

Planning Performance Framework

2020/21



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Introduction

This is Angus Council's tenth Planning Performance Framework (PPF), which covers the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The document builds on the preceding Planning Performance Frameworks and positive feedback received in previous years.

The Planning Performance Framework (PPF) is the Planning Authorities annual report on the planning service. The PPF was developed by the Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) and the Scottish Government to provide a document with a range of qualitative and quantitative indicators to document planning activities.

This year's annual report has once again been produced during a public health pandemic and is a shorter, more concise document than in previous years as the priority of the Planning Service has been focussed on maintaining service delivery in continuing challenging circumstances. This year's annual report omits much of the statistical performance information normally contained within a PPF, reflecting the advice provided by the Chief Planner in his email of 20 May 2020. It focuses on the Council's response to COVID-19, and in particular our development management process, our approach to dealing with significant development proposals during pandemic restrictions, and our maintenance of performance standards during challenging circumstances. It demonstrates business as usual and the council's ability to deal with significant proposals in the most trying of circumstances.

Marker	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1 Decision making timescales	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
2 Processing agreements	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
3 Early collaboration	Yellow	Green						
4 Legal agreements	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
5 Enforcement Charter	Green							
6 Continuous improvement	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
7 Local Development Plan	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
8 Development Plan Scheme	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
9 Elected Members engaged early (pre - MIR)	Red	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Green
10 Stakeholders engaged early (pre - MIR)	Green	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Green
11 Regular and proportionate advice to support applications	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
12 Corporate working across services	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
14 stalled sites / legacy cases	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
15 Developer contributions	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green

In 2020, Angus Council's Planning Service received all green markers (based on RAG ratings) which shows a consistent improvement since the PPF process started in 2021/13. The evidence presented in this report illustrates the outcomes the service contributes to delivering and shows that work is continuing to improve the service.

Summary – key performance markers 20/21

The planning performance framework sets out 15 key performance markers against which Planning Authorities performance is measured. The table below provides a brief explanation of the evidence (supported by hyperlinks to more information where possible) that Angus Council is delivering in each of the key performance markers. More detail on this evidence is also provided in Part 1 of this report.

No.	Performance Marker	Evidence
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 – Q4]	Statistics and commentary on decision making timescales is provided at Parts 4 and 5 below.
2	Processing agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our pre application discussions relating to national, major, significant local and business critical applications always positively encourage the use of Processing Agreements. Our pre application advice model response includes reference to the availability of processing agreements. The availability of processing agreements is publicised and promoted on the Council website as detailed below. We publish processing agreements relating to individual applications on the Council's public access portal because they also an important tool for keeping the public informed of progress and timescales for the processing of an application.
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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre application advice is promoted on our website and we have a system for online submission of pre application enquiries. We have delayed the scheduled implementation of pre application charging in light of the COVID-19 pandemic to play a small but meaningful part in bolstering the economic recovery Our local development plan and associated supplementary guidance is available on our website and is referenced in our pre application discussion and advice. It sets out where and what supporting information is required for development proposals.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We provide detailed conservation advice online and have published topic specific planning advice notes, technical guidance and development briefs.
4	<p>Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission</p> <p>reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where planning obligations are required, our decision notices set out the steps an applicant needs to take to progress with the preparation of a planning obligation. The Council has developed a model planning obligation which is available to prospective developers to speed up the drafting process. We use delivery packages for the delivery of affordable housing to allow flexibility for developers to make changes in how they deliver affordable housing and to remove the necessity of following the cumbersome process of a formal modification of a planning obligation. Our supplementary guidance on Affordable Housing and Developer Contributions sets out when we will require a planning obligation or other legal agreement and we reference this in our pre application advice.
5	<p>Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angus Council Planning Enforcement Charter – March 2021 The charter was reviewed within the 2-year period.
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 	<p>Statistics and commentary on decision making timescales is provided at Parts 4 and 5 below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have completed or made progress on some of our service improvement targets for 2020/21. However, improvement activity has been delayed because of COVID-19 response. Part 3 of this report includes detail on service improvements for 2020/21 and identifies additional improvements for 2021/22.
7	<p>Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption</p>	<p>Angus Local Development Plan (adopted September 2016) – our LDP was less than 5 years old at 31 March 2021.</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 	<p>The Development Plan Scheme – September 2020 set out the indicative timescales for progressing towards preparation of the next LDP in the context of the Planning Act (Scotland) 2019. The timetable has been impacted on by delays</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	<p>in the programme for NPF4 and publication of development plan regulations from Scottish Government. The next DPS will be published in September 2021 and be reviewed on a 6-monthly basis given ongoing uncertainty. We are currently working on preparatory work for an evidence report and await the regulations to incorporate requirements into the detailed project plan. Adoption of a replacement Plan is currently forecast in late 2023.</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>	<p>Engagement with members during the reporting period has been focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the statutory requirement to prepare a biennial action programme update for the adopted LDP, which was prepared and reported in December 2020. the preparation of an Angus response to Scottish Government on the 'minimum all-tenure housing land requirement' (MATHLR) figures for inclusion in draft NPF4. Submission of an indicative Tayside Regional Spatial Strategy to Scottish Government in early 2021.
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> *including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</p>	<p>Angus Council worked with colleagues from Perth & Kinross and Dundee City to create an indicative Regional Spatial Strategy for Tayside to contribute towards preparation of draft NPF4. Officers took part in Scottish Government engagement activities to support this process.</p> <p>Angus, Dundee City, Perth & Kinross and Fife housing and planning officers are working collaboratively with consultants on a new Housing Need and Demand Assessment to support future Local Housing Strategies and LDPs. This will report later in 2021 but was at a sufficiently advanced stage (including primary research having been undertaken) to support the work required to respond to SGs request for input on NPF4 housing land figures.</p> <p>Other opportunities for engagement with cross sector stakeholders have related to ongoing monitoring and evidence gathering workstreams, the Local Nature Conservation sites project with Perth &</p>

		Kinross Council and NatureScot, and a Forestry and Woodland Strategy working group involving Scottish Forestry and NatureScot.
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our local development plan and associated supplementary guidance sets out where and what supporting information is required. • We provide detailed conservation advice online and topic specific planning advice, technical guidance and development briefs. • Pre-application advice draws on and signposts the published plan and guidance and is promoted on our website. We also have a system in place for the online submission of pre application enquiries. • We have delayed the scheduled implementation of pre application charging in light of the COVID-19 pandemic to play a small but meaningful part in bolstering the economic recovery.
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with building standards, environmental health and licencing to advise businesses during the pandemic. • Close working partnership with housing strategy team delivering on shared issues relating to affordable housing delivery, planning for housing and placemaking. • We have established procedures to ensure effective engagement and provision of consultation responses to development proposals by virtual or digital means during the pandemic.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tayside Biodiversity Partnership between Angus, Perth and Kinross and other stakeholders • Enforcement Benchmarking Group (Tayside and Aberdeenshire Authorities) • Participation in Knowledge Hub areas relating to Development Management and Development Planning • Participation in HoPS Executive and Development Planning and Development Management Sub Committees

<p>14</p>	<p>Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have determined 1 legacy cases in the reporting period and have 5 remaining. Each is subject to a processing agreement that sets out the steps required by the applicant for the application to progress to determination. We have a small number of legacy cases year-on-year and they relate to cases where there is a realistic prospect that issues can be addressed in a manner that allows positive determination. • Arranged multi-disciplinary meetings to assist in identifying barriers/issues delaying delivery of local development plan allocated sites.
<p>15</p>	<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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our supplementary guidance on Affordable Housing and Developer Contributions sets out when we will require developer contributions. We are current programming a further review to ensure that are based on up to date information. • Our pre application advice sets out where contributions will be required and the nature and potential level of that requirement • We regularly update and publish the commuted sum value (and the methodology in reaching this) where affordable housing is being delivered via that means. • We issue invoices to developers where developer contribution triggers are reached to ensure that payments are made promptly, and developers are in no doubt as the how to make their payment. Where payments are not made promptly, the invoice passes to the Council's debt recovery staff. • We use delivery packages for the delivery of affordable housing to allow flexibility for developers to make changes in how they deliver that housing.

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

Angus Council's planning service continues to deliver high quality outcomes, helping to secure high quality development on the ground, adding value through the application process and recording high levels of customer satisfaction indicated in post-application surveys.

In this year's PPF our case studies focus on our proactive response to COVID-19 and how we have focused on maintaining service levels within development management to help support the development industry and economic recovery. Our focus has been adapting processes and procedures to allow good decisions to be made in a timely manner, demonstrating a commitment to quality of outcomes and quality of service and engagement, while ensuring appropriate governance arrangements remain in place to provide committee oversight of decision-making.

Case study 1 looks at the steps taken to assist in maintaining a high level of customer service and to ensure decisions necessary to support economic recovery have been made timeously. Review of our national headline indicators and key outcomes demonstrate that we have been successful in mitigating the impact of COVID restrictions on our performance.

Case Study 2 looks at a development by Seagreen to provide an onshore cable connection over a 19km route to serve what will be Scotland's largest offshore wind farm development. The grid connection represents a £70m investment project and is an integral part of a national development associated with the provision of an Enhanced High Voltage Energy Transmission Network to facilitate renewable electricity development and its export. The project involved submission of several applications including two that provided for the formation of the 19km route itself. Those applications gave rise to potentially significant issues and were accompanied by relevant environmental information. The council's procedures allowed those significant applications to be presented to and determined by committee within a period of little more than 3-months as agreed with the applicant. The resultant approvals are a vital element in delivering a hugely significant development that will deliver benefits of national importance.

Implementation of existing plan and delivery of development

We continue to update progress all allocated and opportunity sites identified in Angus Local Development Plan in a development delivery database and [live action programme map](#). Regular contact with the development industry ensures that we have an up to date understanding of market conditions, development progress and delivery issues across all sites identified in the Plan. This allows officers to be proactive and to help address any emerging issues quickly. We intend to continue to evolve this tool and combine it with our housing, employment, and vacant/derelict land monitoring to provide a more comprehensive view of all development related activity. This has potential to work alongside a register of publicly owned land and property assets to help identify opportunities for investment and collaboration.

Quality of design and development

The council has previously reported on steps it has taken to speed up preparation of development briefs and to make them more proportionate in the guidance they provide. It has also reported on the work it has done in relation to the preparation and publication of guidance dealing with design quality and place making. Case Study 3 looks at a site that was allocated for housing development in our local development plan and the positive approach the council took to provide guidance to help inform investment decisions by a prospective developer, and how that has assisted in the submission and subsequent approval of a major development proposal for the site that provides a high quality development that will integrate well with the established character of a distinctive village.

Despite COVID restrictions we have made a number of tree preservation orders where that has been necessary to safeguard environmental quality.

QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

This section of focusses on demonstrating the positive actions we take to support sustainable economic growth, initiatives to work closely with stakeholders and deliver a positive customer experience.

Supporting sustainable economic growth

In December 2020, progress on the implementation of the Angus Local Development Plan was set out in the [ALDP Action Programme Update](#). It provides a snapshot of progress and activity. ([Report 332/20](#) refers).

Preparation of the Action Programme update assisted deeper insight into performance of the current ALDP and progress made with commitments.

Specific proposals for the development of land in our settlements are monitored through annual audits of housing and employment land as well as town centre and other surveys. Regular and ongoing contact with the development industry ensures that we have an up to date understanding of market conditions, development progress and delivery issues across all sites identified in the local development plan. This allows officers to be proactive and to help address any emerging issues quickly. The direct contact enables maintenance of a [live action programme map](#) which is available on our website.

Whilst the Plan continues to provide appropriate policy framework for determination of applications to secure investment and development across Angus there have been significant shifts in the global, national and local contexts. These, in addition to the changes to the planning system brought about by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, mean some of the policy actions which were intended to support implementation of the plan need to be reconsidered.

The annual Housing Land Audit was published in August 2020, monitoring the take up and availability of housing land within Angus. Consultation on the Audit involves a range of stakeholders including Scottish Government, Homes for Scotland, public service providers, RSLs and developers/landowners. Consultation informs accuracy in site programming, helping to align the assessment of housing land supply with the commitments of those involved in building new homes across Angus and informing the communities in which the houses will be built.

Officers from development planning and development management continue to participate in the Angus Affordable Housing Delivery Group. The Group focusses on the delivery of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan's (SHIP) priorities for affordable housing. Monthly project meetings take place with the Council's Housing Service, RSL partners, Scottish Water and Scottish Government's Housing Service. Having the different disciplines in one arena allows for the identification of barriers to the delivery of affordable housing and the resolution of issues. The SHIP is reviewed annually by the Council's Housing Service with planning staff involved in the project development group.

Opportunities for participation

Opportunity for the type of participation we had planned and reported on in the 2019/20 Planning Performance Framework was halted abruptly by the Covid – 19 lockdown in March 2020. Planned events and member briefings were cancelled and put on hold. As the impact of continuing lockdown became clearer the development plan team resource was refocussed on monitoring activity and evidence gathering to support preparation of a new style development plan under the 2019 Act. Delays to progress towards implementing the new system of development planning became extended, impacting the timescale for publication of the draft NPF4 and associated regulations and guidance. This meant the opportunities for participation have been limited to connecting with stakeholders involved in workstreams related to the development plan and policy development, and authority staff participating in consultation and events to support evolution of the national policy position. These included:

- SPP and Housing : Technical Consultation on Proposed Policy Amendments (Nov 2020)
- Response to Town Centre Review Group Call for Evidence (August 2020)
- RTPi and Improvement Service workshops on digital planning and spatial data
- Representation on Heads of Planning Development Plan subcommittee LDP working groups and Local Place Plan benchmarking group to assist in the development of guidance and regulations

Working with colleagues from Dundee City and Perth & Kinross Councils, an indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (iRSS) for Tayside has been prepared presenting those matters of significance at a regional scale to help the Scottish Government shape the emerging draft NPF4 and the associated secondary legislation. A local working group met virtually to consider matters of shared interest to the economy and environment of the Tayside area. Officers also participated in national workshops and events to share findings and develop understanding of the role of RSS. New governance arrangements have been established to enable future oversight of matters of regional concern in light of the dissolution of the strategic development plan provisions of the 1997 Act. An initial indicative Regional Spatial Strategy was submitted to the Scottish Government in October 2020.

At the end of February 2021, the Scottish Government wrote to Local Authority Heads of Planning and Housing to seek the input of their authorities and relevant stakeholders to meeting the statutory requirement of the 2019 Act relating to housing as part of preparation of NPF4. Angus, Dundee City, Perth & Kinross and Fife housing and planning officers were jointly well placed to respond positively to this request having already been working collaboratively with consultants on a new Housing Need and Demand Assessment to support future Local Housing Strategies and LDPs. The HNDA preparation was at a sufficiently advanced stage (including primary research having been undertaken) to support the work required for each Council to provide Scottish Government with locally adjusted estimates of the housing land requirement for inclusion in draft NPF4.

Delivering a positive customer experience

The Council's [online planning pages](#) have been refreshed with input from our Communications Team to improve the content and presentation of planning information and to make it more accessible for our customers. This has been particularly important as we have directed customers to our digital resources due to COVID-19 restrictions.

While we have sought to direct customers to our online services we have also established back-office processes to ensure that correspondence submitted by paper mail, including applications and related correspondence such as representations are processed effectively and efficiently.

The facility for [online submission of pre application enquires](#) on our website has been successful particularly in the context of the COVID-19 restrictions. The functionality we have introduced includes a payment engine to allow for the introduction of pre application charging allowing customers to submit and pay for the pre application service in one transaction.

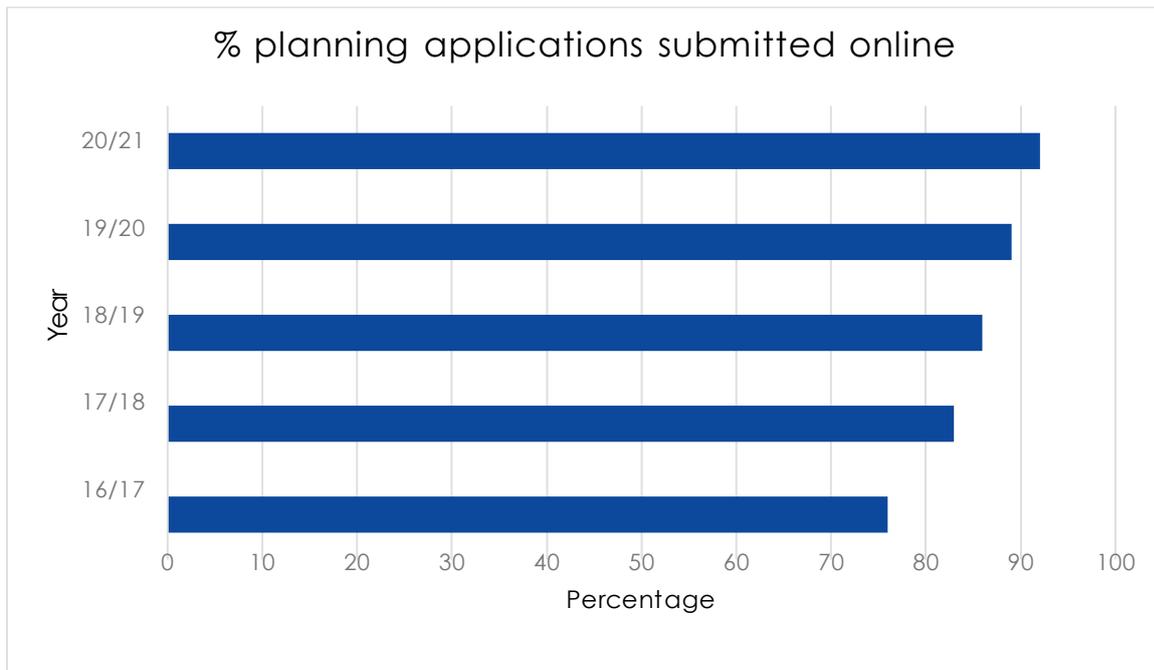
Our website sets out clear timescales for responding to pre application enquiries and all new enquiries are acknowledged and set out which officer is responsible for handling of the enquiry.

Where necessary, the Council's pre-application service seeks input from other Council services and external consultees to provide customers with a clear steer on the information that is required in support of a planning application.

Our pre application advice always sets out the type and level of where developer contributions and affordable housing are required and that information is also published in our [Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance](#). Our case studies demonstrate the positive and helpful approach we take to pre-application engagements.

We positively encourage the use of Planning Processing Agreements (PPA) in relation to applications for national, major and significant or complex local developments. The availability of PPA is outlined in pre application advice for relevant application types and the use of PPA is promoted on our [website](#). We publish PPAs agreed with applicants on our website to give interested parties clarity on progress in determining the application and to explain any delays in deciding the application.

During 2020/21, the proportion of planning applications submitted online was 92% a further increase from the previous year. Our website text has been revised to direct people to the eplanning website and we promote its use in our correspondence. We expect that trend to continue to grow, particularly with the temporary closure of Council offices from March 2020.



In our last planning performance framework we identified an intention to review our customer satisfaction survey in light of falling response rates. That work has been delayed by COVID-19 and response rates to the current paper-based survey are at a low rate that provides information of limited value. We are currently working to provide that satisfaction survey through digital means with the hope that will increase participation and that is an improvement that we intend to carry through into 2021/22.

The Angus environment plays a significant role in providing a quality place to live, work and visit (in line with the shared Community Planning and Council vision). Protecting and enhancing the environment while providing opportunities to create great places to live, sustain local economies and attract new investment requires a keen focus on securing new development which has positive impacts. Last year we focused on working towards delivery of the redevelopment of the former Sunnyside Royal Hospital at Hillside. This year we have had similar challenges in relation to the former Strathmartine Hospital site on the outskirts of Dundee. It is a large redundant hospital site containing listed buildings, derelict buildings, and significant areas of woodland within its policies. It has been a magnet for arson, vandalism, and anti-social behaviour for several years and despite a planning permission in principle that provides for its redevelopment for housing, there has been no progress. Over the last two years the Planning Service has engaged in a positive manner with prospective developers to identify barriers to delivery, to reduce risk and uncertainty associated with the existing planning permission in principle, and to allow the grant of a new

permission in 2020 that will hopefully see the development proceed. Case Study 4 sets out the steps that helped to move the site forward.

Working consistently with stakeholders

Cairngorms 2030: people and nature thriving together

During 2020 the Cairngorms National Park Authority prepared and submitted a development application for the National Lottery Fund Heritage Horizons Award for the ambitious, landscape scale project 'Cairngorms 2030: people and nature thriving together'. Involving more than 45 partners, the project will assist in delivering transformational change for people and nature. It will tackle the climate emergency, protect and enhance biodiversity and contribute towards climate resilient communities. The application includes over £500k of projects in Angus delivering nature-based solutions which will be delivered and managed by the River South Esk Catchment Partnership. These will reduce pressure in Potentially Vulnerable Areas designated in the Tay Estuary and Montrose Basin Flood Risk Management Plan. The project will aid in the green recovery following the COVID19 pandemic by connecting wellbeing and the environment and will have an enduring legacy. (Cairngorms 2030 was awarded £12.5 million in July 2021).

Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS)

We are jointly working with Perth & Kinross Council and Nature Scotland to create a suite of LNCS across both council areas. The project began in 2019 and is being overseen by two steering groups covering geodiversity and biodiversity.

There is close involvement with Tayside Geodiversity whose volunteers with geological expertise have been carrying out site surveys and reports for formal assessment by a panel. The project has filtered an initial 87 potential sites to a survey list of around 40 sites. The survey is likely to complete later in 2021.

The biodiversity group comprises Tayside Biodiversity Partnership and representatives from Scottish Wildlife Trust, RSPB and local recorders from the Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland. An initial list of 118 sites has been provisionally filtered to around 40 to 60 sites. Many of these were previously surveyed around 20 years ago, which provides some initial data. The survey stages of the project are proposed to be undertaken during 2021 (delayed by COVID restrictions). It is similarly hoped that much of this survey work will be undertaken by expert volunteers.

GOVERNANCE

The Angus Council Planning and Communities Service sits within the Communities Directorate. The Communities Directorate comprises of 4 services; Environmental Services, Housing, Environmental & Consumer Protection and Planning & Communities. The Planning and Communities Service consists of the Development Standards, Strategic Planning, and Building Standards teams. The structure of the Communities Directorate and the current managers can be viewed on pages 48/49.

The current profile resulted from a Management Structure Review and was implemented in April 2018 with the purpose of being more effective and fit for purpose. At that time, Community Planning and Development Planning were brought together under a single manager and was envisaged to provide significant scope to work with our communities in the preparation of the Local Development Plan and in wider place discussions. In early 2021, as a result of the significant changes in global and national circumstances, the structure of the service was once again under review. This was driven by the opportunity to reflect the growing emphasis on the role of the spatial planning system to shape an integrated approach to deliver on local authority obligations to address climate change, wellbeing, social inequalities as well as the local economic impacts resulting from pandemic related lockdowns. Changes were implemented just outwith the reporting period.

We have an up to date scheme of delegation under Section 42 of the Act that was approved by Scottish Ministers on 17 May 2019. We are currently working with colleagues in the Council's Legal & Democratic Service to review and update our scheme of delegation under the Local Government Act.

We have an up to date [Enforcement Charter](#) that was reviewed within the required two-year period, published in March 2021. It seeks to provide an understandable and proportionate approach towards enforcement activity, focusing on resolving those cases that give rise to potentially significant amenity, environmental, or safety issues. While enforcement matters are delegated to the officers within the Planning Service, regular reports on enforcement activity and appeal decisions are reported to our Development Standards Committee for oversight.

As part of the wider Council 'Change Programme' for budget setting, it was purposed that charging for pre-application planning advice was introduced. A

Report (No 56/19) detailing this recommendation was put forward to and was approved by Full Council in February 2019 with the intention for the charging scheme to come forward in 2019-2020. Work has been carried out throughout the year on designing, testing and implementing a digital service using online forms. The service was launched in March 2020; however, the decision was taken to suspend charging for the service in light of the financial challenge of the Coronavirus pandemic. A decision will be taken in the 2021/22 financial year as to when to introduce the charges. The Service has received positive feedback on the availability of the service, especially in a period of lockdown when people have found it difficult to access Council services in person.

On a wider collaboration basis, the Affordable Housing Delivery Group continues to meet and includes staff from the Housing Service, Housing Associations, Scottish Government, and the Planning Service. This group continues to resolve any issues to ease delivery of affordable housing on sites.

Over the year the Planning Service has provided training to elected members in relation to the planning process and associated decision-making. That training is mandatory before members participate in decision-making on planning applications. In the current reporting period, we have established processes to allow for the determination of planning matters, including planning applications at virtual meetings of committee and full council. Our elected members are digitally equipped to deal with that and have been provided with the requisite training. They have embraced the challenges presented by virtual meetings and that has allowed us to broadcast our meetings live online, increasing opportunity for individuals to participate in or to observe the decision-making process. Case studies 2, 3, 4, and 5 demonstrate the positive efforts the council has adopted to ensure high quality decisions are made in a transparent manner despite COVID-19 restrictions.

CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The council's performance statistics demonstrate continuous improvement and it is notable that the average timescale for dealing with local applications has reduced over the reporting period despite the difficulties associated with COVID-19. Case Study 1 highlights the positive approach the council has taken to ensure that performance levels were not only maintained but improved.

To support this renewed emphasis, aligning with the corporate investment in a Big Data Strategy project, and to ensure a robust data driven baseline for the evidence report, a Spatial Data for Place Coordination Working Group has been established. It is intended to support the placemaking and spatial service delivery role of the Council in meeting statutory obligations around land use planning, environmental protection and climate change mitigation.

The group will identify the ways in which technical / data requirements and solutions can be designed and resourced, specifically through collaboration between built environment professionals and specialist data and GIS colleagues. Innovative approaches to progress in this area will be encouraged. It will involve clear and detailed oversight of the interrelationship of data and GIS, giving a clear direction on timing of delivery of workstreams and resourcing requirements, allowing prioritisation and resource/specialist skills deployment as well as helping to identify the need for additional training or specialist external input in advance. It is being piloted by the development planning and environment teams in the planning service with the intention to incorporate all spatially based workstreams across the Council over time.

Senior officers within Angus Council have continued to have an active role within Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) regularly attending and contributing to the work and discussions as part of the Executive, Development Management, and Development Planning sub-committees.

Officers within Angus Council have also been active through other planning forums, including membership and contributions to the work of the RTPi East of Scotland Chapter and through volunteering with Planning Aid for Scotland.

Angus Council has continued its joint working with Perth and Kinross Council through the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, and the procurement of the Archaeological Service from Aberdeenshire.

The Service Lead has continued the role of Acting Strategic Development Plan Manager for TAYplan, and representatives from the four Tayside authorities formed a working group to discuss cross boundary issues and share experiences and good practice. During the reporting period this focussed around the preparation of a Tayside indicative Regional Spatial Strategy for submission to Scottish Government. As a result of the changes to development planning arising from the 2019 Act, as the removal of the strategic development plan, new governance arrangements to support continued close working between the authorities. This means spatial planning matters of regional interest will now fall within the remit of the Tay Cities Region Joint Committee under a Spatial Planning and Sustainability Board.

The Tay Cities Deal (TCD) was signed in December 2020 to ratify the implementation and financial arrangements for £700 million investment in the region. The Angus Fund outline business case was approved by the TCD joint committee in Feb 2021. The Chief Planning Officer and planning officers continue to support the Joint Committee and Boards now overseeing the detailed projects and delivery of the ambitious programme across the area, including The Mercury Programme. This is Angus Council's visionary £1bn partnership between government, public, private and community sectors which seeks to deliver clean, green growth and is the overarching ambition that drives the projects that will be stimulated by the Angus Fund.

The culture of continuous improvement also relates to the people within the Planning Service. The Council operates a Performance Appraisal and Development Scheme, which aims to ensure that each officer has an agreed Action Programme and Personal Development Plan. Members of the Royal Town Planning Institute are supported to produce Personal Development Plans (PDP) and to undertake Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Our CPD includes review and discussion of planning related case work within a team setting to share knowledge and experience, and access to a programme of professional competency training available by digital delivery through the Council.

Our journey for continuous improvement involves learning from experience and seeking to improve. In Case Study 5 we look at an application for an extension to Pitairlie Quarry at Monikie. That was an application for extension of an existing stone quarry close to a village and a regionally important country park. Previous development proposals associated with the operation had generated significant

concern amongst some local residents, and the associated applications took a considerable time to determine given repeated requests for additional information. Council officers engaged in a positive manner with the prospective applicants as soon as it was known that an application was to be submitted. While no commitment was given to the eventual decision on the application, officers worked with the applicants and their agents, and brought together relevant consultation bodies to identify information requirements before the application was submitted. The subsequent application for major development comprising extension of a hard rock quarry was dealt with in a period of little more than 3-months despite COVID-19 restrictions.

Progress on implementing our programmed service improvements has been affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Our focus has been directed towards implementing procedural adjustments to allow us to continue delivering a high-quality service despite limitations and restrictions associated with the pandemic. However, where possible we have progressed improvements to a point where they can be taken forward as restrictions are relaxed. We have included unfulfilled improvements from 2019/20 in our programme for 2020/21 and have identified further improvements for the coming year that will aid service delivery and effectiveness, particularly in relation to climate change and economic development.

CASE STUDY 1: COVID-19 response – it's business as usual

Location and Dates:	
April 2020 – March 2021	
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Quality of service and engagement • Governance 	
Key Markers (please select all that apply):	
1, 2, 6, and 12	
Key Areas of Work (please select the main area of work covered - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management Processes • Service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting economic development
Stakeholders Involved (please select the main stakeholders - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority planning staff • Authority other staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning committee
Overview:	
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of council offices in mid-March 2020 and the subsequent introduction of travel restrictions.</p> <p>The council has been developing agile and home working arrangements in recent years and staff had access to equipment and online services that allowed them to continue working from home at very short notice.</p> <p>Notwithstanding that, restrictions associated with COVID-19 presented particular challenges to a planning system, particularly the development management process, heavily based on a statutory requirements and short determination timescales. That process requires significant community consultation; it relies upon the ability of planning officers to engage effectively with a wide range of parties; it requires information to be publicly accessible; and it requires officers to understand the physical attributes of a development site and its environs. These are all significant challenges when working from home with travel restrictions in place.</p> <p>The team responded quickly and effectively, identifying procedural issues and adopting a pragmatic approach to overcome them. This was often in advance of any government guidance, and in advance of any action by other councils. It moved seamlessly to digital service delivery ensuring that statutory requirements were met, including opportunity for citizens to contribute to the application process.</p>	

Measures were put in place to allow officers working from home to undertake the validation process and to communicate with council support staff in our digital reprographics unit who continued to work from the office. That allowed neighbour notification processes to continue. While the council sought to direct correspondence and enquiries through its established digital channels, it also made arrangements to ensure the scanning and electronic distribution of all incoming paper format mail to ensure multiple channels of communication remained available for customers.

The council's response built upon positive working relationships it has developed with local agents and the development industry and sought support from them to undertake certain functions such as the posting of site notices and the provision of site photographs in order to deal with difficulties associated with travel restrictions.

Officers and elected members were required to embrace new methods of working in short order to ensure continued service delivery. Officers revised procedures and committed significant time to allow preparation and delivery of detailed visual presentations on complex development proposals to virtual meetings of committee. The work involved in those presentations is significant and has been appreciated by elected members and applicants.

The planning process is required to meet the needs of a wide range of customers from applicants to objectors, from other council services to government bodies. The opinions of all those participating in the process must be considered in a transparent manner. The focus of the team has been to ensure that all customers continue to receive a high standard of service. During this difficult period the team has continued to determine applications under delegated powers and has assessed applications and presented detailed reports to committee on complex, multi-million-pound developments allowing robust decisions to be made.

The Planning Service also took the decision to delay the introduction of pre application charging – a small but helpful step to facilitate engagement between developers and the Planning Service to assist in economic recovery.

Goals:

The council plan identifies four key themes related to economy, people, place, and our council. Those are identified as: -

- We want Angus to be a 'go-to' area for businesses
- We want to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities
- We want our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens
- We want Angus Council to be efficient and effective

The council's goal was to maintain a fully functioning planning system that could continue to make decisions in a timely manner thus supporting economic activity, while ensuring interested parties had opportunity to participate in decision-making processes, and making good, accountable decisions in a transparent, effective and efficient manner.

Outcomes:

Our officers have worked from home throughout the pandemic without service interruption.

We have established procedures to allow public engagement with development proposals and opportunity to participate in a virtual decision-making process.

Our elected members have been equipped to and have embraced decision-making in a virtual environment.

Our response to COVID has allowed good decisions to be made in an open, transparent and timely manner.

Our national headline indicators and key outcomes demonstrate that we have been successful in mitigating the impact of COVID restrictions on our performance.

The team's performance dealing with applications during that period has improved despite the hugely challenging circumstances. That performance and the quality of service provided has been recognised and appreciated by customers and has helped sustain local businesses and support vital economic development activity.

Name of key officer

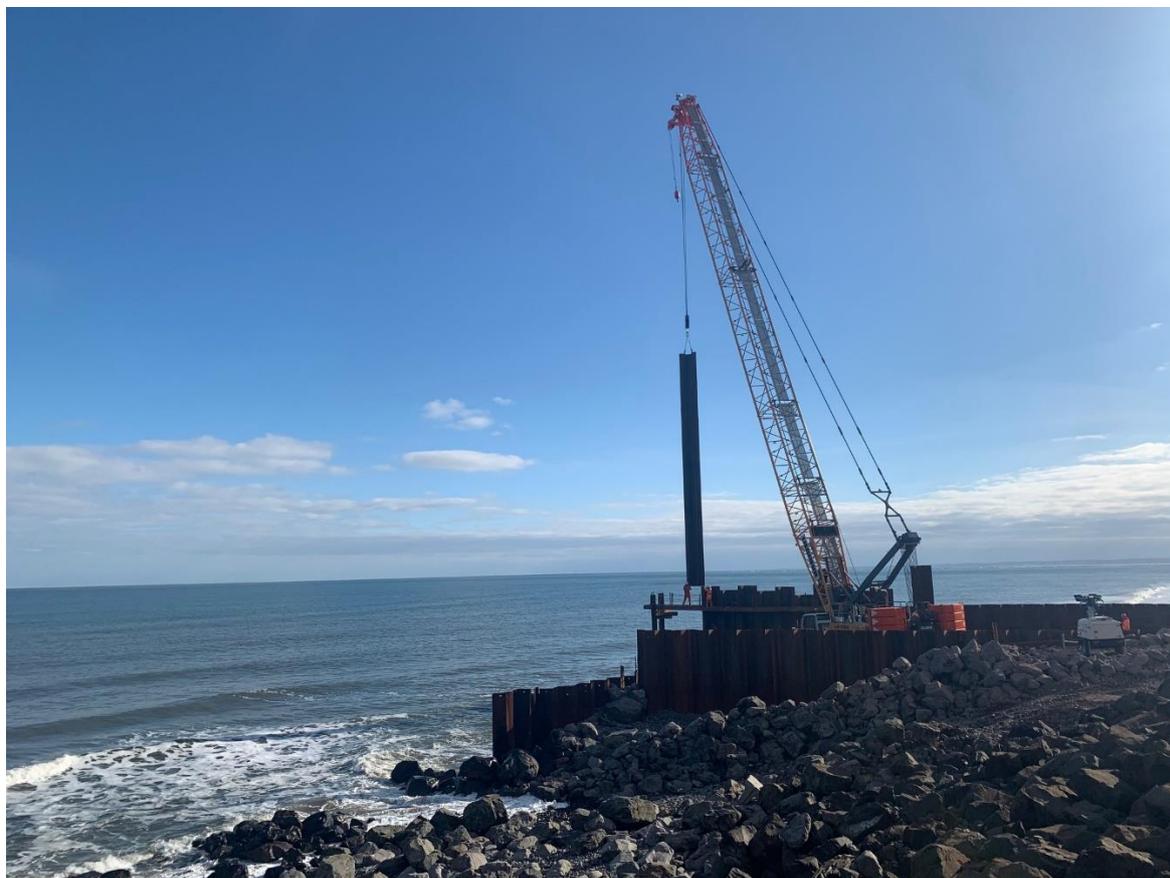
Alan Hunter – Manager, Development Standards

CASE STUDY 2: Seagreen grid connection – making a difference

Location and Dates:	
Virtual – March – June 2021	
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Quality of service and engagement • Governance 	
Key Markers (please select all that apply):	
2, 3, and 12	
Key Areas of Work (please select the main area of work covered - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development management process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning applications
Stakeholders Involved (please select the main stakeholders - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority planning staff • Authority other staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning committee • Applicant
Overview:	
<p>This was a proposal for a high voltage electricity connection to serve the Seagreen offshore windfarm. It involved a number of applications to provide a cable route over 19km between Carnoustie and Tealing, as well as the construction of a sizeable extension to the existing electricity sub-station at Tealing.</p> <p>A previous application was withdrawn prior to determination given emerging issues regarding the requirement for submission of additional environmental information.</p> <p>The service facilitated discussion with the applicant to scope the nature and extent of additional information required to support further applications. That discussion was informed through engagement with relevant council service departments to reduce the potential requirement for submission of additional information during the application process.</p> <p>The submitted applications required consideration of a wide range of issues related to amenity and environmental impacts, including issues in relation to potential impact on internationally significant conservation interests at Barry Links; impacts on the Carnoustie golf courses; and impacts associated with electro-magnetic fields. They required liaison with a range of bodies to consider the significance of those impacts and the potential to secure mitigation. However, the pre-application engagement, and procedures put in place with internal consultees in particular, assisted greatly in allowing consultees to provide detailed</p>	

responses in a relatively short period of time having regard to COVID restrictions.

The applications were subsequently reported to committee in a manner that allowed our elected members to understand the impacts associated with a nationally significant development proposal and to make a positive decision in a transparent manner.



Goals:

The principle goals were: -

- to provide constructive pre-application engagement to minimise delay in the associated application process
- to facilitate early discussion with consultees to minimise delay in the application determination process
- to provide an effective and efficient decision-making process for a nationally significant development during pandemic restrictions

Outcomes:

The applications were accompanied by the information necessary to enable consultees to provide relatively prompt responses having regard to COVID restrictions.

Council officers worked with the applicant to ensure provision of information that would assist in reporting complex development proposals to the council's development standards committee in a manner that would assist elected members to understand likely impacts and associated mitigation measures.

The applications were subsequently reported to committee within a timescale of

little more than 3-months that was agreed with the applicant. The applications were approved by the development standards committee in accordance with officers' recommendations.

The approved development forms an integral part of a £3bn development that is Scotland's largest infrastructure project. It will generate power for over 1 million homes, create in the region of 400 jobs, and is estimated to bring £1bn+ economic benefit to the country.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mjGip3WzzY>

Seagreen - *We appreciate that Covid-19 and the health emergency is the priority for councillors and planning meetings have had to be moved online. We would like to put on record our thanks for the smooth running of the Committee as a virtual meeting. We note the professional manner of the handling of the applications by your officers throughout the planning process and at the Development Standards Committee.*

Name of key officer

Alan Hunter – Manager, Development Standards

CASE STUDY 3: Duriehill, Edzell – making good places

Location and Dates:	
Various locations, including virtual Initial developer contact/follow up guidance - January 2017 - February 2017 Pre-application discussions – 2020 and planning permission – 2021	
Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Quality of service and engagement • Governance • Culture of continuous improvement 	
Key Markers (please select all that apply):	
1, 3, 6, 11, 12, and 15	
Key Areas of Work (please select the main area of work covered):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design & Placemaking • Process improvement • Interdisciplinary working 	
Stakeholders Involved (please select the main stakeholders):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer • Authority Planning Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Other Staff • Key Agencies
Overview:	
<p>High quality development on the ground is a key aspiration of both national and local planning policies. The council continues to see improvement in outcomes being delivered with closer working between council services and developers at the site delivery stage being a key aspect of this. The preparation of development briefs, Supplementary Guidance and pre-application discussions are tools which the council use to raise the standards of design.</p> <p>The Angus Local Development Plan (2016) identifies land for 50 housing units in Edzell and sets out the council's intention to prepare a development brief for the site. The council's procedure for development briefs required significant staff input in preparing the brief and presenting a draft and a finalised version to a council committee. This procedure impacted on staff resources and overall timescale involved in publishing a finalised brief.</p> <p>Early developer interest in the Edzell site led to an initial meeting between the developer and council planning officers to discuss LDP policy requirements and site-specific issues. This identified the need for more pragmatic approach to the lengthy development brief process to provide the developer with clarity on site specific policy requirements to enable these to be factored into site acquisition and development costs. It was recognised that matters normally set out in a development brief could be established through discussions with relevant council services and that providing this level of detail had become a common aspect of pre-application discussions. It was agreed that development guidance could be prepared setting out detailed development requirements including site specific design principles and developer contributions to provide clarity for the developer on what was expected.</p>	

The guidance was subsequently prepared and issued to the developer within 2 weeks of the initial contact. The document included an analysis of the site and the surrounding development pattern and townscape and was prepared by the area planning officer in consultation with other council services and Scottish Water. Input from other services including Parks and Landscape, Housing, Roads (transport and flooding teams) and Environmental Health ensured a joined - up approach to tackling issues and allowed successful solutions to be identified. This included addressing the proximity of a wastewater treatment facility and green network opportunities.

Amongst other things, the guidance identified an opportunity to co-locate structural landscaping, open space, and SUDs to provide multifunctional open space and for these to be linked to existing paths and natural features to create a green network. The space could provide for a range of recreational activities and create wildlife benefits whilst providing an effective buffer to the wastewater treatment facility. This outcome enabled policy requirements relating to green infrastructure, odour mitigation and residential amenity to be satisfied whilst making efficient use of undevelopable land within the site. This created greater flexibility elsewhere in the site helping support development viability. Furthermore, the guidance identified opportunity to provide new open space adjacent to an existing small play area located on the site boundary to improve its functionality and enhance place quality.

Additionally, the guidance sought to assist the developer with early design concepts, help inform community engagement undertaken by the developer as part of the pre-application consultation process and help shape the design and layout of a future planning application.

The planning application subsequently submitted for residential development was reported to and approved by the councils Development Standards Committee. The development proposed satisfied the key requirements set out in the guidance and required only minor amendment, enabling it to be considered relatively quickly despite the impact of Covid on the councils committee meetings and consultation responses. The guidance document played a key role in shaping the proposed development and securing a design which complements the character and townscape of the village and successfully integrates green infrastructure to create green network opportunities with community and wildlife benefits.

Goals:

Active interest in developing a site allocated in LDP required a pragmatic approach to development brief process to facilitate development delivery. This approach sought to:

- Streamline the development brief process and timescales to support development delivery.
- Timeously prepare site specific development guidance to assist the developer identify site development costs and constraints.

- Expand upon the LDP policy through consultation with relevant council services and stakeholders to provide clarity on site specific development requirements and minimise timescale for planning application.
- Provide certainty and a positive customer experience through effective communication of specific development and design principles and supporting information requirements
- Help shape the design process and ensure provision of a high-quality development consistent with the council's policies and objectives for good place-making
- Ensure all council services were working together to deliver good placemaking and positive outcomes.

Outcomes:

We provided integrated guidance, policy requirements and likely requirements identified by consultation bodies at short notice which:

- offered a degree of certainty, enabling the developer to make informed decisions about site acquisition and development proposals to be formulated.
- informed the submission of a planning application requiring only minor amendment enabling quick decision making.

We have helped shape detailed development proposals and creation of a place which:

- respects the village grid iron street pattern and provides a perimeter block style layout with good connections to the surrounding area,
- provides a range of house types and sizes of a design and appearance appropriate for a village setting and includes affordable housing
- provides a layout that provides substantial multi – purpose open space and ensures natural surveillance of public areas and routes
- integrates and enhances green infrastructure to create a connected multifunctional green network with recreational, place quality and wildlife benefits.

We worked across council services to ensure matters were considered in a holistic manner and delivered successful outcomes which:

- addressed site constraints in a manner that supported development viability
- integrated site infrastructure, landscaping and open space to enhance green network opportunities and place quality for future residents and the wider community.

This pragmatic approach has demonstrated the council's commitment to improving processes to support development delivery and reducing timescales, delivering high quality outcomes, and to quality of service and engagement.

The value of the collaborative and interdisciplinary approach is something that the council is working to develop and embed within its pre-application advice service for major development proposals.





Name of key officer

Frances Loffreda – Planning Officer (Development Plans)

CASE STUDY 4: Former Strathmartine Hospital – making things happen

Location and Dates:	
Council offices, Strathmartine hospital, and virtual – various 2019 and 2020	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Quality of service and engagement • Governance 	
Key Markers (please select all that apply):	
2, 3, 12, and 14	
Key Areas of Work (please select the main area of work covered - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary Working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Working
Stakeholders Involved (please select the main stakeholders - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority planning staff • Authority other staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowner/ developer
Overview:	
<p>This was a proposal for 224 dwellings on the site of the former Strathmartine Hospital. The site contains important listed buildings but has lain vacant for several years, blighting the local environment, and has been a target for vandalism and arson at significant cost to the public purse. The principle of redeveloping the site for housing has previously been established, but there has been limited interest in taking it forward for development.</p> <p>The planning service facilitated meetings with a wide range of stakeholders including the prospective landowner, council service departments, and external bodies with a direct interest in the site, including Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Those meetings allowed free and frank discussion regarding barriers to development and allowed parties to agree a shared vision for delivery of the site and to identify key outcomes that were necessary for all parties to see a successful development. Agreement on those matters ensured subsequent discussion was focused on resolving the issues of greatest importance.</p> <p>In particular, the planning service led discussion between relevant parties on matters related to potential impact on education infrastructure; means for delivery of affordable housing; and detail of road/pedestrian network connections between the site and the surrounding area. This included review of housing numbers having regard to the school estate, reviewing optimal affordable housing delivery models given the location and characteristics of the site; and leading discussion with roads and transport colleagues regarding necessary pedestrian and public transport improvements. The initial stakeholder meeting ensured all parties were working towards the common goal of removing barriers to development, providing developer certainty, and delivering a high-quality development.</p>	

The discussion allowed the prospective landowner to have greater certainty regarding developer contributions and enabling works that would be required to facilitate redevelopment of the site.

This resulted in submission of an application to modify the terms of the existing permission.

Goals:

The collaborative and interdisciplinary working model sought to: -

- address barriers to the regeneration and redevelopment of the site;
- secure the retention and enhancement of important built and natural heritage interests, including significant listed buildings on the buildings at risk register;
- ensure all council services are working together with a common goal and understanding of desired outcomes;
- provide certainty and a positive customer experience through effective communication of advice, information requirements and timescales, and one-stop meetings with relevant council officers;
- ensure provision of a financially viable development with a realistic prospect of delivery.

Outcomes:

A further application for planning permission in principle was subsequently submitted accompanied by relevant supporting information regarding development viability and specific details of certain matters that were previously addressed by planning conditions. The revised application provided a development proposal that the prospective landowner is confident could be financed and delivered.

The revised proposal is compatible with requirements identified by the council and relevant consultation bodies. It makes provision for retention of an important listed building; it will deliver 28 affordable housing units on site along with additional financial contribution of £784k towards affordable housing provision in the area; it will deliver improvements to footways in the wider area; and it will provide a contribution of over £1m towards improvement of education infrastructure.

The application was reported to and approved by council in accordance with officer recommendation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkKwxOwSwQE>

Positive discussion is ongoing with prospective developers regarding development of the site.

Ryden Planning - *Very many thanks for your efforts and the presentation this morning - I know how much work goes into these applications and it is appreciated.*

Name of key officer

Alan Hunter – Manager, Development Standards

CASE STUDY 5: Pitairlie Quarry Monikie – making things better

Location and Dates:	
Virtual and Pitairlie Quarry Monikie – various 2020	
Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to (please select all that apply):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of outcomes • Quality of service and engagement • Governance • Continuous improvement 	
Key Markers (please select all that apply):	
1, 3, 4, 6, and 12	
Key Areas of Work (please select the main area of work covered - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management Processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Improvement
Stakeholders Involved (please select the main stakeholders - 1 to 2 options maximum):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning Staff • Authority Other Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant
Overview:	
<p>This was a proposal for extension to an existing sandstone quarry to allow extraction over a 50-year period. The business is one of few in Scotland producing sandstone product suitable for use in building construction.</p> <p>Previous proposals relating to the site had attracted significant levels of public interest and concern. Dealing with those matters involved regular and repeated request for the applicant to provide information to address issues that were raised through the application process. This was inefficient for all parties involved with frequent need to review additional information that was submitted both by the applicant and by those making representations. It placed significant burden on planning staff and on other local authority staff involved in the application process. It resulted in significant delay in the determination of proposals and frustration on the part of all parties involved, in particular the applicant, those making representation, and staff consulted on the proposal.</p> <p>When approached about a possible extension to the site, the planning service was keen to learn from and avoid inefficiency associated with the process surrounding previous proposals at the site. While previous processes had not been particularly efficient, they had allowed the collection of information that was useful to help inform the likely impact of the new development proposal. The service facilitated discussion between the prospective applicant and relevant consultation bodies to identify the scope and extent of information that would be required to accompany the application. and agreed timescales for its submission.</p> <p>The subsequent application was accompanied by a full suite of information and required submission of very limited additional information to allow a determination to be made.</p>	



Goals:

The key goal in relation to this was to learn from previous experience and to manage the application process to deliver an effective and efficient process to the benefit of the applicant, interested parties, and relevant consultation bodies.

Outcomes:

The application was submitted and determined in a period of little more than 3 months.

The application required consideration of a wide range of issues related to amenity and environmental impacts, and liaison with a range of bodies to consider the significance of those impacts and the potential to secure mitigation. That process was undertaken in a virtual environment given the restrictions associated with COVID-19. While the proposal attracted significant public interest with members of the community expressing both support and opposition, very little additional information was required through the application process, reducing delay and inconvenience for all parties.

The proposal provides for restoration of an existing area of quarry workings and secures long-term restoration of the wider quarry area to provide habitat improvement.

The application was reported to a virtual meeting of the development standards committee within a timescale agreed with the applicant having regard to business needs. A complex development proposal was presented to elected members in a manner that allowed them to make an informed decision. The application was approved in accordance with officer's recommendation.

The approved quarry extension provides potential for extraction of stone with a value in the region of £100m; it helps secure the future of the business and associated employment; it provides a source of local stone for the building industry; and it provides economic benefit to the wider Angus area.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-F3Qn8rAJs>

Denfind Stone - *We were extremely impressed with the responsiveness and willingness that was shown dealing with such a major development proposal, particularly whilst we were all having to try and deal with the challenges a global pandemic presented. In short, we cannot fault the Planning Service, the application was dealt with efficiently, effectively and within the timeframes set out.*

Name of key officer

Alan Hunter – Manager, Development Standards

Part 2: Supporting Evidence

Part 1 of this report was compiled, drawing on evidence from the following sources:

- [TAYplan Strategic Development Plan publications](#)
- [Angus Community Planning Partnership Local Outcomes Improvement Plan](#)
- [Angus Community Planning Partnership Locality Plans](#)
- [Angus Development Plan Scheme 2020](#)
- [Angus Local Development Plan 2016](#)
- [Angus Local Development Plan Action Programme \(2020 update\)](#)
- [Development Delivery Database](#)
- [Angus Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing supplementary Guidance 2018](#)
- [Angus Design Quality and Placemaking Supplementary Guidance 2018](#)
- [Planning Advice Notes](#)
- [Angus Housing Land Audit 2020](#)
- [Angus Employment Land Audit 2020](#)
- [Development Management Online Information](#)
- [Angus Council Climate Change Information](#)
- [Scottish Government Planning Authority Performance Statistics](#)
- [Tay Cities Deal Information](#)
- [Angus Council Local Housing Strategy](#)
- [Angus Planning Enforcement Charter 2021](#)
- [Angus Employment Land Audit 2020](#)
- [Angus Biodiversity Information](#)
- [Angus Council Engagement Hub](#)
- [Schedule of Council Meetings](#)
- [Report on Local Development Plan Action Programme Update](#)
- [Report on Angus Development Plan Scheme](#)

Checklist for Part 2: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service	Case Study
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of outcomes	1, 2, and 3
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of service and engagement	1, 2, and 3
<input type="checkbox"/> Governance	1, 2 and 3
<input type="checkbox"/> Culture of Continuous Improvement	1 and 4
Key Area of Work	Case Study
<input type="checkbox"/> Design	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Regeneration	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	2, 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Greenspace	
<input type="checkbox"/> Town Centres	
<input type="checkbox"/> Masterplanning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Local Development Plan & SG	3 and 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Supply	3 and 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing	3 and 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development	2 and 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Enforcement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Management Processes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Applications	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Interdisciplinary Working	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Working	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Engagement	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Placemaking	3 and 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Charrettes	
<input type="checkbox"/> Place Standard	
<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Monitoring	
<input type="checkbox"/> Process Improvement	1 and 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Management	2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Skills Sharing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Training	
<input type="checkbox"/> Online Systems	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Transport	
<input type="checkbox"/> Active Travel	

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Case Study 5: Pitairlie Quarry Monikie	34

Part 3: Service Improvements

Service improvement 2020/2021	Progress and evidence	
Undertake a review of the Planning and Communities service in line with the OD/ZBB budgeting principles and to support more effective integration across teams	The full service review was not progressed as a council wide Directorate review was undertaken. This has now resulted in a change in structures which will bring Planning and Economic Development together in a new service, with the Communities teams moving to a new service. The review of the service will therefore not now take place at this current time.	Green
Ensure maximum coverage of Development Plan and Placemaking engagement activity as part of the Plan preparation.	Partially complete – revision of programme for progression of next plan means this improvement will continue into the next reporting period.	Yellow
Up-skilling our planning support staff to undertake a greater role in validation of applications	Planning support staff are now responsible for validation of all householder applications. We will continue to investigate opportunities for them to undertake additional tasks in the validation process.	Green
Implementation of Enterprise module in Uniform system to improve efficiency of processing planning applications	Delayed due to COVID response. Carry forward when circumstances allow.	Yellow
Introduce Design Review Panel as part of implementation of Design and Placemaking Supplementary Guidance, Mainstreaming Placemaking	Initial work piloted in relation to major development proposals, but implementation delayed due to COVID response. Carry forward when circumstances allow.	Yellow
Review and digitise customer satisfaction approach associated with development management	Delayed due to COVID response. Carry forward when circumstances allow.	Yellow
Developing the use of digital and virtual technology for planning application site visits	Completed. Majority of site visits now undertaken using publicly accessible data sources and augmented by digital imagery provided by applicants where appropriate.	Green

Move presentation of land audits/ floorspace surveys onto digital GIS platform	Delayed due to Covid 19. Spatial Data for Place Coordination working group setup to provide a framework for coordination of the spatial data requirements of place related functions/activities across the Council, focussing on the design and resourcing of technical and data requirements and solutions.
Investigate potential for model for cocreation of digital programme for LDP engagement with pupils/ young people	Delayed due to Covid as presented challenges in bringing young people together against other priorities. Focus group already scheduled for forthcoming year.

Service improvement for 2021/2022	Why?
Review and implement a revised team structure within the planning service	To provide increased focus on delivery of the local development plan with potential to provide expert input from dedicated environmental and climate change specialists, and to examine scope to integrate economic development activity within the planning process
Review staff complement/remit and consider potential for climate change specialists	To allow the planning service to coordinate climate change response
Make enforcement case information available online	Improve public access to information
Ensure maximum coverage of Development Plan and Placemaking engagement activity as part of the Plan preparation.	Partially complete – revision of programme for progression of next plan means this improvement has continued from the previous reporting period. Creation of a programme of participation to support the preparation of the evidence report and embedding a place coordination approach to planning and delivery of spatial projects.
Up-skilling planning support staff to undertake a greater role in validation of applications	To reduce officer involvement in the validation process and make the validation process quicker and more efficient – progress made in 2019/20 but carried forward
Implementation of Enterprise module in Uniform system to improve efficiency of processing planning applications	To reduce the requirement for manual intervention in the different stages in the processing of an application – carried forward from 2019/20
Introduce Design Review Panel as part of implementation of Design	To provide quicker, more holistic, and more effective comment on proposals at an early stage, along with suggestions for design improvements with the overall

and Placemaking Supplementary Guidance, Mainstreaming Placemaking	aim of improving the quality of development on the ground. Carried forward from 2019/20 – pilot work undertaken but implementation affected by COVID 19 response.
Review and digitise customer satisfaction approach associated with development management	To encourage increased response to our survey in order that we better understand customer experience/perception of our service
Move preparation and presentation of land audits/ floorspace surveys onto spatial/digital platforms	Delayed due to Covid 19. Relates to progress with creation of Spatial Data for Place Coordination working group to provide a framework for coordination of the spatial data requirements of place related functions/activities across the Council, focussing on the design and resourcing of technical and data requirements and solutions. Changes to data collection processes will assist with building business resilience for the future and release staff time for other work.
Investigate potential for model for cocreation of digital programme for LDP engagement with pupils/ young people	Continued from last year. Work with communities team to embed awareness of involvement in local democracy into youth programmes utilising the opportunities presented by participation in LDP preparation and other spatial projects.
Redesign development planning webpages and work with colleagues to investigation engagement hub	To provide clarity for businesses and residents, supporting more collaboration and input on plan making and implementation.

Part 4: National Headline Indicators (NHI)

A: NHI Key outcomes - Development Planning:

Development Planning	2020-21	2019-20
Local and Strategic Development Planning:		
Age of strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period	3 years 6 months	2 years 6 months
Age of local development plan(s) at end of reporting period	4 years 6 months	3 years 6 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5 th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	N	N
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	Y	Y
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	N	Y
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs¹		
Established housing land supply	3462 units	3469 units
5-year effective housing land supply programming	2061 units	1939 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	2788 units	2991 units
5-year housing supply target	1550 units	1550 units
5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)	6.6 years	6.3 years
Housing approvals	604 units	601 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	1449 units	1366 units
Marketable employment land supply	125.78 ha	167.14 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	2.2 ha	0 ha

¹ Based on Draft 2021 Housing Land Audit & 2020 Employment Land Audit

B: NHI Key outcomes – Development Management:

Development Management:	2020-21	2019-20
Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	46.8% 269	41.6% 279
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	50% 2	100% 1
Decision Making		
Application approval rate	97.3%	98.4%
Delegation rate	97.0%	96.3%
Validation	n/a	n/a
Decision-making Timescales		
Major Developments	25.6 weeks	14.7 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	7.2 weeks	7.3 weeks
Householder developments	5.8 weeks	6.1 weeks
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	1	3
Number remaining	5	5

C: Enforcement activity

	2020-21	2019-20
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed	0 months	12 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	62	123
Breaches identified – no further action taken	3	19
Cases closed	26	171
Notices served	11	30
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

D: NHI Key Outcomes – Commentary

The council's performance dealing with applications timeously remains better than the Scottish average and generally in the upper quartile for key indicators. That is despite long-term staff absence and short-term absence as part of staff redeployment associated with the council's COVID-19 response.

Average timescales for dealing with major applications has increased but remains significantly better than the Scottish average. Applications were generally determined within timescales agreed with applicants. Performance remains strong.

Average timescales for dealing with householder applications has improved slightly during the reporting period and remains significantly better than the Scottish average and in the top quartile. This improved performance is despite long-term absence of a staff member on maternity leave. We have reconfigured officers work areas to manage workload associated with that absence. Performance remains strong.

Average timescales for dealing with local non-householder applications have reduced in comparison to the previous reporting period. Performance remains significantly better than the Scottish average and in the top quartile. This improvement is due in part to continued focus on more proportionate use of site visits and standardised or template style reports of handling.

COVID-19 restrictions have in some circumstances affected the ability of applicants to submit information in a timely manner. The council has utilised processing agreement and extension of time arrangements to manage the associated process.

Performance across all development types remains strong and compares favourably with Scottish average figures.

There is continued use of planning processing agreements to deal with additional information requirements for major and local applications. The use of processing agreements to effectively manage application timescales is promoted on our website and actively pursued by case officers where appropriate. Teamleaders within the Development Management Section undertake regular caseload reviews with officers to ensure progress of applications is positively managed. Information on timescales for determination of applications is regularly reviewed and distributed to development management officers to monitor and maintain focus on performance.

The application approval rate is in excess of 97%. This demonstrates that the council's published guidance is helpful in allowing applicants to prepare proposals that are acceptable; it demonstrates the value of our pre-application service; and demonstrates the effectiveness of officers in negotiating improvements that allow proposals to be approved. The council has an up to date S43A scheme of delegation. and 97% of applications were delegated during the reporting period demonstrating effective and proportionate decision making.

The enforcement charter was reviewed, updated and submitted to Scottish Ministers in March 2021. It is up-to-date and less than 2-years old.

The council seeks to promote electronic reporting of suspected breaches of planning control and has developed an online reporting tool. Fewer cases were formally recorded within the reporting period as the council adopted a proportionate approach having regard to government advice associated with COVID-19.

Progress reviewing and closing legacy enforcement cases has been adversely impacted by staff vacancy, and COVID-19 staff redeployment and travel restrictions. However, closure of legacy cases remains a priority and should be addressed with recruitment and training of new staff.

The council continues to seek resolution of enforcement cases through negotiation but has successfully defended a number of enforcement appeals during the year.

The adopted Angus Local Development Plan 2016 remains up to date and is in line with the TAYplan Strategic Development Plan (2016 – 2026). The decision to prepare a 'new style' LDP under the 2019 Act was made late in 2019 and set out in the DPS (September 2020).

As well as concerns about meeting the timescales for continuing with preparation of a replacement plan under the 1997 Act, it was recognised that emphasis of the new planning system is on placemaking and development delivery rather than constant, process-driven plan making. In these circumstances, it was determined there would be greater benefit in preparing a plan under the new legislative framework, removing the risk of having to immediately prepare a further new plan following adoption of the replacement. A new style plan will also result in closer alignment with national and strategic priorities including the NPF4 and other key local authority outputs, such as the next Angus Local Housing Strategy due to be replaced by 2022.

The Participation Statement included in the DPS would normally set out how, when and with whom engagement opportunities will be developed. Delays in the publication of secondary legislation which will guide the new planning system has hindered the ability to develop a participation statement, but we intend to work with stakeholders over the coming months to achieve this. We propose to prepare further updates of our DPS as necessary to reflect the changing situation and these will outline the provisions for engagement supporting the preparation of an Evidence Report for submission next year and a Proposed Plan thereafter.

Part 5: Official Statistics

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

Timescales		2020-21	2019-20
Overall			
Major developments	4	25.6 weeks	14.7 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	198	7.2 weeks	7.3 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	80.8%	6.3 weeks	6.6 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	19.2%	10.7 weeks	10.7 weeks
Householder developments	242	5.8 weeks	6.1 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	95.5%	5.6 weeks	5.9 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	4.5%	10.7 weeks	9.5 weeks
Housing Developments			
Major	2	36.1 weeks	9.7 weeks
Local housing developments	82	7.4 weeks	6.6 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	76.8%	6.4 weeks	6.3 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	23.2%	10.5 weeks	9.5 weeks
Business and Industry			
Major	0	0 weeks	0 weeks
Local business and industry developments	62	6.8 weeks	7.4 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	83.9%	6.1 weeks	6.7 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	16.1%	10.3 weeks	11.9 weeks
EIA Developments	0	0 weeks	0 weeks
Other Consents	?	? weeks	6 weeks
Planning/legal agreements			
• Major: average time	2	25.6 weeks	14.7 weeks
• Local: average time	0	0 weeks	6.8 weeks

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2020-21		2019-20	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	5	3	60	3	42.9
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	1	0	0	2	66.7

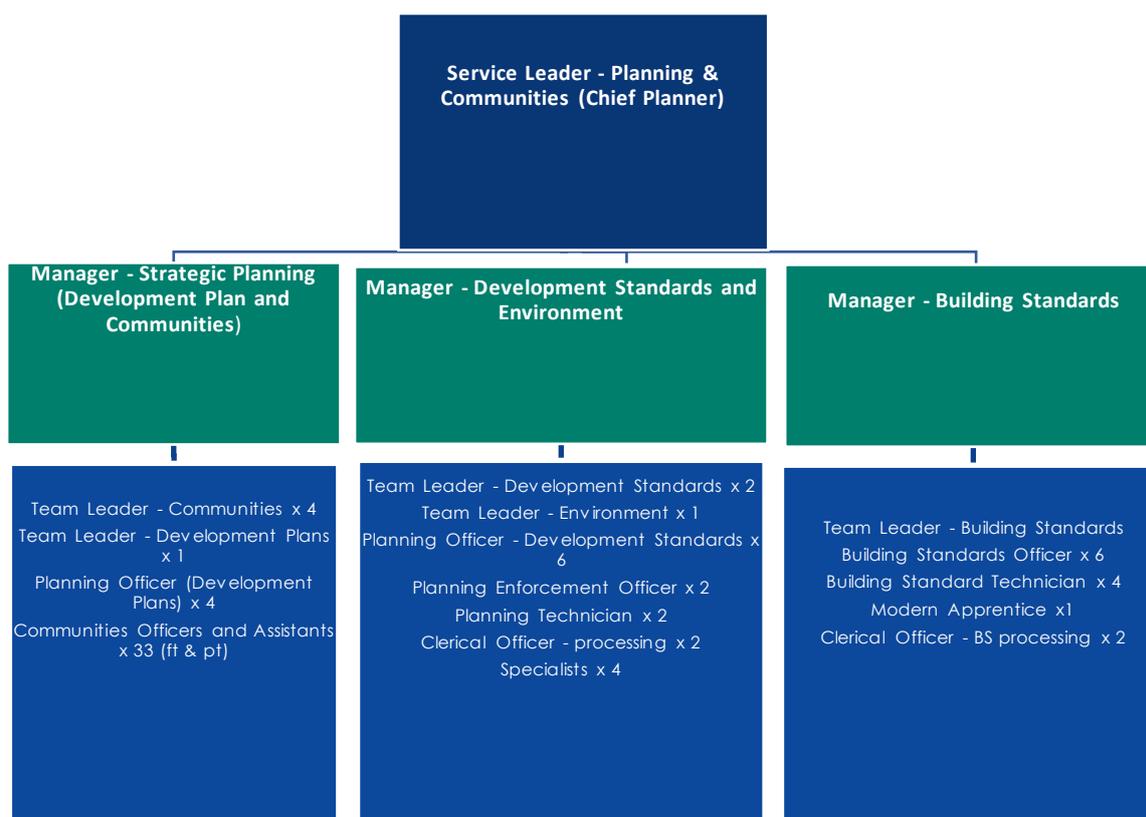
Part 6: Workforce Information

	Tier 1 Chief Executive	Tier 2 Director	Tier 3 Head of Service	Tier 4 Manager
Angus Council Equivalent role	Chief Executive	Depute Chief Exec	Director	Service Leader
Head of Planning Service				x

Staff Age Profile	2020/21
Under 30	1
30-39	6
40-49	11
50 and over	7

RTPI Chartered Staff	Headcount
Staff with MRTPI	17
Other RTPI affiliation	2 x licentiate

Planning Service Structure:



The Service Leader is the council's Chief Planner and has three managers covering development management and environment, building standards, and development planning and local community planning within the portfolio. During

the reporting period a manager post was vacant (maternity leave) for 4 months, one team leader post was vacant for the full year, another was vacant for 5 months, several officer posts have been vacant and remain so, whilst a technician post was vacant (maternity leave) for 12 months. In addition to those listed, there are other staff who support the day to day operation of the service including business support staff and digital/ technical colleagues who are not directly employed by the planning service. Communities and building standards staff are not included in the above information.

Part 7: Planning Committee Information

Committee and Site Visits	Number per year
Full Council Meetings ¹	1
Planning committees	7
Area Committees	-
Committee Site Visits	0
Local Review Body	7
LRB Site Visits	6

¹The number of meetings where a specific 'planning' matter was considered.