good practice.

# Supporting Evidence

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

## Perth & Kinross Council

- Community Plan/SOA 2013-2023
- Communication and Consultation Toolkits
- Complaints Policy
- State of the Environment Report
- Integrated Appraisal Toolkit
- Council Website
- Local Review Body
- Customer Service Charter

## The Environment Service

- The Environment Service Business Management & Improvement Plan

## Planning & Regeneration

- Perth City Plan
- Strategic Development Plan
- Planning User Forum
- Invest In Perth
- City Investment Plan
- Planning Performance Framework
- Community Council Portal

## Development Plan

- Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee
- Consultation and Engagement Events
- Developer Contributions
- Affordable Housing
- Local Development Plan Scheme
- Adopted Local Development Plan
- Supplementary Guidance
- Local Development Plan 2
- Development Briefs
- Background Information and Studies
- Community Council Portal
- Perth West Charrette and Masterplan

## Development Management

- Development Management Committee
- Guide to the Use of Processing Agreements
- Planning Processing Agreement Template
- Scheme of Delegation
- Planning Application Checklist
- What Needs Permission?
- Planning Enforcement Charter
- Internal Audit Report

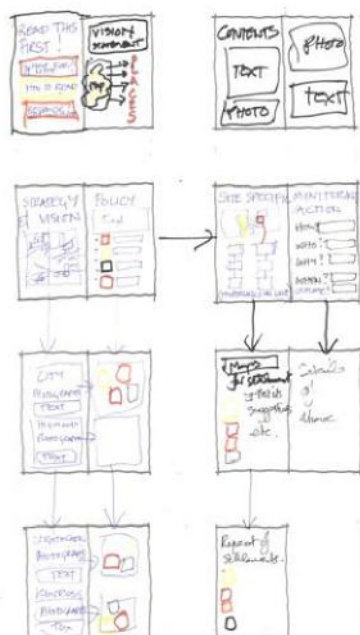# Service Improvements 2016-2017

In the coming year we will:

- **Customer Service Excellence**
  *Building Standards are progressing with this and both the Development Management team and the Strategy and Policy team will work towards this, with the target of achieving CSE during the PPF7 reporting period (2017-2018).*

- **Undertake a Review of Conservation Areas**
  *This will be continued on from the previous year.*

- **Better Project Management of the Major Applications Team** *Improve timescales and management of applications whilst enhancing relationships with applicants, agents and developers.*

- **Quality of Developments**
  *Take a more proactive approach to achieving high-quality development through the preparation of Placemaking Supplementary Guidance and Development Briefs for sites allocated in the LDP.*

- **Rationalise Web Pages and Review Content**
  *As part of a Transformation Project, the Council website will be redesigned around the customer to ensure the best user experience possible to encourage customers to choose digital first. The Planning & Development webpages are amongst the most popular on the corporate website, so will be rationalised and their content reviewed. Content should put the customer first, be designed to be easily viewed using a smartphone/tablet and be easily understood.*

## Delivery of Our Service Improvement Actions in 2015-2016

| Committed Improvements and Actions | Complete? |
|---|---|
| **Undertake a review of Conservation Areas** | *Yes* |

An initial review of the 4 key larger conservation areas (CAs) was undertaken as an internal process within the Planning and Development Service. Following this, it was established that:

- *the larger CAs have several pockets of development within them which are of a lesser quality to the remainder of the area and there is concern that this is perceived as a dilution of the overall quality;*

- *the smaller CAs generally have their boundaries drawn more tightly around key character areas where there is little presence of lesser quality;*

- *since the designation of the larger CAs there has been little progress on the ground in respect of lifting the standard of those parts of lesser quality;*

- *it is not envisaged that the quality of the lesser areas are likely to significantly improve in the foreseeable future;*

- *the presence of areas of lesser quality result in difficulties of applying a higher standard of development quality to other properties;*

- *normal domestic permitted development rights are removed within all CAs which puts an added burden on those properties within the lesser areas and may actually dissuade owners from undertaking improvements, if a higher more costly solution is required.*

*(continued)*

| Committed Improvements and Actions | Complete? |
|---|---|
| *(continued)*<br><br>Discussions were subsequently held with Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust and following this it has been decided to progress the project in an initial phase for Perth City in combination with a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme bid, targeting specific areas within the conservation area for built heritage enhancement. The Council is currently intending to appoint consultants to take forward this project. | |
| **Undertake a review of Buildings at Risk**<br><br>The critical prerequisite for this project was a meeting with the BARR section of Historic Environment Scotland was critical. Initially this was difficult to arrange but following the HES establishment becoming fully operational this is now being progressed through a meeting between respective officers. It is anticipated that this will allow a more pragmatic and realistic approach to be able to be taken to addressing the list. | *Ongoing* |
| **Improve the visualisations and inclusion of more graphics in the LDP, specifically in the Main Issues Report**<br><br>As identified in Case Study 4, we held a workshop to examine different styles of presenting maps and statistical data from a number of other recent Development Plans, both from the UK and internationally. One of the aims was to find a way to communicate spatial options in an easily understood visual style.<br><br>The intention had been to incorporate different styles of graphics and mapping within the Main Issues Report itself, however, from the workshop it was determined that this may be confusing to people when trying to compare options, and therefore we undertook to use the Main Issues Report and drop-in sessions to experiment with different styles of mapping and to gauge views of users of the document on what worked best for them.<br><br>*(continued)* | *Ongoing* |

| Committed Improvements and Actions | Complete? |
|---|---|
| *(continued)*<br><br>The outcome of this, together with the workshop feedback, will inform the mapping and graphics for the Proposed Plan. | |

*Example storyboard from Workshop: What should a Plan look like?*



*Interaction at Workshop*

| Committed Improvements and Actions | Complete? |
|---|---|
| **Increase our social media presence and communication materials in order to improve stakeholder engagement and establish a better dialogue with young people**<br><br>We have enhanced our activity on Twitter (@PKCplanning), particularly through the MIR consultation period holding regular Twitter surgeries and encouraging dialogue through the means of social media.<br><br><br><br>We have consulted on the mapping used throughout our land use planning documents during the MIR consultation period and the outcome of this will be incorporated within the Proposed Plan and Local Development Plan.<br><br>Through the **TAYplan Youth Camp** we established a better dialogue with young people. We conducted two visits to schools within Perth and Kinross in early 2016 and highlighted the role of planning and routes into the planning profession. We then held a one day workshop with school pupils from schools across the TAYplan region, including 7 pupils from Perth and Kinross, to develop their understanding of the planning process.  | *Ongoing* |

| Committed Improvements and Actions | Complete? |
|---|---|
| **Evaluation of Development Management Procedures**<br><br>All of our procedures were reviewed and updated during 2015/16.<br><br>Our procedures and processes were also the subject of a routine internal audit during February 2016. The Audit **report** concluded that Development Management had *"moderately strong"* controls in place for monitoring and reporting the planning application process, although some improvement actions were identified. Most of these were carried out by the end of March 2016. | *Yes* |
| **Working towards achieving Customer Service Excellence Award**<br><br>Building Standards have had a pre-assessment meeting which highlighted some issues that need to be addressed before the formal assessment took place. These have now been resolved and the team are awaiting the formal assessment procedure to be carried out.<br><br>Once Building Standards have been successful, this will be rolled out to Development Management and the Strategy and Policy Team, (which incorporates the Local Development Plan Team). | *Ongoing* |

## A: Decision-Making Timescales
*(based on 'all applications' timescales)*

| Category | Total Number of Decisions 2015-2016 | Average Timescale (weeks) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2015-2016 | 2014-2015 |
| Major Developments | 8 | 23.7 | 42.2 |
| Local Developments (non-householder) | 864 | 11.3 | 11.8 |
| • Local: less than 2 months | 618 (71.5%) | 6.8 | 6.9 |
| • Local: more than 2 months | 246 (28.5%) | 22.6 | 19.1 |
| Householder Developments | 546 | 6.3 | 6.8 |
| • Local: less than 2 months | 533 (97.6%) | 6.2 | 6.4 |
| • Local: more than 2 months | 13 (2.4%) | 10.7 | 10.9 |
| Major Housing Developments | 3 | 33.0 | 40.3 |
| Local Housing Developments | 447 | 14.0 | 12.7 |
| • Local: less than 2 months | 289 (64.4%) | 6.9 | 7.1 |
| • Local: more than 2 months | 159 (35.6%) | 26.8 | 19.3 |

| Category | Total Number of Decisions 2015-2016 | Average Timescale (weeks) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2015-2016 | 2014-2015 |
| Major Business and Industry | 0 | **n/a** | 48.1 |
| Local Business and Industry | 201 | **7.8** | 9.8 |
| • Local: less than 2 months | 165 (82.1%) | 6.7 | 6.7 |
| • Local: more than 2 months | 36 (17.9%) | 13.2 | 16.5 |
| EIA Developments | 5 | 11.8 | 23.8 |
| Other Consents* | 291 | 6.9 | 7.6 |
| Planning/Legal Agreements** | 43 | 28.7 | 53.2 |
| • Major: average time | 2 | 50.3 | 50.2 |
| • Local: average time | 41 | 27.6 | 54.6 |
| Local Reviews | **53** | 19.9 | 18.5 |

*  Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & & relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

**  Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

## B: Decision-Making: Local Reviews and Appeals

| Type | Total Number of Decisions | Original Decision Upheld | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2015-2016 | | 2014-2015 | |
| | | N O | % | N O . | % |
| | 53 | 36 | 67.9 | 29 | 69 |
| | 14 | 9 | 64.3 | 9 | 52.9 |

## C: Enforcement Activity

| | 2015-2016 | 2014-2015 |
|---|---|---|
| Cases Taken Up | 296 | 361 |
| Breaches Identified | 209 | 267 |
| Cases Resolved | 167 | 212 |
| Notices Served*** | 23 | 37 |
| Reports to Procurator Fiscal | 0 | 0 |
| Prosecutions | 0 | 0 |

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

## D: Context

### Decision-Making Timescales

Major applications performance improved significantly again last year from an average of 42.2 weeks to 23.7 weeks. Project planning and better monitoring of cases has once again helped, together with the improved management of the planning obligation process. Local Development (non-householder) applications also took less time to determine on average (down by 0.5 weeks to 11.3) compared to 2014/15. This improvement was in part achieved for reasons which are similar to the major applications as outlined above. Over the same period there was also a big improvement in the percentage of (non-householder) local applications being determined within 2 months (71.5% compared to 59.5% in the previous year). Local housing applications took longer than the non-householder average to determine, whereas the business and industry proposals took less time. This in part reflects the complexity of some housing applications, particularly those which just fall under the *'major'* threshold, and the fact we deal with certain business applications as a priority.

Tighter timescales for dealing with all applications involving planning obligations were introduced in 2013 and further improvements in performance were consequently achieved in subsequent years. Last year, the average number of weeks for these applications improved significantly from 53.2 to 27.6. The improvement was however confined to the local applications with the major figure remaining static at just over 50 weeks. The 5 EIA developments determined last year also saw a significant improvement from 23.8 to 11.8 weeks.

During 2015/16 a further significant improvement to the average time taken to determine *'other consents'* was achieved with the relevant figure dropping from 7.6 in

2014/15 to 6.9 weeks. In 2013/14 the relevant figure stood at 9.2 which demonstrates a continuing improvement within this application category.

## Local Reviews and Appeals

During 2015/16 the Local Review Body (LRB) upheld 67.9% of the 53 decisions originally taken by planning officials which was a slight decrease on the previous year's figure of 69%. The percentage of original decisions upheld on appeal to the Scottish Ministers rose notably from 52.9% in 2014/15 to 64.3%%.

## Enforcement

Enforcement activity was quieter during 2015/16 than in the previous year, with a decrease in cases being both reported and resolved. The number of formal notices served also dropped, from 37 to 23. Although the number of cases resolved has dropped, the percentage of the breeches identified that have been resolved has increased from 79.4 to 79.9%. We continually aim to reduce breaches of planning control through giving our enforcement work a high profile, particularly with regard to monitoring compliance with planning consents.
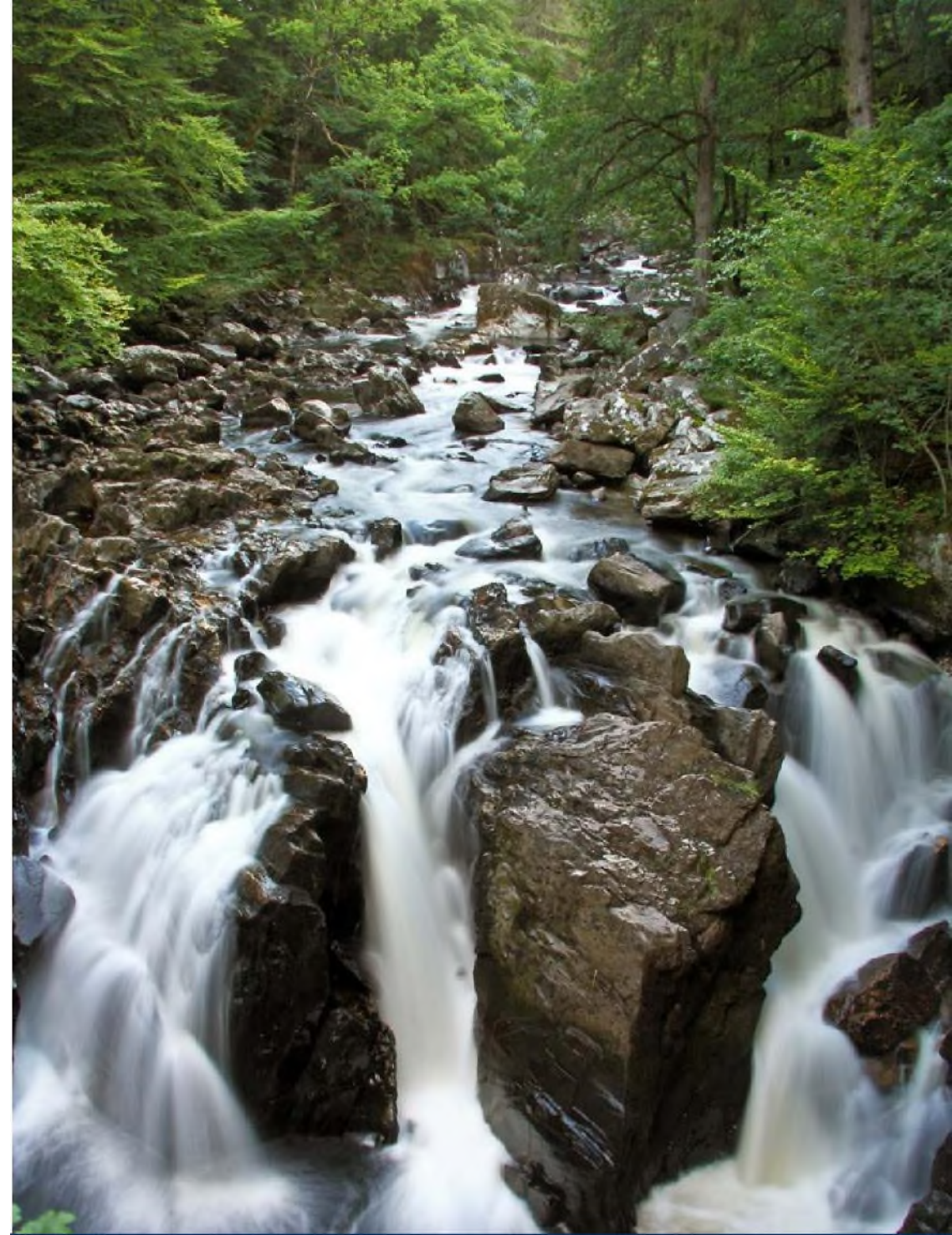
# Workforce and Financial Information

The information requested in this section is an integral part of providing the context for the information in parts 1-5. Staffing information should be a snapshot of the position on 31 March 2016. Financial information should relate to the full financial year.

|  | Tier 1 | Tier 2 | Tier 3 | Tier 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Head of Planning Service | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

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

|  |  | DM | DP | Enforcement |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Managers | No. Posts | 1 | 1 | 0 |
|  | Vacant | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Main Grade Posts | No. Posts | 17 | 15 | 3 |
|  | Vacant | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Technician | No. Posts | 4 | 3 | 0 |
|  | Vacant | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Office Support/ Clerical | No. Posts | 6 | 0 | 0 |
|  | Vacant | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total |  | 28 | 20 | 3 |

Note: *Managers are those staff responsible for the operational management of a team/division. They are not necessarily line managers.*

| Staff Age Profile | Number |
|---|---|
| Under 30 | 8 |
| 30-39 | 17 |
| 40-49 | 16 |
| 50 and over | 11 |

| Committee & Site Visits* | Number per Year |
|---|---|
| Full Council Meetings | 8 |
| Planning Committees | 17 |
| Area Committees (where relevant) | Not relevant |
| Committee Site Visits | 2 |
| LRB** | 12 |
| LRB Site Visits | 16 |

Notes:

\* References to committees also include National Park Authority Boards. Number of site visits is those cases where visits were carried out by committees/boards.

\*\* This relates to the number of meetings of the LRB. The number of applications going to LRB is reported elsewhere.

| Total Costs | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Budget | Direct* | Indirect** | Income*** |
| Development Management | £1,578,615 | £1,008,963 | £569,652 | £1,543,643 |
| Development Planning | £1,764,919 | £767,119 | £704,766 | £86,314 |
| Enforcement | £165,396 | £110,058 | £55,338 | £0 |
| Total | £3,508,929 | £1,886,140 | £1,329,756 | £1,629,957 |

Notes:

* *Direct staff costs covers gross par (including overtime, national insurance and superannuation contribution). The appropriate proportion of the direct cost of any staff member within the planning authority spending 30% of more of their time on planning should be included in costs, irrespective of what department they are allocated to (for example, legal advice, administration, typing). Exclude staff spending less that 30% of their time on planning.*

** *Indirect costs include all other costs attributable to the planning service. Examples (not exhaustive) include accommodation, IT, stationery, office equipment, telephone charges, printing, advertising, travel & subsistence, apportionment of support service costs.*

*** *Include fees from planning applications and deemed applications, and recharges for advertising costs etc. Exclude income from property and planning searches.*

| Performance Marker | Evidence Provided in PPF Section | | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Driving Improved Performance** | | | |
| 1 Decision-Making | • *NHIs* | | 4 |
| | • *Official Statistics* | | 27 |
| 2 Project Management | • *NHIs* | | 4 |
| | • *Weekly Review Meetings* | | 8 |
| | • *Managing Development Management* | | 18 |
| 3 Early Collaboration | • *NHIs* | | 4 |
| | • *Service Provision* | | 12 |
| | • *Clear and Proportionate Advice* | | 12 |
| | • *Case Study 3* | | 14 |
| | • *Case Study 4* | | 16 |
| 4 Legal Agreements | • *Official Statistics* | | 27 |
| | • *Legacy Cases* | | 6 |
| | • *Decision-Making Timescales* | | 6 |
| 5 Enforcement Charter | • *NHIs* | | 4 |
| 6 Continuous Improvement | • *Development Management Performance* | | 17 |
| | • *Culture of Continuous Improvement* | | 18 |

| Performance Marker | Evidence Provided in PPF Section | | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Promoting the Plan-Led System** | | | |
| 7 LDP | • *NHIs* | | 4 |
| | • *LDP Policies and Supplementary Guidance* | | 9 |
| | • *Case Study 4* | | 16 |
| 8 Development Plan Scheme | • *NHIs* | | 4 |
| | • *Case Study 4* | | 16 |
| 9 Elected Members Engaged Early | • *Engaging with Elected Members* | | 13 |
| | • *Case Study 4* | | 16 |
| 10 Stakeholders Engaged Early | • *Case Study 3* | | 14 |
| | • *Case Study 4* | | 16 |
| | • *Planning Users Forum* | | 17 |
| 11 Production of Regular and Proportionate Policy Advice | • *LDP Policies and Supplementary Guidance* | | 9 |
| | • *Case Study 2* | | 11 |
| | • *Case Study 3* | | 14 |
| **Simplifying and Streamlining** | | | |
| 12 Corporate Working Across Services | • *Planning Users Forum* | | 17 |
| | • *Collaborative Working* | | 17 |
| | • *Weekly Review Meetings* | | 8 |