

Development Services
Planning Performance Framework
Annual Report 2022–23



**Clackmannanshire
Council**

www.clacks.gov.uk

Comhairle Siorrachd
Chlach Mhanann



Cover photograph: Goldcrest Mural, Alloa Town Centre
created by artist Michael Corr

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Introduction

This is Clackmannanshire Council's Annual Report on its Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for Development Services. This Annual Report represents a summary of the services provided by the Council on planning related matters.

Measurement of performance in PPF submission has historically focussed on speed of decision making on planning applications and time periods for up to date development plans.

The Council continues to maintain its pace of application decision making, and continues to provide free of charge and punctual feedback on general and pre-application enquiries, applications and other submissions, all in accordance with our Customer Charter. A continued focus on speed of decision making and the willingness to engage early on development proposals with applicants and other customers without financial charge have been seen as important to the successful delivery of the Planning and Building Standards service of Clackmannanshire Council, despite time and budgetary pressures.

In past PPF's Clackmannanshire Council has also taken the opportunity to highlight work relating to placemaking and partnership work.

This latest PPF continues to demonstrate that continued commitment, by placing greater focus on the wider non-statutory work of the Planning service.

Not only does Clackmannanshire Council's planning service perform well against National Performance Indicators, it goes above and beyond its statutory functions and is integral to the wider place based approach of the Council's Be the Future Transformation Programme.

Clackmannanshire has many positive attributes, such as its central position within Scotland, vibrant towns and areas of great natural beauty. However, it also has pockets of acute deprivation and the area suffers from low job density. The Council is working with a wide range of partners to address these issues and ensure that all of its residents have equal access to work and can live healthy and fulfilling lives.

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal is bringing significant levels of investment to the area, a new Wellbeing Hub is being built in Alloa and there is a great deal of interest at a national level in the way the public, private and third sectors are working together with communities; creating a Wellbeing Economy through adopting local economic development approaches such as Community Wealth Building and building services around people to improve outcomes with initiatives such as Family Wellbeing Partnership and STRIVE. The investment strategy recently approved by the Council identifies a set of projects and initiatives to which future funding should be directed to maximise outcomes for our local people.

The role that place has to play in making all of this happen is well understood in Clackmannanshire which is why Alloa was chosen to become one of the first towns to take part in the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme. For the last 18 months, this project has been mapping out the extensive place based work that is happening at a local level and is measuring our work against the nationally recognised Place and Wellbeing Outcomes. This ensures that that place and wellbeing considerations are built into all of our

key strategies and projects from the outset. In addition a new placemaking post has been created to further embed the Place Principle in the Council's investment and service delivery.

The Planning service's role in driving forward positive change is recognised at the most senior levels of the Council and within our partner organisations.



Part 1 – Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

1. Quality of Outcomes

a. High Quality Development on the Ground

These case studies highlight how the Planning Service is able to design and deliver transformational place-based projects that support health and well-being, contribute to the quality and enjoyment of the built and natural environment, enhance the local economy and the quality of our towns and villages as places to live in and visit. They help to demonstrate;

- How the Planning Service goes above and beyond its statutory functions and is committed to supporting a wider place based approach;

- How the Planning Service is committed to partnership working with aligned communities, the third sector and public partners to deliver improvements;
- How the Planning Service adds value through design expertise, stakeholder engagement, seeing the “bigger picture” within which discrete projects lie and making sure they deliver on multiple priorities;
- How the projects align with the Council’s strategic objectives such that all of its residents can live healthy and fulfilling lives

CASE STUDY 1 – Living Alloa

The Council’s Planning Service led on the planning and delivery of Living Alloa; a multi-award winning project to redevelop a derelict town centre site to provide dementia friendly housing and deliver a set of place-based interventions around it to support town centre living and transform the streetscape.

When the Council decided to redevelop a vacant site on Primrose Street, in the centre of Alloa for housing to suit older people and those with underlying health conditions, the planners realised that

to be successful, the development needed to achieve excellence in design, deliver a high quality living environment, and be supported by changes within the surrounding townscape to ensure a safe and welcoming place for all.

Working with A&DS and Kingdom Housing Association (the Council’s RSL partner), the Planning Service hosted a workshop at the pre-application stage involving a range of stakeholders, including built environment professionals, but also health and

social care and dementia design specialists. These workshops helped to identify a package of design interventions to benefit elderly residents and those with dementia. Elements such as mobility scooter charging points, wide cloister deck access, safe and inclusive garden spaces and dual aspect flats supported internal dementia design features that were built into every apartment. The design of the buildings also evolved through this process to

recreate a perimeter block pattern, better address street frontages and respond appropriately to the site's conservation area setting. As a result of the planners facilitating the front-loading of this expertise into the pre-application design stages, the subsequent planning application was approved well within the statutory time period.



Primrose Street flats

Alongside this work, planners also engaged directly with the local voluntary and business communities to carry out extensive public consultation, (including use of the Place Standard tool), which helped identify key priorities for change in the wider town centre. Informed by results of this engagement, the Council's Planning team co-designed a set of projects with these third sector and business partners that dove-tailed with the housing development. These included opening up narrow lanes, making road crossings easier, creating new social spaces and re-purposing a closed public toilet as a new town centre hub. Opportunities for public art were also built into the project, to help embed a sense of place and pride. These wider projects were delivered using Scottish Government town centre regeneration funds, alongside the development of the new flats.

The flats are now complete and occupied and the associated projects that make up Living Alloa have also been successfully completed. The town centre hub is called "Alloa Hub" and is operated by a community interest company jointly managed by business and third sectors. This body grew directly out of the co-production stage of the projects, and which, on its own, represents a great example of community wealth building in action. The Hub is also home to the Clackmannashire Tapestry, which is part of the Great Tapestry of Scotland.



Alloa Hub

The Primrose Street development won the Town Centre Living Award at Scotland Loves Local Awards 2022. The wider Living Alloa project won the Improving Scotland's Places Award at the SURF Awards 2022, and was short-listed in the RTPi Scotland Awards for Planning Excellence 2022. The Alloa Hub won the Sustainability Award at the Stirling Society of Architects Awards 2023.

The SURF judges said they *"were inspired with the place-based approach in Alloa that rejected a quick physical makeover in favour of a 'forever' project that is rooted in delivering positive long-term outcomes for people and place. Strong local leadership has nurtured community and business support through a clear strategic plan to address local needs and opportunities."*



In May 2023, colleagues from the City of Stavanger in Norway, visited Alloa, Clackmannanshire to gain insights around use of the Place Standard Tool in Scotland. The visit was planned with Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Government, who specifically brought the delegation to Alloa to see first hand an exemplar of the use of the Place Standard tool in action. The Christel Dahl, the Public Health & Planning manager from Stavanger said *“We so much enjoyed the walk in Alloa! What a fantastic place. It made such an impact seeing and experiencing Alloa after being introduced to different projects through the presentations. It*

simultaneously made us aware how having the results from a Place Standard Tool, made it easy to implement quick and visual changes in Alloa.” More can be found out about the project and visit on Architecture & Design Scotland’s website:

- <https://www.ads.org.uk/blog/place-standard-tool-norwegian-colleagues-visit-scotland>
- <https://www.ads.org.uk/blog/town-centre-living-primrose-street-alloa>



Visit to Alloa by delegates from City of Stavanger

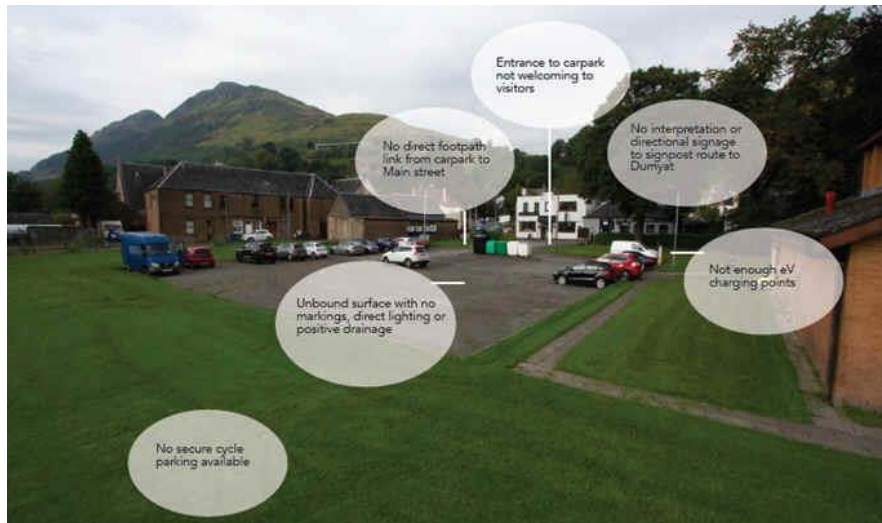


Part of the Clackmannanshire Tapestry housed at Alloa Hub

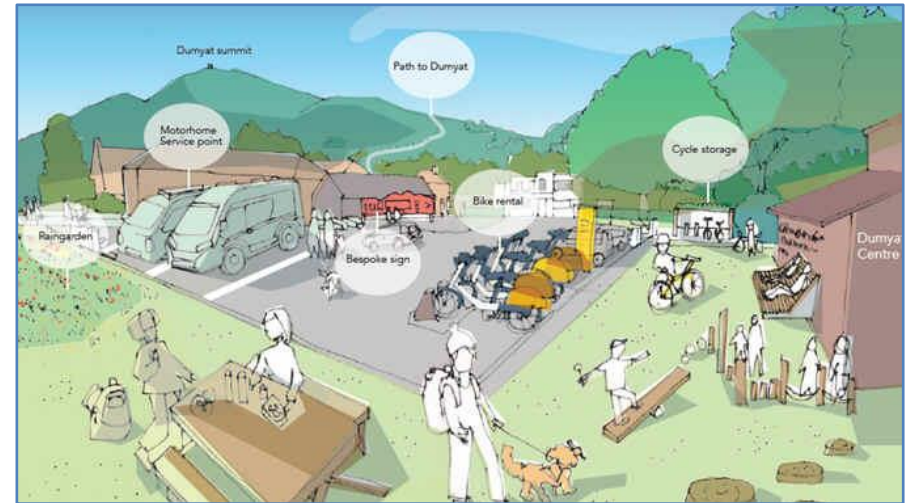
The Council's Planning Service is now building on the momentum of these successes through development of a town centre masterplan in collaboration with the Council's partners and stakeholders.

CASE STUDY 2 – Dumyat Visitor Hub, Menstrie

This project was a catalyst to help realise the potential of the village of Menstrie as a destination for outdoor recreation and inclusive wellness tourism and to help generate economic activity in the village centre and improve active travel opportunities for residents and visitors. The Planning service led on the funding bid and design of a proposal, supported by other services. The funding came from a successful bid for £140,000 from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) administered by VisitScotland with contributions also from Transport Scotland, Energy Savings Trust, the Council and in kind from The Conservation Volunteers.



Menstrie car park prior to redevelopment



Concept sketch of Menstrie car park redevelopment

The project sought to capitalise on Menstrie's proximity and accessibility to the Ochil Hills and in particular Dumyat Hill, which is a popular destination for visitors to the Ochils. The majority of the works were to be in or adjoining an existing carpark next to the Dumyat centre; a community centre close to shops, café, pharmacy, public house and food outlets in the village.

As project leader, the Planning Service engaged other key stakeholders to help inform the design and scope of the project and the funding bid. This helped maximise the potential benefits for the local community and its alignment with other strategies and projects, and included consultation with Menstrie Community Council, Menstrie Community Action Group (MCAG), Discover

Clackmannanshire, Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface, Stirling Council and Forth Environment Link. The project complimented the community's plans to take over responsibility for the management of the Dumyat Centre from the Council. This process helped secure community buy in, validation of the scope of the project and demonstrate community and partnership working as part of the project.

The project was successful in being awarded funding in recognition of the potential of the project to help relieve growing issues of inappropriate visitor parking and traffic pressures on the most popular road used to access Dumyat Hill on Sheriffmuir Road in Stirling Council's area by drawing visitors to Menstrie to access the hill from a different side. The Sheriffmuir Road access point is also heavily reliant on private vehicles for access and either excludes or is not easily accessible for those without access to a car. Menstrie was on a bus route and as noted above had a number of amenities that visitors to the hill could use before or after their visit.

Key elements of the project included:

- Encouraging both direct and more circular walks around Dumyat, Menstrie Glen and adjacent hills,
- Providing safe and welcoming parking for vehicles and motorhomes,

- Promoting more sustainable transport options, including bus and cycling, and electric vehicle charging/parking,
- Providing high quality interpretation and directional signage, to create a welcoming and quality visitor experience for all, and
- Increasing footfall for local businesses and services.

The Planning Service took main responsibility for the design process, including the visitor interpretation and way marking signs, with input from the community on content and design. The Planners also worked closely with colleagues in the Roads Service who took forward the project from the tender stage to delivery of the upgrade the car park and related infrastructure. All main elements of the project have been completed and are operational, with the exception of the ebike station, which is part of the wider Forth Bike network that has been affected by the operating company having recently gone into administration. All the required infrastructure is in place at Menstrie and a new operator of the Forth Bike network is actively being sought.

The project has successfully delivered;

- A permanent extension of the carpark which serves the village centre including the Dumyat Centre to create an additional 30 parking spaces including 2 longer spaces to

accommodate motorhomes and 3 additional disabled parking spaces.

- The carpark has been surfaced with tarmacadam, is fully lit and includes surface water drainage. It has now been adopted for future maintenance by the Roads Service.
- The installation of a fast charge electric vehicle charge has increased vehicle charging facilities from 2 to 4 vehicles.
- The creation of a segregated footpath link from the carpark to Main Street provides safe and accessible access to the shops and route to the Ochil Hills. Before this, pedestrians had to share the carriageway on the access to the car park or walk over a grass area.
- The provision of interpretation boards and a totem sign next to the footpath link containing information about walking routes towards Dumyat Hill and about the history and amenities in the village.
- Provided interpretation and waymarking signage between the carpark and the 2 main paths leading to the Ochil Hills.
- Replaced existing access gates with self closing gates which are accessible for cyclists and horse riders.

- Improved sections of the footpath from Menstrie leading to Dumyat Hill.



One of the new interpretation boards installed in Menstrie

The completed works have been well received by local groups and residents and have enhanced and complemented other initiatives by the Community Council and Community Action Group to improve the amenities for local residents and attract visitors to the village. This includes taking over management of the Dumyat Centre to sustain community facilities including the provision of public toilets, the installation of an outdoor gym and covered cycle parking next to the carpark and managing a community garden accessible from the carpark. This has helped deliver the Dumyat Visitor Hub.

2. Quality of Service and Engagement

a. Open for Business

In anticipation of the publication of National Planning Framework (NPF) 4, work was already underway to put processes and procedures in place to implement the new development planning system. This included reviewing and modifying existing ways of working and developing new work plans to address the requirements of NPF4. The publication of NPF4 in February 2023 allowed this work to progress with more certainty, although LDP Guidance was still awaited.

The adopted LDP represents the foundation upon which the Service can rely upon to build investment on the ground, growth in the economy and an enhanced quality of service. The first two of its strategic objectives set a clear framework for positive change and aim to deliver sustainable economic growth. In that context, we have identified a specific section of the plan on Employment and Prosperity, aimed at addressing the economy, job creation and business support. The plan has six key policies which capture the principles:

- Support for new business and industry on strategic sites.
- Support for the retention and promotion of businesses.
- The circumstances where business expansion outwith allocated sites can be considered favourably.
- The general presumption against non-employment generating uses on existing and allocated sites.

- Support for the principle of homeworking, particularly within planned growth areas.
- Encouragement for investment in green business.

The Planning team continues to be structured with a customer focus and has also evolved in the last year with the creation of the Principal Placemaking Officer post. The three Development Management case officers deal with: residential development; commercial development; and householder developments. This arrangement continues to be seen as the appropriate way to serve our customers, but will be kept under review to ensure service delivery is optimised, customer satisfaction is maintained and the balance of other non-statutory work on officer time is managed.

In order to bring a place-focus to the Council's wider strategic priorities, a Principal Placemaking Officer role was created (for an initial 2 years period) to work corporately and with external partners on the Council's key strategic and investment priorities. The post was filled from within the Planning Service following the successful delivery of the Living Alloa project and as the place-focussed skills and ways of working demonstrated in this project were identified as what was required for this new role.

The Principal Placemaking Officer has already made a significant contribution to the work of the Council in areas of City Region Deal,

Community Wealth Building, development of a new Wellbeing Hub, and in supporting the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme.

This officer had also helped prepare residential policy guidance for the LDP, was involved in supporting the work of the Developer Contributions Group, is part of the Local Authority Urban Design Forum (LAUDF), and is the Council's Place Standard Lead. The officer continues to provide layout and design advice and support to the whole Planning team.

The Development Management based Principal Planner post was vacated as a result of the Principal Placemaking Officer role being filled from within the team. This has been back-filled for the initial two-year period with an external appointment. The new officer recruited has significant experience in dealing with residential developments and has quickly built up a strong relationship with regular residential development customers and embraced the Service's way of working, thereby ensuring minimal disruption to the standard of service provision offered to our housing developer customers, with support from the wider team.

The division of development management casework as described above continues to work well and ensures that customers receive a consistent level of advice, and this helps to develop good working relations with our more regular customers as well as support those less familiar with planning procedures. It also ensures that knowledge and expertise within each officer "specialism" can be cascaded within the Planning team more easily.

As an example of how this works, the planning officer dealing with householder developments has developed the skills and experience necessary to communicate with customers who are often first time (and possibly only time) applicants unfamiliar with planning procedures, and who may often need to be guided on matters such as permitted development and the application process. The officer is also able to keep colleagues up to date on new and emerging changes to permitted development rights for householders for example.

The planning officer responsible for commercial development has developed strong business links and an understanding of the needs of business and commercial developers to ensure that the Planning Service responds appropriately to these needs within the regulatory framework and in preparation of LDP policies and guidance. For example, this officer liaises closely with the Council's Environmental Health team, which greatly assists applicants for food and drink related developments in understanding what the expectations of that service will be at an early stage in the planning process. This is a great benefit to businesses within the Council area. This officer is also part of the Developer Contributions Group, is a regular attendee at national forums such as in relation to EIA developments and mineral working, is the key Council contact with organisations such as Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in respect of built heritage and the PADHI+ land use planning process.

The work of all officers is overseen by the Planning and Building Standards Team Leader who is able to contribute to the progression of all applications in the absence of any officer, and arranges case conferences with officers where more in-depth consideration of a proposal is required. The Planning and Building Standards Team Leader also allocates workload and applications to best utilise planning officer knowledge and skills to ensure continued professional development and to best assist with specific project work.

The Council recognises the important role planners can play in working outwith the statutory planning process, adding value to the delivery of the Council's strategic aims and objectives, and the Team Leader is able to ensure proper priority is given to non-statutory work undertaken by officers who may already have a busy application caseload. This may include taking work on themselves or re-allocating to other officers if required.

A monitoring framework has been set up which will report annually each October on the performance of the LDP, including details on the frequency of the use of policies, examples of good practice flowing from Policy input, identification of any policy voids and other performance criteria related to the LDP.

The Planning Service does not have a dedicated enforcement or monitoring officer. Each planning officer provides a service to customers, from pre-application advice through to monitoring the implementation of development. The Council's Enforcement

Charter was originally published in February 2011 and is reviewed and updated every two years. This review continues to confirm that the criteria in our Charter to inform decision-making are aligned with Government guidance and are fit for purpose in delivering proportionate outcomes with strong public confidence in the Service. Any alleged breach of planning control can be reported via the Council Website. This "Report It" facility is a convenient method of reporting an alleged breach, and enables officers to populate our enforcement management system with the essential information required initially. In fulfilling a commitment in a previous PPF the Enforcement Register is now published on the Council website. The completion of this action has had the added benefit of reducing the number of Freedom of Information requests on enforcement action, as enquirers can be directed to the website in most cases. This is better for our customers and reduces the amount of officer time spent in responding to FOIs of this nature.

Free pre-application advice continues to be available to all prospective applicants. This message is set out on the Council's website, which also includes an on-line form to make it as easy as possible to submit an enquiry. This also ensures that the required level of information to open a pre-application enquiry is submitted first time. Each enquiry is allocated to the planning officer who deals with the specific development type, which helps build relations and ensure consistency through the whole process.

The pre-application stage is seen as a vital opportunity to explain policy, procedures and key issues, and above all else, smooth the application process, and result in better development outcomes. It helps identify information that we may require, and should reduce the prospect of applications for planning permission being delayed or refused, with attendant appeals to Ministers and the Local Review Body. We are committed to reviewing existing practice and securing best value and this is reflected in our service improvements for each year, in the knowledge that providing pre-application advice demands a significant proportion of officer time.

Each pre-application enquiry receives its own unique reference number, and a target response date, and as noted is allocated to the planning officer who deals with the specific development type, and will almost certainly be the case officer for any subsequent application.

The Council's Developer Contributions Team operates to approved terms of reference and represents a cross-Service model of working that is fit for purpose, providing consistent and informed decisions that ensure minimal impact on the pace of decision making. Agenda items will include applications and pre-application enquiries, and allows us to provide prospective applicants with early warning of any potential contribution that will be sought as part of a development proposal. This Group has brought tangible benefits to our Planning Service. We now have a process that is reliable and consistent for our customers. It is also ensures

coordinated and recorded decision making, an efficient cross-service working, and more consistent decision making. However, we do need to improve our systems for monitoring funds gathered and to ensure that this funding is spent appropriately and in a timely manner.

b. Certainty

Almost all planning applications were decided in accordance with Local Plan policies, or with allocations and guidance set out in the schedule of sites within the Plan. As such, any interested party can identify key issues for a site or proposal through the development plan and have a strong degree of confidence that this will be reflected in planning decisions of the Council.

Officers are fully committed to good communication with customers. This helps build confidence in the service, keeps customers informed, and represents a proactive approach to decision making.

Officers continue to promote the use of Processing Agreements to prospective applicants, particularly for major developments. Our experience has been, however, that there is not a strong appetite for such agreements to be entered into. Anecdotal evidence in this respect appears to show that as applicants and agents are able to communicate easily with case officers during the application processing, demand for a formal arrangement around how the

application is handled and how we communicate is low. Officers will continue to promote their use, meantime.

We continue to refer applications for major developments to Planning Committee for decision and continue to have a low number of requests for Local Review of planning application decisions; a further indicator of the success of this Scheme and our drive to work positively with applicants to enable developments and find solutions rather than simply regulate development. Our approval rate remains proportionately high, and is evidence of the Planning Service meeting Scottish Government's call for the delivering of development.

Reports of Handling identify specific policies, proposal allocations or supplementary guidance. This is an integral part of the LDP monitoring process and provides reliable evidence on the use and effectiveness of policies, progress on allocations and the value of guidance to ensure plans are fit for purpose.

c. Communications, Engagement and Customer Service

Our online planning information system represents the main source of information on planning applications received and decided. It is maintained in accordance with "Publishing Planning Applications Online" the Scottish Government's data protection guidance to planning authorities. It provides 24/7 access to planning application files. Each current application file will include the application form, drawings, consultation responses, representations, report of

handling, decision notice and approved plans. Information on determined applications includes application form, approved drawings, report of handling and decision notice.

The home page of the Council's website, Clacksweb, includes Planning as one of eight top tasks subjects, providing quick and easy access to service information. The page also has a dedicated Self Service Section, with links for "Apply for It" and "Report It". The former takes the user to a group of applications, including one to the edevelopment.scot home page, and the latter provides access to icons that include an alleged breach of planning control. A review of the Planning Service pages on the Council's has been undertaken as a previous service improvement action, and will continue to be kept under review to ensure information is up to date and accurate.

In addition to the online planning information service, we continue to offer alternative channels of communication. Customers can still make direct telephone contact with planning officers, a Service that fewer authorities now provide, but one that we know is highly valued by our customers. All incoming calls are answered by a planning officer or support staff. Where a planning officer is not available, the call will normally be returned later that day. Through management of workload, officers are able to incorporate this level of service within their work schedules without detriment to wider service delivery. Our continued commitment to this high standard of customer service is regularly acknowledged in discussions with

our customers, and is often noted by such customers as something that is not available from other authorities.

d. Complaints

The Council has a two stage corporate complaints service. Historically a low number of complaints have been received annually however a notable increase in complaints has been experienced more recently and some of these have been complex in nature. This is consistent with the experience of other Council services and public sectors more generally, in the post-COVID period. However, in recognition of the ongoing obligation to respond to customer needs, a review of Planning service working in respect of experience of complaints has been identified as a service improvement area for the coming year.

The Council's website is regularly updated with information on the progress of the Local Development Plan as well as notification of any significant milestones in the Council's Development Services Bulletin. The bulletin is published on a weekly basis, providing a note of planning applications and building warrants received and decided in the preceding 7 days. It is also the opportunity to report on any other matters of interest, such as planning committee dates, appeal decisions or enforcement matters. Any individual or body can request to be added to the mailing list for this Bulletin, and this get emailed weekly to around 80 customers.

3. Governance

a. Efficient and Effective Decision-making

The current LDP was adopted in 2015 and a review was commenced in late 2017. When the Planning (Scotland) Act was passed in June 2019, it was noted that the timescales for the introduction of the new Planning system, particularly NPF4, and the adoption of the LDP Review were very similar. It was therefore decided not to pursue the LDP Review as it would have reduced relevance, or even be rendered obsolete under the new Planning system. COVID affected the progress of NPF4, delaying its implementation, however this would also have delayed the LDP Review.

Subsequent consideration of the LDP Policies against NPF4 Policies, and a Place and Wellbeing Assessment of the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the Adopted LDP identified that these were still significantly relevant and therefore would still contribute to effective decision making.

Publication of the Development Plan Scheme was delayed in anticipation of LDP Guidance in Spring 2023 to ensure it was as up to date as possible and could reflect any relevant parts of the guidance.

Progress continues to be monitored through monthly meetings between the LDP officer, the Planning and Building Standards Team Leader and the Development Services Manager. The LDP officer

manages their own workload seeking guidance or support when required, and these meetings provide the opportunity to discuss resource issues, including delegation of tasks to other planning officers in Development Management. How the production of the new LDP will be resourced will become an ongoing issue for the Service.

One key area of investment for the Council is in Renewable Energy. The Service has taken a positive approach to addressing the demand for renewable energy development in response to the statutory requirement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to enable Clackmannanshire to contribute to achieving the Scottish Government's targets for renewable energy production. This reflects the clear vision for the area by 2035 set out in the LDP, which includes *“a community that has experienced a successful transition to a vibrant low carbon economy”*

The LDP contains a number of policies relating to renewable energy and specific renewable energy technologies as well as two areas of Supplementary Guidance on Onshore Wind Energy and Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Development. This policy framework, together with other policy guidance and experience has informed decision making on renewable energy proposals.

The PPF report has described our customer focussed case officer structure, our model for pre-application advice and case conference arrangements.

Case officers undertake planning application site visits within seven days of receipt of all planning applications. Officers are expected to have collated all information on the expiry of publicity periods, identified relevant policy considerations and either agreed a likely recommendation or identified key issues within a four week period, in accordance with the application process map. Applicants or agents can expect first communication within that same time frame.

Over 95% of all planning applications for local developments are determined by Appointed Officers under the Scheme of Delegation. The Scheme continues to be an efficient model for decision making, with universal expressions of confidence arising from its contribution to efficiency and decision making.

The Service has a robust committee decision making structure in place which is fit for purpose and designed to avoid any delay in decision making, and structured to give added certainty. The key features of this structure include:

- The release of confidential draft agendas to the Council's Management Team and Councillors as an early warning system, with a draft officer recommendation on each item of business.

- Pre-Committee convenor briefings on items of business to identify any new information received and barriers to decision making.
- Arrangements for elected member site visits to be convened before the planned committee meeting. No applications are deferred for site visits. There has been no deferral of any decision during the reporting period.
- A scheme of oral representations which provides the opportunity for the applicant, objectors and community councils to address the committee; committee meetings regularly hear representations from applicants, or objectors. The scheme is publicised on our website, and we send details to all those submitting representations against a proposal before the committee meeting.
- Arrangements for decisions to be issued immediately after the committee meetings.

Planning Committee meetings are now scheduled on a 6 week cycle and meetings of the Local Review Body are diarised on the same day. Presentational improvements to the Planning Committee have been undertaken and these include the enhanced use of graphic presentation methods and the incorporation of images and hyperlinks.

b. Effective Management Structures

In 2020 the Council implemented an organisational re-design and senior management structure to fulfil commitments to operational efficiency and budget savings. The re-design established a new managerial structure based on three new service delivery portfolios; People, Place and Partnerships and Performance. Committee structures have now been aligned with this management structure.

The Planning and Building Standards service is provided within the Place portfolio. The Planning and Building Standards Team Leader is responsible to the Senior Manager (Development) who is responsible to the Strategic Director of Place.

Management arrangements within the Service include:

- Monthly team leaders meeting focussing on strategic cross cutting issues, budgets and applications and proposals.
- One to one manager and team leader meetings on a fortnightly basis, focussed on major applications, LDP progress, forthcoming items of committee business and significant enforcement case work.
- Diarised one to one weekly meetings between the team leader and case officers, with separate case conference meetings where key applications require management input.

- Regular liaison meetings as required between the Council's Legal Service and the Development Service to review progress on instructions relevant to planning agreements, enforcement cases, site disposal and other general legal matters.

Regular performance reports are submitted to the Development Services Management Team which provide details of applications received and decided, performance information on those decisions, and an up to date record of fee income set against targeted figures. We have now implemented a new performance management system "Pentana" which allows for greater scrutiny and reporting of performance indicators. Information from this platform is collated for wider reporting to the Council. The alignment of Service Business Plan commitments with Scottish Government performance reporting criteria is now possible and will be implemented. This will streamline and provide greater consistency in performance reporting.

c. Financial Management and Local Governance

The budget setting process is undertaken on an annual basis to identify expected expenditure and income for the coming year. This will include the outsourcing of any key projects, income from planning applications and other sources, and is set against Action Plans and Key Performance Indicators in the Development & Environment Services Business Plan for the period.

The Service continues to ensure that flexible resource management arrangements are in place to broaden skills, knowledge and experience and to react to fluctuating demand on resources from the LDP and Development Management casework. This flexibility within the staff resource has been reinforced with the refined joint team leadership arrangements and financial prudence is central.

At a corporate level; the Council continues to respond to the financial challenges facing it and most other planning authorities. The aim is to get maximum benefit from our available resources. The key elements of the programme for the planning service are:

- To focus on clear priorities such as statutory duties set out in planning legislation, and non-statutory work that feeds into the Council's wider strategic priorities.
- Transform services to best meet user needs. We have referred previously to the focus on improved website advice and information. The development.scot programme and now implemented merger of the Planning and Building Standards sections are further examples.
- To be as efficient and effective as possible within the constraints of limited resources.
- Have an appropriate approach to charging for services and getting better value for money. However, the need to introduce charges for pre-application advice, or for some premium standards of service, remains under review on an ongoing basis.
- A move away from paper copies of plans and guidance associated with the LDP towards easily accessible web based documents, while still meeting statutory requirements for having documents available in local libraries and community access points.

4. Culture of Continuous Improvement

All staff within the Planning service undertake a Performance Review and Development (PRD) programme. This exercise focuses on behavioural competences such as commitment to quality, developing people and excellence in customer service. At a corporate level, the Council has developed training pathways for Service Managers and Team Leaders.



PRD Competences

The Planning service annual operational plan informs the PRD process. This is monitored to ensure that it aligns with the Service Improvements in Part 4.

Clackmannanshire Council has joined a benchmarking group to share good practice and stimulate improvements in service. The sharing of work on indicators and performance markers develops themes elsewhere in the Planning Performance Framework, and enables the exchange of views and good practice on Planning Performance Framework; Service Improvements; budgets; enforcement; and benchmarking indicators.

We continue to use and contribute to the Local Government Knowledge Hub for evidence of good practice and enhanced connection with other planning authorities. The attendance of the Planning and Building Standards Team Leader at both Heads of Planning (HoPS) and Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) has provided an enhanced Service understanding of the relationship between Planning and Building Standards in respect of engagement with Scottish Government and stakeholders. This attendance has resulted in greater consistency of approach in the Planning and Building Standards service to customers and improved networking opportunities with the Planning and Building Standards Services of other Councils.

Part 2 – Supporting Evidence

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

- Annual Development Services Business Plan
- Clackmannanshire Local Development Plan
- Clackmannanshire Council Competency Framework
- Clackmannanshire Council Online – Planning & Building Standards
- Development Planning and Development Quality Service Improvement Plans
- Discussions with staff in the respective teams
- Supplementary Planning Guidelines
- Planning Enforcement Charter
- Clackmannanshire Housing Land Audit
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals (various)
- Scheme of Delegation for Local Developments
- Communication with applicants and agents
- The Knowledge Hub
- Scottish Government PPF Performance Markers Report
- Annual HoPS PPF Peer Review

1. Checklist for Part 2: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Study Topic	Case Study
Design	1
Conservation	1
Regeneration	1 and 2
Environment	2
Greenspace	2
Town Centres	1
Masterplanning	1
Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance	
Housing Supply	1
Affordable Housing	1
Economic Development	2
Enforcement	
Development Management Processes	1
Planning Applications	1
Interdisciplinary Working	1 and 2

Table 1 – Case study topic checklist

Study Topic	Case Study
Collaborative Working	1 and 2
Community Engagement	1 and 2
Placemaking	1 and 2
Charrettes	
Place Standard	1
Performance Monitoring	
Process Improvement	
Project Management	1 and 2
Skills Sharing	
Staff Training	
Online Systems	
Transport	1 and 2
Active Travel	1 and 2
Other (please note):	

Part 3 – Service Improvements in the coming year

The following improvements in service delivery are planned for next year. They are drawn from the annual Development Services Business Plan for the period. The Planning service consistently demonstrates high levels of performance and customer satisfaction therefore a limited number of realistically achievable improvements are identified for the following year given the limited resources of the Planning team.

1. Committed Improvements and Actions

Action	Status
Scheme of Delegation review.	Ongoing
Evaluate existing Scheme of Delegation to ensure continued “fit for purpose” and identify opportunities for governance and performance improvements	
Action	Status
Review of Planning Team workload distribution	Ongoing
This action recognises the additional Development Planning resources required to prepare a new Local Development Plan and the additional non-statutory work of the team. Workloads of the team will be reviewed to assist with the additional demands that Planning reform has placed on Development Planning without compromising Development Management performance.	
Action	Status
Complaints processes and response review.	Ongoing
To evaluate increased complaints experienced post COVID and review handling processes in response to changing demands and sensitivities of customers.	
Action	Completed
Improve monitoring and distribution processes for Developer Contributions	Ongoing
This action will build on the work of the cross service Developer Contributions team. Good progress has been made having regular meetings to discuss and agree infrastructure requirements required to mitigate development. More progress on monitoring of funds gathered and ensuring that they are spent in a timely manner is needed over the next year.	

Action	Status
Carry out analysis on potential charging for services, such as pre-application advice, condition discharge or handling non-material variations.	Not yet commenced

This action will seek to balance the value of providing these services for free to our customers with the time and cost involved in administering them, in an environment where the Servei will need to find budget cuts on an ongoing annual basis.

Part 4 – National Headline Indicators

Planning Performance Framework Annual Report 2022-23

Development Planning	2021-22	2022-23
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years (60 months)</i>	LDP (6 years 7 months)	LDP (7 years 7 months)
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? (Y/N)	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-earlier/Y-later/N)	Y-later	Y-later
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)	N	N

Table 2 – Development Planning

Effective land supply and delivery of outputs	2021-22	2022-23
Established housing land supply ¹	4569 units	n/a ³
5 year effective housing land supply ¹	1602 units	n/a ³
5-year housing supply target	750 units ²	n/a ³
5-year effective housing land supply	10 years	n/a ³
Housing approvals	99 units	n/a ³
Housing completions over the last 5 years	866 units	n/a ³
Marketable employment land supply	151.96 ha	127.03 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	2.17 ha	24.93 ha

Table 3 – Effective land supply

² From NPF4 MATHLR

³ 2022-23 HLA not yet completed

Development Management, Project Planning	2021-22	2022-23
Percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice	13.8%	19.8%
Number of major applications subject to processing agreement	0	0

Table 4 – Development Management, Project Planning

Decision-making	2021-22	2022-23
Validation	63.6%	63.3%
Application approval rate	97.4%	96.5%
Delegation rate	99.2%	99.6%

Table 5 – Decision-making

Decision-making timescales	2021-22	2022-23
Major developments	38.3 weeks	15.1 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	7.7 weeks	9.1 weeks
Householder developments	6.1 weeks	6.0 weeks

Table 6 – Decision-making timescales

Legacy Cases	2021-22	2022-23
Number cleared during reporting period	0	1
Number remaining	4	5

Table 7 – Legacy cases

Enforcement	2021-22	2022-23
Time since enforcement charter published/reviewed (<i>months</i>) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i>	24	15

Table 8 – Enforcement Charter

Enforcement Activity	2021-22	2022-23
Complaints lodged	46	31
Cases taken up	46	31
Breaches identified	39	25
Cases resolved	37	45
Notices served	0	2
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Table 9 – Enforcement activity

Part 5 – Official Statistics

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

Category	Total number of decisions 2022-23	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2021-22	2022-23
Major developments	3	38.3	15.1
Local developments (non-householder)	52	7.7	9.1
Local: less than 2 months	43	5.6	6.1
Local: more than 2 months	9	13.4	23.7
Householder developments	148	6.1	6.0
Local: less than 2 months	147	6.0	5.9
Local: more than 2 months	1	10.0	19.1
Major housing developments	1	43.4	6.4
Local housing developments	15	6.0	11.6
Local: less than 2 months	11	5.4	5.8
Local: more than 2 months	4	9.3	27.5
Major business and industry	2	-	19.4
Local business and industry	22	7.2	9.3
Local: less than 2 months	18	5.8	6.2
Local: more than 2 months	4	12.3	23.5
EIA developments	-	-	-
Other consents	36	5.7	6.1
Planning/legal agreements	-	-	-
Major: average time	-	-	-
Local: average time	-	-	-

Table 10 – Decision-making timescales

2. Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions 2022-23	Original decision upheld			
		2021-22		2022-23	
		Number	%	Number	%
Local reviews	1	0	0	1	100
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	1	1	33.3	0	0

Table 11 – Local reviews and appeals

Part 6 – Workforce Information

Workforce information is a snapshot of planning staff in position on 31 March.

	Chief Executive	Director	Head of Service	Manager
Head of Planning Service	—	—	1	1

Table 12 – Head of Service

RTPI Qualified Staff Members	Headcount	FTE
Development Management	4	4
Development Planning	1	1
Enforcement	0	0
Specialists	1	1
Other (including staff not RTPI eligible)	2	1.5

Table 13 – RTPI Qualified Staff

Where members of staff have dual roles they are included only under the area which they spend more time working.

Staff age profile	Number
Under 30	0
30–39	0
40–49	2
50 and over	6

Table 14 – Staff age profiles

Part 7 – Planning Committee Information

The number of meetings and site visits conducted during 2022-23.

Committee meetings and Site Visits ²	Number per year
Full council meetings	7
Planning committees	4
Area committees (where relevant)	0
Committee site visits	0
Local Review Body ³	4
Local Review Body site visits	0

Table 15 – Committee meetings and site visits