

Planning Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 7 August 2014

Planning Performance Framework 2013-14

Item number	7.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All

Executive summary

The purpose of the report is to seek Committee approval of the Planning Performance Framework (PPF) 2013-14 for its submission to the Scottish Government.

This Planning Performance Framework report is the third report to be submitted to the Scottish Government since the Scottish Government introduced the PPF as a more rounded way of assessing the performance of planning authorities. The PPF sets out a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures which provide an effective scorecard for scrutiny and assessment purposes.

The PPF for 2013-14 has been produced taking into account feedback from the Scottish Government on the second PPF (submitted last year) and the performance markers agreed by the High Level Group on Performance co-chaired by Derek McKay MSP, the Planning Minister.

Links

Coalition pledges	P15 , P27 , P28 , P40
Council outcomes	CO7 , CO19 , CO24 , CO25 , CO26 , CO27
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 , SO4

Planning Performance Framework 2013-14

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the Planning Performance Framework 2013-14 for submission to the Scottish Government.

Background

- 2.1 The Planning Performance Framework (PPF) is a document that is submitted every year to the Scottish Government detailing how the planning authority has delivered its service over the previous year and how it has embedded a culture of continuous improvement. Whilst the speed of decision-making still features as an important factor, it is the quality of achievements and successes that is the focus of the framework.
- 2.2 This is the third PPF submitted to the Scottish Government and feedback from PPF2 was largely positive. The feedback included a performance markers report for 2012-13. These markers were devised by the High Level group on Performance co-chaired by the Planning Minister, Derek McKay MSP and include 15 markers which are given a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) scoring. This report is included in PPF3 as an appendix.
- 2.3 In 2012-13, the Minister welcomed our commitment to the use of processing agreements for major applications and the shortening of average timescales. He also singled out the One Door Approach, Environmental Quality Indicators and the Edinburgh Planning Concordat as interesting projects which potentially will improve outcomes. However, there were concerns about the delays to the Local Development Plan and the fact that the Enforcement Charter was out-of-date. More information was needed on improving legal agreement timescales.

Main report

- 3.1 The PPF has six main parts:
 - National Headline Indicators;
 - Defining and measuring a high quality planning service;
 - Supporting evidence and links to related reports and studies;
 - Service improvements and timescales for the delivery of improvements;
 - Official statistics; and
 - Workforce and financial information.

A copy of the markers report is included as an appendix.

- 3.2 Under the National Headline Indicators in part 1, we have identified the delays in the proposed Local Development Plan (LDP) caused by the requirement to prepare Supplementary Guidance (SG) to allocate additional housing land. This has delayed adoption of the LDP by approximately one year. The latest Development Plan Scheme (June 2014) anticipates LDP adoption in February 2016. At that point, the Edinburgh City Local Plan will be just over six years old and the Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan 9.5 years old. Whilst both of these plans will be over the five year target, it is clear that there is nothing this Council could have done within the law, during 2013/14, to prepare the LDP any faster.
- 3.3 There has also been an improvement in the percentage of major applications meeting their processing agreements target and also in the timescales for dealing with other major applications, despite an increase from 25 cases the previous year to 46 in this year. However, the diversion of resources to deal with these major cases has impacted on timescales for local and householder developments which are longer than the previous year. This is in the context of a 5% increase of planning applications from the previous year. The new service structure for Planning and Building Standards will address some of these issues by diverting resources to frontline delivery.
- 3.4 The PPF is evidence based and part 2 which focuses on defining and measuring a high quality planning service has a number of sub-headings reflecting the evidence gathered. The information is more comprehensive than previous years and case studies are included to illustrate how we have implemented actions in practice. The opportunity has also been taken to include Council wide projects where Planning has had an input such as the Edinburgh 12, a corporate initiative to get stalled sites progressed.
- 3.5 Highlights of the second section include the implementation of the revised Edinburgh Planning Concordat and Engagement Fund, Edinburgh Design Guidance, supplementary guidance on the Bio-quarter and town centres, and the use of social media as a communication tool. Part 3 provides the evidence base for this work.
- 3.6 Part 4 comprises a report on how targets in the Service Plan for 2013-14 have been met. It also sets out the new targets in the Service Plan for 2014-15 which was approved by the Planning Committee on 15 May 2014.
- 3.7 Part 5 has more detailed official statistics showing performance and includes decision-making timescales, appeal and review performance and enforcement activity. Appeal and review performance has improved from the previous year. Enforcement activity has also increased, although fewer notices have been served.
- 3.8 The workforce and financial information in part 6 shows a largely static workforce which has an age profile which raises concerns about succession planning. However, the figures include Building Standards where around 63% of officers are 50 or over. This is being addressed through workforce planning.

- 3.9 The information contained within the PPF for 2013-14 shows how a culture of continuous improvement has been embedded by implementing a range of actions to process efficiently applications, deliver a Proposed Local Development Plan and initiate a series of projects to improve the city.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The Scottish Government recognises the continuous culture of improvement embedded into the Planning and Building Standards Service in Edinburgh and commends the Council for its actions to deliver this.

Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial risks arising from this report.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no perceived risks associated with this report. The report has no impact on any policies of the Council. The Government requires all planning authorities to prepare and submit an annual Planning Performance Framework.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The Equalities and Rights Impact Assessment indicates that there are no positive or negative impacts arising from this report because it concerns planning performance in 2013-14 and includes no new policy or process decisions. The Public Sector Equality Duty to review existing policy and processes to ensure compliance with legislation will be done as part of the service improvements detailed in the Service Plan 2014-15 and other ongoing reviews of policy and practice.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes are summarised below:
- This report will have no impact on carbon emissions because the report deals with performance in the planning system;
 - This report will have no effect on the city's resilience to climate change impacts because the report deals with planning performance; and
 - This report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because it describes how a culture of continuous improvement has been to the benefit of the city.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The preparation of evidence for the PPF includes information gathered from a variety of sources including officer work streams, customer surveys, performance returns and the proposed Service Plan for 2014-15.

Background reading/external references

Report to Planning Committee 8 August 2013: [Planning Performance Framework 2012-13](#).

John Bury

Acting Director of Services for Communities

Contact: Nancy Jamieson, Change Manager

E-mail: nancy.jamieson@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 3916

Links

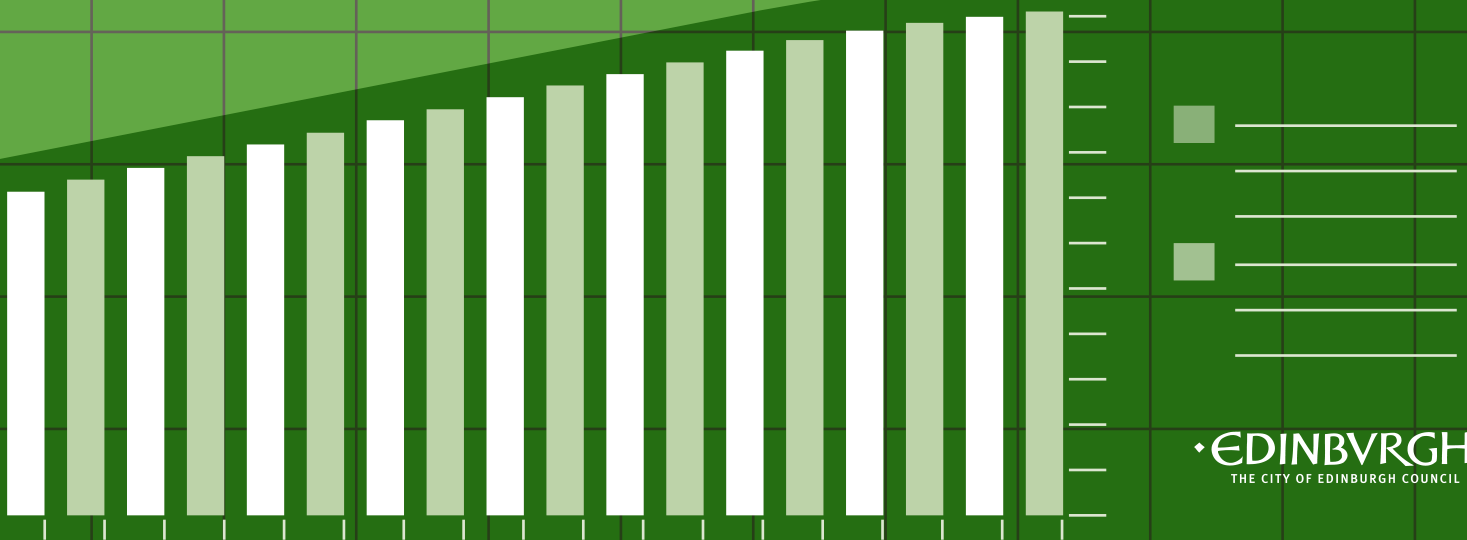
Coalition pledges	<p>P15 – Work with public organisations, the private sector and social enterprise to promote Edinburgh to investors</p> <p>P27 – Seek to work in full partnership with Council staff and their representatives</p> <p>P28 – Further strengthen our links with the business community by developing and implementing strategies to promote and protect the economic well being of the city</p> <p>P40 – Work with Edinburgh World Heritage Trust and other stakeholders to conserve the city’s built heritage</p>
Council outcomes	<p>CO7 – Edinburgh draws new investment in development and regeneration</p> <p>CO19 – Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm</p> <p>CO24 – The Council communicates effectively internally and externally and has an excellent reputation for customer care</p> <p>CO25 – The Council has efficient and effective services that deliver objectives</p> <p>CO26 – The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver agreed objectives</p> <p>CO27 – The Council supports, invest in and develops our people</p>
Single Outcome Agreement	<p>SO1 - Edinburgh’s economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all</p> <p>SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric</p>
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 – Planning Performance Framework 2013-14</p>

*

Planning Performance Framework

Services for Communities
Planning

2013 - 2014
2013 - 2014



Contents

Introduction

Part 1

4

National Headline Indicators

Part 2

7

Defining and measuring a high quality planning service

- Open for Business 9
- High Quality Development on the Ground 13
- Certainty 22
- Communications, Engagement and Customer Service 25
- Efficient and Effective Decision-making 32
- Effective Management Structures 34
- Financial Management and Local Governance 37
- Culture of Continuous Improvement 38

Part 3

40

Supporting evidence and links to related reports and studies

Part 4

42

Service improvements and timescales for the delivery of improvements

Part 5

49

Official statistics

Part 6

51

Workforce and financial information

Appendix 1

53

Performance Markers Report 2012 - 13

The Council submitted its second Planning Performance Framework to the Scottish Government on 26 September 2013. This covered the period from April 2012 to March 2013. The Planning Minister, Derek McKay MSP, gave us detailed feedback on 11 December 2013.

The following strengths were highlighted in this feedback:

I was particularly impressed with the dedication of the planners and their willingness to play a role in the improvement of the services they provide. Many of the challenges for planners are not new but what we need are new approaches and renewed determination.

Turning to your authority's performance report, I am pleased to see your continued commitment to the use of processing agreements and the strong relationships you have developed with stakeholders to support the delivery of good development. You have made some good improvements to decision-making timescales and I am keen to see you continue to bring old cases to a conclusion.

You have described a wide range of initiatives and also a culture embedded within your authority that support businesses through planning processes and the delivery of economic development; for example your introduction of a One Door Approach to Development Consents and activity that can help to ensure proportionality in information requests and developer contributions.

We welcome the recognition received for the quality of your website and its information, as a means to publicise your service and keep people informed, along with your expanding reach through social media. Your targeted engagement of young people will also help to open up a different perspective on planning issues that may otherwise have been missed.

The Government's Performance Markers Report for 2012-13 in Appendix 1 gives an indication of priority areas for improvement action identified by the Scottish Government.

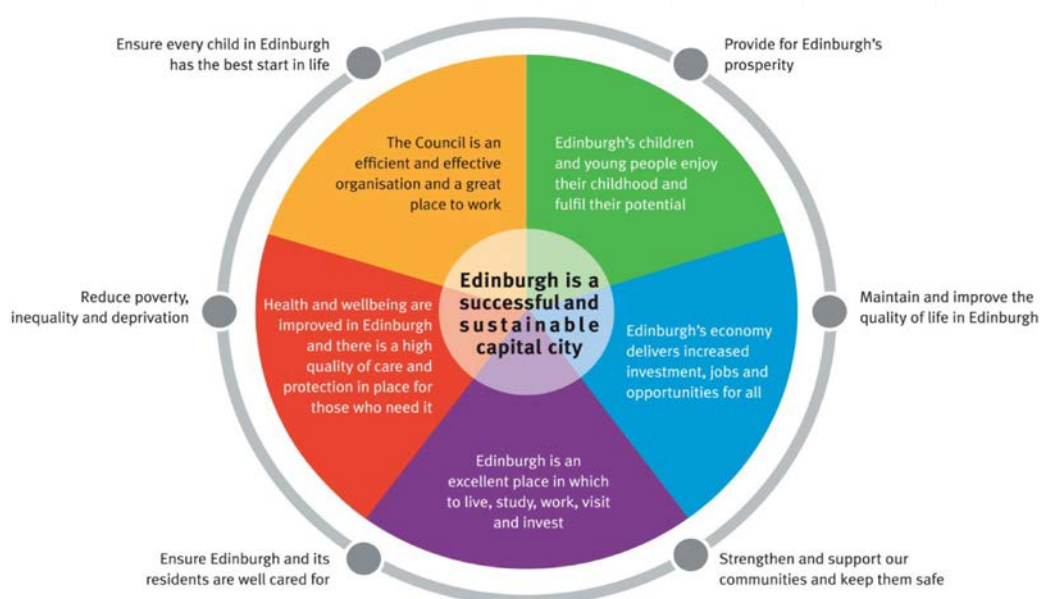
Introduction

The City of Edinburgh Council is pleased to submit its third Planning Performance Framework (PPF) report. The document highlights the work we have done from April 2013 to March 2014 to improve performance and deliver a high quality Planning service and builds on the positive feedback we received from PPF2 for 2012 to 2013.

The Council's Strategic Plan for 2012-17 sets out five strategic outcomes needed to fulfil our vision that Edinburgh is a thriving, successful and sustainable capital city.

These outcomes reflect priorities across all Council services and will deliver on Capital Coalition commitments to:

- ensure every child in Edinburgh has the best start in life
- reduce poverty, inequality and deprivation
- provide for Edinburgh's prosperity
- strengthen and support our communities, and keep them safe
- ensure Edinburgh, and its residents, are well cared-for
- maintain and improve the quality of life in Edinburgh.



The Planning service has a role to play in delivering many of these outcomes but, in delivering service improvements, our focus has been on ensuring Edinburgh is a great place to live, study, work, visit and invest in addition to supporting Edinburgh's economy through increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all. The framework will set out how our work has made a difference in delivering these outcomes.

The year to March 2014 has presented a number of challenges, not least the delay in the proposed Local Development Plan as we seek to identify land for additional housing requirements. Numbers of planning applications have also increased and this has put pressure on resources. However, as a forward looking Planning service with an ethos of continuous improvement, measures are being progressed and implemented to ensure the service is fit for purpose in coming years.

PART 1 - National Headline Indicators

In “Planning Reform – Next Steps”, one of the key priorities of the Scottish Government is to ensure development plans are up-to-date. Local Development Plans (LDPs) must by law be replaced at least every five years and be consistent with the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Ministers expect LDPs to be adopted within two years of SDP approval and recognise that to achieve this there may be a degree of twin-tracking (Circular 6/2013).

In view of strong development pressures in the City, particularly for new housing development, the Council has twin-tracked the publication of the stages of its LDP as closely as possible with the stages of the SDP. The first proposed LDP was approved in March 2013, consistent with the proposed SDP submitted to Ministers in August 2012. In doing so, the Council recognised that the proposed LDP might need to be revised if the SDP was modified by Ministers on approval. However the Council judged that achieving a plan-led approach to pressures for new greenfield housing development, in accordance with the Government’s intentions, outweighed that risk.

The SDP was approved in June 2013, but Ministers required the SESplan Councils to prepare Supplementary Guidance (SG) to allocate additional housing land in the early periods of the plan. This confirmed that the Council’s LDP would indeed need to be revised and work to identify the additional housing sites began immediately, twin-tracking preparation of the SG. The finalised SG was submitted to Ministers on 21 May 2014 and on 18 June 2014 Ministers gave notice that a sentence should be removed from the SG before it could be adopted. However, there was no objection by Ministers to either the amount or distribution of housing land identified in the SG. On 19 June 2014, the Council approved a second proposed LDP that included the additional housing land required by the SG.

The SDP SG has delayed adoption of the LDP by approximately one year. The latest Development Plan Scheme (June 2014) anticipates LDP adoption in February 2016. At that point, the Edinburgh City Local Plan will be just over six years old and the Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan 9.5 years old. Whilst both of these plans will be over the five year target, it is clear that there is nothing this Council could have done within the law during 2013 - 14 to prepare the LDP any faster.

During 2013 - 2014, the City of Edinburgh Council recorded a 5% increase in the number of planning applications from the previous year. This is in addition to a 4% increase in enforcement cases and 14% increase in tree work applications. Staff numbers remained static in 2013 - 14 and this has had an impact on performance. This is being addressed through a new structure for the Planning and Building Standards Service which will provide more front line staff to address these performance issues.

The number of major applications increased from 25 in 2012 - 13 to 46 in 2013 - 14 and, as this is an area where the Council gives a significant amount of pre-application advice, resources have had to be realigned from local development work to cope with the demand. This has impacted on householder applications performance. Performance in major applications shows a significant improvement as we reduced the number of legacy cases which were skewing the figures. Edinburgh deals with significantly more major applications than most Planning authorities and this reflects its role as an engine for the growth of the Scottish economy.

The percentage of major applications meeting the processing agreement timescale has also improved. Edinburgh has trialled adding timescales on for concluding the legal agreement. However, this has not been successful as the officer preparing the Planning processing agreement (PPA) has no means of knowing when the legal agreement will be signed. This is essentially in the hands of the applicant who often delays signing the agreement to extend the timescale of the consent. The other option of taking the application back to Committee for possible refusal if the agreement is not signed within 3 to 6 months is contrary to our ethos of economic resilience.

We now have a more accurate figure on pre-application advice, based on collected figures rather than sampling. This shows that nearly a quarter of applications are subject to pre-application advice. In addition, we now have a fully up-to-date Enforcement Charter.

Key Outcomes	2013 - 2014	2012 - 2013
Development Planning		
age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) Requirement: less than 5 years	Rural West Local Plan (RWELP) – 8 years RWELP alteration – 3 years Edinburgh City Local Plan – 4 years	Rural West Local Plan (RWELP) – 7 years RWELP alteration – 2 years Edinburgh City Local Plan – 3 years
development plan scheme: on track? (Y/N)	yes	yes
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
effective housing land: years supply (*1)	3.6 years	n/a
effective housing land supply (*2)	7722 units	5292 units
housing approvals (*3)	4694 units	4294 units
effective employment land supply (*4)	228.5ha.	229.5ha.
employment land take-up (*5)	1.0ha.	1.4ha.
Development Management Project Planning		
percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice (*6)	23.5%	42.9%
number of major applications subject to planning processing agreement (PPA) or other project plan	32	19
percentage planned timescales met	87.5%	84.2%
Decision-making		
application approval rate	91.9%	92.9%
delegation rate	93%	92.7%
Decision-making timescales		
Average number of weeks to decision:		
major developments (excluding PPAs)	27.9	81.6
local developments (non-householder)	10.6	10.5
householder developments	7.5	6.9
Enforcement		
time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) Requirement: <i>review every 2 years</i>	7 months	36 months
number of breaches identified / resolved	779	751
Total number of applications	4343	4123
Total number of Major applications	46	25

See footnotes on following page

Footnotes :

(*1) The SESplan Councils proposed a method of calculating the effective five year housing land supply in the submitted Supplementary Guidance, however this was removed by Scottish Ministers in their letter dated 18 June 2014. SESplan nevertheless intends to ensure that all six Councils adopt a consistent approach to this monitoring.

(*2) The latest agreed housing land audit (HLA) is for March 2013 (i.e. agreement reached with the house builders re. sites that are effective, and future programming of development). The Council is currently working on programming of sites in the 2014 HLA, and an updated figure for housing land supply as at March 2014 is expected to be available in July or August 2014.

(*3) This is the total number of residential units granted planning consent between April 2013 and March 2014. It is based on decision notices rather than planning committee decisions, and so excludes 'minded to grant' decisions which may be subject to the conclusion of a legal agreement. Coverage also reflects the date of the decision notice, rather than the committee date. The figure includes all consents, including outline, reserved matters ('matters specified in condition'), amended applications etc. Hence this means there is likely to be an element of double counting in terms of the output actually emerging from the planning 'pipeline' and delivered on the ground. The figure for 20012/13 has been amended in light of updated information.

(*4) The latest available figures are from the 2013 Employment Land Audit which relates to August 2013. Figures for 2014 should be available in September 2014 (survey carried out in August).

'Effective' employment land is assumed to comprise category 1 and 2 employment land.

Category 1 refers to land with planning consent and / or allocated in an adopted local plan which is readily available and serviced, and is marketable. Category 2 refers to land with planning consent and / or allocated in an adopted local plan and considered suitable for development, but restricted or requires full servicing / completion of servicing.

(*5) This figure is the amount of designated employment land taken up for employment uses only – i.e. it excludes land taken up for non-employment uses. However, it includes land in all quality categories (1, 2 and 3). The 1.0 ha. taken up in 2013 comprised just one site – a car showroom at Newbridge North.

(*6) The figure for this year's pre-application discussion data is not comparable with 2012 - 13.

PART 2 - Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

Performance Markers Report for 2012 - 2013

Appendix 1 sets out our key markers report showing how the Scottish Government rated our performance in 2012 - 2013. We have delivered on the key markers in 2013 - 14 as follows:

1. **Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories.** Decision-making on major applications has significantly improved and the number of major applications with processing agreements meeting their target date has also improved. However, there has been a slight reduction in performance in local developments due to an increased volume of applications. Householder applications have also taken longer although these are still well within the 2 month statutory timescale.
2. **Processing agreements (PPA).** These are offered for all *major developments* and the number has increased significantly. Our webpage on major developments gives applicants and agents full details of the process. Not all major developments need a PPA as some are more straightforward and, in those cases, applicants do not wish to sign one.
3. **Early collaboration with applicants and consultees.** A methodology was put in place for recording whether an application has been subject to pre-application advice. This is now captured in the registration process using information from the application form. The figures show that 23.5% of applications have had pre-application advice. The pre-application project on how we deliver the service is ongoing as we move to a new management structure. As part of this we will ensure information requests are proportionate. Information on how to seek pre-application advice on local developments and listed buildings is currently available on our *pre-application webpage*.
4. **Legal agreements.** Legal agreements are now being concluded quicker than last year. We have also gone through a process of withdrawing old cases where the legal agreement has not been concluded. The Council does not support limiting the timescale for conclusion of legal agreements as we do not believe this works in practice. Indeed, we have noted that in cases where the Reporter has put time limits on in appeal cases, these have had to be extended. The practicalities are that if the legal agreement has not been concluded within 6 months, we would have to take the application back to Committee with a recommendation for refusal. Some major development may actually be approved by Committee without developer contributions for the necessary infrastructure. We do not believe either option is good for the economic vitality and resilience of the City. We would prefer to negotiate for as long as is reasonable.
5. **Enforcement charter** updated / re-published within last 2 years. This was updated in August 2013.
6. **Continuous improvement.** Decision making timescales are addressed above. In terms of enforcement, the criteria are not sufficiently clear to allow us to collate the information. Every enforcement complaint is investigated and resolved one way or another. There are a number of options open to the Council including no further action (either there has been no breach or the breach does not justify any action); request an application; serve an enforcement notice; and negotiation to resolve the breach. We are currently looking at whether we need to reclassify cases to collate the figures accurately. Information in this year's SIP should be largely complete. The LDP will not be ready to replace the Edinburgh City Local Plan before it is over 5 years old as there has been delay caused by the additional requirements on housing land.
7. **Local Development Plan** - the Council has set a demanding programme to ensure that the LDP is adopted to replace the existing local plans as soon as possible (see commentary under Headline Indicators).

8. **Development Plan Scheme** - the Council has set a demanding programme to ensure that the LDP is adopted to replace the existing local plans as soon as possible (see commentary under Headline Indicators).
9. **Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation.** This was not applicable in 2013 - 14.
10. **Cross sector stakeholders engaged early** (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation. As above.
11. **Regular and proportionate policy advice.** Statutory and non-statutory guidance on a range of subjects has been updated and consolidated in 2013 - 14.
12. **Corporate working across services.** New protocols put in place for cross service working and with Edinburgh World Heritage. One Door Approach Charter published.
13. **Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge.** Benchmarking meetings with the city planning authorities in Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow continued throughout 2013 - 14 as did attendance at Heads of Planning Scotland committees. A series of Edinburgh-Glasgow planning management liaison meetings continues with the aim of sharing good practice. Edinburgh participated in the Scottish Government *Aligning Consents* project to look at integrating RCC and planning permission processes.
14. **Stalled sites / legacy cases.** 63% of old cases have now been removed from the system (see service plan data).
15. **Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations.** New guidance on *developer contributions* was published in February 2014.

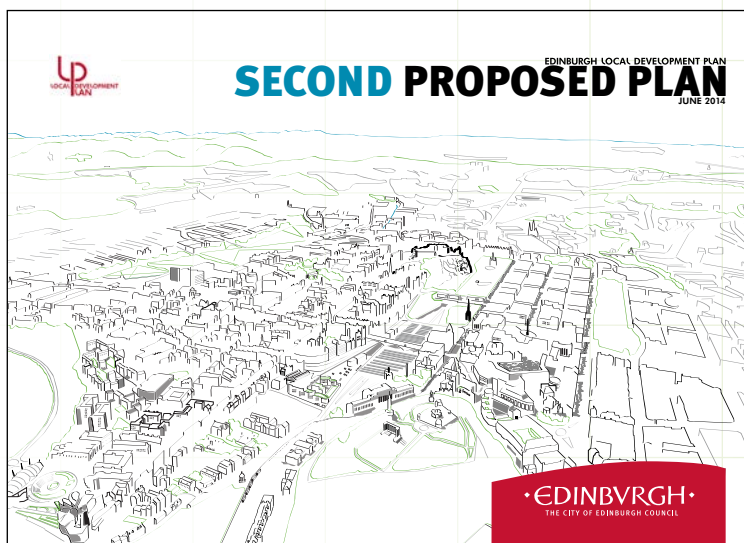


Open for Business -

Positive actions to support sustainable economic growth and social needs:

The Proposed Local Development Plan

The *Proposed Local Development Plan* sets the context for economic development across the city with a number of ‘special economic’ areas of national or strategic importance to provide the potential for a significant number of jobs. These areas are at Edinburgh BioQuarter, Riccarton University Campus and Business Park, Edinburgh Airport, Royal Highland Centre, International Business Gateway and RBS Headquarters at Gogarburn. The Plan sets the vision for sustainable economic growth in partnership with all stakeholders.



The Council published its first *Proposed Action Programme* in March 2013, alongside its first *Proposed Local Development Plan*. The actions identified were used to inform the consideration of early planning applications for new housing sites in the LDP. In June 2014, a second Proposed Action Programme was approved by the Council alongside its Second Proposed LDP.

To assist with the delivery of this, the Council published updated non-statutory guidance on developer contributions in February 2014 (see below) and has also started a programme of preparing statutory *Supplementary Guidance* for town centres.

Our *Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing guidance* was updated in February 2014 to align with the action programme of the LDP and to ensure that contributions will only be required where they are necessary, proportionate and directly related to the impact of the development. This ensures that new developments are suitably served by supporting infrastructure and are not burdened by overly onerous requirements that may prohibit development taking place.

Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth

Edinburgh 12 is the name given to an initiative to progress the development of strategically important city centre sites that for one reason or another have stalled. The selection of the sites is based on a study commissioned by the Council in early 2013 to establish an understanding of what role the public sector could/has to play in progressing development.

The study identified 12 major sites with the potential to be developed within five years and promoted a number of recommendations for the Council to consider in order to drive development forward. In response, the Council has established a co-ordination group and



developed an engagement approach that is able to provide pre-application advice to developers and landowners through a single point of contact in conjunction with the Council's Economic Development, Planning and Building Standards and Transport services and its key partner organisations and agencies e.g. Historic Scotland and SEPA, among others working constructively together. This holistic approach to supporting economic development is key to getting development started.

Working Together to Support Good Development

On 27 August 2013, a revised *Edinburgh Planning Concordat* was signed. This is a tripartite concordat between the Council, the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils and it promotes collaboration between all parties to assist with the delivery of major developments. By encouraging consensual working, the Concordat can assist economic activity by getting community buy-in for development and so ironing out delays.



The Edinburgh Development Forum continues to meet quarterly. This Forum allows planning officers and members of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce to have open and honest discussions about the development of the City and how it should move forward. This complements the *Edinburgh Business Forum* which supports inward investment by bringing the Council and the Chamber together to agree on priorities for economic development.

In addition, an internal working protocol with Economic Development, Planning and Estates was implemented in September 2013 and staff from the three service areas were involved in joint workshops to promote it and embed it into work practices.

A revised Protocol for Edinburgh World Heritage involvement in the planning process was put in place to facilitate handling of specific applications and make sure all stakeholders understood their role in the process.

Meeting Our Customers' Needs

The One Door Approach Charter was launched in October 2013 and sets out the service we will give to our customers who want to develop in the City. In particular, it gives advice on all the consents they might need rather than simply planning advice. This links to the new Council webpage on *Permissions for Development* which assists applicants understanding the range of consents they might need.

The Council directs enquirers to the Council website for advice as much as possible as there is a full range of policies, guidance and other advice available. However, we recognise that some want to speak to an officer directly and we offer a full help desk service where a qualified planning officer is on hand to give informal advice. This provides a single contact point during office hours for general planning enquiries whether by phone, e-mail or face-to-face. This service is also integrated with the *Business Gateway* where the two services share the same public counter. This has proved to be an important cross service contact point.

Edinburgh has contributed to the Scottish Government *Aligning Consents* project which potentially assists developers in a simplified application process and we look forward to progressing with this.





Planning and Building Standards maintains its commitment to customer service and has (as part of Services for Communities) maintained our *Customer Service Excellence* accreditation since March 2012. In November 2013, we were re-accredited. We continue to improve how we communicate with our customers, seek customer feedback and ensure these results inform our Service Plan.

Customer Service Charters and Standards are in place. The Enforcement Charter is up-to-date and other service charters are programmed for updates. As a service we are now commencing a review of all our customer contact channels with a view to improving the customer experience and making efficiencies where possible. We will also as part of the pre-application advice project clarify the service we can offer.

Supporting the Development Process

In May 2013, we initiated a *management review* in the Planning and Building Standards service. The aims of the review are to create an operational structure which improves processes and procedures, particularly in the interfaces with other Council services, to ensure they are lean and fit for purpose; provide an improved customer journey; redesign management responsibilities to improve efficiency, performance and productivity; develop a strategic neighbourhood management approach to deliver better places; and maintain staff morale and get staff support for the new organisational structure.

The bulk of 2013 - 14 was spent preparing and consulting on the new structure and responsibilities and the proposed changes were approved by the Planning Committee on 12 June 2014. Implementation is due by October 2014. The new structure will result in more frontline staff to meet business needs and priorities and ensure the appropriate level of authority to provide advice.

Pre-application discussions are welcomed and contact details can be found on the Council website on our *pre-application page* and the *major developments* page. During 2013-14, we initiated a project on pre-application advice and this is ongoing. As part of the project, we held workshops with staff, consultees and applicants/agents to gauge current views on the service and whether pre-application charging would be supported. Following legal advice we have decided not to proceed with charging until the legal framework for doing so is in place. We have also held back from limiting advice on householder development until we have reviewed our customer contact channels.

23.5% of applications were subject to pre-application advice in 2013-14. Principal planners co-ordinate pre-application advice to ensure consistency and supervise the planning officer dealing with the case. In cases of conflict, senior managers will review cases to ensure they are resolved. In 2013-14, authorisation was given to recruit customer support assistants in the local development and listed buildings team and the organisation and records management of pre-application advice will be a major task for these staff.

All major application proposals are offered pre-application advice. This includes new development not supported by the proposed LDP. In these cases, we allow one meeting with the developer to discuss the scheme as support for the proposal is unlikely. This underlines the priority we give to assisting with economic growth.

Two major development teams have continued to deal with an increased workload of major development proposals both at pre-application and application stage. Priority is given to major developments as these contribute to the economic vitality of the City and region. Meetings are arranged quickly with consultees and in particularly complex cases, a series of meetings will be arranged to deal with all the issues. The planning officer project manages the major application process and ensures all consultees and other stakeholders are fully engaged in the application process and keep to time.

Four monthly meetings of the two major development teams take place to share good practice, discuss potential improvements and ensure consistency of service. All planners in the team are trained to use a project management approach with a processing agreement and a project plan central to the process. Every Proposal of Application Notice for a major development is processed efficiently by our Community Engagement Technician and the applicant is invited to a consultee meeting to discuss the proposals and the requirements of all stakeholders in the application process. This service is free to all applicants.

Processing agreements are now part of our culture of dealing with major applications. In 2013 the Council received a commendation at the *Scottish Quality Awards* for its use of processing agreements which assist with certainty in processing major applications. As part of this we received support from Montagu Evans, planning consultants who stated:

“Our team have had very positive experiences in working with the Council to secure the use of Processing Agreements for a number of different clients. Our team and our clients consider the principle of the use of the Agreements invaluable on many projects. In our experience, the City of Edinburgh Council has worked pragmatically with ourselves and our clients to deliver Processing Agreements that are mutually beneficial.”



All supporting information required on major developments is discussed at the consultee meeting and agreed with the applicant as part of the processing agreement. Legal agreements are also discussed at an early stage on major developments to ensure that applicants are clear about requirements.

Invalid applications account for around 15.5% of all applications which is relatively low. As around 65% of our applications are made online via the E-Planning website, there is less opportunity for invalid applications. The Council encourages online submissions to support our customers' business needs.

Every planning application, big or small, is allocated to an individual planning officer who has ownership of the case. Case conferences are held in team meetings and staff have access to design advice from a refreshed design service provided in-house. Case officers are encouraged to carry out consultations quickly to avoid delays and any amendments are normally requested following the site visit and assessment of any representations. For householder and minor local developments, this process is reasonably straightforward.

In more complex cases, the case officer has specialist advisers on hand to get advice on design, trees, biodiversity, transport issues, flooding and environmental impacts. Requests can then be made reasonably quickly for additional information to support the case if necessary.

In 2013-14, we reviewed our use of conditions and resolved to ensure that we received information up-front rather than apply conditions that could not be enforced. We have had staff workshops to implement that new way of working and this included our consultees. Every request for additional information from a consultee is assessed by the case officer to see whether it is necessary. In some cases we have declined asking for information as it was too onerous for the applicant e.g. noise assessments.

Post decision processes are handled directly by the case officer to ensure continuity.

High quality development on the ground - Creating and shaping places of which we can all be proud

The Place Making Framework

The current local plans and Proposed Local Development Plan set out clear design policies which support the Council's proactive approach to place making. This is supplemented through the more detailed *Edinburgh Design Guidance* which was renewed in 2013-14 and has been shortlisted for a Scottish Quality Award 2014. The Guidance sets out how high quality place making can be delivered across the city and will in due course be reviewed to consider the impact this has had on the delivery of new development and places in the city.



The *current and proposed development plans*

contain a number of policies to guide the delivery of high quality places and buildings in the city. These policies are designed to do the following:

- To ensure that new development is of the highest design quality and respects, safeguards and enhances the special character of the city;
- To ensure that the city develops in an integrated and sustainable manner; and
- To create new and distinctive places which support and enhance the special character of the city and meet the needs of residents and other users.

Policy DES 2 Co-ordinated Development applies to comprehensive development and regeneration of wider areas and has been applied to the revised Craigmillar Urban Design Framework and the Edinburgh Bio-quarter Masterplan (see below). Both of these documents support the holistic approach to development, avoiding piecemeal change and ensuring the delivery of infrastructure and high quality places.

Masterplanning is central to our aspirations for high quality places. In May 2013, we undertook a consultation on the *Edinburgh Bio-Quarter (EBQ)* and South East Wedge Parkland (SEW). This is part of our suite of statutory guidance as part of the Local Development Plan. The statutory guidance aims to realise the full life sciences potential of the EBQ in a mixed use urban quarter which protects and enhances the landscape setting of the city. The *finalised guidance* was approved in December 2013 and approval for given to consult on a masterplan for the area.

CASE STUDY 1 – EDINBURGH BIO-QUARTER



The Edinburgh BioQuarter (EBQ) aims to become a top 10 global centre of excellence for life sciences offering opportunities for academic, commercial and clinical research and development with health care, teaching facilities and appropriate support services and facilities. The LDP identifies the EBQ as a ‘Special Economic Area’ as it offers a unique opportunity to establish a commercial life science centre in Edinburgh of a scale comparable with others globally.

The SEW Parkland is to be developed as a significant new strategic park linking with parallel developments in Midlothian. The context for the SEW Parkland was first established with the approval of the Craigmillar Urban Design Framework (CUDF) in 2005. There is an opportunity within the SEW Parkland to create a new landscape that provides a setting for the EBQ and local communities such as Moredun and Craigmillar. The SEW Parkland is identified as Green Space Proposal GS 4 in the LDP.

The Council works with major land owners to prepare masterplans and frameworks. For instance we have been working closely with NHS Scotland and the University of Edinburgh to create buildings and places of the future. For example, in 2013, we received a commendation for Development on the Ground in the Scottish Quality Awards for *Sugarhouse Close*, an example of how we have used our policies and guidance to raise the quality of design in the City, working with the University of Edinburgh to provide student housing.

CASE STUDY 2 – SUGARHOUSE CLOSE



This development received a commendation at the Scottish Quality Awards as an example of the applicant, agent, planners and other stakeholders working together to deliver student housing in a regeneration area within the World Heritage Site. The resulting complex shows innovation, sustainability, place making through public access to the public realm and the re-population of a declining area.

Design frameworks ensure a co-ordinated and high quality development on the ground but these must be updated to ensure they are in line with current policies and guidance. In 2005, the Craigmillar Urban Design Framework (CUDF) was prepared in the context of the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015 and the South East Edinburgh Local Plan (2005). SESPlan, *the strategic development plan* for the Edinburgh City Region, has replaced the structure plan. The local plan has been replaced by the Edinburgh City Local Plan (2010). For these reasons the Council, in August 2011, agreed to commence a review of the CUDF. This review was approved by the Planning Committee in August 2013.

CASE STUDY 3 – CRAIGMILLAR URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



The revised CUDF was prepared in full consultation with the local community and others who have an interest in Craigmillar. While looking at the issues relating to the area, the review also updates the CUDF to reflect the current planning policy context with regards to changes to the Development Plan, Edinburgh Planning Guidance and other relevant guidance, including design guidance. These changes are reflected throughout the reviewed CUDF and include changes in terms of design, housing and open space.

The proposed LDP *Action Programme* sets out the actions to deliver the plan and we recognise that adopting the LDP is not the end of the story; development plans need to be deliverable, not just good ideas. The Action Programme aligns the delivery of the Local Development Plan with corporate and national investment in infrastructure and is used by the Council as a delivery mechanism to lever the best possible outcome for the city and to co-ordinate development proposals with the infrastructure and services to support them. Good places can only be delivered under this holistic and co-ordinated approach.

We have a more focused approach to delivering infrastructure by making use of the Action Programme through estimating costs of essential infrastructure, identified funding sources, and specifying any funding gaps. Where a development's value is demonstrated to be insufficient to support the full cost of essential infrastructure the resulting funding gap would need to be addressed. This could be achieved through other funding sources and through the use of the Action Programme to inform the Council's budget setting for capital investment.

Statutory and non-statutory guidance is constantly being reviewed, consolidated and updated. The Council is currently preparing, in consultation with others, the *Edinburgh Street Design Guidance* which will set out principles for the delivery of good place making, improving conditions for walking and cycling. The *draft guidance* was approved by the Planning Committee for consultation in February 2014.

Strategic Development Areas

The current and proposed development plans focuses the growth of the city on four Strategic Development Areas. This approach is consistent with the Strategic Development Plan and with the Council's Economic Strategy which seeks sustainable growth through investment in jobs – focussing on development and regeneration, inward investment, support for businesses and helping unemployed people into work and learning.

City Centre:

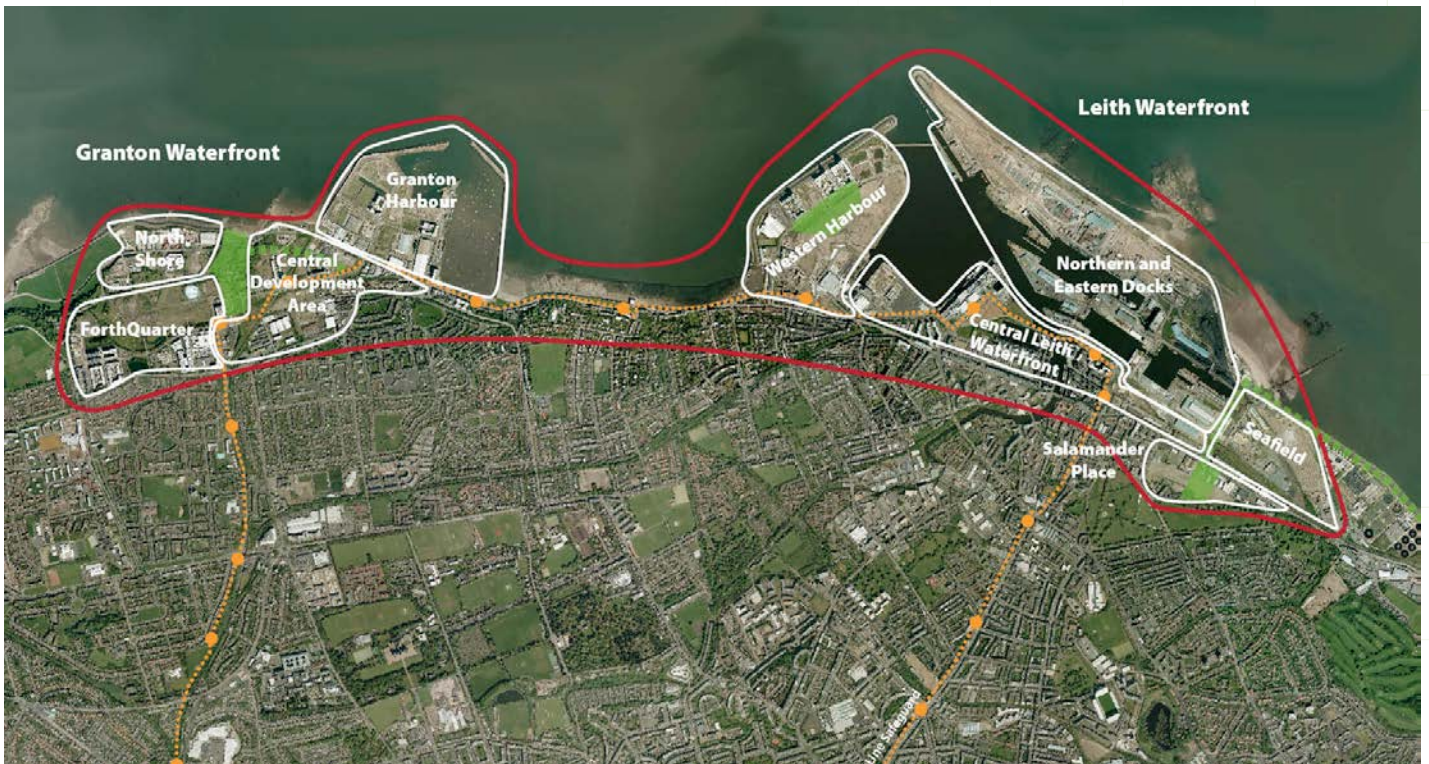
Edinburgh's city centre is the vibrant hub of the City region. The Local Development Plan supports four major development opportunities in the City Centre: St James Quarter, New Street, Fountainbridge and Quartermile. A CPO has now been approved for the St James Quarter and work is programmed to start next year. New consents were granted for New Street (Caltongate) in 2014 and work has started on affordable housing at the site. Consents have now been granted at Fountainbridge and new student housing has been completed at Quartermile.

South East Edinburgh:

This area is expected to experience major change over the next five to seven years and projects such as the Bio-Quarter and Craigmillar regeneration as well as additional housing sites, will be at the centre of this.

Edinburgh Waterfront:

The regeneration of Edinburgh Waterfront has been guided by masterplans and frameworks prepared in collaboration with principal land owners. Forth Ports Ltd. now wants to concentrate on port activities but the LDP sets out the development strategy for adjoining areas including the completion of the regeneration of Granton Waterfront.



West Edinburgh:

West Edinburgh is an area that will change significantly in the coming years. Discussions have been ongoing about the International Business Gateway (IBG) during 2013-14. The proposals are described in the Local Development Plan and are being developed in the context of a strategic design framework and supplementary planning guidance. The Council is part of a development partnership with Edinburgh Airport, the Royal Highland Centre, other principal landowners and key agencies to oversee the delivery of this nationally important development.

Getting Communities Involved

On 27 August 2013, the revised *Edinburgh Planning Concordat* was signed. This is a tripartite concordat between the Council, the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils and it promotes collaboration between all parties to assist with the delivery of major developments. It includes a commitment for parties to work together and engage at an early stage. This is where communities can assist in promoting high quality development on the ground. Design changes are often promoted by community groups as part of the process and agreed by the developer. The Community Engagement Fund which helps community councils seek the wider community view is an important part of this process.

“Many community Councils find it difficult to get the community’s views as widely as they would like but with some financial assistance, we can aim to engage with the community so it has a real input into the quality of development in its area.”

David Salton

Chair, Edinburgh Association of Community Councils



New community councils were elected in October 2013 and the Planning Service in Edinburgh has delivered training to new members on the Planning system and how it works. Events took place in January and March 2014 and community councils were given a broad understanding of Development Plans and guidance as well as the Concordat. Information on planning application processes and how community councils can have a say was a major part of the training. More detailed training is taking place in 2014-15. Ensuring communities understand the planning process helps to encourage better places.

In March 2014, an update on the LDP was given in the form of special briefings to community

councils. The process was explained and individual officers have attended community council and groups meetings to explain planning processes

The Planning service contributes to the quarterly Civic Forum made up of community groups and provides awareness and training on a range of subjects.

Design Expertise

The *Edinburgh Urban Design Panel* gives design advice and has now marked its fifth anniversary. Members of the Panel took part in an assessment of the value added by design reviews in a workshop held by Architecture and Design Scotland. As well as new developments, the Panel also reviews Council policy and guidance that has an impact on urban design. Its aim is to raise the quality of new buildings, streets and spaces in Edinburgh. It does this by reviewing schemes and giving reports on them. These reports help designers, developers and planners improve their plans. The Panel meets monthly and reviews between one and three schemes per meeting. It is an important element in the pre-application advice available to developers in Edinburgh.



Case officers are able to use in-house design expertise for advice on the quality of new proposals. Currently we have architects and urban designers who can advise on design solutions. This is largely for major applications and more complex local developments. An in-house design meeting is held every 2 weeks and case officers can ask for their cases to be reviewed by the design team. This meeting has been refreshed with a change in leadership and focus on prompt and constructive feedback.

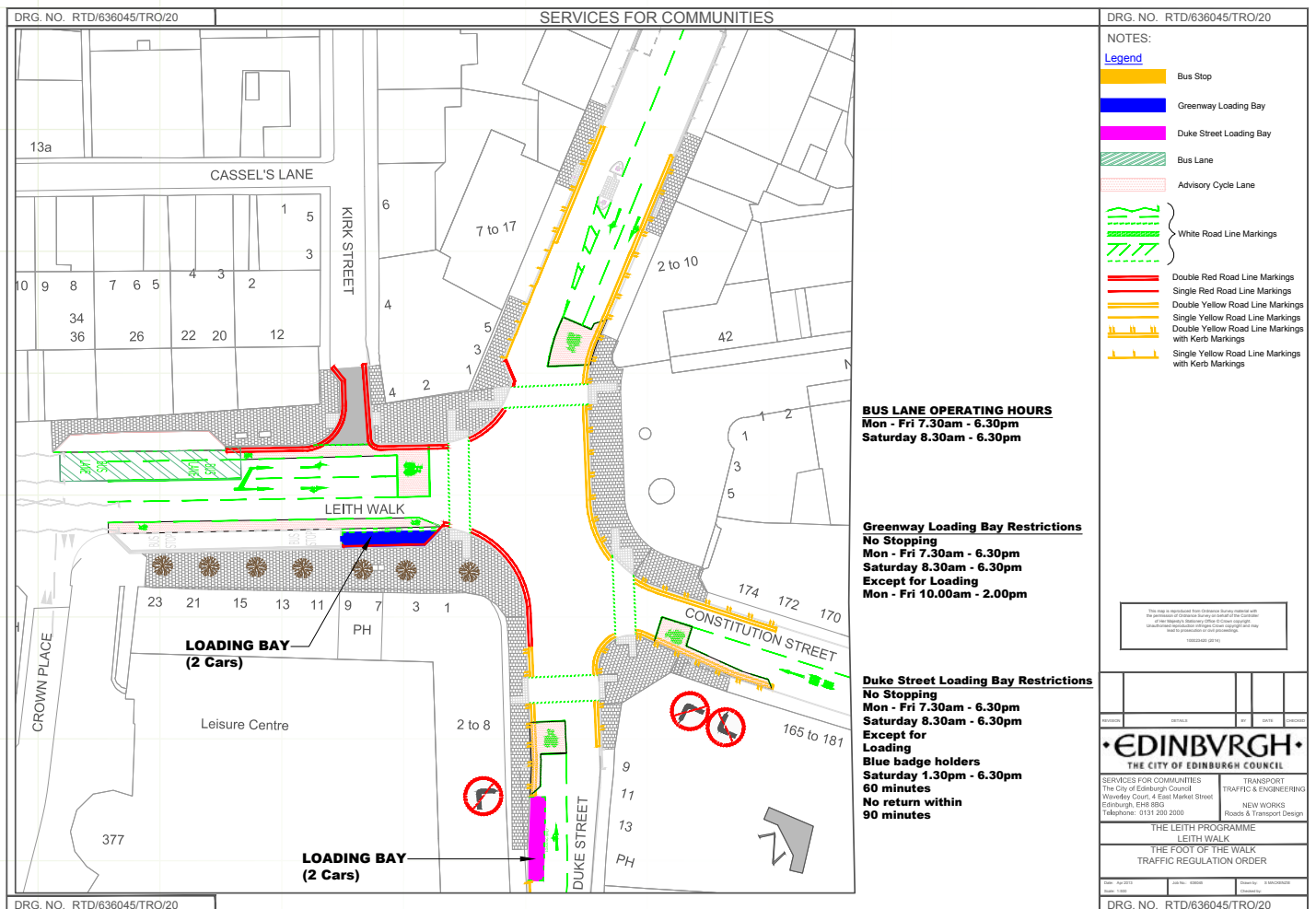
Throughout 2013-14, our design leader has been actively involved in many Council led projects to improve community involvement, not only the design but the user experience of the building.

Although the service does not run any design awards, we have been active in submitting applications for the Scottish Quality Awards. This year we have submitted a scheme in Charlotte Square which was completed in 2013-14 and illustrates the Council working with the applicant and architect to deliver an outstanding new office building in this historic area. It has been shortlisted for a 2014 award.

Looking After our Environment

In November 2013, the Council published a *Town Centre Strategy* to guide future town centre investment, linked to the Public Realm Strategy (approved by the Council's Planning Committee in December 2009). It will work in conjunction with other Council strategies and policies, thus promoting the 'One Council' approach for the benefit of the whole City. This work is complemented by the *Supplementary Guidance* prepared on town centres.

The *Leith Programme* covers work being carried out to Leith Walk and surrounding streets to make environmental improvements. A report on the Leith Programme setting out the overall approach and ambitions of the local community for the scheme went to Council's Transport and Environment Committee on 19 March 2013.

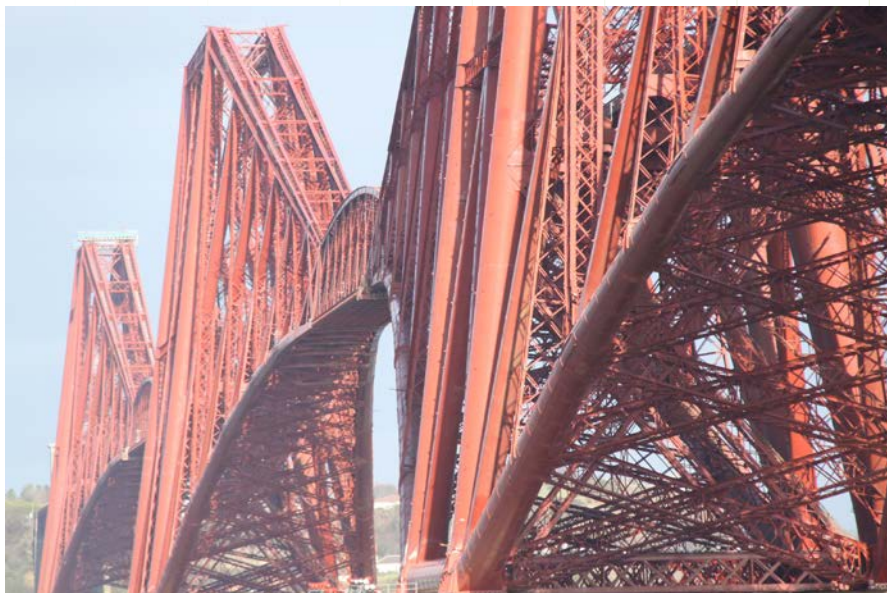


A public consultation was carried out in 2013 on a Vision for the City Centre. This was aimed at improving the pedestrian experience in the City Centre by improvements to streets and spaces. Improvements are being progressed.

The review of Edinburgh's 50 conservation area *character appraisals* commenced in 2013-14 and we are learning from the impact new development and change has had in these areas. The Grange and Queensferry character appraisals are currently being reviewed. The feedback from the consultation will be used to inform the guidance within the appraisals.

After extensive consultation with the local communities, we have designated eight of *Edinburgh's colony areas* as conservation areas and designated *Pilrig* as a new conservation area. In the case of the new and reviewed conservation areas, the environmental quality indicator process has informed the consultation exercises and we have been using methods such as online and paper surveys, drop in sessions and exhibitions in local libraries to inform people of the proposals and to get their view.

During 2013-14, we worked with Historic Scotland and other agencies on the nomination of the *Forth Bridge* as a potential World Heritage Site. This was reported to the Planning Committee in February 2014. The Council has a major role to play on the steering group for the nomination. In addition, a Partnership Management Agreement was approved to streamline development application processes for the bridge.



Finally, our Edinburgh World Heritage Co-ordinator continued with the monitoring of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site to assess any impacts on its Outstanding Universal Value.

Measuring Success and Delivery of High Quality Places

The Council used *Environmental Quality Indicators* in 2013-14 to assess a number of different new development types across the city and engage communities in this process. The outcomes from the surveys are used to review the decisions we have taken and the impact on place making in the City. The indicators were developed in association with Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland, the Cockburn Association, the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland, the Scottish Wildlife Trust and Edinburgh World Heritage. In August 2013, we reported to Planning Committee on the outcome of the second survey and the results showed a high level of satisfaction with new buildings in the City.

As part of the 2013-14 Service Plan, we undertook to provide a framework on Added Value in the planning process and the aim is to link the data from this exercise to outcomes from the Environmental Quality Indicators. This is still at an early stage as we collect the data on how we have added value by design and other improvements. Officers use codes to record what design or other improvements they have made at pre-application or application stage and this is then collated into a report. In the Service Plan, we had a target of 80% of major applications showing added value and this target was met. It has been increased to 90% for the forthcoming year.

Certainty -

Consistency of advice, process, engagement and decision-making:

A Robust Development Plan

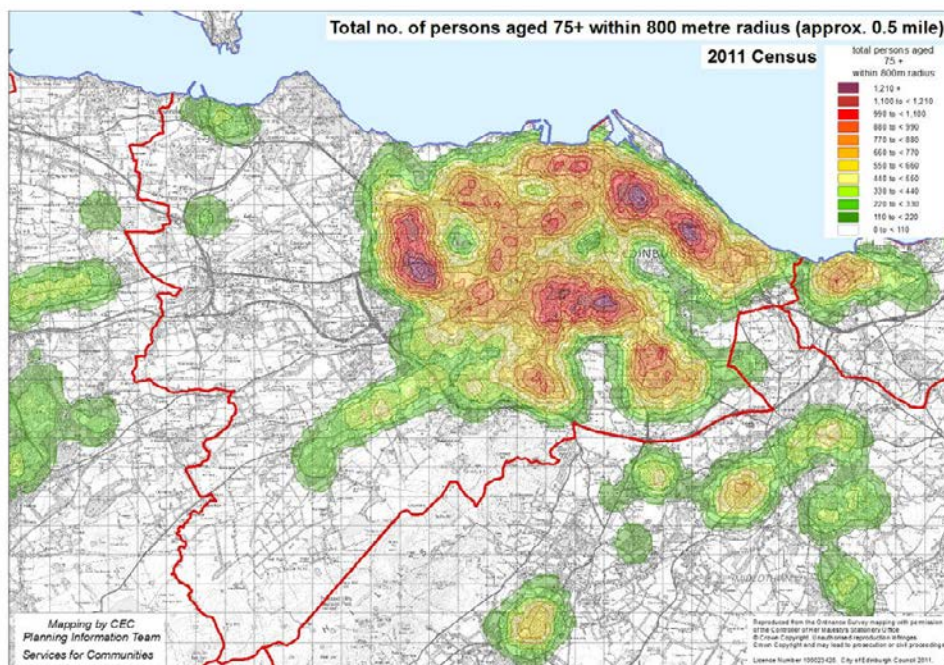
A plan-led system is dependent on a robust development plan. The current development plan remains robust with only nine applications granted contrary to the development plan. This is less than 1% of the 3326 decisions made in 2013-2014. Some of the departures were minor but others such as a multiplex in a commercial shopping centre have wider implications for the plan led planning system.

The *Proposed Local Development Plan* builds on this and puts forward policies to support the growth of the City economy; provide new homes; encourage sustainable transport systems to support access to jobs and services; protect and improve the environment; and help create strong, sustainable, healthier communities. The delay in approving the new Development Plan is a result of the requirement to find more housing land.

The Research and Information team in the Planning service helps provide the evidence base for the Development Plan. This year it has provided detailed analysis of forward looking demographic changes, such as the latest population projections. This is a critical aspect of a robust development plan which must be both visionary and practicable. These are particularly significant for assessing future housing needs. The *Census analysis* has been a significant piece of work over the last year, and has also attracted a substantial amount of recognition from services across the Council and from external bodies such as the National Records of Scotland (NRS) for our innovative techniques for analysing and presenting the data. They consider that Edinburgh is leading the field in Scotland in making best use of the Census outputs.

NRS are particularly interested in our 'heat mapping' techniques which communicate in a very visual way how different population groups are distributed and how population distribution has changed since the last census.

This analysis has demonstrated, for example, how effective planning and transport policies have been at reviving inner city populations, by recycling brownfield land and minimising urban sprawl. Our UK-wide analysis of population densities in different cities has shown how Edinburgh has more people living in and around its city centre than most other large



urban centres across the UK; it is a very compact city. We demonstrated that Leith, in particular, has some of the highest population densities in the UK outside London, and already this has been widely cited as a key factor influencing future options for extension of the new tram system. NRS have expressed an interest in adopting our mapping techniques and publishing the results on their own web site. This in-house expertise is fundamental to the robustness of the Development Plan which has to be founded on facts and trends.

Working Together to Deliver Development

The proposed *LDP Action Programme* provides a more focused approach to delivering infrastructure through estimating costs of essential infrastructure, identified funding sources, and specifying any funding gaps. Where a development's value is demonstrated to be insufficient to support the full cost of essential infrastructure, the resulting funding gap needs to be addressed. This could be achieved through other funding sources and through the use of the Action Programme to inform the Council's budget setting for capital investment. The Action Programme sets out those who are responsible for delivery (landowners, key agencies and organisations) and, working with these development partners, sets out a timescale for implementation. This is a holistic approach involving all stakeholders including a range of Council services. Work has been ongoing throughout 2013-14 to update the Action Programme and the second Action Programme was approved on 19 June 2014.

An internal working protocol with Economic Development, Planning and Estates was implemented in September 2013 and staff from the three service areas were involved in joint workshops to promote it. The protocol ensures that we work corporately to deliver development. This also ties in with the Edinburgh 12 (see Open for Business). In addition, the Major Development Co-ordination Group meets every 3 months to discuss a corporate understanding of major development proposals and the priorities needed to progress them. This group include Planning, Economic Development, Housing and Regeneration, Transport, Estates and Education.



Workshop with Planning, Economic Development and Estates colleagues

A revised Protocol for Edinburgh World Heritage involvement in the planning process was put in place to facilitate handling of specific applications and make sure all stakeholders understood their role in the process. In addition, the Council has a service level agreement with Historic Scotland for the role of co-ordinator and this promotes consistency and reliability of advice.

Certainty for our Customers

The One Door Approach Charter was launched in October 2013 and sets out the service we will give to our customers who want to develop in the City. In particular, it gives advice on all the consents they might need rather than simply planning advice. This links to the new Council webpage on *Permissions for Development* which assists applicants understanding the range of consents they might need. A network of One Door Approach lead officers has been established as part of the project.

The *Edinburgh Planning Concordat* sets out how major applications are processed in Edinburgh and this helps both the developer and the community to understand the planning process. This also ties in with our use of processing agreements (see below).

Customers want certainty and whilst this cannot be guaranteed at pre-application stage, discussions are welcomed and contact details can be found on the Council website on our *pre-application page* and the *major developments page*. We take pre-application advice seriously and complex cases are dealt with by principal planners in the Development Management teams to ensure consistency.

As part of the pre-application project, we measured the number of enquiries received every month and this amounted to around 400 largely via emails. Consistency is therefore challenging to achieve. Any advice given on the planning help desk is informal and as part of our customer contact project we are looking at how effective this service is. There are very few complaints about this service with only one recorded in 2013-14. Responses are monitored to ensure they are correct and consistent and any problem areas identified are dealt with by the Help Desk Coordinators who communicate with the help desk planners.

Detailed guidance is available on the Council website for most application types and our [Guidance for Householders](#) gives sufficient advice to create certainty for most straightforward householder applications. This is part of a suite of guidance helping potential applicants design an acceptable scheme. It is recognised that more complex cases require a meeting and principal planners in the Development Management teams arrange these meetings.

A Project Management Approach

The Council's emerging Local Development Plan has been produced within a professional project management framework managed by a corporate steering group, with cross-Council representation. An innovative Council-wide group has been set up to ensure a joined up, corporate approach to delivering the LDP's Action Programme. The Council publishes a statutory development plan scheme at least annually; it is recast following significant project programme changes and key plan stages.

The national headline indicators for 2013-14 clearly show that Edinburgh is committed to the use of processing agreements in major developments. 32 out of our 46 major applications had processing agreements providing certainty for developers. 87.5% had their planned timescales met. Every major application has a project plan with dates set out, the most crucial for the developer being the Committee date.

In some straightforward cases, there is no need for a processing agreement and, in others, the applicant has not signed one and does not wish to do so. However, the option is always offered for major developments.

Decisions can only be issued when the legal agreement is signed and our experience is that applicants do not wish to sign these until they are ready to build so we do not include a fixed date into the processing agreement. Our refreshed webpage on [submitting a major application](#) has full guidance notes available including one on [processing agreements](#).

Certainty in Application Processing

Every case must be dealt with on its own merits and positive decisions cannot always be guaranteed for the applicant. Development Management teams have regular review meetings to ensure that cases are on track. The aim is to ensure the applicant is aware of potential problems. Catching these cases early is key to certainty in the process.

12 applications with decisions issued in 2013-14 were the result of the Development Management Sub-Committee disagreeing with officer recommendation. Out of 3326 applications determined, this is only 0.3%. Out of these, 7 were granted, 4 were refused and 1 was a mixed decision. However, the figures also show that 37.3% of delegated refusals were overturned by the Edinburgh Local Review Body and 28.6% of appeals were allowed. Whilst this creates less certainty in the process, the outcome may be more favourable to the applicant.

In 2013-14 we undertook a major review of how we use conditions to make planning applications acceptable. There was a culture of adding too many conditions, some of which could not be enforced. Our in-house conditions guidance was updated to ensure compliance with Government circular 4/1998 and training sessions

were held with case officers and consultees to implement this. Information is now requested up-front so we can make better decisions without the need to add conditions.

Work has also started on recording all pre-application advice in the IDOX document management system. This means that enquiries and responses are easier to find and available to all members of staff. This will improve consistency.

Around 65% of all applications were made online through the E-Planning portal. This service uses wizards to guide applicants through the application process and ensures that all the necessary information is provided. However, the Council also publishes validation guidance to assist applicants when making an application.

Invalid applications account for around 15.5% of applications which is considered an acceptable figure. All applications are registered by our Intake and Registration team and initial checks are done to ensure addresses are on the Corporate Address Gazetteer. A team of technicians check applications for validity and this ensures consistency in the process. A target is set for validation within 4 working days of receipt of a valid application.

Proportionate Enforcement

The *Planning Enforcement Charter* was updated in August 2013 and sets out our service standards. Enforcement is dealt with in accordance with Government guidance and the aim is to resolve cases firstly by negotiation if possible. In a number of cases, we have formed cross service working groups to co-ordinate specific enforcement issues. For instance, in recognition of the social problems caused by short stay commercial leisure uses in residential areas, we convened an officer group to take action in a particular street in the City Centre. An enforcement notice was served in addition to an ASBO and this is being monitored for compliance.

Communications, engagement and customer service -

Communications strategy for engagement and positive customer experience:

Customer Service

The Planning and Building Standards Service achieved Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation in March 2012 and re-accreditation was given in November 2013. CSE has been adopted to provide the following:

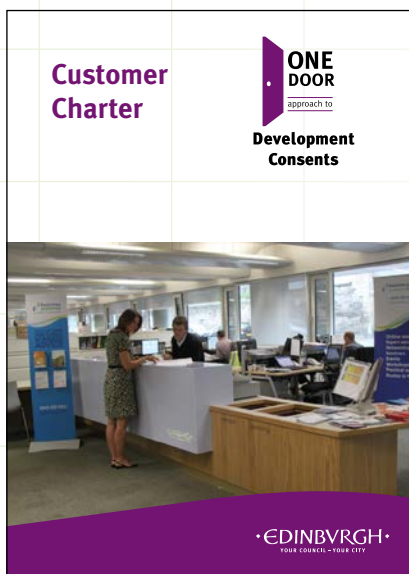
- a framework for delivering good customer experience;
- an assessment tool to motivate and drive improvements; and
- a benchmark against which to assess how your services are meeting customers' needs and expectations.

A key component of Customer Service Excellence accreditation was the requirement to ensure we targeted our customers with appropriate information in a way that it was easy for them to understand. We continue to strive to improve how we communicate with our customers, seek customer feedback and ensure these results inform our Service Plan.

Customer Service Charters and Standards are in place but will be updated in 2014-15 as we implement our new service structure. The Council has a culture of Customer 1st and our Planning Help Desk continues to provide a single contact point during office hours for general planning enquiries whether by phone,

e-mail or face to face and is answered by planning professionals. This service is open to applicants, agents and community groups. However, in recognition that customer contact channels are changing, we launched a project this year to investigate how we can meet customer expectations whilst making service efficiencies.





The One Door Approach Charter was launched in October 2013 and this represents another stage in our commitment to the One Door Approach to Development Consents. The Charter sets out the service we will give to our customers who want to develop in the City. In particular, it gives advice on all the consents they might need rather than simply planning advice. This links to the new Council webpage on *Permissions for Development* which assists applicants understanding the range of consents they might need.

Pre-application discussions are welcomed and contact details can be found on the Council website on our *pre-application page* and the *major developments page*.

Customers – Having A Say

Customer surveys were promoted during 2013-14 using email signature tags. The results were poor and could not be used constructively. We have therefore been more proactive in getting our customers' views and this has included the use of our communications toolkit and targeted consultations to customers who have expressed an interest.

All Development Plans, Supplementary Guidance, non-statutory guidance, action plans and masterplans are subject to public consultation prior to adoption and this helps us to make amendments to the draft documents. Significant engagement has taken place around the proposed Local Development Plan to ensure that communities are kept up-to-date with progress.

In August 2013, a mystery shopper exercise was carried out as part of the One Door Approach project to development consents. A range of Council services were targeted including Planning, Buildings Standards, Licensing and Transport. The overall scores for Planning ranged from 40 out of 100 to 76 out of 100. Customer service scored well but the quality of information pulled down the final results. There was a concern that the shoppers were being directed to the Council website rather than given the information direct but overall the results were positive.

As part of the Pre-application Advice project, applicants and agents were invited to workshops to discuss the service. An initial workshop with agents and developers took place in September 2013. This was mainly to gather views on the current pre-application service and explored issues of resources including the option of charging for advice. The main points that came out of that workshop were as follows:-

- Participants were generally happy with the current service;
- Online guidance is good but clients still want an authoritative view from the Planning Service even when they have their own planning consultants;
- Access to experienced senior officers is important to ensure credibility of the advice;
- Current pre-application advice is too 'ad hoc' and clients are seeking a simple yes or no answer;

- There are grey areas in policy and guidelines which officers are reticent to make a judgement on at pre-application stage;
- Opposing views from consultees can be a problem. There needs to be a more joined up approach; and
- If charges are brought in there is an expectation that the quality of the advice is high and that developers know what they will get for their money.

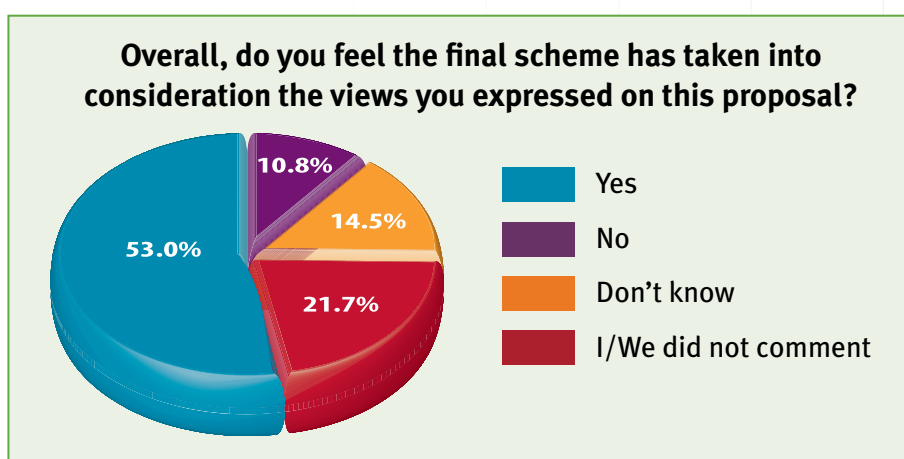
Proposals for a new pre-application service were subject to a formal consultation exercise which was launched at the Edinburgh Development Forum on 19 November 2013. The proposals were posted on the Council website and around 70 agents and associations were contacted directly regarding them using our consultation database. A further external workshop to debate the proposals was held on 26 November 2013. 36 comments (29 from the survey monkey and 7 by email) were received. The results of this have allowed us to raise the possibility of enacting pre-application charges and will inform the new pre-application service to be delivered as part of the new organisational structure in Planning and Building Standards.

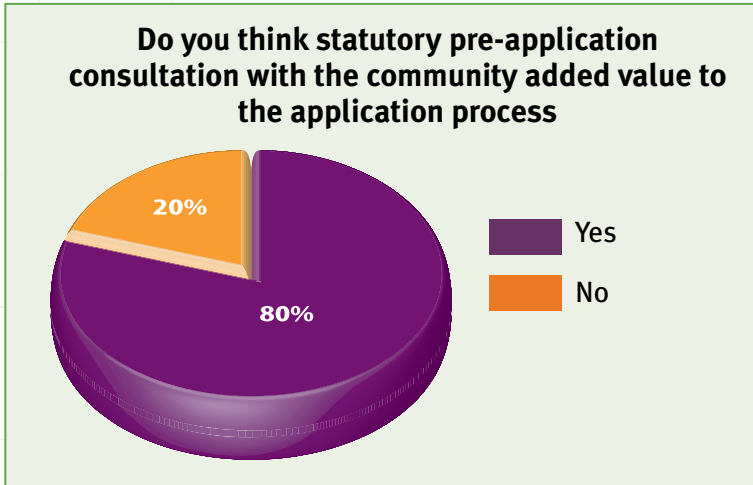
At the conclusion of the major application process, both applicants and community councils are asked for feedback on the process through a survey monkey. In October 2013, we published a Planning Information Bulletin on the results. An extract from this is set out below.

Main community concerns

The survey results showed that for many applications the community was satisfied with how the pre-application consultation was carried out and with some of the changes made to the proposals. However, the results also showed they felt information provided by the applicant on the proposals and the application process was unclear and this should be made easier to understand. Many felt that the applicant should feedback to the community any changes made following initial consultation. Some felt that they have no real influence over the proposals and the pre-application consultation report should better explain how community comments were addressed.

The results also showed many of the community felt their comments to CEC once an application was submitted were being dismissed. They felt proposals were often changed, with new drawings being put on the planning website after the time period for comments. It was felt that more face-to-face contact from planners would be helpful as well as clearer advice on how to make material objections.



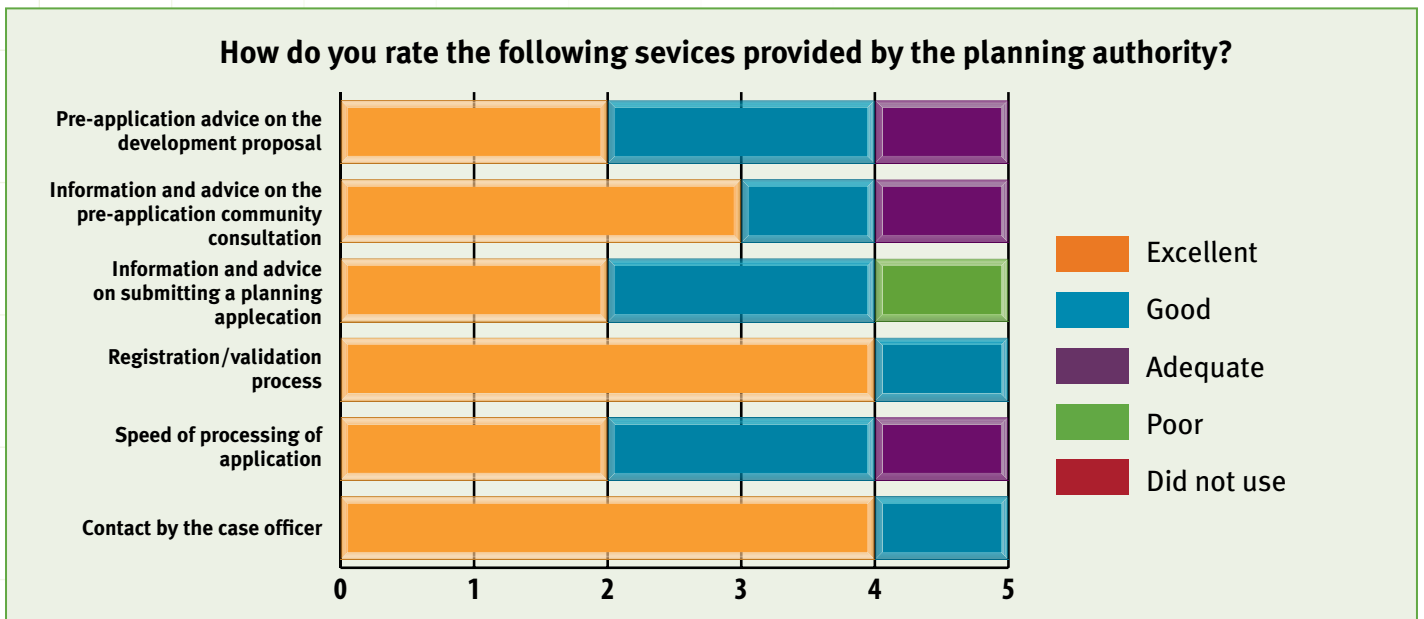


Applicant Survey

The applicants' survey is issued to the applicant or their agent once a legal agreement has been concluded (if applicable). It concentrates on services provided by CEC and whether PAC added value to the process. To date 16 applicants have been invited to take part in the new applicant survey and 5 responses have been received.

Main applicant concerns

In one case the applicant felt CEC was unprepared in relation to pre-application advice and there was disconnection between internal services. In one case it was felt the Committee report did not argue the applicant's case sufficiently.



Getting Communities Involved

The planning system has a whole range of customers and, as part of the formulation of the revised Edinburgh Planning Concordat, a constructive dialogue was held with community councils as we worked to reach agreement. The comments on the draft Concordat gave us detailed insight into how some community councils perceive the planning system. In particular, a continuing theme is that the Planning service is too helpful to developers and not helpful enough to communities. The Concordat seeks to re-balance this by encouraging all parties to work constructively together. In addition, in 2013, we launched the *Edinburgh Planning Concordat Engagement Fund* which gives grants of up to £300 to community councils to engage more widely with their local communities on major development proposals. This fund is unique in Scotland.

Planning's involvement in the induction training for the new community councils was a recognition of the importance of getting the community view on development proposals and much of the training centred on how they can get involved. Briefing sessions were also held with community councils on the Proposed Local Development Plan so they could understand the process.

The Royal Mile Action Plan was approved by Planning Committee in August 2013. The Plan was developed and finalised in widespread consultation with the broad range of stakeholders who make up the Royal Mile community. The first year of the delivery stage has focussed on continued building of community networks and relationships; development of low cost high profile projects such as the trade waste pilot, proposed Lawnmarket 'parklets' and opportunities to improve the retail offer; and ground work for the larger public realm projects to come. The project was submitted to the *Scottish Quality in Planning Awards* on the basis of its community involvement in all stages of the project although it was not shortlisted.



The World Heritage Site Management Plan actions are monitored by the co-ordinator with the WHS Steering Group. In addition, World Heritage Day was held on 18 April 2013 and this took international co-operation as a theme. An event was held at the Royal College of Surgeons and this was open to all. Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs was one of the speakers and the event highlighted the importance of the World Heritage to the City.

The Environmental Quality Indicators survey allows us to get feedback on the quality of new buildings in the City in a proactive way.

PPF2 was sent to all community councils and the feedback from this was interesting. Community Councils felt there was too much focus on timing rather than quality; local residents are not seen to be customers; strong concerns over the close relationship between planners and developers; local people are not given enough time to submit objections; and the PPF was focused too much on developers rather than communities.

We Learn from Complaints

The Council implemented a *new complaints policy* in March 2013 to make it compliant with the Ombudsman code of practice. This is a two stage process – frontline resolution and then internal investigation. Since the start of the new complaints system on 25 March 2013, Planning and Building Standards has dealt with 204 complaints. 148 were at frontline resolution, 49 were internal investigations and 7 went to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. 30 complaints were upheld, 76 were partially upheld and 77 were not upheld. The main issues raised are as follows:

- Neighbour notification
- Adequacy of report of handling
- Conservation area character assessment
- Setting of listed buildings
- Fairness and impartiality of D M Sub-Committee presentation
- Failure/decision to take enforcement action

We aim to resolve complaints at frontline resolution stage. However, the nature of planning means this is not always possible. Many of our customers try to use the complaints process to overturn planning decisions as there is no 3rd party right of appeal. We do however aim to learn from complaints and any actions coming from complaints are dealt with quickly. The following examples from 2013 - 14 show how we have changed working practices as a result of issues raised by our customers:

- Conservation area character and appearance – guidance given to ensure issue fully explained and addressed
- Setting of listed buildings – guidance issued
- An ERIA now carried out in respect of all enforcement reports, whether recommending action or not
- Addenda now used in enforcement reports where follow up issues are dealt with and the situation has changed

The case study below shows how we have proactively implemented the new complaints system.

CASE STUDY 4 – INTERNAL INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINT

Mr A complained that the Council in making a decision on a new dormer in a conservation area had not taken the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area sufficiently into account when approving the application. The response sent to him by the case officer as a frontline resolution had not resolved his concerns.

He submitted a second stage complaint and a principal planner was allocated to the case to carry out an internal investigation. This officer had no previous involvement in the case and as part of the investigation she met the complainant and walked round the conservation area with him to understand more clearly his concerns. She also interviewed the case officer, her line manager and the manager editing committee reports.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigating officer concluded that the assessment of the case had been correct but the setting out of this in the report could have been more rigorous to provide clarity as to why the decision had been taken. This learning point has led to the report writing guidance being updated to ensure this happens with all cases.

Connecting to our Customers

The *Edinburgh Planning Twitter* account now has over 1,450 followers and is the most followed planning authority Twitter account in Scotland. This channel is used to share up-to-the-minute information with a wide range of customer groups on topic such as consultation events, committee items or any issues with our online services. Our use of Twitter has now developed in to a two-way channel with customers able to ask questions and get responses to general planning queries. Our Twitter feed is followed by a growing number of Community Councils (nearly 45% at present), professionals, key agencies and individuals. We in turn, follow these groups to identify issues that matter to them and try to address these before they are raised through other formal channels such as email. We have shared good practice with SESplan in our use of social media to help them engage a wider audience on issues around the Strategic Development Plan.





In September 2013, we launched the *Planning Edinburgh blog*, which provides up to date information on the work of the service. The blog allows people to register to get alerts on updates and they can comment on blog posts. It is written in a style that is easy to understand which engages a wide readership. To date the blog has had over 3,200 views with a variety of planning related articles.

We have now re-launched the Council's website as a 'responsive design' site which allows easier access to our content on mobile and tablet devices. There is a significant increase in customers accessing Council information on these devices (2011-12 12% of all

contact with CEC was by smartphone, 2012-13 23% was by smartphone). To support this, the council gives free social media training to users.

Online applications and consultations are now fully embedded into work practices. During 2013-14, 65.4% of applications were submitted online. This compares to 54.7% in 2012-13. In addition, consultation on the LDP and other guidance is done electronically for some work streams and online feedback is encouraged.

This year we have been working with young people through sessions with school children of both primary and secondary school age to raise awareness of planning and to involve them in how we prepare planning policies. This has included workshops with children from Dalry and Corstorphine primary schools who undertook drawing sessions with planning staff to set out their aspirations for their town centres.

A writing competition was used to involve young people in the designation process for the World Heritage status for the Forth Bridge. This involved over 500 pupils from both Inverkeithing High School and South Queensferry High School. The winners will have their work presented at the Children's Book Festival and have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in collaboration with Napier University's Creative Writing School.

Efficient and effective decision-making -

Ensuring structures and processes are proportionate:

Managing an Effective Service

Active management and monitoring of the performance of the service is embedded into our ethos. Service managers report to the Planning and Building Standards Leadership Team (PBSLT) every month and full scrutiny is given to performance and working practices. Project Initiation Documents to improve the service are agreed by the PBSLT and regular updates are given.

Performance on planning applications has been good in 2013-14 due to the active monitoring that team principals undertake to keep the work on track. Principal planners print out application lists every week which identify cases due for determination and discuss any potential delays with the case officer. Weekly review meetings and case conferences are standard practice. Many teams have weekly meetings to discuss operational practices and benchmark on difficult cases.

Principals are responsible for the Development Management Sub-Committee agenda and make sure reports are edited to the highest standards. They are also responsible for ensuring delegated reports are signed off quickly although this year we changed the proper officer scheme to give more delegated powers to senior planning officers which are the level below principal planners. This change has given more responsibility to other officers and allows principal planners to concentrate on the main priorities.

Work programmes are set out in the Development Planning section and these are monitored to ensure projects are on track. Principal planners and Group Leaders are responsible for monitoring the delivery of these programmes.

A number of measures were taken in this year to make the decision-making process on planning applications simpler and more effective. These were:

- New short report format for cases that are PD, withdrawn or otherwise do not require consent. The back office computer system for planning applications has been pre-loaded with PD codes and officers can choose the codes to generate a Report of Handling which comes out with the full text. This has improved consistency and efficiency.
- Online representation letters no longer get a separate acknowledgement letter (they do get an auto response). We benchmarked with other councils and found that this was not necessary. Paper representations are still acknowledged by letter. In addition, an access report has been created which pulls all online comments into a single document. This avoids the need to print them out one by one.
- The way we use conditions was completely reviewed. We removed many old standard conditions from the back office system and revamped it to only include conditions compliant with the government circular. This means we no longer apply conditions which are either not really required or cannot be enforced.
- We have set up systems for recording all pre-application enquiries in our document management systems. This means all officers have access to the information and this will improve consistency.

Decision Making Systems

There are *two schemes of delegation* – the statutory scheme for local developments and the scheme under the 1973 Local Government Act for other application types. The statutory scheme was amended in 2013 following changes to legislation to allow council developments to be dealt with under delegated powers. The 1973 scheme was also amended to allow for delegation under the new High Hedges legislation. The scheme for Proper Officers was also updated in this year to give more responsibility at lower levels and allow principal planners to manage more effectively.

In 2013-14, 93% of applications were processed by officers under delegated powers. The scheme is well balanced and allows discretion for complex or contentious cases to be decided by Committee whilst even cases with objections can be decided by officers.

The Committee structure is tried and tested and works well. The Planning Committee sets high level policy and strategy, the Development Management Sub-Committee takes decisions on planning applications and there are three Local Review Body panels. The Development Management Sub-Committee and LRBs meet every 2 weeks to ensure the business is dealt with promptly.

Dealing with delays

The LDP programme has been delayed by the requirement for SESplan to prepare *Supplementary Guidance (SG) on Housing Land*. The SG requires the proposed LDP to be revised to identify additional housing sites. This has delayed LDP adoption by approximately one year. However, the Council has set a demanding programme to ensure that the LDP is adopted to replace the existing local plans as soon as possible (see commentary under Headline Indicators).

Old applications can stall progress and in 2013-14, we removed 63% of old legacy cases from the system. Each case was assessed and either withdrawn or a letter was sent to the applicant requesting withdrawal. Cases awaiting legal agreements were assessed as part of this project.

All cases officers have access to time management training. The Council has a full Learning and Development programme available largely through E-Learning but also in-house courses. Processing agreements and project plans mean that major applications are kept on track and case officers ensure they are kept up-to-date. Each case officer is responsible for the management of their cases and has systems in place to ensure they are on track.

On a corporate level, *Edinburgh 12* is the name given to an initiative to progress the development of strategically important city centre sites that for one reason or another have stalled. The selection of the sites is based on a study commissioned by the Council in early 2013 to establish an understanding of what role the public sector could/has to play in progressing development. The study identified 12 major sites with the potential to be developed within five years and promoted a number of recommendations for the Council to consider in order to drive development forward.

Working Together

The service has a number of working protocols with other services including:

- An internal working protocol with Economic Development, Planning and Estates was implemented in September 2013 and staff from the three service areas were involved in joint workshops to promote it. The protocol ensures that we work corporately to deliver development.

- A protocol with the Transport service remains in force.
- Work has continued in 2013-14 on a protocol between Planning and Culture and Sport and a joint working protocol between Planning and Building Standards. These will be completed in 2014-15.
- A revised Protocol for Edinburgh World Heritage involvement in the planning process was put in place this year to facilitate handling of specific applications and make sure all stakeholders understood their role in the process. In addition, the Council has a service level agreement with Historic Scotland for the role of co-ordinator and this promotes consistency and reliability of advice.



EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE

Effective management structures -

Ensuring management structures are effective and fit for purpose:

Managing the Service

Planning and Building Standards (PBS) is part of Services for Communities. This department is led by a Director and a senior management team leads on key strategic decisions. The PBS Leadership team is made up of the Head of Service and service managers and meets every week to take decisions affecting the service. The Head of Service has a business manager to assist in making sure priorities are dealt with.

Weekly meetings with the convener and vice-convener of the Planning Committee ensure priorities are discussed and acted upon.

In May 2013, we initiated a *management review* in the Planning and Building Standards service. The aims of the review are to create an operational structure which improves processes and procedures, particularly in the interfaces with other Council services, to ensure they are lean and fit for purpose; provide an improved customer journey; redesign management responsibilities to improve efficiency, performance and productivity; develop a strategic neighbourhood management approach to deliver better places; and maintain staff morale and get staff support for the new organisational structure.

The bulk of 2013-14 was spent preparing and consulting on the new structure and responsibilities and the proposed changes were approved by the Planning Committee on 12 June 2014. Implementation is due by the end of September 2014.

The current structure is top heavy and the aim is to divert resources to frontline delivery. As part of the move to the new structure, a different ethos is being evolved to ensure planners and officers at all levels take full ownership and responsibility for their work and fully embed the principles of Customer Service Excellence. A new service delivery team will ensure projects and practices are on track and fit for purpose. The new management structure will ensure that the service is fit for purpose in future years.

Communicating with Staff

A core brief is delivered every month to Planning and Building Standards managers and this is then delivered by managers to their teams. The core brief contains the monthly news and main points of actions.

Most teams have regular team meetings and one to ones with staff to make sure work is kept on track and to discuss issues arising.

The Council has been in the process of updating a number of policies and procedures in 2013-14 and these are communicated to all staff by a series of emails. Sue Bruce, our Chief Executive, also issues a Managers' newsletter every month with up-to-date details of new policies and ways of working to be embedded.

CASE STUDY 5 – THE PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS CORE BRIEF

The Core Brief has been in place for many years and it sets out the current news in the service that everyone needs to be aware of. The brief is agreed by the Leadership Team and delivered by the Head of Planning and Building Standards to his managers. These managers then deliver the brief to their teams. This is a two way process and managers delivering the brief encourage team discussion and seek feedback and views from staff on the issues concerning them. In turn, any escalated concerns are addressed by the Leadership Team and a response is given in the next month's core brief.

The core brief of September 2013 covered the following subjects:

- Overtime and Toil in the Planning and Building Standards Service
- Corporate office accommodation Project
- Staff Development Group Update
- Staff Survey Feedback
- Edinburgh Planning Concordat
- Pre-application Project update
- Management Review
- Ombudsman's cases
- Staffing News

The Staff Engagement Group was set up in 2013-14 after feedback from the staff survey indicated that managers needed to engage more with staff. This has led to an action plan which is still being delivered. Changes have included a more interactive format for the annual staff briefings, a new office etiquette and getting to know each other sessions.



MANAGEMENT CORE BRIEF

Date brief prepared		Originator	
3 September 2013		Planning and Building Standards Leadership Team	
<i>Note to all team briefers</i>			
1	This brief provides the core message – add this information to your own briefing material.	4	Encourage questions. If you do not know the answer say so, make a note, get the answer and give it to the questioner at the earliest possible opportunity and within 5 working days.
2	Convey the message in your own words, which you know will be understood, and where possible illustrate with a practical example that is relevant to your team.	3	Ensure that you have prepared your own local brief and have it checked by your manager before they brief you.
3	Words or phrases which need to convey a precise meaning will be underlined. These should not be changed in briefing.	6	Use the feedback form to deal with questions and/or suggestions.
Briefing team: Management Team		Absentees	
Briefing date: 3 September 2013		Date briefed	
Time: 10.30 am			
Team briefer: David Leslie			
Subjects and key points			
<u>Core Brief Feedback</u>			
Thank you to all the teams that provided feedback from the Core Brief in August. We encourage all team briefers to send feedback to Isla Paterson so that most issues can be solved. The response to last month's feedback is in the appendix to the Core Brief.			

Resourcing the Service

The PBS Leadership team holds staffing meetings every month to discuss staff resources. The business manager provides a workforce planning spreadsheet with details of the budget pressures on staff resources. The opportunity will be taken in the management review to ensure the new teams have the correct balance and numbers of staff.

Due to the increase in planning fees in April 2013, we were able to recruit 2 graduate planners for a fixed 2 year period and increase support staff to deliver greater efficiency. We have also been able to recruit graduates for 8 weeks in the summer to help out with survey and other work. In addition, we recruited a project support officer for the Local Development Plan.

The Service has three service areas currently –Development Planning (DP), Development Management (DM) and Building Standards. Traditionally there has been little movement between DP and DM but in 2013-14 we were able to open up some opportunities for staff movement and a principal practitioner moved to DM to deal with major applications on a part-time basis. We also moved staff from a local development team to a major team due to workload pressures. Staff have been working flexibly in DM with enforcement staff assisting with local developments and vice versa. This broadens the range of experience.

Support staff deal with the administrative and technical requirements of the process. This year we recruited additional customer support assistants for the 2 local developments and the listed buildings team to assist with the back office work and free up officer time as much as possible to concentrate on assessing applications. The Data Management team ensures that our IT systems run smoothly and the Research and Information team play an important role in providing information and analysis on land use, environmental and economic topics as well as demographics. For example:

- It continuously monitors development trends and pressures and assesses the balance between future supply and demand for offices, retail, hotels, housing etc;
- It monitors employment land, and vacant & derelict land;
- It surveys our shopping centres on a regular basis to assess any changes in their role and vitality / viability;
- It produced a comprehensive ‘State of the Environment’ report for Edinburgh in 2008 and has updated chapters on a rolling basis since then.
- It has played a central role in developing Council-wide sustainability indicators;
- In conjunction with Transport it analyses relative accessibility of different areas of the city by public transport, which helps to guide development. In conjunction with the Parks service it monitors trends in the amount of green space, and accessibility to open space; and
- As stated above, its work on the Census results and mapping techniques has received high praise.

Working with others

The Council continues to work closely with its five partner councils through *SESplan*, the strategic development planning authority for the Edinburgh city region. The region’s first *Strategic Development Plan* was approved last year and presents a vision for a connected, sustainable capital city region in the period to 2032. The SESplan councils are currently working together on SDP2 with the aim of publishing and consulting on a Main Issues Report early in 2015. The Chair of the SESplan board has now been assumed by the Convenor of the Edinburgh

Planning Committee. The board has representation from all the administrative boundaries with the City of Edinburgh including East Lothian, Midlothian, Scottish Borders, West Lothian and Fife Council.

The Edinburgh World Heritage Co-ordinator post is delivered through a service level agreement with Historic Scotland and the WHS Steering group ensures collaboration and strong relationships to deliver joint objectives. We also work with Historic Scotland, English Heritage, Department of Culture, Media and Sport and UNESCO to deliver the 6-yearly Periodic Report to monitor the State of Conservation of the WHS (submitted in July 2013)

The service works with many agencies, public bodies, organisations and community groups to deliver plans and improve the service. This includes Scottish Enterprise at the Bio-Quarter; The Cockburn Association on the Civic Forum; and the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce on the Edinburgh Development Forum and the Edinburgh Planning Concordat.

As stated above, we work closely with major landowners to deliver masterplans and frameworks which guide the future development of the City and region. One such long standing arrangement is with the University of Edinburgh, with whom quarterly meetings are held to discuss the development of their extensive estate.

Financial management and local governance -

Demonstrating effective governance and financial management:

Managing our resources

We recognise that resources have to be managed carefully to be able to deliver the vision we have for the City. The Council has to make savings of £327m over the next four years and Planning and Building Standards has to make a contribution to these savings. As a small service with limited income generation this is challenging and means careful decisions have to be taken on the level of service we can provide.

There is ongoing budget monitoring to ensure that we are efficient and effective in procuring services and spend. Monthly reports on costs and income are discussed at Leadership Team Meetings and the service has a business manager to oversee the budget. Monthly meetings to discuss staffing includes workforce planning updates and authorisation of vacancy filling is carefully managed. The business manager works with the Finance manager and the Head of Service to ensure the budget is on target. Procurement is done through a centralised system with procedures in place for authorisation

Priority is given to major applications as these are the most important for the economic health of the City. Staff resources have been re-aligned to cope with an increase in workload in this area. Resources have also been re-aligned to prioritise the Proposed Local Development Plan to ensure that we deliver a plan-led approach to the City's growth.

The Council took part in the Heads of Planning Scotland costing exercise in 2013 to establish the cost of the planning service. The results of the exercise shows that costs per productive hour are around the average for planning applications but below the national average in terms for policy and compliance showing efficient and productive use of staff resources. Administrative tasks were very efficient, also being below the national average and we believe that our long standing investment in e-planning is a key factor in this. However, our costs for major applications are well above the average because of the resources we put in at pre-application and application stages and also the sheer number of major applications.

Culture of continuous improvement -

Demonstrating a culture of learning and improving:

Edinburgh Leads the Way

The City of Edinburgh Council is committed to our vision that Edinburgh is a thriving, successful and sustainable capital city. The Planning and Building Standards Service is at the centre of this in many different ways and we are constantly seeking to make improvements to deliver the best service we can. Many of the initiatives we have started and delivered in 2013-14 are unique and ground breaking and represent a service with a culture of continuous improvement. For instance:

- The revised Edinburgh Planning Concordat shows how the Council, the development industry and communities can work together to deliver high quality development on the ground;
- Our work on the Added Value Framework in the development process and the connections with the Environmental Quality Indicators will allow us to show the value planners add to development on the ground and what we can do better;
- Edinburgh Twitter has established Edinburgh at the forefront of the social media transformation to make planning accessible to the public; and
- Our ground breaking work on the Census results is without comparison in any other Scottish planning authority.

Staff Training

We have Gold Award Investors in People accreditation and the Staff Development Group has been busy in 2013-14. A programme of training for all staff has been in place throughout the year and 62% of staff met their target of 5 days training. Monthly staff workshops have included sessions on density planning, the Local Development Plan, the protocol with Estates and Economic Development, street design guidance and use of conditions. Lunchtime seminars are held in the Urban Room and this year we covered a range of topics such as Cycle Provision in the City, Planning for Protected Species and World Heritage events.

We invite external speakers to assist our understanding of planning issues. For example:

- Brodies delivered training on planning obligations in February 2014;
- Scottish Slate provided a talk on types of slate in February 2014;
- One of our planners on a career break provided a comparative planning perspective with a talk on Swedish planning in March 2014.

Between September to December 2013, we made a major investment to provide training for all staff on Dealing with Aggressive Customers. This was significant in helping us to deal with customer relationships.

All staff have access to E-learning and there are packages of training on a range of topics such as council policies, customer care, risk management, IT systems and management skills. All managers and senior planners are encouraged to attend leadership courses.

During the year, we delivered 5 lunchtime sessions on IT systems including Microsoft office, E-Planning, Uniform and IDOX and GIS.

Team Development days are organised by team principals. For instance, the team dealing with major applications in the City Centre and West spent the day on site looking at the design aspects of recently completed housing developments to assess what lessons learned, in design terms, they could use. Less experienced planners from the local development teams joined them to learn more about the major development process. In addition, both major applications teams visited the Clyde Gateway in Glasgow to learn how they are promoting major developments in the City.



We support the career development of our young planners and six of them attended the Young Planners Conference in March 2014.

Managers also attended a range of training events such as risk management and Pride in Our People.

The above examples shows the wide range of learning events available to ensure our workforce is able to show continuing professional development.

Elected member training

Members of the Planning Committee are given detailed training throughout the year. Topics covered in 2013-14 included:

- The University of Edinburgh Estate;
- Use of conditions;
- Windows;
- The Development plan and housing land supply.

The Planning Committee tour in June 2013 visited approved housing sites to learn from development on the ground.

Performance Review and Development

All members of staff have an annual Performance Review and Development appraisal. This is a corporate exercise based on council value and competencies. The PRD form sets out how they have met objectives set for the year and how they have met the competencies of the post. The document sets out the training completed and the training proposed for the year ahead. The review is done by the line manager and scores determine whether pay steps are awarded for certain staff. Reviews are done at 6 months to ensure objectives are on track.

The objectives that are set for each member of staff relate not only to their individual work area e.g. performance but wider service and council priorities. For instance, they might be expected to take part in a working group or make an input to a particular project.

The Service Plan for 2013-4 is set out in part 4 and details what has been delivered.

PART 3 - Supporting Evidence

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

Business Gateway

Census results

Council Complaints Policy

Council Scheme of Delegation

Craigmillar Urban Design Framework August 2013

Customer Service Excellence Accreditation

Developer Contributions February 2014

Edinburgh Bio-Quarter and SEW Parkland December 2013

Edinburgh Business Forum

Edinburgh's Colonies – Conservation Areas February 2013

Edinburgh Design Guidance May 2013

Edinburgh Planning Blog

Edinburgh Planning Concordat August 2013

Edinburgh Planning Concordat Engagement Fund

Edinburgh Planning Twitter

Edinburgh Street Design Guidance – consultation

Edinburgh Street Design Guidance – Committee Report February 2014

Edinburgh Urban Design Panel

Edinburgh 12 – report to the Economy Committee on City Centre Development Opportunities, 17 September 2013

Environmental Quality Indicators Committee Report August 2013

Forth Bridge World Heritage nomination February 2014

Leith Programme

Local Plans and Guidelines

Major Developments webpage

Management Review Committee papers

The One Door Approach Charter

Permissions for Development webpage

Pilrig Conservation Area August 2013

Planning Enforcement Charter August 2013

Planning Charters

Planning Guidance

Pre-application advice webpage

Processing Agreements

Proposed Action Programme March 2013

Proposed Local Development Plan webpage

Review of Edinburgh Conservation Area Character Appraisals October 2013

Scottish Government Aligning Consents

Scottish Quality Awards 2013

Second Action Programme June 2014

Second Proposed Local Development Plan June 2014

SESplan

Strategic Development Plan

Supplementary Guidance on Housing Land

Supplementary Guidance on town centres February 2014

Town Centre Strategy November 2013

Validation Guidance for Planning Applications

PART 4 - Service Improvements 2014-15

1 KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	INDICATOR	Target 2014/15	
High Quality Development on the Ground	% of approved major developments within the year to show added value quality improvements	90%	Percentage increased from 80% to 90%
Efficient and Effective Decision making	% of Listed Building Consent applications determined within 2 months	75%	Increased from 70% to 75%
PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	Target 2014/15	Changes from previous Year
National Headline Indicators: Local Development Plan	Report 2nd Proposed LDP to 12 June 2014 Planning Committee, for approval; if approved, publish for representations during August and September and report to Committee by end of March 2015.	31 Mar 2015	Milestones related to the next stages in this process.

2 CUSTOMER RESULTS

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Due Date	Changes from previous Year
Improve the Customer experience	Develop an improvement plan in relation to customer experience, identify and implement improvements, monitor progress and report, following the publication of the results of the Building Standards Department led national customer survey	Prepare plan within 3 months of publication. Review and monitor actions quarterly thereafter	31 March 2015	New Action
Improve the Customer experience	Produce an action plan and implementation programme for all customer contact channels	Action plan and implementation plan prepared	31 Dec 2014	New Action
Communication and Engagement	Review and implement joint working protocols with other service areas to improve communications and efficiency including Estates, Economic Development, Culture and Sport, Flooding and Planning, Transport and Edinburgh World Heritage.	Implement joint working agreements by October 2014	31 Oct 2014	New Action

3 COMMUNITY RESULTS




PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Due Date	Changes from previous Year
Communication and Engagement	Complete a review of the main digital communications including Planning News, the Planning Blog, and Twitter with a view to widening access	Review completed and action programme agreed	30 Sept 2014	New Action
More attractive public places	Create more attractive places by finalising the Street Design Guidance, reviewing the Public Realm Strategy and the Area Development Frameworks and launching the Royal Mile Retail Strategy	Engagement as part of projects to be completed	31 March 2015	New Action
Communication and Engagement	Engage with young people in a range of projects including: 100 years of Planning in Edinburgh, the town centre supplementary guidance and the reviews of the Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Area Development Frameworks	Engagement as part of projects to be completed	31 March 2015	New Action
High Quality Development on the Ground	Review 'design' in the planning process integrating the added value framework and the Environmental quality Indicators	Review and Implementation completed	31 March 2015	New Action
Communication and Engagement	Pursue the integration of spatial planning and community planning at city-wide and neighbourhood levels	(1) contribute to the preparation of Neighbourhood Local Community Plans for 2014-17 by end June 2014; and (2) presenting the revised LDP to the Edinburgh Partnership Board by end September 2014.	30 June 2014 and 30Sept 2014	New Action



4 PEOPLE RESULTS

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Due Date	Changes from previous Year
Effective Management Structures	Implement a programme of management development skills to allow managers to lead the service and champion corporate value	Programme complete	31 March 2015	New Indicator
Continuous Improvement	Improved staff training	36 hours	31 March 2015	Amalgamated IT training target within general target
Continuous Improvement	To implement the culture of continuous improvement by delivering a programme of training and workshops.	Delivery complete	31 March 2015	New Indicator








Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2013-14:

1 KEY PERFORMANCE RESULTS





PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	INDICATOR	2013/14 Value	Target	Status	Latest Note & improvement actions
High Quality Development on the Ground	% of approved major developments within the year to show added value quality improvements	92.9%	80%		Performance above target for the year.
Efficient and Effective Decision making	% of Listed Building Consent applications determined within 2 months	80.1%	70%		Although showing a reducing trend due to increased volumes of applications, the outturn figure for the year was 80.1% which is well above the 70% target.
Efficient and Effective Decision making	% enforcement cases where statutory action taken notice served within 4 months of receipt of complaint	96.8%	80%		Performance above target for the year.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Status	Due Date	Latest Note & improvement actions
National Headline Indicators	Report on representations to the proposed Local Development Plan by December 2013	By December 2013		31 Dec 2013	This action has been fully completed.
25% reduction by March 2014 in undetermined cases over 3 years old at April 2013.	Removal of planning and building standards legacy cases from the system	25% reduction by March 2014 in undetermined cases over 3 years old at April 2013.		31 March 2014	Target exceeded. 63% of cases withdrawn and Uniform operating system updated accordingly.




2 CUSTOMER RESULTS

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Status	Due Date	Latest Note & improvement actions
Open for Business	Review of pre-application advice service including resources and recording	Review current pre application service by October 2013 and implement new service by March 2014		31 March 2014	The pre-application advice project is being re-evaluated as we decide how to align our resources with customer needs. It has been established that we cannot at present charge for pre-application advice and the project will move into a new phase of considering what level of service can be provided with resources in 2014/15.
Certainty	Major applications service - Provide a guidance publication	Provide a guidance publication on the major development service in Edinburgh by March 2014		31 March 2014	A guidance publication has been drafted on Major Developments. Consultation with key services is underway and it will be published in the next few months.
Customer Service	Deliver an up-to-date One Door Approach customer charter	Completion of One Door Approach charter by October 2013.		31 Oct 2013	The Charter is now complete and has been uploaded onto the Council web page and the Orb. Staff communication to raise awareness completed.
Communication and Engagement	Implement joint working agreements with Economic Development and Corporate Property to ensure linkage of development consents	Implement joint working agreements by October 2013.		31 Oct 2013	The protocol with Economic Development and Estates is now complete and workshops have been held with all services areas to promote it and include it in the procedures manual.
Communications, Engagement and Customer Service	Demonstrate how customer feedback on engagement is used to improve policy and processes	Report on outcomes by September 2013		31 March 2014	Achieved.
Communications, Engagement and Customer Service	Raise awareness of Planning among young people	Identify opportunities to involve young people in major projects by March 2014		31 March 2014	Writing competition has now been launched in South Queensferry School. Well received by teaching staff in both schools. Details of involvement with Napier University and Book Festival have been agreed. Quality Indicators will be going to a school on w/b 24 March. Finally, agreement reached with Firrhill School for 3rd year running to take in children for 3 days in April and involve them in Planning project.
Communications, Engagement and Customer Service	Extend the use of Social Media as a communication tool	Implement two-way Twitter by September 2013		30 Sep 2013	Soft launch has taken place. Enquiries starting to come in via Twitter. The next stage is to widen the promotion of this service. There will be a review after 6 months.

3 COMMUNITY RESULTS

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Status	Due Date	Latest Note
High Quality Development on the Ground	Development of 'Added Value' framework to improve quality of planning applications	Implement an 'Added Value Assessment Framework' by December 2013		31 Dec 2013	The added value framework was completed in December 2013. The guidance note has been completed and is available for staff use.
Communication and Engagement	Edinburgh Planning Concordat	Complete version 2 by October 2013 and launch by December 2013 to embrace Community Councils in a tripartite process.		31Dec 2013	The completed Edinburgh Planning Concordat was issued to community councils in December 2013. To date, 13 out of 41 Community Councils have signed the Concordat and work is ongoing to encourage others to do so.
High Quality Development on the Ground	Develop indicators of environmental quality	Prepare a list of measures to inform planning policy and processes by December 2013		31Dec 2013	This project is almost completed for 2013/14. The Edinburgh People's Survey has taken place and the focus groups are almost completed. Positive feedback from the process. A review of the QIs has taken place following 3 years of implementing the project. This sets out how to take the project forward in line with SFC structures and how the outputs can feed back into planning procedures.
High Quality Development on the Ground	Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Shopping Centres	Finalise Town Centre guidance pilots by December 2013. Publish 2nd batch in draft by March 2014.		31 March 2014	Consultative draft Supplementary Guidance for Corstorphine and Gorgie/Dalry, and finalised Supplementary Guidance for City Centre, all approved at Feb 27 Planning Committee. Outline Programme for further town centres published in February 2014.
High Quality Development on the Ground	Improve the environment of the Royal Mile	Finalise Royal Mile Action Plan by September 2013		30 Sep 2013	Finalised Action Plan has been approved. New governance structure has been put in place to address implementation. Project now linked into wider City Centre work.
High Quality Development on the Ground	Improve the environment of the City Centre	Contribute to City Centre Vision initiatives by March 2014		31 March 2014	Progress continues to be made into the development of city centre proposals. George St proposals are progressing as are proposals for West End and Coates/Athol Crescent. The next phase will focus on delivering the long term use of city centre spaces.
Efficient and Effective Decision Making	Exploit information from the 2011 Census	Analyse and disseminate output by March 2014		31 March 2014	Progress this year includes a Council-wide Census user group meeting quarterly; key findings published online, including citywide summaries, local area profiles and topic reports - evidence confirms these have already shaped services. Results widely communicated via seminars and presentations, e.g. to Council committees, neighbourhood partnerships, Econ Dev / Planning staff. Further presentations planned to Chamber of Commerce, and Edinburgh Partnership.

4 PEOPLE RESULTS

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK INDICATOR	ACTION	TARGET	Status	Due Date	Latest Note
Effective Management Structures	Review of Planning and Building Standards Management Structure	Review and implement new management structure by December 2013.		31 March 2014	To align with other service reviews in SFC, the implementation target date has been revised to Sept/Oct 2014. Formal consultation on the proposed structure is now underway with in-scope staff. Report to Planning Committee in early Summer 2014.
Continuous Improvement	Improved staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 hours IT training per staff member • 31 hours additional training 		31 March 2014	62% of staff attained the target. Staff Development Group coordinated a series of IT training events for staff. Regular updates from the Staff Development Group provided in the monthly Core Brief and E-Mail communications to staff. Training targets will be emphasised during the PRD process in April/May 2014.
Continuous Improvement	Engage staff in progressing organisational improvements	Action Plan to be approved by end of June 2013 Implement Staff Engagement Action Plan by March 2014		31 March 2014	The Staff Engagement Group's focus is driving action in four areas: handling change, the role of managers, the importance of respect, and improving morale. Implementation continues into 2014-2015.

PART 5 - Official Statistics

A: DECISION-MAKING TIMESCALES

CATEGORY	Total number of decisions 2013-2014	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2013-2014	2012-2013
Major developments	14 excluding PPAs	27.9 excluding PPAs	81.6 excluding PPAs
Local developments (non-householder)	2149		
• Local: less than 2 months	65.9%	7.0	6.7
• Local: more than 2 months	34.1%	17.4	18.4
Householder developments	1357	6.9	6.5
• Local: less than 2 months	89.2%	12.3	12.2
• Local: more than 2 months	10.8%		
Housing developments Major	4	32.5	114.8
Local housing developments	193		
• Local: less than 2 months	52.1%	7.3	6.7
• Local: more than 2 months	47.9%	20.6	22.2
Business and industry Major	0	n/a	16.1
Local business and industry	58		
• Local: less than 2 months	75.9%	6.7	6.4
• Local: more than 2 months	24.1%	14.8	22.1
EIA developments	1	15.3	18.1
Other consents*	1171	7.4	7.5
Planning/legal agreements**	57	23.7	38.7
Local reviews	75	6.4	7.7

* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 8 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

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

B: DECISION-MAKING: LOCAL REVIEWS AND APPEALS

TYPE	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2013-2014		2012-2013	
		NO.	%	NO.	%
Local reviews	75	47	62.7	37	52.1
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	56	40	71.4	43	68.3

C: ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

	2013-2014	2012-2013
Cases taken up	779	751
Breaches identified	Not recorded	Not recorded
Cases resolved	Not recorded – criteria not specified	Not recorded – criteria not specified
Notices served***	34	56
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	2
Prosecutions	0	0

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

D: CONTEXT

Edinburgh continues to embed a culture of processing agreements when dealing with major applications. As the national headline indicators show, we have been very successful in improving performance on meeting processing agreement target dates and providing confidence for the development industry.

The performance on the remaining major applications has also shown an improvement. This is because we have gone through a process of removing old legacy applications from the system which were skewing the decision making timescales. We have removed around 63% of old applications as part of this programme.

In terms of local developments, there has been a slight decline in performance as a result of the increase in the number of applications without additional resource and the re-alignment of staff resource to major development.

Performance in dealing with other consents such as listed building consent and advert consent has however shown a slight improvement from last year. Legal agreements are also being concluded quicker as we successfully apply the use of a model agreement and discuss this as part of the PPA preparation.

Local reviews are now held quicker and the success rate of both appeals and local reviews has improved. This shows that decisions are being taken properly and we can have more confidence that they will not be overturned.

Enforcement activity has increased. Edinburgh has a culture of trying to resolve breaches rather than serve notices. In many cases the breach is so minor that action is not justified. This is in line with Government guidance. Without definitive criteria on what 'resolved' means, we have been unable to capture this information.

PART 6 - Workforce and Financial Information

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Head of Planning & Building Standards Service			1	

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

		DM	DP	Enforcement	Other	Cross service
Managers	No. Posts	8	9	2	3	1
	Vacant					
Main grade posts	No. Posts	41	35	7	41	1
	Vacant					
Technician	No. Posts	7	5			
	Vacant					
Office Support/Clerical	No. Posts		3	2	2	18
	Vacant					
TOTAL		56	52	11	46	20

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

Staff Age Profile	Number
Under 30	10.2%
30-39	22.2%
40-49	28.6%
50 and over	39%

Committee & Site Visits*	Number per year
Full council meetings	11
Planning committees	7
Area committees (where relevant)	DM Sub-Committee 23
Committee site visits	8
LRB**	18
LRB site visits	3 (21/8, 4/9, 22/1)

Notes:

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

**this relates to the number of meetings of the LRB. The number of applications going to LRB are reported elsewhere.

	Total Budget	Costs		Income***
		Direct*	Indirect*	
Development management	£2107483	£2107483	£549659	£1859200
Development planning	£2175997	£1925996	£145201	£41672
Enforcement	Included in Development Management			
Other	£444969	£551270	£681426	£119754
TOTAL	£4728449	£5600761	£1376286	£2020646

Notes:

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

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

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

APPENDIX 1

PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2012-13

Name of planning authority: **City of Edinburgh Council**

The High Level Group on Performance agreed a set of performance markers. We have assessed your report against those markers to give an indication of priority areas for improvement action. The high level group will monitor and evaluate how the key markers have been reported and the value which they have added.

The Red, Amber, Green ratings are based on the evidence provided within the PPF reports. Where no information or insufficient evidence has been provided, a 'red' marking has been allocated.

No.	Performance Marker	RAG rating	Comments
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	Green	Good reduction in timescales for local applications in comparison to own past performance; also considerably quicker decision-making than national averages. Concerns over timescales for major applications (not covered by processing agreements), although evidence shows that completing small number of legacy cases skewed those figures; otherwise a more reasonable performance.
2	Processing agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	Green	Good, regular use of processing agreements as normal practice, covering procedure up to point of committee meeting. Remains scope to bring activity for legal agreement more formally into agreed timetable.
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees <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 	Amber	42.9% of applications reported as having been subject to pre-application advice, which is encouraging; although not currently measured so methodology for that figure is not clear. SIP commitment to review pre-application service, including a recording system. Up-to-date guidance and meetings with developers, involving consultees, on major developments gives opportunity to clarify expectations. Needs some clearer evidence on how the authority is ensuring information requests are proportionate.

4	<p>Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period) 	Amber	<p>References to legal agreements being a continuing source of delay due to applicants deferring signing. Authority can assume a strong management role to ensure these cases are completed efficiently.</p> <p>Mention of setting informal target, alongside processing agreements, of 3-6 months to conclude; backed up by statistics which show cases with legal agreements having been decided more quickly than national average timescales.</p> <p>Some data needed to confirm progress on this marker.</p>
5	<p>Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years</p>	Red	<p>Charter over 3 years old at end of reporting period. Need to review this and ensure kept up-to-date within the statutory period.</p>
6	<p>Continuous improvement:</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 	Amber	<p>Good improvements in most decision-making timescales and in pre-application engagement, including extensive use of processing agreements for major applications. LDP set to slip beyond the 5-year period from city local plan and more needing to be done to demonstrate enforcement performance.</p> <p>Some demonstration of improved performance from SIP, although information incomplete in PPF report.</p>
7	<p>Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption</p>	Amber	<p>Local plan (covering most of area) 3 years old, but local plan for remaining area is older.</p>
8	<p>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 	Red	<p>Local plan (covering most of area) set to be slightly older than 5 years when LDP adopted, while other local plan already over 5 years. Delays with SESplan (on which authority has a role) and ongoing issues with housing land allocations has had particular influence in delays.</p>
9	<p>Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i></p>	N/A	

10	<p>Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i></p> <p><i>*including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</i></p>	N/A	
11	<p>Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information required to support applications; and expected developer contributions 	Green	<p>Recently updated validation guidance, to ensure applicants have up-to-date information. Could say more about how ensuring requirements are proportionate.</p> <p>Economic Resilience Plan commits to review/revise developer contribution policies (some already revised) and currently taking forward through LDP. Needs to be completed.</p>
12	<p>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>	Green	<p>Good evidence of corporate approach to service delivery, particularly through the one door approach to consents. Also, work ongoing to develop concordats with other parts of authority, which should be progressed.</p>
13	<p>Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities</p>	Green	<p>Participation in benchmarking group with other cities. Also contributed to <i>Planning Reform: Next Steps</i> projects through support for processing agreements and the one door approach.</p>
14	<p>Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old</p>	Green	<p>Some evidence of old cases being decided during the year, with notable impact on major application statistics. Mention of developing systems to deal with legacy cases, backed by a SIP commitment with target for 25% reduction.</p>
15	<p>Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and in pre-application discussions 	Green	<p>Some policies have been revised; ongoing through LDP process.</p> <p>Economic Resilience Plan includes a flexible approach, allowing for deferred payments to help manage cash flow and support delivery. Officers have access to experts on development viability.</p>

