

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL
PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 12
2022 -2023



PE

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Welcome to Perth & Kinross Council Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for 2022-23.

The Framework sets out how we have performed over the year and what we are doing to improve. This year's Framework:

- * Is simpler and more focused than in previous years.
- * Pilots a new approach to monitoring quality of performance, by looking at the quality of outcomes on the ground in a more comprehensive way
- * Sets out case studies and updates on improvement work.
- * Presents the regular quantitative and time performance National Headline Indicators.

The latter show that average time performance was longer in 2022/23 for most categories of applications. We are addressing this now we have re-staffed our development management teams. We have also started our work of reviewing the end-to-end planning application process, as part of Perth & Kinross Council Planning Improvement Plan.



PART 1

QUALITY OF OUTCOMES - CASE STUDIES



Case Studies

1 Planning Housebuilders' Forum Engagement

2 Engagement with Children & Young People

3 Outcomes on the Ground

3.1 6 Milne Street Development

3.2 56 Atholl Street Development

3.3 Burrelton Development

3.4 Hattonburn Development

3.5 13 - 21 Newhouse Road Development

3.6 1 - 45 Crieff Road Development

3.7 Blelock Farm Development

PART 1 Case Study 1: Planning Housebuilders' Forum Engagement

Location
Perth & Kinross wide
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service This Study Relates To
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of outcomes• Quality of Service & Engagement
Key Markers
12 Corporate working across services
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Placemaking• Collaborative Working
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local developers• Authority: Planning Staff

Key Officers:

Katrina Walker, Strategic Planning Officer
Ben Wilson, Service Manager Planning & Housing Strategy
Kristian Smith, Service Manager Development Management

Overview

In November 2022 the Council's planning service hosted a half-day session with representatives of the housebuilding industry in the AK Bell Library in Perth. This was the first such event to be held in-person since before the pandemic. The session was introduced by the Council's Chief Executive Thomas Glen, who set out the emerging Corporate Plan's vision and priorities. Attendees were then updated on recent changes and performance in the planning and building standards service. The Council's programme for new planning, transport and housing strategies was set out, along with details of the Local Development Plan project timetable and service improvements. The latter included examples of how processes could be made smoother and faster.

The development representatives shared their experiences of working with the planning service in breakout group discussions. Ideas for further change and improvement were captured. Post-event feedback was positive, with an average rating of 4.2 out of 5 for the session's content.

Goals

To engage positively with the housebuilding firms active in Perth & Kinross and to gain insights into this key customer sector.

Outcomes

The Council's planning service gained in-person insights from 18 leaders from 14 companies across the market and affordable housebuilding sectors. These have fed in to service improvements, such as the ongoing review of planning application processes. The attendees were briefed on the Council's Corporate Plan vision and objectives, and the projects that will implement them in a new generation of place strategies. A structure approach to getting customer feedback has been re-established, and a firm basis and demand for further such sessions has been set.

Feedback from the participants

'Its worth keeping this going, it will develop relationships and the minor detail may well be replaced by more high level progress on dealing with projects going forward. Everyone has targets.'

'Very helpful to understand timescales and points of engagement for next LDP process. Keen to see the linking of transport, housing and planning strategies and suggest a session on how the 3 align in due course.'

'It was a good session and the group discussions were helpful. The updates from Kristian (especially) and Ben felt a bit rushed and lacked opportunity for Q&A and points of clarification which would have been helpful. It would have been good to have a longer session with a break for informal chat.'

PART 1 Case Study 2: Engagement with Children & Young People

Location
Perth & Kinross wide
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
12 Corporate working across services
Key Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Development Supplementary Guidance Community Engagement
Main Stakeholders Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to reach groups Authority other staff - teachers

Key Officer:

Andrew Ballantine, Planning Officer
 Dante Sosa, Assistant Planning Officer
 Planning & Housing Strategy

Overview

With a renewed focus on up-front engagement for new-style Local Development Plans, throughout 2023 the Council’s Local Development Plan team is undertaking an intensive engagement exercise called ‘The Big Place Conversation’. Using the preferred Place Standard tool, the purpose of this engagement is to have a conversation with communities across the Perth & Kinross Council area to help inform the next Local Development Plan and wider Council initiatives such as the Mobility Strategy. Specifically, we are having conversations with communities to find out how good their place is and what could be improved.

As part of the Big Place Conversation we are engaging with ‘seldom heard’ groups including children and young people. Using the recently published Children and Young People versions of the Place Standard tool we have been delivering place standard engagement sessions with children and young people aged 5-25 years old. Working with Council officers, schoolteachers and youth group leaders and coordinators, we have developed a programme of primary school, secondary school and youth group engagement sessions across our Council area. The sessions comprise a mixture of roundtable conversations using the 14 place standard questions and maps of their area as well drop-in sessions to gather feedback on key issues included in the place standard document.

Alongside a range of other key information and data, the outputs of the Alongside a range of other key information and data, the outputs of the children & young people engagement sessions will form part of our LDP3 Evidence Report.

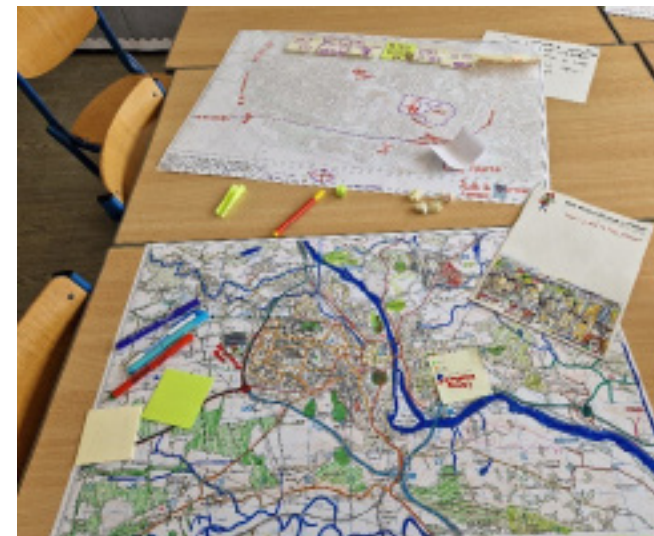


Place Standard tool – Children's Version (2022)

PART 1 Case Study 2: Engagement with Children & Young People

Goals

The purpose of the engagement programme is to have a conversation with communities to help inform the next Local Development Plan, specifically identifying what issues potentially need to be addressed and/or supported through the land use planning system. Engaging with children and young people is of particular importance to ensure that their voices are heard and that their unique perspectives of their place are taken into account in any future plans for their area. As well as capturing views and feedback on specific areas, the engagement exercise is also expected to support building capacity in how children and young people can get involved in decision making processes. This is particularly the case with one of the place standard questions seeking views from children and young people on whether or not they are being listened to and what improvements could be made in this respect. This of particular relevance in the context of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure that children and young people have the right to be listened to and taken seriously. Land use planning – by its nature – involves decisions on the future use of land and buildings, and enabling the views of children and young people to be included in these decisions is important.



Outcome

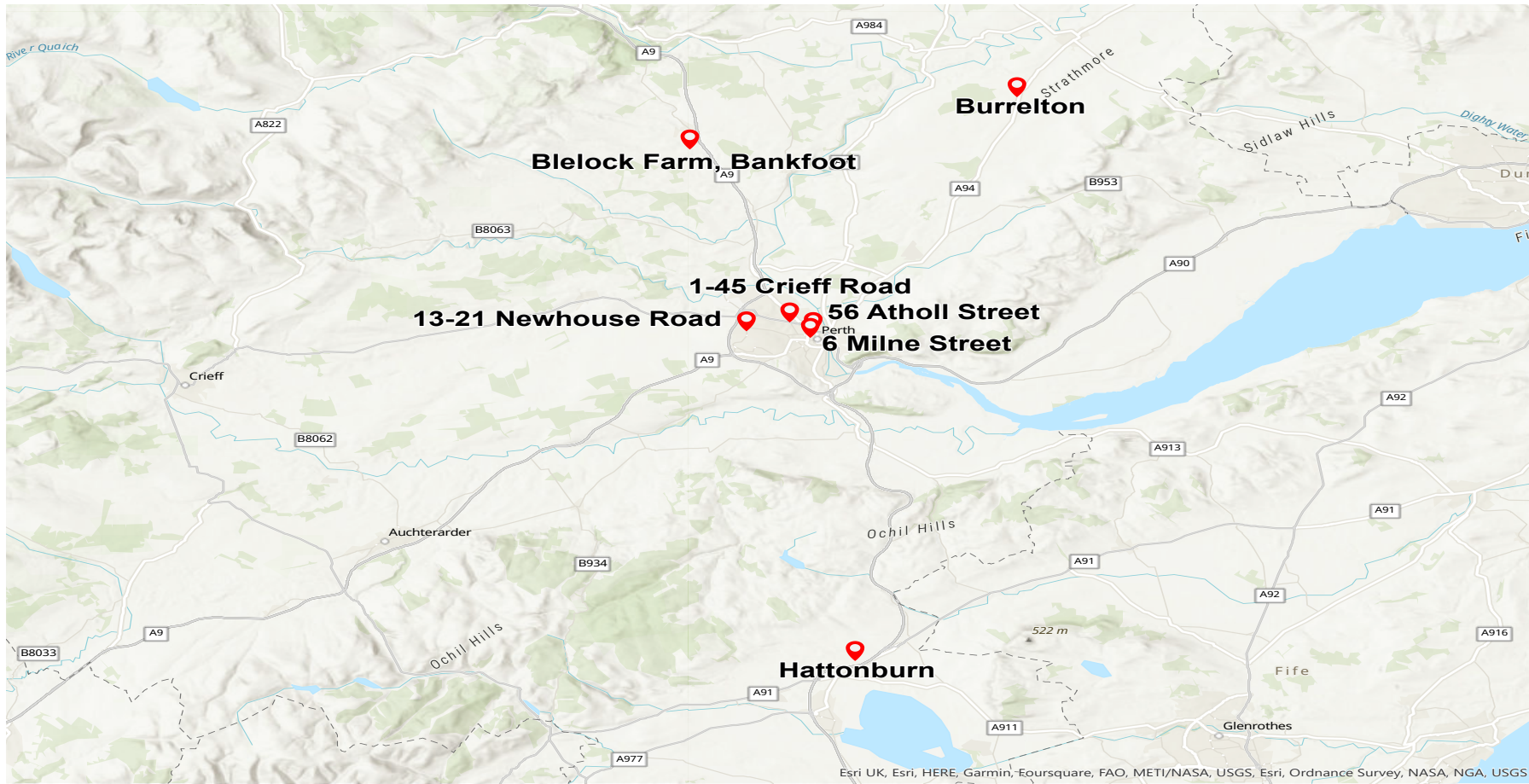
This is an example of collaborative working to deliver effective stakeholder engagement as part of the work of the Council's Local Development Plan team.

The views of children and young people gathered during the Big Place Conversation will form part of the evidence to be included in our Evidence Report to support the next stages of our plan making process. Our children and young people engagement programme includes completed and planned sessions with 15 primary schools, 5 secondary schools and 9 youth groups, ranging from ages 5-25. Sessions completed to date have provided a wealth of local knowledge, experiences and perspectives from young people and children thus providing data from seldom heard group.

PART 1 Case Study 3: Outcomes on the Ground

Commentary

As a pilot of monitoring the quality of outcomes on the ground, a sample of completed developments were visited and assessed in simple terms for what is successful about them as places and what could be done better. The sample was approximately 50% of the housing developments which reached completed in the last finalised Housing Land Audit (2022).



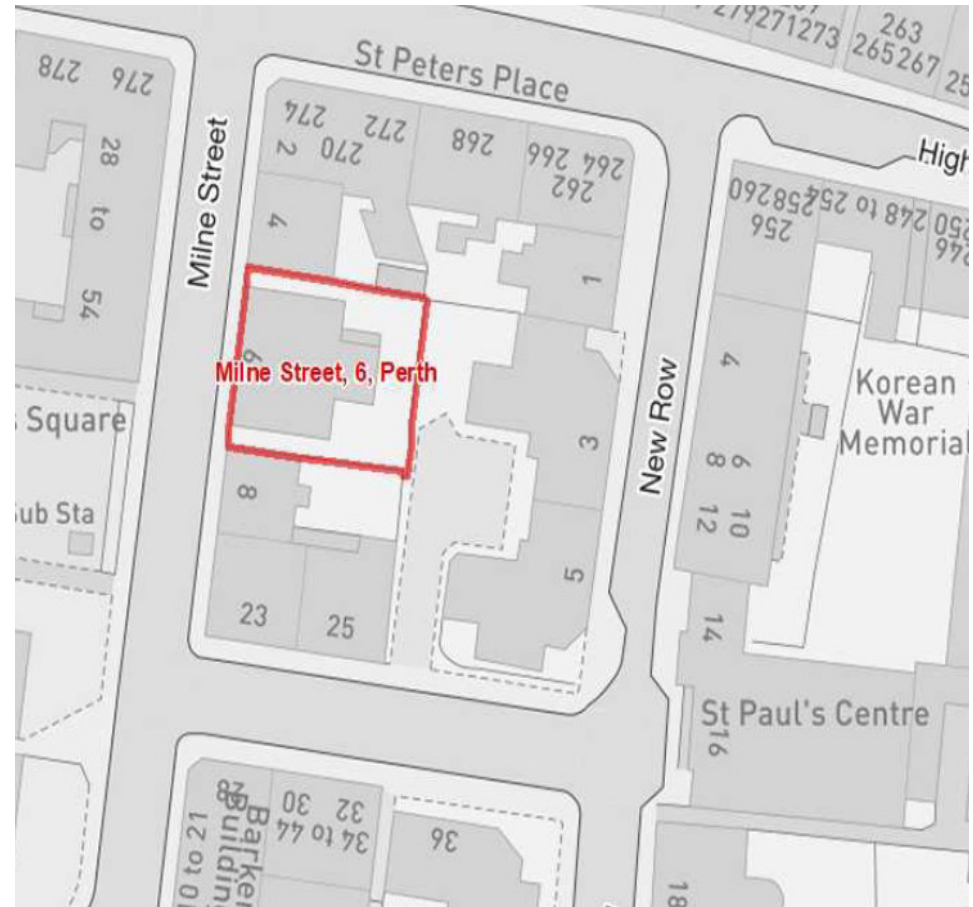
PART 1 Case Study 3.1: 6 Milne Street Development

What is successful about this place?

6 Milne Street was an unlisted building in the Perth Central Conservation Area. The redevelopment has provided a building of an appropriate scale, and massing and improved the streetscape.

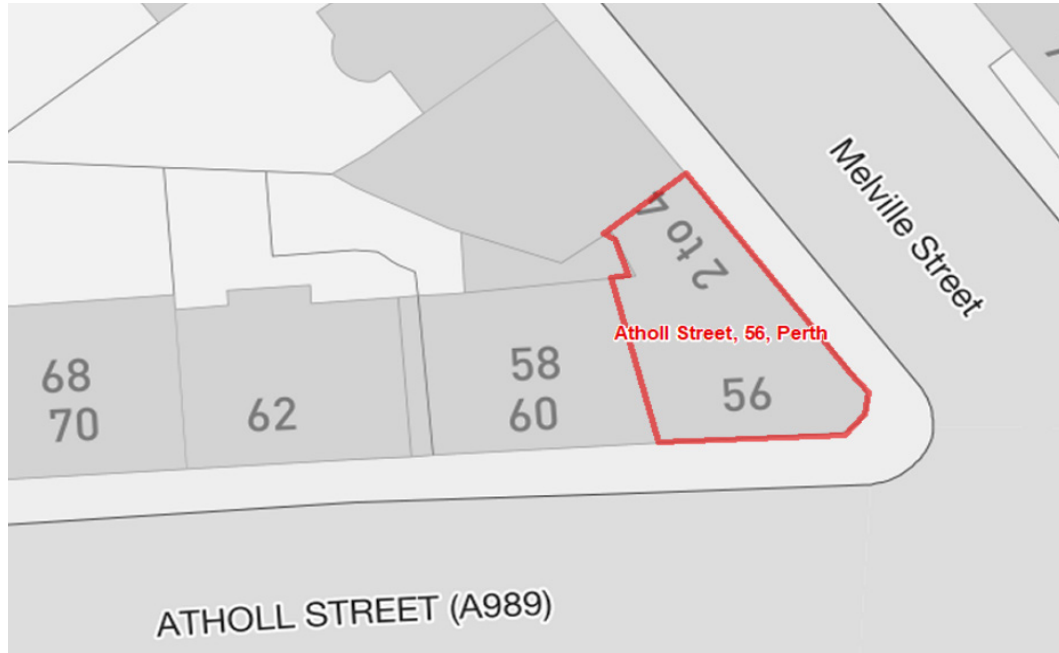
What has room for improvement?

Providing balconies to the rear would have added more amenity for the residents, providing some private open space for residents.



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Case Study 3.2: 56 Atholl Street Development



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What is successful about this place?

56 Atholl Street is a category C listed two-storey corner block in the Perth Central Conservation Area. The building has been converted from a retail unit and restaurant to five flats, with a mix of both retail at ground floor level. It is a positive step forward for the building which otherwise risked sitting unoccupied and deteriorating further.

What has room for improvement?

Pollution levels at Atholl Street needs to improve but when the Perth Transport Futures project is complete, the projected reduction of traffic along Atholl Street should further improve its air quality for the residents.



PART 1 Case Study 3.3: Burrelton Development

What is successful about this place?

The finishes are clean, and with the use of brightly coloured timber cladding/accents, has provided an attractive setting to bring up young families, or equally those looking to downsize to bungalows.



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What has room for improvement?

The striking element of this development was the distinct lack of communal open space and formal play equipment with a dominance of the road layout and cars was evident. The development could have benefitted from softer landscaped edges, whether that be lower hedging, with post and wire, or structural planting.

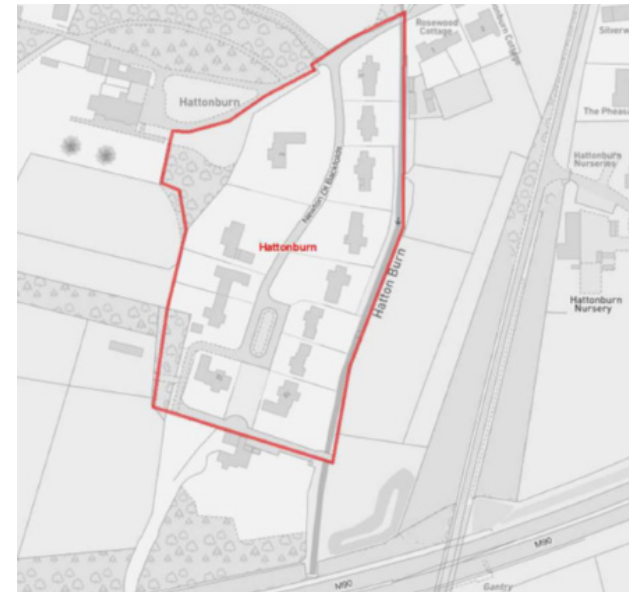
PART 1 Case Study 3.4: Hattonburn Development

What is successful about this place?

Incorporation of existing farmstead building into a sympathetic modern home. Buildings located to minimise impact on existing trees.

What has room for improvement?

Footway linking the site to public footpath closer to town removed late in the application process. Planting and wildflower meadow let down by poor execution. Landscaping or construction has not adequately protected remaining trees affecting their health – some having to be removed.



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PART 1 Case Study 3.5: 13 - 21 Newhouse Road Development

What is successful about this place?

The Newhouse Road development was successful due to the way the houses step up the hill and are bookended with larger units.



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What has room for improvement?

Could the front gardens and boundary treatment have better integrated waste storage?

PART 1 Case Study 3.6: 1 - 45 Crieff Road Development

What is successful about this place?

In the Crieff Road development it is an attractive contemporary building design and use of materials (but worth visiting after some years to see effect of weathering).

What has room for improvement?

Could greenspace have been provided as individual gardens for both ground floor and upper flats, encouraging sense of ownership / use / cultivation?



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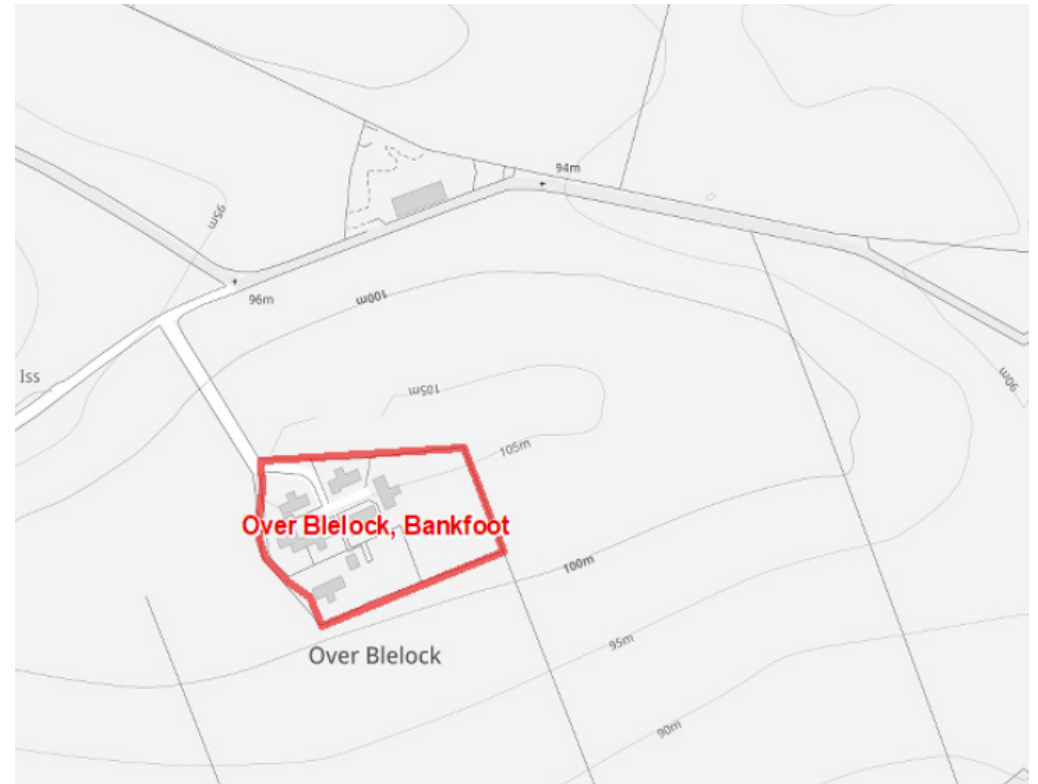
PART 1 Case Study 3.7: Blelock Farm

What is successful about this place?

This development is not deemed successful as a place, other than in its reuse of previously developed land.

What has room for improvement?

The design of the dwellings do not respond to the setting, though as there is no development within sight to reference. Could more interpretation of the former steading have created a locally distinctive development? A more consistent approach to fencing styles and heights, measures to reduce the dominance of car parking, and landscaping. Landscaping to encompass the natural setting would have been positive.



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SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS



PART 2 Planning Improvement Programme 2022-23

Last year we announced that improvement activities were to be structured into four themes in our refreshed Planning Improvement Programme: Leadership & Management, Customers & Stakeholders, Digital, and Continuous Improvement. The following updates on what we said we do under those themes, and what we are going to do in 2023/24. It also updates on actions identified in earlier PPFs and not yet concluded by last year's PPF.

Leadership & Management

What we said we would do and we did:

Develop a People Plan, including a workforce profile and actions to build and retain skills.

Progress:

A People Plan for the planning teams has been prepared. As indicated by the high-level age profile figures in Part 5 of this PPF, while the service has a relatively balanced range of ages in its staff, there remains a need to plan for renewal as the significant number of staff over 50 approach retirement ages.

We are also trying new approaches to support recruitment, including use of short videos on social media, with some success despite a challenging labour market.

Relevant Prior Actions:

None carried forward from earlier PPFs.

What we will do in 2023/24:

- The People Plan and its actions will be developed into refreshed Team Plans. This will align with the existing Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027 and the emerging Corporate Workforce Plan 2023 – 2026 and its themes of Building in Agility, Evolving our Talent, and Refreshing Our Employment Offer.
- We will use corporate and localised staff surveys to inform our staff team development activities
- We will make use of internal and external leadership resources to support and empowered staff at all levels

PART 2 Planning Improvement Programme 2022-23

Customer & Stakeholders ¹

What we said we would do and we did:

Review our approach to external communications

Progress:

We have used our webpages to improve understanding of the different types of affordable housing we deliver. We have used social media in new ways to promote the Big Place Conversation engagement process. We have held an in-person customer forum session with housebuilders (see Case Study in Part 1).

Relevant Prior Actions:

- Self Build Housing – we have established an online self build register form (www.pkc.gov.uk/selfbuild), concluding a prior improvement action.
- Local Place Plans – we have set out details on Local Place Plans (www.pkc.gov.uk/localplaceplans) and promoted them during Big Place Conversation engagement, concluding a prior improvement action.

What we will do in 2023/24:

- Hold more customer forum sessions, including a follow-up session with housebuilders, and a session focused on other users of the planning system, such as local agents.
- Develop our understanding of customer experience of our service, for example by carrying out customer feedback surveys.

¹ Statistics on complaints for 2022 - 2023 are provided as an appendix

PART 2 Planning Improvement Programme 2022-23

Digital

What we said we would do and we did:

Introduce and monitor new online self-service digital tools, to improve customer experience and reduce the need to speak to members of staff.

Progress:

We have introduced an online service to report Planning enforcement breaches. We have introduced a webpage providing advice on whether customers need planning permission for a short term let.

Relevant Prior Actions:

- Use of spatial data / digital analytics – we have continued to develop our use of spatial data, including in the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency project.
- We have updated our technical post descriptions and requirements to reflect the importance of data skills in our teams, concluding a prior improvement action.
- Rationalising site visits – we have continued to develop a blended approach to use of digital information and site visits, concluding a prior improvement action

What we will do in 2023/24:

- Work with colleagues and the Scottish Government to develop our data skills to be ready to implement the Council's data strategy and the national Digital Planning programme.

PART 2 Planning Improvement Programme 2022-23

Continuous Improvement

What we said we would do and we did:

Reduce average validation times and improve times for issuing Planning & Placemaking Committee decisions which vary from officer recommendation.

Progress:

As set out in more detail in Part 3, in 2022/23 the proportion of applications which are valid on receipt decreased from the previous year. However, we have now increased the staff resource handling validation and we are seeing a significant improvement in how many receive a first review under the national benchmark of five working days. The additional resource has also allowed us to review and update some of the submission guidance on our website.

The action on post-Committee decision issuing has been completed.

We separately started a process review for planning applications, mapping the end-to-end journey of a planning application.

Relevant Prior Actions:

Developer Contributions and Legal Agreements – we have not yet fully implemented actions to: develop a simplified summary of legal agreements, develop the relevant webpage including information on the Modification of Planning Obligations process, and prepare an annual report on planning obligations.

What we will do in 2023/24:

- Run validation workshops with local agents to improve understanding of minimum requirements with a view to increasing the overall rate of valid applications and reducing validation times.
- Progress actions on developer contributions and legal agreements previously identified, coordinated with an update of the relevant Supplementary Guidance.
- Continue the process review for planning applications, to identify opportunities for streamlining and simplifying the steps each application goes through from end-to-end.



PART 3 National Headline Indicators

The National Headline Indicators (NHI) are a detailed list of different parts of the local planning authority work programme, on which each planning service reports. The NHIs are designed by Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) to enable ongoing measurement of a 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	2021-22	2022-23
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period (Requirement: less than 5 years)	2 year 4 months	3 years 4 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5 th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	No	No
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	Yes	Yes - later
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	n/a	Yes

PART 3 National Headline Indicators

Key Outcomes - Development Planning

Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs ¹	2021-22	2022-23
Housing approvals	555 units <i>(Covering the period April 2021 to March 2022)</i>	328 units <i>(Covering the period April 2022 to March 2023)</i>
Housing completions over the last 5 years	3,488 units <i>(Covering the period April 2021 to March 2022)</i>	3,866 units
Marketable employment land supply	286.14 ha <i>(Base date June 2021)</i>	290.32 ha <i>(Base date August 2022)</i>
Employment land take-up during reporting year	1.61 ha <i>(Base date June 2021)</i>	0 ha <i>(Base date August 2022)</i>

¹ Housing land supply figures are taken from the Final 2022 Housing Land Audit

PART 3 National Headline Indicators

NHI Key Outcomes - Development Management

Project Planning	2021-22		2022-23	
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	12.8%	240	14.5%	159
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	25%	4	46.7%	7
Decision-Making	2021-22		2022-23	
Application approval rate	87.8%		87.3%	
Delegation rate	97.7%		96.3%	
Validation	25.5%		16.3%	
Decision-Making Timescales	2021-22		2022-23	
Major Developments	35.1 weeks		48.3 weeks	
Local developments (non-householder)	8.6 weeks		10.1 week	
Householder developments	7.4 weeks		8,3 week	
Legacy Cases	2021-22		2022-23	
Number cleared during reporting period	20		17	
Number remaining	20		21	

Enforcement Activity

	2021-22	2022-23
Time since enforcement charter published/reviewed Requirement: review every 2 years	19 months Planning Enforcement Charter 2021	31 months Planning Enforcement Charter 2021
Complaints lodged and investigated	234	322
Breaches identified - no further action taken	234	176
Cases closed	286	277
Notices served	47	49
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

PART 3 National Headline Indicators

Commentary

There has been a noticeable and significant decrease in the receipt of valid applications of all types at the point of submission. Our validation requirements have not changed in the past year, nor have they changed for many years.

We have many 'validation' checklists and guidance on our web pages which should aid both experienced and inexperienced applicants and agents to be able to pull together adequate information to ensure their submission would be valid on our receipt. If our standards have not changed, then the quality and accuracy of submissions must have reduced. We have found that numerous submissions are made with fees not having been paid at point of submission, waiting for us to check the proposal and calculate the fee. This may be as a result of the revised fees regulations and hopefully that may resolve over the coming year as more become acquainted with the revised rates and categories.

It has appeared that some submissions are made on the expectation that we will identify any omissions, drawing inconsistencies or other basic errors, identify them and give the applicant/agent the opportunity to rectify. This has resulted in double and triple handling of many submissions and put significant additional pressure on our limited staff resources, impacting on our ability to timeously review new submissions and pass to case officers for their consideration.

We are hoping to run 'validation' workshops with local agents to collaboratively reach a much higher number of applications valid on receipt.

Development Management Team Leader





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](https://www.scottish.gov.uk). The template below allows the information from these returns to be recorded in a consistent format.

Timescales	2022-23	2022-23	2021-22
Overall			
Major Developments	15	48.3 weeks	35.1 weeks
Local Developments (Non-Householder)	629	10.1 weeks	8.5 weeks
· Local: less than 2 months	55.6		6.4
· Local: more than 2 months	44.4%		14.3
Householder Developments	449	8.3 weeks	6.9 weeks
· Local: less than 2 months	67.7%		6.6
· Local: more than 2 months	32.3%		10.1
Housing Developments			
Major	4	18.6 weeks	40.3 weeks
Local Housing Developments	255	10.8 weeks	8.8 weeks
· Local: less than 2 months	56.4%		6.4 weeks
· Local: more than 2 months	43.6%		15.1 weeks

Timescales	2022-23	2022-23	2021-22
Business and Industry			
Major	1	34.1 weeks	15.9 weeks
Local Business and Industry Developments	63	9.5 weeks	9.6 weeks
· Local: less than 2 months	63%		7.0
· Local: more than 2 months	37%		14.7
EIA Developments	2	30.4 weeks	-
Other Consents	245	8 weeks	7.2 weeks
· 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			
Planning/legal agreements			
· Major: average time	2	134.2 wks	129.3 wks
· Local: average time	7	12.7 wks	15.7 wks

PART 4 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Decision-Making: Local Reviews and Appeals

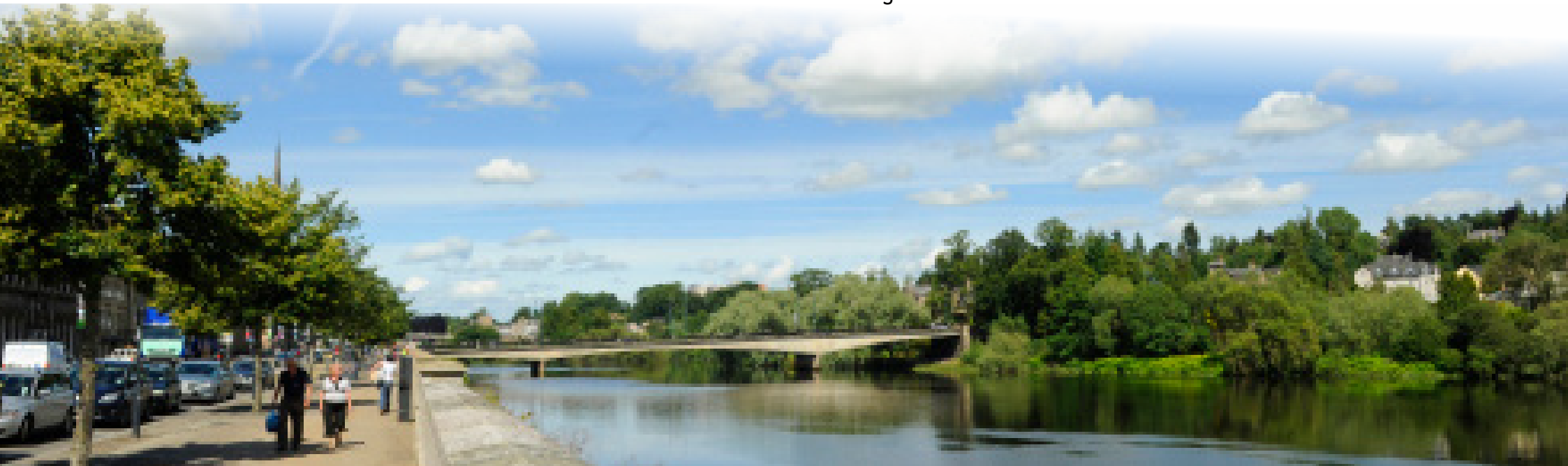
Type	Total number of decisions	Original Decision Upheld			
		2022-23		2021-22	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local Reviews	53	40	75.5%	31	70.5
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	7	5	71.4%	3	42.9

NOTE: The numbers of applications included in the timescale tables above for decisions made either within two months or more than two months include only those applications which were not the subject of Planning Processing Agreements (PPA) and including agreed Extensions of Time, to provide consistency with the Scottish Government's approach.

Context

As with recent years, DM performance overall remains good in very trying circumstances – although dipping from the last reporting period. Particularly significant work has been done to recruit to fill a number of vacancies, restructure and train up new staff, most markedly in the 'Major' Team. There has been a spreading of applications across a smaller cohort of staff, together with clearing out a number of legacy cases.

These staffing issues and decisions being taken on legacy cases has resulted in a pronounced increase in average time for decision making on 'Major' applications (35.1 > 48.3 weeks + 37.6%). Much of this related to the need for and timescales associated to legal agreements and the general reluctance of applicants to enter into processing agreements, all complicated by the lack of willingness of PKC to move from a 'minded to grant' position to one of refusal, simply on the basis of legal agreements not being concluded.



PART 4 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Cont/

Similarly, there have been capacity issues across the wider Development Management function which have seen average timescale increase around 20% (Local 8.5>10.1 weeks + 18.8% and Householder 6.9 to 8.3 weeks + 20%), primarily related to the significant number of vacancies in recent years coupled with an increase in both application numbers, general increases in workload and impacts from duties introduced by the Planning Act/NPF4.

The Local Applications Team have seen wider staffing and recruitment issues which have impacted performance. There were four post vacancies across the year (3x Planning Officer and 1x Conservation Officer (CO)). The CO post being vacant for 9 months. This placed a significant burden upon remaining staff, and the time subsequently required for training of new starts.

In relation to the householder applications team, multiple vacancies have been filled, although with a number of months without a full complement of staff and thereafter training efforts drawing away capacity. This staff turnover saw the team operate at 2/3 capacity for around 7 months. All this, despite significant efforts to mitigate, resulted in reduced performance. However, fruit is being borne with performance noticeably improving towards the end of the reporting period.

Encouragingly all vacancies are currently filled and training progressing well. For these reasons there is a positive outlook for performance, subject to a period of stability.

Beyond application processing by Development Management there has been a significant increase from the last reporting period in the number of Local Reviews (44>53 + 20%) whilst Appeals remain the same (7/7). However, in both cases the number of original decisions being upheld has increased. Local Review being dismissed by 5%, increasing from 70.5 to 75.5%, with a much larger success rate in Appeals, by 66.4% rising from a success rate of 42.9 to 71.4%

Training is being provided to all Councillors on the planning system and particularly planning decision making, to improve the ability to consider and then narrate reasoning at both Planning and Placemaking Committee and via the Local Review Body. Otherwise, significant resource is directed to appeal defence work.

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 2023.

	Tier 1 <i>Chief Executive</i>	Tier 2 <i>Director</i>	Tier 3 <i>Head of Service</i>	Tier 4 <i>Manager</i>
Head of Planning Service			1	

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	7
30-39	9
40-49	17
50 and over	21

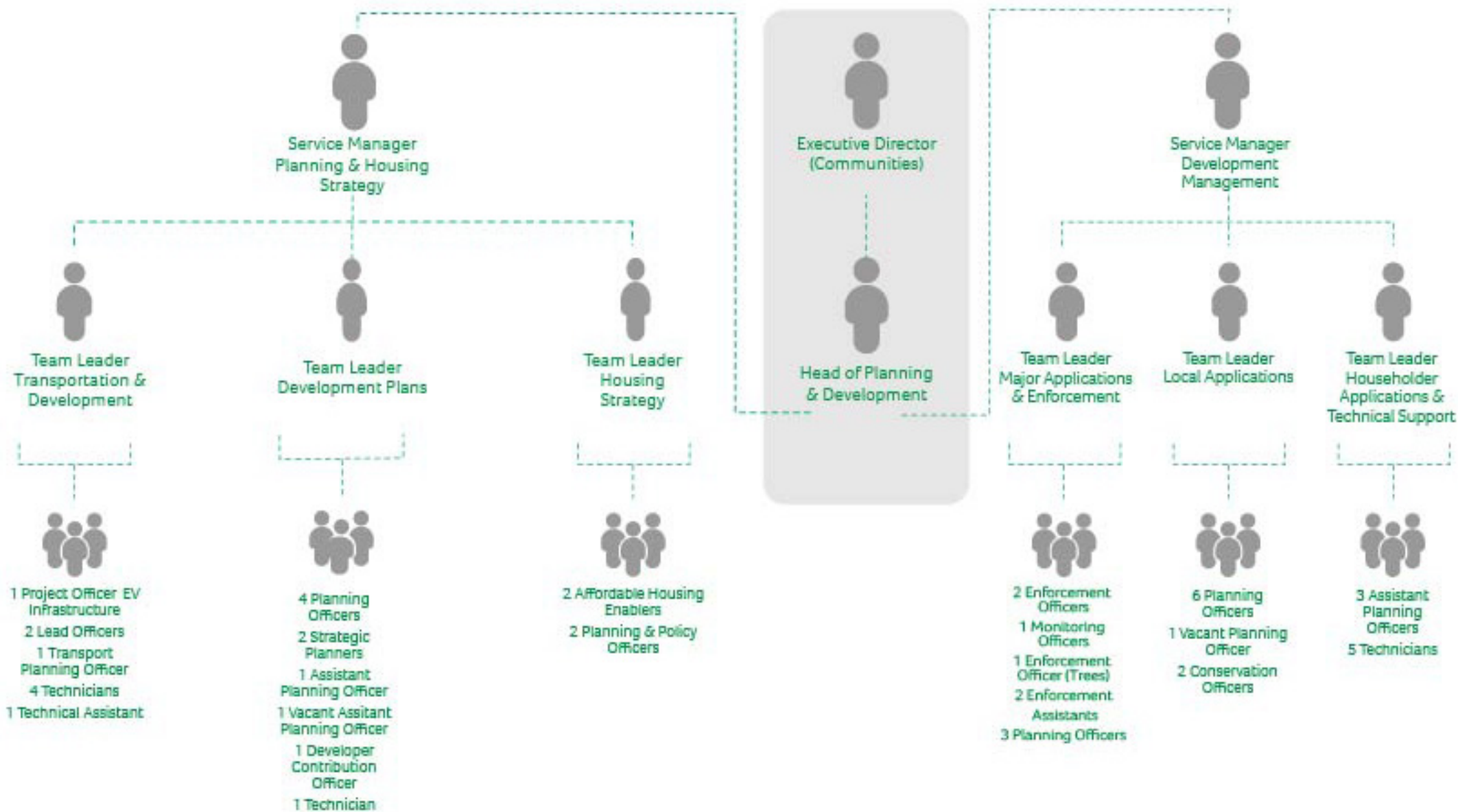
RTPI Chartered Staff	Headcount
Chartered Staff	24

Our Staffing Structure

Again we have continued to see significant staffing changes during the last year, but this time new staff coming in to backfill staff who had left, but also in order to fill new posts created to deal with performance focus areas i.e. Enforcement/ Major Applications/ Technicians. These staffing actions, although positive have seen continued impact on the operational side of the service, through time spent on recruitment, training and the redistribution of workstreams.

The overall positive is that despite all the difficulties we have managed to fill the vast majority of vacancies and can move forward after a difficult 2 years or so. The last vacant posts in Development Management (Enforcement) due to be filled in September 2023. It should be noted that the resilience levels employed to mitigate staffing issues in past years was reduced in the reporting period and as advised in PP11 this has seen performance negatively impacted in the reporting here within PPF12 – although again there is a positive outlook for PPF13.

PART 5 WORKFORCE INFORMATION





PART 6 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Committee & Site Visits	Number per Year
Full Council Meetings	10
Planning & Placemaking Committees	9
Area Committees	-
Committee Site Visits	0
Local Review Body	11
Local Review Body Site Visits	-

Commentary

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 & Placemaking Committee where applications that that cannot be considered under delegated powers are determined. Planning policy matters and enforcement are considered by the Environment, Infrastructure & Economic Committee.

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER



PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

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</p> <p>Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]</p>	<p>Part 4 Page 24 - 26</p> <p>The statistics above show how we have performed in comparison to last year. Decision timescales for applications has however increased significantly, primarily as a result of the staff departing during the reporting period, with time taken to fill those vacancies to an enhanced level. However, that process has been completed and early indications are that performance levels have turned around.</p>
<p>2. Processing Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	<p>Part 4 Page 24</p> <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. However, there remains a low level of willingness to enter into PA's and reluctance to adapt them as issues emerge. Where this is associated to long running applications there is significant impact on the average timescales, although often without any positive alternative for PKC, but to take the hit on headline performance as a result of a small number of applications but with a very long timescales.</p>

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>3. Early Collaboration with Applicants and Consultees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	<p>Part 3 Page 21</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to 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 in the number of applications subject to pre-application advice re Part 1 Case Study 1. The Development Management and the Development Plan teams 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. Guidance is available on our website in relation to requirements for supporting information and this can be further enhanced by using our pre-application advice service, which will seek to identify areas where information is required.
<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>Part 4 Page 24</p> <p>It is made clear in Reports of Handling what the expected timeframes are for either upfront payment to be made (28 days) or a legal agreement to be concluded (4 months); and that the applicant/agent is further advised that the application may be refused under delegated powers, should progress not be made within these timeframes. We are keen to work with developers to bring forward as many permissions as we can, ideally within these target timeframes. However, as is discussed above there is a fine balance between encouraging swift progress and then moving from an acceptable development with legal processes moving slowly – to a position of refusal, just because the timelines have not been adhered to. The balance of acceptable economic generating development and refusal of that on technical reasons is often not palatable or proportionate for various reasons. Again it is often decided that there needs to be a hit on overall performance, just because a small number of applications take a very long time to conclude legal processes. Time taken to conclude legal agreements has improved for local developments but lengthened for major developments.</p>

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>5. Enforcement Charter updated</p>	<p>The most recent detailed review of the Perth & Kinross Council Planning Enforcement Charter was published in January 2021. The review of the Enforcement Charter has been deferred from January 2023 until later in 2023, due to capacity constraints across the service, as is discussed in detail elsewhere. However, this action will be concluded for PPF13.</p>
<p>6. Continuous Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and • progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Despite significant staffing issues performance levels have remained positive when compared with the national position and previous high levels of performance. However, disruption in DM staffing, redistribution of work to remaining team members, etc. has seen resilience levels reduced and impacts in the first parts of the reporting period. We worked hard to liaise with applicants and keep moving forward, but delay was unavoidable and highlighted in PPF11. It is important to note that the overall number of cases affected was very low and that the team now has enhanced staffing levels and clear improvements in performance as the reporting period moved to a close. 2. Several service improvements identified last year have been successfully progressed. Part 2 Page 17 - 21. For 2022-23, actions have been grouped into a new three-year improvement programme. This is structured in four themes: leadership & management (which includes workforce planning); continuous improvement, customer; and digital. This has helped coordinate and deliver new and existing improvement actions, including work on developer contributions and legal agreements.

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>7. Local Development Plan (less than 5 years since adoption)</p>	<p>1. 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.</p> <p>2. The Scottish Government acknowledges that transitioning to the new planning system will have implications for LDP timescales and envisages that every planning authority in Scotland will have a 'new style' local development plan in place within 5 years of the development plan regulations coming into force. In line with these anticipated timescales, our current indicative timetable envisages the Proposed Plan being consulted on during 2026 and we are therefore on target to have our first 'new style' LDP adopted before summer 2027.</p>
<p>8. Development Plan Scheme - next LDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	<p>1. As can be seen from the Development Plan Scheme, a significant amount of work has been undertaken in relation to early data gathering for LDP3 with a programme of place based engagement with the local communities in 2022/23 re Part 1 Case Study 2. The outcomes will feed into the evidence report and the wider work of other Services across the Council.</p> <p>2. Work is progressing on LDP3 in line with the indicative timeline in the DPS and is expected to be delivered to planned timescales going forward subject to timely implementation of remaining regulations and guidance</p>

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>9. Elected Members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</p>	<p>We have held elected member training on the planning system following NPF 4 adoption, and intend to hold further sessions on detailed matters such as development viability. This is an informal approach to negotiations and supports the good working relationship that is so vital to delivering the planning service.</p>
<p>10. Cross sector stakeholders*engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year *including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</p>	<p>Part 1 Case Study 1</p> <p>Re-instatement of our House Builder Liaison meetings enabled engagement with the house building industry on matters covering population trends and the economy, expectations for the housing market in the future, housing delivery, draft National Planning Framework 4, the evidence gathering for the LDP and opportunities for the housebuilders to engage further in this process, in addition to the six monthly forum. This model will be translated to further forum sessions with other users of the planning system including community councils and agents.</p>

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Performance Marker	Evidence
<p>11. Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have produced The Gypsy/ Traveller Site Standards guidance note provides guidance on how applications for private permanent sites or short/seasonal stay sites can address Policy 21 in Local Development Plan 2. 2. Bi-yearly sessions of policy review were held between the Development Plan & Development Management teams to collaboratively work together to translate NPF4 policies to ensure DM officers are aware of the new interpretation of policies as denoted by NPF4.
<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. The Pre-Application Advice service sees proportionate liaison with other consultees, reflective of the nature of the proposal. This sees the most rounded advice given and aids progress in relation for applications submitted. 2. There is also close liaison with the Building Standards Service, particularly in relation to 'Dangerous Buildings'. It is also important to note the benefits of having both Development Management and Building Standards sitting under a single service manager, aiding cross service understanding and collaboration.
<p>13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers from Planning & Housing Strategy met with Edinburgh Council officers to share best practice in the application and review of Housing Land Audit production. 2. Regular discussions regarding the 20 minute neighbourhood analysis required have taken place with Aberdeenshire, Angus and Nick Wright, sharing what work is underway and how to move forward with the analysis.

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Performance Marker	Evidence
<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>Part 3 Page 21</p> <p>Staffing issues and decisions being taken on legacy cases has resulted in a pronounced increase in average time for decision making on 'Major' applications (35.1 > 48.3 weeks + 37.6%). Much of this related to the need for and timescales associated to legal agreements and the general reluctance of applicants to enter into processing agreements, all complicated by the lack of willingness of PKC to move from a 'minded to grant' position to one of refusal, simply on the basis of legal agreements not being concluded.</p>
<p>15. Developer contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions 	<p>Part 2 Page 17</p> <p>LDP2 Policy 5: Infrastructure Contributions and Policy 20: Affordable Housing set out developer contributions policy. Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance was adopted in 2020. A update of this guidance started in early 2023.</p> <p>Reference to the requirement for developer contributions is made, where relevant, in pre-application enquiry responses, and the enquirer is directed to the LDP2 policy and Supplementary Guidance.</p>

PART 7 PERFORMANCE MARKER

Our Performance Graphic Against The Key Markers

Marker	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22
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 schemen						
9. Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10. Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11. Regular & proportionate advice to support applications						
12. Corporate working across services						
13. Sharing good practice skills & knowledge						
14. Stalled sites & legacy cases						
15. Developer contributions						

APPENDIX 1 COMPLAINTS STATISTICS 2022 - 23

Planning & Development Service – Front Line Resolutions (Stage 1)	Apr 22 to Mar 23
Complaints Received in the Period	56
Complaints Closed in the Period	55
Complaints Upheld	4
Complaints Partially Upheld	6
Complaints Not Upheld	20
Resolved	25
Withdrawn	0
Average Time in Working Days for a Response (Target within 5 working days)	6.75
Number Closed within 5 Working Days	35
Percentage Closed within 5 Working Days	63.6%
Number with Improvement Action(s)	13

Planning & Development Service – Investigations (Stage 2)	Apr 22 to Mar 23
Complaints Investigations Received in the Period	14
Complaints Investigations Closed in the Period	13
Complaint Investigations Withdrawn in the Period	0
Total Complaint Points	104
Complaint Points Upheld	8
Complaint Points Not Upheld	89
Complaint Points Unable to Reach a Conclusion	7
Average Time in Working Days for a Complaint Investigation Response (Target within 20 working days)	32
Complaint Investigations Closed within 20 Working Days	0
Complaint Investigations with Improvement Action(s)	1

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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