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Pg03 Introduction

The purpose of the Planning Performance Framework (PPF) is to show how as a planning authority we are working to achieve a high-quality planning service: how we have performed and also, plan to improve. It also provides more measured information on the authority's work programmes, called National Headline Indicators (NHI), along with the Scottish Government Annual Official Statistics for that authority. The PPF concludes with a snapshot covering the workforce and planning committee meeting information.

In 2020, the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic put additional pressure on Council resources and we had to take the decision to submit a reduced PPF without case studies. Despite the reduced format, we were able to demonstrate a high level of performance and received one of the most positive ratings since the start of the PPF reporting in 2012.

The challenges we highlighted in PPF9 continued throughout this reporting year. Members of the planning staff continued to work from

home, juggling the standard workload with home-schooling and taking on responsibilities in re-tasked roles to support the Council's Covid recovery work. Officers took on shifts at vaccination centres, assisted with the administration of business grants, the delivery of social care services and the distribution of emergency food parcels. Mindful of these additional commitments, we carried forward the concise format of PPF9. This year however, we also included a small number of case studies as we felt it was important to showcase some of our achievements that demonstrate how we adjusted and delivered a high quality planning service in these challenging times.

Over the past year, we continued to improve our remote working practices and the way we collaborate internally and externally with the use of virtual tools. Some revisions to working practices which were necessitated by the pandemic and associated temporary changes to legislation have proved to be so beneficial we will retain these going forward. The service improvements identified for the next reporting year focus on actions around continuing our digital transformation, responding to the increasing demand for ancillary and self-build accommodation and improving the way we work with developers and local communities.



QUALITATIVE NARRATIVE & CASE STUDIES



PART 1 QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

Having spent a full year affected by the restrictions of Covid, the below case studies focus on how we adapted our ways of working to overcome challenges and continue to deliver an efficient planning service. They provide examples of projects where we demonstrated successful virtual collaboration within the Council as well as with communities, the development sector and other partners. In the process, we learned valuable skills which help accelerate the digital transformation of the planning service and work towards the aims of the wider Digital Strategy for Scotland.

Case Studies

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PART 1 Case Study 1: Designing Open Spaces at Bertha Park

Location
Bertha Park, Perth
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Culture of continuous improvement
Key Markers
11 Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Develop Plan & Supplementary Guidance • Collaborative Working
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local developers • Authority: Planning Staff

Key Officer

Callum Petrie, Planning Officer,
Development Management

Overview

In December 2019, the planning department received an application for 82 dwellinghouses on land at Bertha Park, an area that had already received permission in 2015. The 82 homes proposed was on a 2.06ha site which represented 41 homes per ha. This was considered quite high density particularly because it did not include any flatted development. It was quickly recognised through discussions internally between the policy team and development management that some of the garden space did not meet the standards that had been adopted in the Placemaking Supplementary Guidance for PKC. As a result of this issue, a workshop was organised to discuss the layout of the proposal with internal consultees, including Community Greenspace, Biodiversity, Transport Planning and Development Plans. This allowed key issues to be raised and discussed with identified actions for the case officer to take forward.

We suggested two alternative approaches to changing the proposal. To maximise the use of space, the applicant could include a wider mix of tenure with housing types such as courtyard blocks, colony flats, row housing where residents do not have private gardens and share larger semi - private / communal spaces instead. Alternatively, if the applicant wished to progress with the proposed detached house types, it was agreed that the Council would not lower its requirement for private garden grounds. Although the proposal had generous public open space provision, we felt that for these house types, private garden grounds are important for encouraging a sustainable

lifestyle as well as providing flexibility and adaptability for the future. It was also highlighted that amenity planting and street parking could be rationalised within the layout to free up valuable space and improve the streetscape.

This collaborative approach and proactive suggestions allowed the case officer to then negotiate with the developer regarding the layout and garden space. The case officer then provided this feedback and warned that the current layout would most likely be refused at committee. As a result of this advice, the original application was then withdrawn and the applicant re-submitted a new layout based on the internal advice provided. The original house types were retained however the proposal provided more coherent open spaces and ensured that all garden grounds met the statutory minimum requirement with a necessary reduction in unit numbers to 75 dwellings.

Goals

This case study demonstrates the value of good internal collaboration and external negotiation to achieve better placemaking in a new development. The case officer and policy team worked closely to establish the plots that were not meeting the standards for garden sizes. Furthermore, this highlighted that the open space proposed for this development did not provide adequate outdoor space for future residents and overall, the original unit numbers represented over development. This issue has been particularly key during the COVID pandemic as it has highlighted linkages between deprivation and discrimination, and lack of greenspace.

PART 1 Case Study 1: Designing Open Spaces at Bertha Park

This provided greater weight to the issue and allowed the case officer with the evidence required to negotiate with the applicant. The outcome was a better design for the site, a healthier provision for open space and improved garden sizes allowing the future residents to enjoy outdoor space and enhanced choices. As part of the process, we were also able to improve other aspects of the proposal, such as the layout of parking areas, minimising their visual impact on the streetscape; and the provision of amenity planting, to allow for easy maintenance and a more coherent structure.

Outcomes

This is an example of collaborative working within the Council, with input across the planning department and community greenspace. It demonstrates how important it is to provide support for Development Management and give the case officer the evidence needed to negotiate with applicants. The outcome was an improved submission – this also benefits the applicant as it provides them with the guidance to deliver a better proposal that focuses on placemaking and the needs of future residents. In terms of our experience, it gave us further confidence in challenging proposals solely on placemaking grounds and taking a proactive approach to finding design solutions which are both feasible and deliver a positive outcome for future residents. We were particularly keen to see a successful outcome here as it is the first significant investment in the market rent sector and it is one of the Council's aims to broaden the tenure mix within allocated sites.



Location
Perth & Kinross, October 2020 to March 2021
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of service and engagement
Key Markers
12 Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General public

Key Officer

Team led by Peter Marshall, Service Manager, Planning & Housing Strategy

Overview

Wide engagement with internal and external stakeholders to raise awareness of the Council's climate change campaign and its Climate Emergency Plan Engagement and interim Action Plan was programmed to take place between February and April 2020. However, plans needed to change at short notice and all engagement pivoted to online only due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key officers from across the Council's planning & housing strategy service, together with officers from a number of other Council services joined together to form an ad-hoc team to support each other to devise and carry out an alternative programme of online events.

The online sessions were targeted at raising awareness of the issues, and of the opportunity to comment on the Council's draft Action Plan; while also promoting climate change discussions among individuals and groups. The overall aim was to enhance the level and quality of responses to the Action Plan during the period of engagement.

A number of online sessions were held, some intended to raise a general awareness of the campaign and to provide an opportunity for issues to be raised with the Council; and some relating to specific topics from the Action Plan including energy & buildings, land use issues, transport, with the Council; and some relating to specific topics from the Action Plan including energy & buildings, land use issues, transport, business & industry, and waste & resources

management. During the course of the campaign, other online sessions were arranged in response to issues that had been raised separately by a number of participants, including sessions dedicated to rural transport, and to river catchment issues.

The online sessions were supported by an inter-disciplinary team of Council officers, including representatives from household and commercial waste and recycling teams, transport, business development & place development, community greenspace, housing, and property.

In addition, the team partnered with several Climate Café online sessions that were already scheduled to be taking place over the period of the campaign. These included sessions with established Climate Café groups in Aberfeldy, Dunkeld & Birnam, and Pitlochry; and a brand-new Climate Café group just being established in Perth. Online sessions were also held with the Perth City Leadership Forum and with other interested groups.



Case Study 2: Climate Change Engagement

Goals

The Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan set out initial proposals for fulfilling the Council's ambition to lead by example in accelerating the transformational change required to address the Climate Emergency. It was deliberately an interim document, to be used as the basis to start the conversation with our partners and communities, to share in the design and delivery of a low carbon and climate resilient Perth & Kinross.

The goal of the engagement was to identify the main actions that can be taken, and to hold a conversation about what each of us can do in the Perth and Kinross area.

The pivot to online-only engagement required rapid learning of new techniques on digital engagement, digital facilitation and receiving and recording comments and feedback from online events. This required informal training and guidance on new skills such as online facilitation of discussions, and how to make the most of online engagement as

an alternative to traditional face-to-face or 'drop-in' meetings to effectively meet this goal. All our traditional engagement skills and toolkit needed to transform to an online setting in a short time period.

Outcomes

This online engagement campaign represents the beginning of a longer and broader relationship between the Council and stakeholders. Our ambition to reduce carbon emissions to net zero recognises that the public as citizens and consumers have a greater role shaping our future actions. This is consistent with the Perth & Kinross Offer, where we work together with communities and stakeholders to co-produce solutions. It is acknowledged that there is a significant cost to responding to the Climate Emergency, but the Council's investment in making resources available to carry out the engagement and to deliver the changes required will reduce this cost in the long term.

The results of the climate change engagement activity – the initial return on the investment in staff time and resources to carry out the engagement campaign – will be reported to the Council and with proposals to update the vision and interim Action Plan. This will inform the operations of the Council's Planning & Development service as it will help align the review of the policies and proposals in our Local Development Plan with those in our Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan. In addition to assisting in the delivery of our Climate specific action for LDP3. The redesigned digital engagement has also enhanced skill and learning which will be applied to future LDP engagement. Change ambitions the lead role played by planning has enhanced our understanding of the inter-relationship between climate change impacts, our route map to net zero and the land use planning function allowing us to focus more specific action for LDP3. The redesigned digital engagement has also enhanced skill and learning which will be applied to future LDP engagement.



Let's Work Together to Tackle and Adapt to Climate Change (Phase 1)

PART 1 Case Study 3: Reviewing Local Nature Conservation Sites

Location
Tayside
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance
Key Markers
13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environment
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key agencies• Specialist community groups

Key Officer

Robert Wills, Planning Officer,
Planning & Housing Strategy

Overview

Perth & Kinross Council has been working in conjunction with Angus Council and NatureScot to identify local nature conservation sites across Tayside. These are sites of at least local importance for either their biodiversity or geodiversity value, and in some cases both. With one biodiversity officer and no geodiversity expertise within the planning department we had to engage with multiple partners to cover the multiple disciplinary knowledge required of these sites. While work had been carried out on methodology prior to lockdown between the Councils, arranging meetings with multiple stakeholders proved time consuming. Lockdown and homeworking resulted in a hiatus while IT systems were set up and work fell further behind due to redeployment of the project lead into social care. Eventually with a bit of practice we were able to hold regular meetings to make greater progress than if we had been meeting in person. During 2020 we were able to continue working with Angus Council, NatureScot and the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) on methodology for biodiversity sites. Tayside Geodiversity surveyors were able to get out in their local area when restrictions allowed and in early 2021 geodiversity site meetings were held weekly over 6 weeks with experts from Tayside Geodiversity, NatureScot and independent geologists to review assessments and make recommendations for 40 local geodiversity sites. With funding from NatureScot and following online

interviews we secured a place for a graduate ecologist and were able to scope the extent of surveys required on 100 candidate local biodiversity sites. This involved weekly meetings over 14 weeks involving Council staff, BSBI recorders, NatureScot experts, the RSPB and the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership co-ordinator. The technology also allowed for a collaborative presentation on the project by 3 of the organisations involved to the interested public at the Tayside Recorders day.



PART 1 Case Study 3: Reviewing Local Nature Conservation Sites

Goals

The climate change and biodiversity emergencies make identification and protection of these sites through the planning system more important than ever. Identification of these sites is a key action in the Tayside Local Biodiversity Plan and a requirement of Scottish Planning Policy. These sites, where adopted, will be identified in the Local Development Plan and show commitment to the biodiversity duty to promote the conservation of biodiversity, and provide a tool for engaging local communities with the special qualities of their area.

Outcomes

Collaboration is essential to ensure a robust evidence base and community buy in, and has been the most important part of this project. Learning and efficiency has been gained by not just working with the stakeholders mentioned but also working closely with landowners, Forest & Land Scotland, TWIC and Fife Nature, and Tayside Biodiversity Partners such as Butterfly Conservation, British Dragonfly Society and the Tayside Raptor Study Group and more. We are currently in the process of following up with landowners to get their input into the final shape of the geodiversity sites that passed assessment, and surveys are currently underway on biodiversity sites. Following assessment sites will be adopted in the interim in guidance before forming part of the next LDP.



Location
Perth & Kinross 2020-21
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of service and engagement • Culture of continuous improvement
Key Markers
12 Corporate working across services
13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary Working • Collaborative Working • Project Management • Energy Planning
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff • Knowledge Sharing Group - Zero Waste Scotland, Staff from Other Councils, Consultantss

Key Officers

Shelley McCann, Strategic Planning & Sustainability Officer & Andrew Ballantine, Planning Officer, Planning & Housing Strategy

Overview

In recognition of the close working arrangements between energy and land use planning and following on from our case study on Energy Planning in 2018-2019 members of the Planning & Housing Strategy (P&HS) team have continued to lead on, and be involved in, progressing the energy planning work of the Council, both internally and externally. The energy planning work has been advanced in line with current and emerging Scottish Government plans in relation to Climate Change and net zero, as well as Council-led plans and strategies.

Key officers within the P&HS team have continued to pro-actively respond to current and emerging duties and responsibilities in relation to energy planning. In particular, the Council has been involved in a Knowledge Sharing Group (KSG) alongside Zero Waste Scotland, other local authorities and a consultancy firm, to further refine plans for Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES). Taking on the role of lead local authority as part of the KSG has helped to shape future Scottish Government policy around LHEES and inform our future planning around this emerging statutory duty. The KSG has involved detailed input on policy, methodology and data development to support emerging thinking on how LHEES can be delivered by local authorities (and partners) and supported by the Scottish Government. A number of other key plans and strategies have been consulted on by the Scottish Government to support the net zero agenda including NPF4 Position Statement, Heat Networks Bill, New Build Heat Standard, Draft Heat in Buildings Strategy, and Updated Climate Change Plan. The Council has

set aside time and resources to be able to respond to these consultations meaningfully and to ensure our local authority perspective, including implications on resources, is recognised in developing these plans.

Members of the P&HS team have also been actively involved in the ParkPower Green Heat in Greenspaces (GHiGs) Project (add link) as a core partner which has explored the opportunity for using greenspaces and rivers as sources for low carbon heat. PKC was represented on the technical sub-group of the project to assist with developing the methodology and resultant outputs. PKC was invited to present at the GHiGS conference in April 2021 to reflect on the opportunities of the GHiGs project findings for local authorities and our wider energy and land use planning projects/plans.

In addition, PKC has been involved in detailed discussions with Scottish Government heat map team to further consider the role of heat map data (and other sources) in relation to heat and energy planning at local authority level including alignment with LHEES and other projects.

PKC has continued to invest staff time and resources to be at the forefront of developing plans around strategic energy planning in Scotland. This is to both support existing workstreams (e.g. identifying opportunities for low carbon heat as part of new development proposals) as well as to develop plans to future-proof the Council as best as possible for meeting emerging net zero duties. Our input has also supported Scottish Government plans for the development of the forthcoming statutory duties around LHEES which will be at the heart of delivering transformational change in terms of heat and energy efficiency of existing and new buildings to support the net zero agenda.

PART 1 Case Study 4: Planning Ahead for Net Zero

Goals

In order to transition to a net zero and climate resilient future local authorities are leading on plans to take forward how energy can be decarbonised and energy efficiency measures implemented thereby reducing carbon emissions. This strategic work has implications for land use planning, in particular around how buildings are heated using sustainable sources, driving energy efficiency improvements and opportunities for smarter ways to deliver, store and use energy including heat networks. Plans to improve energy efficiency of domestic properties can also help support efforts in reducing fuel poverty. These objectives are captured in the Council's Interim Climate Change Action Plan (link) which is being updated later in 2021. The overall goal in relation to this case study was for the P&HS team to continue to lead on the Council's strategic energy planning work, linking in with various teams and projects currently being progressed and sharing knowledge with external partners on the opportunities and challenges from forthcoming duties.

As noted above, PKC is actively involved in developing emerging duties to help support the transition to net zero including LHEES policy development. The LHEES process will form the framework under which local authorities will set out how to meet increasing standards for building energy performance and heat decarbonisation, tying in with key plans such as local development plans and local housing strategies. The LHEES will also link in with the strategic energy planning of Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) as well as other key partners to align key investment decisions with planned new developments and

building upgrades. Alongside the LHEES proposals, the Scottish Government have consulted on a range of plans and proposals including NPF4 Position Statement, Heat Networks Bill, New Build Heat Standard, Draft Heat in Buildings Strategy, and Updated Climate Change Plan. An objective of the team has been to invest time and resources in to feeding in to the LHEES policy development as well as responding to the various consultations being taken forward by the Scottish Government. It is considered that by front-loading officer time around these current and emerging duties we will be best placed to ensure we can plan ahead to ensure that necessary resources will be in place. This will support our own net zero objectives as well as ensuring we are able to meet forthcoming statutory duties.

In addition to the LHEES knowledge sharing work and responding to key net zero related consultations, the team has also committed officer time to be involved in the GHIGs project as well as ongoing technical discussions about the use of heat map data for current and future projects. The aim of being involved in these additional projects has been to provide a local authority perspective and gain external insight on energy planning issues including around the usage of data for strategic and project focused work and the opportunities from specific technological options across urban and rural areas.

The implications of this work on the operations of our planning service is centred around how the development process can feed into the net zero agenda and specifically how the development

planning process aligns with current and future plans focused on this agenda. Embedding this learning in to the P&HS team has been extremely important to consider the land use implications of the net zero agenda and how the Council can support existing and future local and national efforts in this regard.

Outcomes

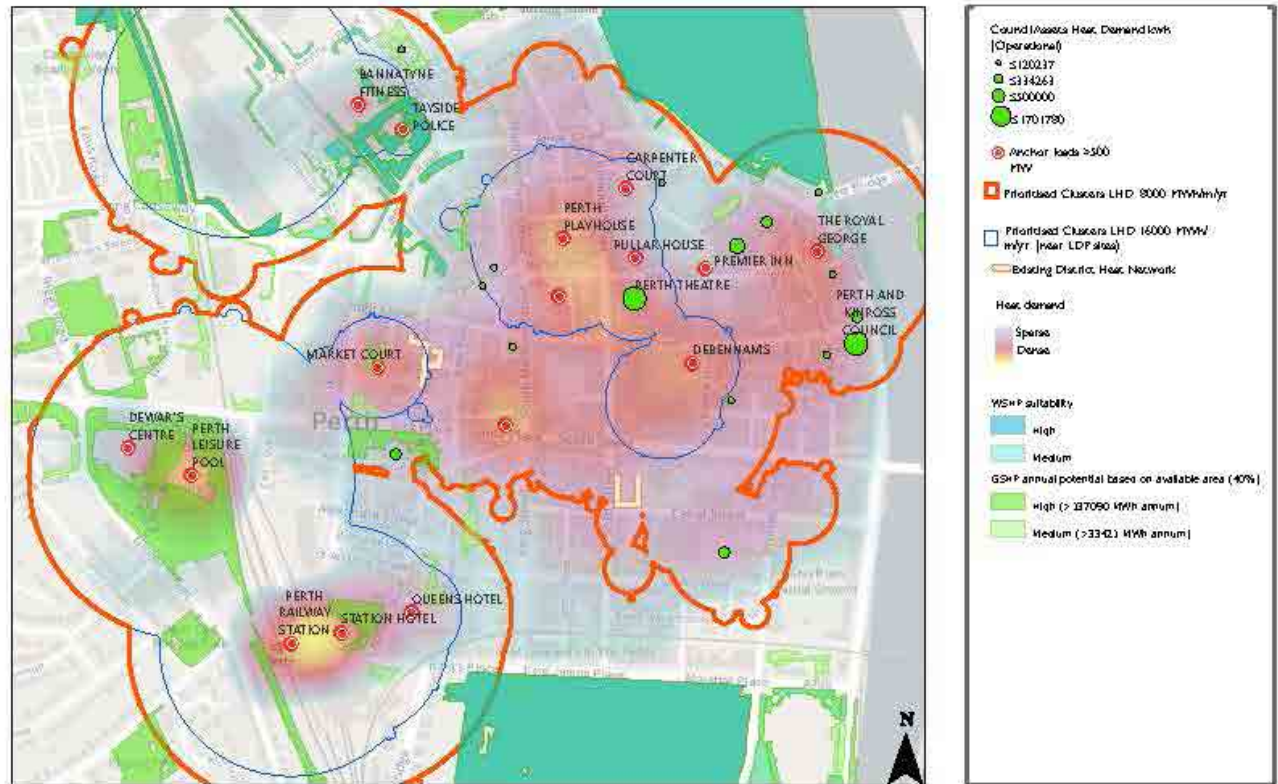
The key outcome in relation to this case study was to continue to develop our working knowledge and understanding of strategic energy planning, both in terms of progressing current workstreams (e.g. delivering low carbon heat as part of new developments) as well as for emerging duties around LHEES and other various strategies. Our work as part of the KSG to support Scottish Government plans for LHEES policy has in particular provided benefits to the team in terms of a detailed understanding of how LHEES will likely be expected to be delivered by local authorities (methodology, data expectations, action plan, funding, stakeholders, etc) as well as gaining a clearer picture of the resource implications likely to be required and where there are known gaps and challenges at the local and national level that will require further investigation. Having this knowledge and understanding will enable the Council to explore in detail how the LHEES will sit alongside the LDP and other strategies and assist in future work programming across various teams within the Council alongside our engagement activity with key stakeholders and partners. Responding to the various consultations has provided an opportunity for the Council to look across the existing policy landscape and

PART 1 Case Study 4: Planning Ahead for Net Zero

to upscale the delivery of heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures for social housing without causing residents to fall in to fuel poverty as a result? Our involvement in the GHGs project and the ongoing conversation around the use of heat map data has also helped to develop our understanding of the current 'energy landscape' in Scotland and how data can and will be used to support our current and future plans and projects as well as where there are challenges and improvements to be made.

Overall, our continued involvement in energy planning projects has continued to build our knowledge and understanding of current and emerging duties and responsibilities across a variety of workstreams. This is particularly important where Council budgets are likely to be severely stretched in the next few years and both local and national net zero ambitions are continuing to grow. However the Council's investment in staff time and resources in the future planning of how to respond to the net zero agenda (specifically in relation to energy planning) means that we should be in a position to positively plan ahead to meet existing and future challenges head on.

Council Assets - Heat map & anchor loads (>500 MW)



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PART 1 Case Study 5: Supporting businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic

Location
Perth & Kinross
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Governance
Key Markers
11 Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development • Collaborative Working
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff

Key Officers

Team lead by John McCrone, City Development Manager with support from Sean Panton, Planning Officer & Mary Barr, Enforcement Officer, Development Management

Overview

When the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK and the country went in to its first national Lockdown in March 2020, it saw many businesses, big and small, cease operating completely. The detrimental effect this had on the national and local economy meant it was imperative that a safe and well thought out plan was made to help businesses reopen. For many businesses, the lack of formally approved outdoor spaces made it difficult to reopen safely or at a capacity that would sustain a level business to allow recovery. For this reason, Perth & Kinross Council published Guidance and Support for Reopening of Shops and Businesses. This provided the much needed help and support that businesses needed to reopen safely and attain the optimal conditions for recovery. As part of this, a team was made up from different services from within the Council to consider and advise on proposals that would often not be considered. An example of this would be outdoor seating on a public road for the use of a public house/restaurant/cafe. (include photos of king james etc). The team is made up of staff from Place Development, Planning Service, Traffic & Network Management, Community Greenspace, Legal & Governance Services (Licensing), Environmental Health, and Centre for Inclusive Living Perth and Kinross. The Planning Services involvement in the team was to ensure that support was given to these temporary measures without being of detriment to the character and amenity of the area, whilst confirming what proposals would be exempt from enforcement interest.

Goals

The appropriate use of enforcement discretion plays an important role in supporting local businesses and the wider economy. This has proven even more critical during the ongoing recovery process of the Coronavirus pandemic. The process has helped strengthen working relationships with other departments as well as a better understanding of their responsibilities and regulations. These relationships will help the Planning Service further develop pre-existing processes and co-working in the future. This in turn ensures that we are providing the best service possible for our customers.

Outcomes

The recovery period is far from over and as such we will continue to help support businesses in the best way possible. While in some instances, the use of outdoor spaces could only be deemed appropriate on a temporary basis, there are situations where the permanent retention of these outdoor spaces could prove to be beneficial for both businesses and the wider public. In these instances, the owners of the businesses will be provided support and advice on how they regularise the development with the appropriate services. This in some cases, will include the submission of a planning application for changes of use and built development.

PART 1 Case Study 6: Early engagement at Thermo Fisher, Perth

Location
Auld Bond Road, Perth
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of outcomes• Quality of service and engagement• Culture of continuous improvement
Key Markers
3 Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic Development• Collaborative Working
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authority Planning Staff• Authority Other Staff

Key Officers

John Williamson, Planning Officer,
Development Management

Overview

The project relates to the erection of the extension and alterations to the service yard, formation of parking areas and associated works at Thermofisher Scientific at 4 Auld Bond Road in Perth.

In March 2020 Thermofisher Perth were asked to increase production of their “transport media tubes” which are the tubes used to collect test swabs following a Covid 19 test to allow for transport to a testing lab. As of the start of May the Perth site was producing 500,000 tubes per week. Despite this significant number, Thermo Fisher had been advised that this volume was insufficient and therefore Thermo Fisher proposed a multi-million-pound investment at the Perth site to substantially increase output at the site. The proposed extension was to accommodate this output.

Thermo Fisher initially approached the Council in July 2020 to engage with various departments within the Council to establish the requirements for a planning application submission. This initially resulted in the Planning Authority preparing a detailed written pre application advice document setting out the constraints and opportunities associated with the site in order to steer the development proposal in the correct direction. The response also highlighted the documentation required to accompany the application. The response was issued within one day of receipt to ensure progress could be made on the

project in a timely manner and an element of certainty could be given to the developer regarding the planning policy position. Engagement with key stakeholders occurred in the days following this to ensure the proposed planning submission met the requirements of SEPA, Scottish Water, Transport Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive together with relevant Council consultees and all comments received were fed back to the developer to ensure they were addressed in the planning application and the appropriate supporting information was front loaded with the planning submission. The consultees involved in the project were informed of the national importance of the project and its relationship to the fight against the Covid 19 pandemic which enabled timely responses to be provided.



PART 1 Case Study 6: Early engagement at Thermo Fisher, Perth

The engagement with consultees on the project proved to be challenging due to offices being closed and remote working being undertaken but this was overcome through the extensive use of Microsoft Teams virtual meetings and similar for ease of engagement.

During the pre application phase a timeline/project plan for the application was prepared by the Service Manager and Planning Officer in order to help the applicant understand the statutory process associated with the planning application so this could feed into their overall programme for delivery.

Following extensive discussion at pre application stage and engagement with key stakeholders, a planning application was received on 20 August 2020 and the applicant was advised upon submission of the likely timescales associated with the planning submission. At this point a weekly virtual meeting was scheduled with key stakeholders, including the PKC Development Management, PKC Building Standards, PKC Employability, Skills and Special Projects, Thermo Fisher, Robertson Construction, AMCA Architects and Scottish Enterprise in order to ensure a collaborative approach to management of the project could take place. This approach also enabled the developer to engage with PKC Building Standards at an early stage to understand the Building Warrant requirements for the development to ensure delivery of the development in a timely manner.

This collaborative working and engagement enabled any requirements for the planning application to be dealt with and progressed quickly.

The approval relates to a large-scale commercial business operation and allows a substantial increase in operations to be consolidated on site.

The submission included detailed evidence of the growth of the existing business and the creation of an additional 200 jobs in 2020 and another 200 jobs in the first quarter of 2021, it also resulted in a significant wider and localised, indirect and direct benefit to the economy. There was also economic benefit associated with the construction phase of development. The jobs created are of a wide variety, including manufacturing technicians, supervisors, managers, maintenance engineers, manufacturing engineers, distribution operatives, quality engineers, lab technicians, supply chain professionals and more.

Overall, the approval of the extension to the existing facility allows for the expansion of a well established business within Perth and Kinross within an area which is specifically zoned for employment uses in the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2019.

It was recognised that the proposal sought significant investment into the Perth and Kinross economy in a growing and popular business type. The pre application process enabled an understanding of the constraints, opportunities and development potential associated with the site at Auld Bond Road so that an understanding of the key planning policy considerations could be provided to the developer. Collaboration with PKC Employability, Skills and Special Projects Departments identified the business needs for the company and enabled the applicant to prepare an appropriately worded business statement to be submitted with the planning application.

The early engagement with stakeholders also enabled the submission of appropriate supporting documentation prepared in accordance with the requirements of the stakeholders. This resulted in the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage Assessment, Ecology Report, Tree Survey, Noise

Impact Assessment and Transport Statement which sought to clarify the extent of impact which the proposed development would have on surrounding receptors.

This allowed these matters to be specifically referred to within the submission to ensure clarity on the extent of impact and to allow the application to be assessed and determined as quickly as possible to allow business and economic certainty in light of the associated Covid 19 challenges.

There was also local community interest in the project given the scale of the development and proximity to residential receptors and ongoing liaison with the local community has taken place through both telephone calls and virtual meetings to keep them informed of the works on site and how construction can be managed appropriately to limit the extent of impact on these adjacent receptors. Agreement was also reached with the applicant regarding a leaflet drop to neighbouring properties to make them aware of the development and to provide contact details for the project team. This dialogue also allowed the applicant to be able to liaise the local community so that action could be taken on site during construction to address any identified concerns.

The collaborative working associated with the project allowed this important application to be determined under delegated powers within 5 weeks of submission. The associated planning conditions were discharged following further consultation with key stakeholders and construction operations commenced in September 2020, only 5 weeks after the application was submitted, with the first products being produced on site in December 2020.

Goals

1. To deliver sustainable economic development and creation of extensive employment opportunities within a zoned employment site.
2. To identify and help to deliver a site for the growth of an existing business
3. To ensure appropriate development in an urban area to allow growth of the business,
4. To meet the needs of the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, whilst protecting the interests and amenity of the local community.

Outcomes

PKC Development Management, together with other key services in the Council was able to provide a proactive and innovative approach to responding to the needs of its customers and applicants to secure the delivery of quality built development and allow a successful business to expand its operations, grow within an established site, serve its needs to help boost the regional and national economy, create jobs and deliver a development which contributes towards an important industry in Scotland and the UK whilst helping in combating the Covid 19 pandemic. The approach to the application also allowed the development to proceed as quickly as possible whilst engaging key stakeholders at an early stage to ensure

all relevant planning matters could be addressed as quickly as possible in order to secure delivery of an important development. The project also involved collaborative working between various departments within the Council. The priority treatment of the application and subsequent discharge of planning conditions enabled the applicant to have an element of certainty in terms of the timescales of the planning application and to make business decisions on the back of this. This allowed the business to produce the first product by December 2020 within the completed building, only 6 months after initial contact was made with the Council on the project. This is considered to be a prime example of best practise which can be shared amongst benchmark Councils.



SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS



PART 2 Delivery of Service Improvements 2019-20

In last year's PPF, we identified a number of areas where we could improve the service to the benefit of our customers. The table below sets out what we hoped to achieve and how successful we were.

What we said we would do

Work closer with the Community Planning team developing our capacity for enhanced online engagement in response to the coronavirus pandemic and streamline the way we engage with communities. We will look at how one consultation process could inform different strategies to increase efficiency and prevent consultation fatigue. The planning team will get involved with the engagement on the Perth and Kinross Offer and use the feedback to build the evidence base for the next Local Development Plan.

What we have achieved

1. A virtual `Team Exchange` meeting took place between the LDP and the Community Planning teams to discuss current and future priorities and opportunities for joint working. To date, collaboration has started on two fronts: sharing data which will underpin the preparation of LDP3 and planning for the delivery of Local Place Plans. Both teams have also provided input to a user group that is looking at online tools for consultation and engagement in order to establish future business needs across the Council.
2. The LDP team also played an integral role in engaging on the Council's Climate Change Strategy. A member of the team was part of the Climate Change working group and other officers participated in online workshops to hear the views of local communities first-hand. The outcomes of the workshops and online surveys will help inform the evidence gathering stage of the next Plan revision and shape the role land use planning can play in delivering a net zero future for Perth & Kinross. The process of developing a remote engagement exercise will help inform more innovative on-line communication for LDP3.

ON TARGET

What we said we would do

Review the Local Development Plan webpage to improve user experience. We will revise the current structure and information available on our website, focusing on the needs of different users. We will also make more spatial data available in an interactive format, through Storymaps.

What we have achieved

1. The review of the Local Development Plan webpage was carried out in summer 2020 in collaboration with the Council's IT team. All outdated information was removed, and the contents were regrouped under five main headings for easy access. This helped reduce the number of sub-pages and highlighted the key documents which users are interested in.
2. One of the five sections was dedicated to promoting land opportunities available to developers, investors and communities. Another was opened for the LDP review and will be updated regularly by the planning team to help stakeholders follow the timeline of preparing the next Local Development Plan.
3. During the reporting period, two new Storymaps were also added to our website. The LDP Storymap provides access to the adopted Plan in an interactive format with quick navigation between policies and the spatial strategy. The Investment, Employment and Serviced Land Opportunities Storymap is part of the new land opportunities section and provides detailed information on sites available for business and industrial development.

DELIVERED

PART 2 Delivery of Service Improvements 2019-20

What we said we would do

Front load information and engage early to improve the Strategic Environmental Assessment process. The Development Plans team will be undertaking baseline data gathering for the preparation of LDP3. As part of this process, they will be frontloading site information to identify key design considerations with specific regard to drainage, habitat networks and green infrastructure. This will involve collaborative work with internal and external experts on SUDS, landscaping and biodiversity, and follows on from the discussions held in 2019 on barriers preventing creative solutions. The aim is to provide developers with greater confidence in terms of site layout and key requirements whilst addressing long term climate change targets.

What we have achieved

ON TARGET

1. The LDP team has begun the process of early evidence gathering in the form of Settlement Audits to support the initial phases of LDP3. The audit combines SEA indicators with other important criteria derived from the Place Standard in order to inform land allocations and highlight where opportunities exist to deliver improvement through LDP3.
2. The team has identified where input from other Council teams and key agencies will be required however further progress has been delayed due to staff redeployments as part of the Council's efforts in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we have not had the chance to collect formal input, voluntary officer forums on Biodiversity and SuDS helped maintain working relationships between Council teams throughout the year and build capacity for taking this work forward.
3. Completing the settlement audits will be one of the key objectives for the LDP team in 2021. The outcome of the studies will be reported through the draft Evidence Report (with associated SEA information) later in the year and will be available for all relevant stakeholders to consider.

What we said we would do

Establish a set of Placemaking Sustainable Design Awards to celebrate best practice in PKC. These will reflect different types of development and how they've addressed the challenges of climate change and sustainability. The intention is to promote innovative and creative projects that reduce the area's carbon footprint and provide a range of benefits to people, through synergistic and collaborative design.

What we have achieved

ON TARGET

The establishment of Placemaking Design Awards has been impeded by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was discussed whether a virtual event could replace the original concept, but this was not considered to generate the required interest to raise the overall profile of placemaking. It was decided in the interim to develop a best practice webpage which would provide a set of examples of good practice. This will be delivered in the summer of 2021 with a view to launching an awards ceremony in autumn 2022, dependent on COVID restrictions.

PART 2 Delivery of Service Improvements 2019-20

What we said we would do

Investigate ways to enable more effective legal agreement focus and reduce determination periods for planning applications with legal agreements. Timescales for the completion of Legal Agreements remain a problem area within PKC. We have tried various options to increase the efficiency in the process with limited success. We will look to further improve the process to reduce the time for completing Legal Agreements. We will continue this focus and expect further reviews to take place in 2020/21 and, as part of this, we will publish a new Advice Note to explain the Planning Obligation (PO) and S75 Agreement procedures to applicants and their agents.

What we have achieved

Although this area of work has been delayed due to resource implications from the global pandemic, redeployment to essential services and need to focus on providing an effective statutory service, the introduction of the recording system for legacy applications enables officers to readily review outstanding cases, when the opportunity allows.

SLOW PROGRESS

What we said we would do

Investigate ways to resolve legacy applications within more appropriate timeframes. We will establish the cause of significant delays in all legacy applications, with a view to finding ways to seek prioritisation from all involved parties. A clearer explanation of how the Council expects applications to progress through the PO process, set out in an Advice Note, should impact on some of the outstanding legacy applications, and reduce the numbers of new ones, but a more specific guidance may be required for legacy applications without POs.

What we have achieved

We introduced a system for case officers to record and update the progress made on legacy applications. The cases noted on the spreadsheet are monitored and regularly discussed by management which has led to more intervention to actively seek resolution on outstanding legacy applications. This service improvement remains our priority moving forward, and we will re-evaluate the need for more specific guidance when the pressures on the service ease.

ON TARGET

PART 2 Delivery of Service Improvements 2019-20

What we said we would do

Review and update our internal Development Management Procedure Notes. This will ensure officers will be working in line with our best current practice. Although this may be seen as a housekeeping tool, it will result in improved officer-accuracy and consistency of delivery of service for our customers.

What we have achieved

ON TARGET

A number of procedure notes have been updated over the past year, mainly to take account of the changes implemented as a result of remote working and give officers clarity about the new ways of working. Refreshing of other procedures has been delayed due to the need to focus on providing a high-quality planning service, however we are continuing to review them when time allows.

What we said we would do

Review our digital working practices, with a view to making all in-house aspects of the planning application process fully digital. We will investigate incorporating improved efficiency within other areas of the planning application process, for example, potentially reducing the number of site visits by using virtual alternatives where appropriate, which could reduce travel costs and officer time out of the office.

What we have achieved

DELIVERED

The whole planning process, with the exception of the submission of paper applications and letters of public representation, has become digital within the past year. The pandemic required us to be flexible, adapt quickly and address the conflicts and challenges brought to us as a result of revising our processes. We are now operating a fully digitised planning application process system which runs smoothly and efficiently. As a result of the national travel restrictions in place throughout most of the past year, we have fulfilled the second part of our planned improvement, which was to reduce travel and to decrease officer time away from the desk. It is envisaged that we will keep many of these improvements post-Covid, including taking a proportionate and selective approach to site visits.



PART 2 Planned Service Improvements 2021-22

We are providing a high quality, fair and reliable planning service to all our customers however we do want to keep improving where we can. In order to provide the widest benefits, we have identified a few areas for us to focus on, perhaps with redirecting resources or by additional training, or by working more collaboratively. Our aim is to achieve all these improvements in the coming year.

- Collaborative development of Ancillary & Annex Accommodation between Policy & Development Management. COVID-19 has changed the way that we use our homes. Many now require office space or are accommodating extended family, both young and old. This has caused a rise in planning applications for ancillary and annex accommodation. We will develop non-statutory guidance on ancillary accommodation proposals, providing applicants and agents with advice on how the Council assess these applications. This should ensure consistency in terms of submissions and decisions.
- Improve the effectiveness and transparency of the way we use spatial data by continuing to digital analytics and tools. The Sustainability and the LDP teams will collaborate to develop interactive, digital products (StoryMaps, dashboards, webmaps) on the provision and accessibility of open spaces and key

community facilities. The tools will assist in our understanding of 20 min neighborhoods. and the data analysis will form part of the LDP3 Evidence Report and support decision making.

- The establishment of a working group to steer the development of council policy on self and custom-built housing, with input from Housing, Development Plans and Development Management. This will develop an evidenced based approach to the identification of sites and review of current LDP policies. The Council aims to establish a list of interested parties and provide information on locality opportunities. The Council will also investigate the feasibility of a pilot project on Council owned land.
- A review of Developer Contribution and Legal Agreement procedures and monitoring is to be undertaken to improve efficiency in the collection, spending and monitoring of developer contributions. New remote-working practices as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted opportunities to improve these procedures, with relatively minor but effective actions. This is also in anticipation of new provisions arising from the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (35 Planning obligations: publication and 36 Planning obligations: annual report). An internal report has been drafted outlining these

opportunities.

- Rationalise our long-term approach to carrying out site visits. Due to the pandemic, we relied on photo evidence and Google imagery to determine planning applications instead of visiting sites in person. Reducing the need to travel helped officers manage their time more effectively and reduce the environmental impact of our service. In the next reporting year, we will explore how we can consolidate these benefits post-Covid and take a proportionate approach to site visits. We will consider how digital tools such as photographs, videos, live calls and drone footage could be used appropriately, at different stages of the planning process and for proposals at different scales. We will also liaise with the enforcement and building standards teams to learn from their experience.
- Outline how we will support Local Place Plans. A cross-service working group will be looking at ways in which we can provide support for communities who decide to prepare their own Local Place Plan. The aim is to agree a one Council approach and highlight the skills, support and information that different teams can contribute to the process. For instance, we will explore how the evidence gathering for the Local Development Plan could serve a dual purpose and provide the baseline for preparing LPPs.



PART 3 National Headline Indicators

The National Headline Indicators (NHI) are a detailed list of different parts of the local planning authority work programme, that each planning service report. The NHIs are designed by Heads of Planning Scotland ([HOPS](#)) to enable ongoing measurement of each planning authority's performance. Information on the previous year is included within the table and earlier information is available in our [previous PPF submissions](#).

Key Outcomes - Development Planning

Local and Strategic Development Planning	2020-21	2019-20
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	1 year 4 months	4 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5 th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	Yes	Yes
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	No	No
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	n/a - no engagement or consultation was scheduled for this reporting year	Yes

Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs ¹	2020-21	2019-20
Established housing land supply	19,176 units	18,240 units
5-year effective housing land supply programming	3,682 units	4,166 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	16,600 units	15,631 units
5-year housing supply target	4,230 units	4,230 units
5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)	4.4 years	4.9 years

¹ Housing land supply figures are taken from the Final 2020 Housing Land Audit

PART 3 National Headline Indicators

Key Outcomes - Development Planning

Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs ¹	2020-21	2019-20
Housing approvals	866 units <i>(Covering the period April 2020 to March 2021)</i>	472 units <i>(Covering the period April 2019 to March 2020)</i>
Housing completions over the last 5 years	3,508 units <i>(Covering the period April 2020 to March 2021)</i>	3,469 units <i>(Covering the period April 2015 to March 2020)</i>
Marketable employment land supply	289.21 ha <i>(Base date June 2020)</i>	288.10 ha <i>(Base date June 2019)</i>
Employment land take-up during reporting year	1.15 ha <i>(Base date June 2020)</i>	0 ha <i>(Base date June 2019)</i>

¹ Housing land supply figures are taken from the Final 2020 Housing Land Audit




PART 3 National Headline Indicators

NHI Key Outcomes - Development Management

Project Planning	2020-21		2019-20	
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	16.7%	236	13.7%	212
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	100%	3	54.5%	6
Decision-Making	2020-21		2019-20	
Application approval rate	91.1%		90.7%	
Delegation rate	97.6%		97.0%	
Validation	19.5%		32%	
Decision-Making Timescales	2020-21		2019-20	
Major Developments	24.1 weeks		28.2 weeks	
Local developments (non-householder)	8.5 weeks		8.1 weeks	
Householder developments	6.9 weeks		7.3 weeks	
Legacy Cases	2020-21		2019-20	
Number cleared during reporting period	13		11	
Number remaining	30		21	

Enforcement Activity

	2020-21	2019-20
Time since enforcement charter published/reviewed Requirement: review every 2 years	3 months Planning Enforcement Charter 2021 	14 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	268	397
Breaches identified - no further action taken	268	299
Cases closed	237	316
Notices served	31	39
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	1

PART 3 National Headline Indicators

Commentary

There have been very few changes in terms of the Local Development Plan in the last year. Evidence gathering is underway for LDP3 whilst awaiting further guidance on what will be required under the new Act. This has provided the opportunity to review current monitoring processes and investigate new approaches that will support the delivery of Local Place Plans. There continues to be an effective housing supply and there has been a noticeable rise in housing approvals, which has almost doubled from the previous year. This may well be an effect of the pandemic which has seen a bouyant housing market after restrictions lifted for the first time last summer.

The rate of application submissions which were valid on first receipt is significantly lower than previously. The reasons for this are likely to be multiple and outwith the control of the authority as the information available to the public via our website remains the same as in past years, as do the standards we require. During the pandemic lockdown, we noticed the character of application types changing, with there being a reduction in larger scale and commercial proposals and an increase in more modest and householder applications. It may be that people less acquainted with the planning system have been lodging applications without agents and thus errors are occurring. There may also have been an increase in sub-standard submissions from agents where they did not have full access to resources held in their offices due to furlough, etc. The high proportion of invalid submissions has a significant impact on our resources as our technicians who check every submission have to process over 80% of applications more than once, adding substantially to their workload.

The percentages of both delegated decisions and approval rates remain very similar to previous years, as do the decision making timescales. Great efforts were made

by officers to ensure applications were determined timeously notwithstanding the significant constraints and challenges working from home in addition to covering workloads of redeployed staff and those affected directly by the pandemic. Priority was given to new and clearly progressing applications and therefore there was less resource available to push for conclusions on legacy applications, in spite of an increased focus on reviewing positions, and pressing applicants/other parties which could reinvigorate these stalled cases. This can be seen from the increase of this marker and in some ways can be attributed to the impacts of the pandemic. It is notable that 13 cases were concluded in the period which was an increase in number over the previous period. It is currently being considered whether a harder line should be taken on these cases, as the current approach is not seeing any marked improvement, such that where no progress is made applications should be concluded via a refusal. This would draw a line, but also offer the opportunity of these decisions being reviewed or appealed.

The significant reduction in the number of enforcement cases lodged during this period of the Coronavirus pandemic is understandable. Typically such a reduction in complaints would provide capacity and an opportunity to address 'legacy' cases; however, to varying extents, in the first and second quarters, three of the four officers in our enforcement team were redeployed to pandemic activities. In spite of this, and during the restrictions on travel, we were able to reorientate our approach to undertaking assessments, which included a more remote assessment of cases – utilising similar approaches to those associated to assessing the context of planning application sites in lieu of a physical visit. In doing so, we were actually able to improve our rate of closure compared to 2019/20, largely as arrangements for travel were not required and in many cases quicker conclusions were able to be reached.

PART 4 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL STATISTICS



PART 4 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Scottish Government Official Statistics are drawn from quarterly returns submitted to them by all Scottish planning authorities. They are collated into an annual set of figures that is published on the [Scottish Government website](#). The template below allows the information from these returns to be recorded in a consistent format.

Decision-Making Timescales

(based on 'all applications' timescales)

Timescales	2020-21	2020-21	2019-20
Overall			
Major Developments	6	24.1 weeks	28.2 weeks
Local Developments (Non-Householder)	541	8.5 weeks	8.1 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months 	398 (73.6%)	6.4	6.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: more than 2 months 	143 (26.4%)	14.3	14.8
Householder Developments	497	6.9 weeks	7.3 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months 	423 (89.8%)	6.6	6.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: more than 2 months 	48 (10.2%)	10.1	10.9
Housing Developments			
Major	1	-	11.3 weeks
Local Housing Developments	259	9.3 weeks	8.3 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months 	147 (68.1%)	6.4	6.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: more than 2 months 	69 (31.%)	15.7	14.6

Timescales	2020-21	2020-21	2018-19
Business and Industry			
Major	2	28.1 weeks	-
Local Business and Industry Developments	673	8.1 weeks	8.2 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: less than 2 months 	47 (73.3%)	6.3	6.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local: more than 2 months 	18 (27.7%)	12.8	12.5
EIA Developments	1	37.3 weeks	16.6 weeks
Other Consents	298	6.3 weeks	6.6 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including Listed Buildings and Conservation Area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notifications, directions and applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order. 			

Decision-Making: Local Reviews and Appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original Decision Upheld			
		2020-21		2019-20	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local Reviews	28	20	64.3	31	79.5
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	9	4	44.5	5	83.3

Context

Applications with Planning Processing Agreements (PPAs) have been excluded by the Scottish government from the timescale calculations as they have been subject to individual agreement between the applicants and the planning authority. This year we have again determined all Major applications with the timescales agreed in PPAs. Some 84% of Local developments were determined within the PPA agreed timescale and 88% of other types of consents, including Listed Building Consent. This is a slight decline in performance over last year, though given the constraints on resources these high levels evidence the commitment of the team, especially when considered against the national performance which is closer to 75% in both instances. Reminders to staff have been issued on the importance of amending PPA's, where timescales are unable to be achieved.

The legislative change allowing site notices to be posted only electronically allowed many applications to be determined without significant delay, though inevitably some were affected. This early Covid impact will account for some of the slight drop in performance for Local applications, where often additional parties and actions were impacted. Householder applications were not significantly affected.

The initial advice and travel restrictions meant that sites could not be visited, with alternative 'remote' methods introduced. Largely we relied upon photographs from applicants, agents and representors in addition to satellite and streetview images, reflecting the 'PKC Offer' which seeks to work in partnership with customers and Communities. This new way of standard operations enabled us to continue to determine applications, even during the strictest periods of national lockdown. This ensured permissions were concluded and in place when construction could recommence, aiding economic recovery. Notably, we improved upon last year's performance in respect of Householder application types – assisting and recognising the need to quickly adapt homes to the new work/life norms.

Numbers of applications taken to Local Review reduced from last year. Otherwise after a two-month Covid related suspension, LRB meetings reconvened virtually, allowing this part of the process to continue. The percentage of original decisions being upheld at Review and Appeal dropped from previous years.



PART 5 WORKFORCE INFORMATION



PART 5 WORKFORCE INFORMATION

The workforce information below is a snapshot of our planning staff in position on the 31st of March 2021.

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

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	8
30-39	17
40-49	18
50 and over	22

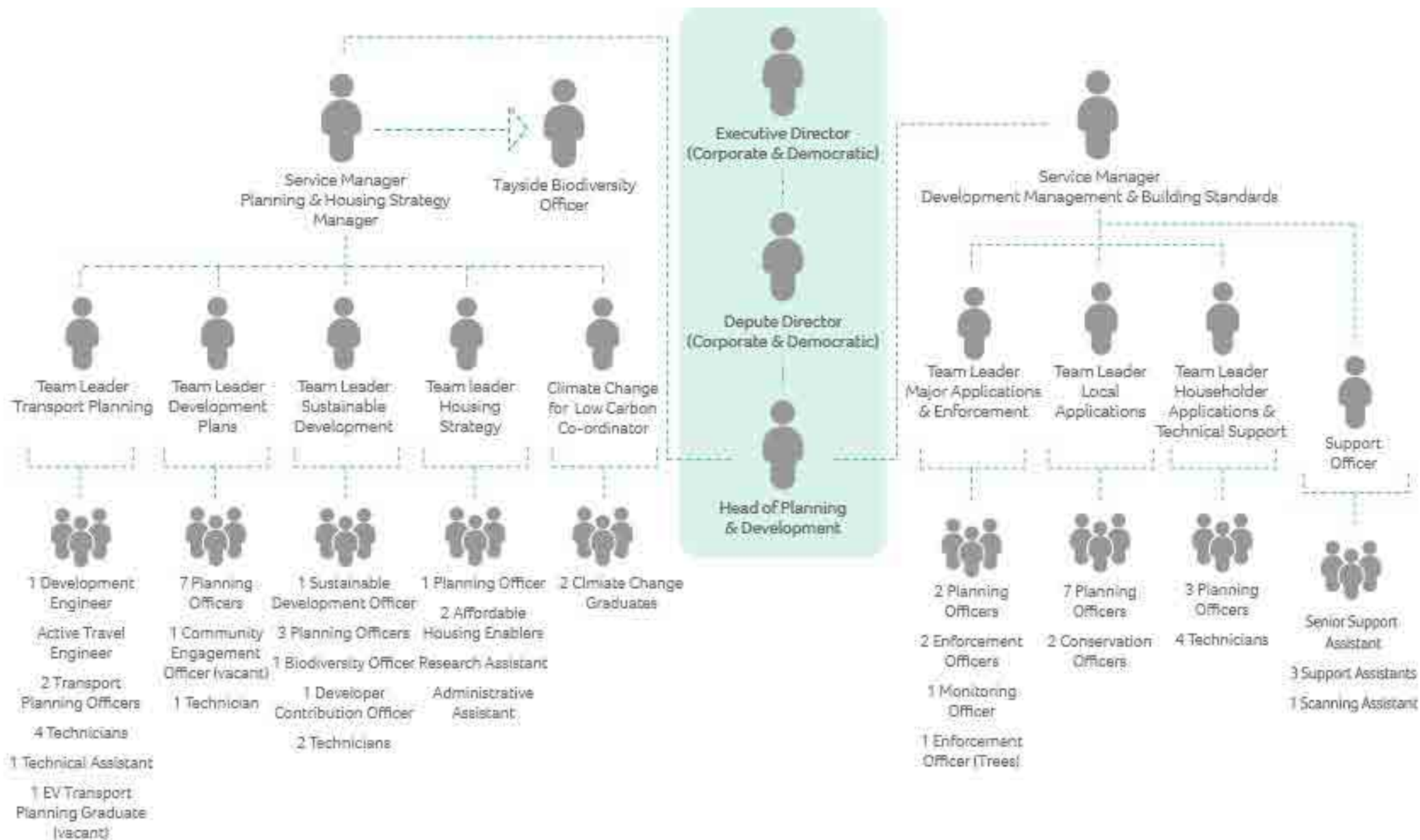
RTPI Chartered Staff	Headcount
Chartered Staff	27

Our Staffing Structure

There have been limited staffing changes in the last year, in part due to the static nature of the pandemic. The Climate Change for Low Carbon post within the Planning & Housing Strategy team is currently vacant but work in this area is still being undertaken by two graduate posts with the support of the wider team. This has boosted the under 30 age profile. There have been no major changes within Development Management.



PART 5 Development Management and Strategy and Housing Structure

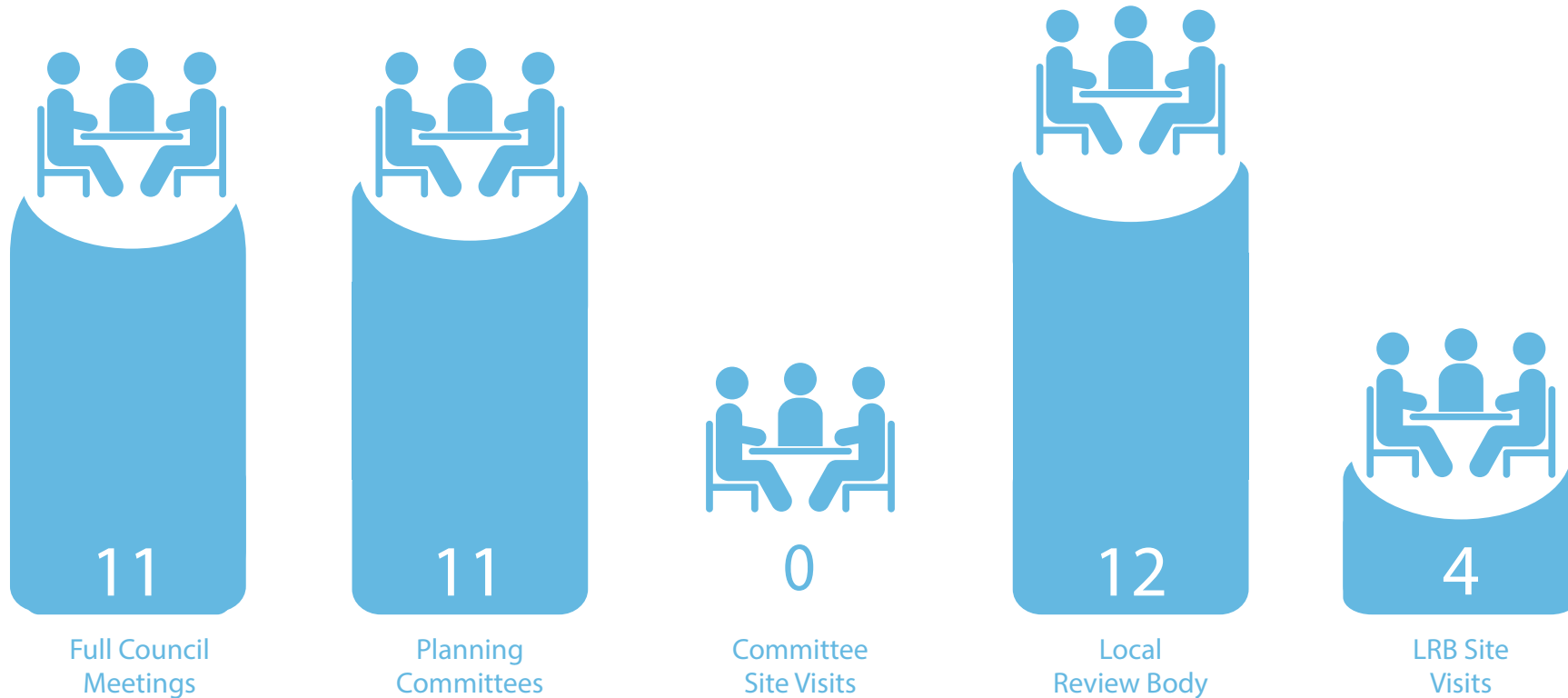


PART 6 PLANNING COMMITTEE INFORMATION



PART 6 PLANNING COMMITTEE INFORMATION

In order to fulfil our statutory duties we are required to report certain matters to different Council committees. The most regular of these is the Planning & Development Management Committee where applications which cannot be considered under delegated powers are determined. A breakdown of the committees and associated site visits is provided below. Planning & Development Management Committees have been held virtually since late April 2020, with only the scheduled early April meeting cancelled. As a result of this speedy, if complex and resource intensive, adaptation no significant delays in processing timescales have resulted beyond the initial first few weeks. Many positive comments have been received in relation to the success and speed of movement to the virtual approach, including the benefits of time saved, ease of access of attendance, and overall sustainability by removing travel requirements. However, although there were some initial teething issues – largely related to user error and individuals internet connections – it remains that some wish to revert back to physical meetings and are not wholly comfortable with the change in approach.



PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS



PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS

National oversight of the performance of the Scottish Planning System is taken by a High-Level Group, chaired by the Minister for Local Government and Communities. Heads of Planning Scotland sit on this group alongside COSLA and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). In 2013 the group agreed a set of “Performance Markers” which allow the Scottish Government a consistent basis to consider performance.

The table below, setting out these markers, shows the measure that Scottish Government will apply, the policy background to the marker being applied and where we have evidenced that this marker has been met.

The PPF feedback report we receive from the Scottish Government stems purely from an assessment of whether these markers have been met and are shown to be met. There is no assessment of the situation behind that information. We therefore need to provide evidence

showing the way we work meets the key markers. We have done this by including case studies and illustrating how we have operated and improved over the past year. The table below references these as well as provides additional examples of projects which we wish to be recognised as evidence of our performance as a planning service.

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>1 Decision-Making Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]</p>	<p>The statistics above show how we have performed in comparison to last year. Decision timescales for Major applications reduced by some 4 weeks and are some 17 weeks less than the Scottish average. Whilst there was a slight increase in determination time of non-householder applications (+0.4 weeks) this remains almost 4 weeks less than the Scottish average. Our performance in respect of determination of householder applications improved to below 7 weeks which, again, is below the Scottish average of 8.1 weeks. The determination of the EIA application, at some 37 weeks, was above the national average of 25 weeks. As this was the only EIA determined during this period, compared with 3 the previous year, this is an isolated case. A decision was made to invest additional determination time in this application to resolve placemaking and technical matters to conclude the application to approval.</p>
<p>2 Processing agreements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and</i> <i>availability publicised on website</i> 	<p>Planning Processing Agreements (PPAs) are recommended to all applicants of Major and Local pre-application enquiries, as a standard part of our response, and are promoted on the relevant pages on our website, which also relates to EIA developments. PPAs can also be offered during the life of an application, in order to allow transparent programming. In the past year, there has been 100% take up with major applications and a continuing rise in relation to the more complex Local applications.</p>

Continued

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>3 Early Collaboration with Applicants and Consultees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and</i> <i>clear and proportionate requests for supporting information</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We offer pre-application enquires and pre-validation checks for all proposals on our website and promote this service to potential applicants whenever possible. In this reporting year, there has been an increase of applications subject to pre-application advice, from 13.7% to 16.7%. Development Management and the Development Plan team are working towards a more collaborative approach to pre-apps to ensure that applicants get early guidance on how their proposal should be approached and what policy barriers they will need to overcome. Case study 6 shows how effective and early collaboration helped us deliver high quality development within the shortest possible timescales to facilitate the production of transport media tubes used for Covid testing. Case study 1 demonstrates how collaboration with relevant services helped identify and resolve design issues related to the provision of private amenity space.
<p>4 Legal Agreements conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)</p>	<p>Where developer contributions are required in advance of issuing a decision notice, the Report of Handling contains an informative advising of the expected timeframes for either upfront payment to be made (28 days) or a legal agreement to be concluded (4 months). The applicant is further advised that the application may be refused under delegated powers, should progress not be made. As discussed above, we are keen to work with developers to bring forward as many permissions as we can within these target timeframes. This demonstrates good governance and commitment to a quality service.</p>
<p>5 Enforcement Charter updated / re-published within last 2 years</p>	<p>The most recent detailed review of the Perth & Kinross Council Planning Enforcement Charter was published in January 2021.</p>
<p>6 Continuous Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and</i> <i>progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report</i> 	<p>In respect of the Development Management key outcomes, our performance is bettered across the board with the exception of the determination of local development applications which, although 0.4 weeks slower than last year, remains below the national average. When taking into account the impact on resources through redeployment along with national restrictions, maintaining such a high level of performance is considered to be exceptional. Despite a challenging year, we made progress on most service improvement actions that we set out in PPF9. Of the eight identified actions, we have delivered 2 and are on target for providing the improvements in another 5. There is only one action, relating to enabling more effective legal agreements, where we were not able to make substantive progress due to resource constraints. We decided to carry this action forward to the improvements identified for the next reporting year, alongside another 5 new commitments which will help us future proof the planning service.</p>

Continued

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>7 Local Development Plan less than 5 years since adoption</p>	<p>The Local Development Plan 2 was adopted in November 2019. The Development Plan Scheme for LDP3 sets out an indicative timetable showing key milestones in the plan preparation process. It notes that these dates may be subject to potential change depending on the timescale of publication, and details of the new regulations and guidance for Development Planning. At the time of drafting our DPS, it was anticipated that the Regulations and Guidance would be published in draft form in April 2021, enabling us to produce a draft Evidence Report in the Autumn of 2021. However, whilst work is well underway on the evidence gathering, as we are still awaiting publication of the draft Regulations and Guidance it is unlikely that we will be in a position to produce our draft Evidence Report in the Autumn of this year.</p>
<p>8 Development Plan Scheme - next LDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and</i> • <i>project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale</i> 	<p>Parallel to the Examination stage and the subsequent adoption of LDP2, we have been working on revising and updating the associated Supplementary Guidance documents over the reporting year. Most of this work is now complete and the team is starting to prepare for the next LDP cycle. Our focus in the next year will be on evidence gathering and early engagement in order to fulfil the requirements of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Approval of our DPS for our next LDP has been held up as a result of delays in reporting to committee due to COVID. It will now be reported to the next available Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.</p>
<p>9 Elected Members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular virtual Members and Officers Working Group sessions have continued to be organised to discuss planning matters, informing Elected Members of legislation changes, staffing requirements and policy approaches. This is an informal approach to negotiations and supports the good working relationship that is so vital to delivering the planning service. 2. We are holding a series of sessions with Elected Members relating to our Climate Emergency Plan Engagement and Action Plan Feedback. The first session in June 2021 provided an opportunity for Members to engage in discussion on the emerging response to the Climate Emergency. We presented feedback from the climate change engagement that took place from early October 2020 through to the end of January 2021. We highlighted the community responses to the draft action plan and discussed priorities for the proposed actions emerging from the engagement. More generally, the many challenges facing the Council in developing detailed actions to address the climate emergency were discussed.

Continued

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>10 Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</p> <p>*including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The first iteration of the Tayside Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (iRSS) was produced via an online collaboration (due to Covid-19), using Teams and Social Pinpoint. It involved the input of officers from Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils, through the Tayside iRSS Working Group, and was submitted to the Scottish Government in October 2020 to help inform the development of national priorities within National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). The purpose of the Strategy is to coordinate and prioritise projects to be delivered through Local Development Plans, Local Place Plans, the Regional Economic Strategy, and the Tay Cities Deal. Having just adopted LDP2, it was not appropriate in the reporting year to be engaging with members particularly given the COVID-19 restrictions. Case study 3 describes our collaboration with Angus Council, Naturescot and landowners on identifying local nature conservation sites across the Tayside Region. When adopted, these sites will be identified in the Local Development Plan.
<p>11 Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We produced a new Supplementary Guidance on Open Space Provision for New Developments, which sets out criteria for the provision, design and maintenance of greenspaces. The LDP and Greenspace teams led on the preparation of the Food Growing Strategy which is due to be adopted in August 2021. It sets out the Council's approach to providing food growing sites and identifies settlements and neighbourhoods with unmet demand for space to support the implementing Policy 14: Open Space Retention and Provision. Our Flood Risk Supplementary Guidance has been revised to be more up to date, put more emphasis on natural solutions to flood risk management, and set out the new arrangements for the maintenance of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. As highlighted in the service improvements section, we are currently working on a new planning guidance that provides more information for Ancillary & Annex Accommodation proposals. A revision of how the policy team respond to pre-apps is currently underway with a protocol drafted. The aim is to engage more actively and collaboratively with Development Management to provide a more consistent and measured response to policy issues. This will involve identifying the key policy issues and agreeing team advice prior to drafting a team response. It will also identify proposals that require a placemaking health check and subsequent workshop.

Continued

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>12 Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Case study 2 demonstrates the Council's commitment to coporate working across services. Climate change and the actions required to mitigate it affect all services. Key officers from across the Council's planning & housing strategy service, together with officers from a number of other Council services joined together to form an ad-hoc team to support each other to devise and carry out an alternative programme of online events, responding to the constraints of COVID-19 collectively to innovate and trial new engagement approaches. 2. Linked to the Food Growing Strategy, the LDP team has been involved with a wider, internal `Good Food` working group. The aim of the group is to create a whole Council approach to tackling issues such as food poverty, waste and encouraging healthier eating choices.
<p>13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Case study 5 describes our collaboration with Angus Council and other stakeholders on identifying local nature conservation sites across the Tayside Region.(already under marker 10 but could be repeated here) 2. As highlighted in Case study 6, officers continue to be part of the Knowledge Sharing Group (KSG) alongside Zero Waste Scotland, other local authorities and a consultancy firm, to further refine plans for Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) 3. Officers across the Tayside partner authorities collaborated online to share knowledge and identify the strategic priorities for the Tayside area, to ensure these priorities are not only aligned with the Regional Economic Strategy and Tay Cities Deal, but also to make sure their importance to the future growth and development of the Region is recognised within National Planning Framework 4, and to support their delivery.
<p>14 Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old</p>	<p>We cleared a significant number of legacy applications over the past year. As noted elsewhere, this remains a significant challenge to PKC with equivalent of the previously outstanding applications being cleared but a greater number being added, for a variety of reasons.</p>

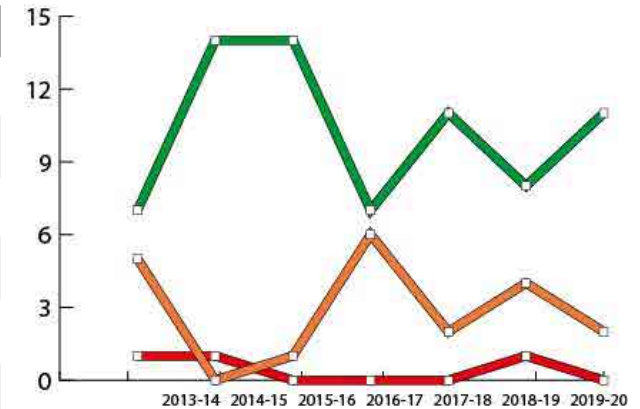
PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKERS

Our Performance Graphic Against The Key Markers

Marker	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1 Decision-making timescales	●	●	●	●	●	●
2 Processing agreements	●	●	●	●	●	●
3 Early collaboration	●	●	●	●	●	●
4 Legal agreements	●	●	●	●	●	●
5 Enforcement charter	●	●	●	●	●	●
6 Continuous improvement	●	●	●	●	●	●
7 Local development plan	●	●	●	●	●	●
8 Development plan scheme	●	●	●	●	●	●
9 Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR)	●	●	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10 Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	●	●	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11 Regular and proportionate advice to support applications	●	●	●	●	●	●
12 Corporate working across services	●	●	●	●	●	●
13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge	●	●	●	●	●	●
14 Stalled sites/legacy cases	●	●	●	●	●	●
15 Developer contributions	●	●	●	●	●	●

Our Overall Markings

(total numbers for red, amber and green)



The red, amber and green ratings issued by Scottish Government show where we have evidenced our continued improvement (green), where we have not evidenced or performed as well as the previous year (amber) and where we have missed a key marker (red).


Clearly, we have been consistently surpassing statutory decision-making timescales and improving our performance year-on-year. Our Enforcement Charter is always current. It is recognised that we provide proportionate advice to applicants on both developer contributions and supporting information for applications.

Within PKC there is a strong ethos of working together to provide a clear message to all our customers and this is shown in our ability to work collaboratively across services. We also have many established links with other local authorities where we can share and develop good practice. These are a few of the trends we will continue to build upon in the coming year and we will endeavour to resolve the issues contributing to our ambers.


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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 01738 475000



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