



PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2022 - 2023



Contents

Introduction	2
Part 1 - Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies	4
Quality of Outcomes	4
Quality of Service and Engagement	6
Governance	8
Culture of Continuous Improvement	8
Part 2 - Supporting Evidence	13
Part 3 - Service Improvements	14
Part 4 - National Headline Indicators	16
Part 5 - Scottish Government Official Statistics	18
Part 6 - Workforce Information	20
Part 7 - Planning Committee Information	22
Appendix 1 - Performance Markers	23
Appendix 2 - Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies Checklist	25

Introduction

The City of Edinburgh Council is pleased to present its twelfth Planning Performance Framework (PPF) report. For the third PPF year, the Covid-19 pandemic has had an effect on how we worked.

This report summarises the work of the service in 2022/23. In the previous two PPF years, a flexible service wide approach to home working, allied with fit-for-purpose hardware, collaborative software and effective IT support gave us the platform to deliver a good quality planning service to the people of Edinburgh. This year, we continued to make a number of service improvements which we hope have made it easier for our service users to access up-to-date, clear information and engage with the service.

Development Management Sub-Committees and Local Review Body meetings were again run successfully via Microsoft Teams but towards the end of the PPF year, in-person meetings were again being held.

The adopted Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) and its associated suite of supplementary guidance documents continued to shape the city's growth in the PPF year. Its emerging successor, City Plan 2030, is now with the DPEA and has progressed through the Stage 1 Examination.



We received confirmation that Stage 2 was to commence on 20 March 2023.

We successfully incorporated the changes brought about by the adoption of NPF4 into our procedures. We also restructured ourselves to provide a strong focus on short-term let casework, the increase in which has been marked this year. This included forming a new specialist team to deal with this most topical of planning issues in the capital.

The service again emphasised customer and stakeholder engagement in 2022/23. Our blog and twitter feed has a growing user base, and we again ran a full programme of training for staff and new committee members.

We are developing our new Service Improvement Plan to set out a strategic approach to review how we deliver our priorities and service over a three-year period.



Part 1 – Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

Quality of Outcomes

During and in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the service continued to focus on performance, delivery, integrated placemaking, service user engagement and staff wellbeing.

The aim is to make improvements to the built and natural environment that help Edinburgh become a truly sustainable capital city and a great place for residents to live, work, play and relax in.

Many examples of high quality, sustainable development across the city were approved and built in the PPF year and are good examples of joined-up, forward-looking place-making which help bring our city's communities together.

Case-Study 1: Residential development - Gylemuir

Residential development comprising 126 new homes at Rowanbank Gardens, Gylemuir Road, Edinburgh - application [20/01854/FUL](#)

Development is underway of the re-development of the brownfield site which will deliver 126 new homes in the west of the city, with 33 of these homes to be delivered for affordable housing.

The development is landscape-led, designed around providing quality amenity and green space for its residents. The perimeter housing is focused on a single, large communal garden that is accessible to all residents, incorporating a communal growing area, lawn, woodland garden and courtyard. A total of 1,865 square metres of external amenity space will be provided within the site through shared amenity space, private gardens and usable greenspace.

The development is designed to be a Low Carbon development, including 100% charging points for electric vehicles and 100% on-site cycle storage, and green roofs are used throughout to make use of rainwater and provide enhanced biodiversity.

The creation of a sustainable and resilient landscape will create an attractive place for its residents to live and be positive for their well-being, improve the biodiversity of the area, reduce carbon emissions and be a positive step towards adapting to climate change.



Relevant performance marker number: 15 (see Appendix 1)

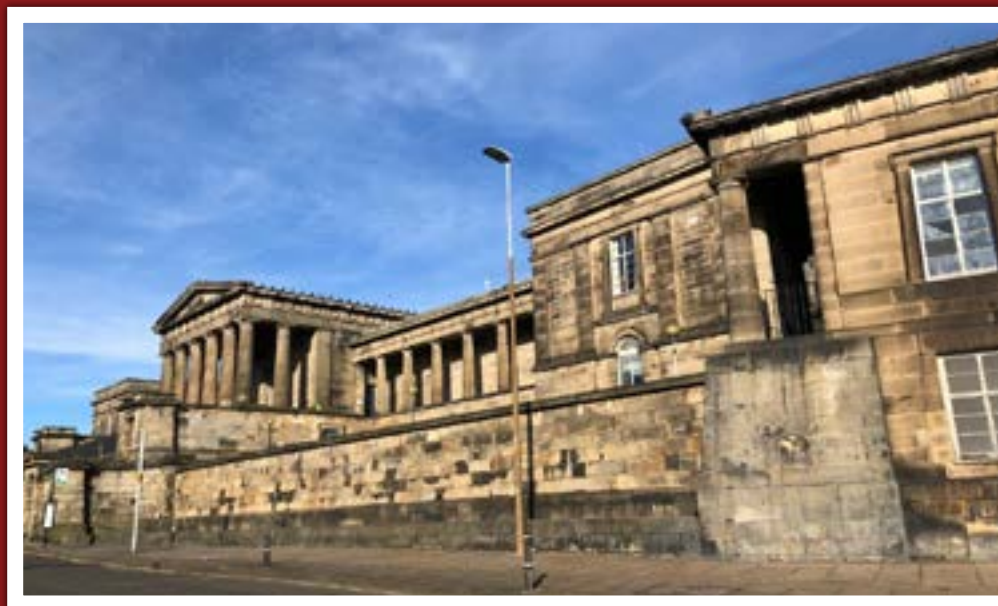
Case-Study 2: Buildings at Risk progress

Edinburgh has inherited a superb legacy of outstanding historic buildings and we take their care extremely seriously. In the PPF year, our Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) showed that Edinburgh had the lowest percentage of listed buildings-at-risk of the four largest cities in Scotland. But we make every effort to help restore and return as many structures as possible to beneficial use.

Positive progress in addressing buildings on the BARR reflects the capital's economic buoyancy and strong property market. As part of our duty to protect the historic environment, the Council's Planning Service works hand-in-hand with owners of buildings on the BARR to achieve the best outcome for each property. In more difficult cases, we use our statutory powers to intervene and take direct action.

Between 2012 and 2022, 17 Category 'A' listed buildings 'at risk' within the Old & New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site were saved. In 2022, only 11 Category 'A' listed 'at risk' properties within the WHS remained on the Register. Examples of successful restoration schemes include the City Observatory on Calton Hill, Riddles Court in the Lawnmarket and the former Donaldson's School for the Deaf.

A number of the current 'at risk' buildings (four) form part of high-profile development sites and regeneration projects, including the India Buildings on Victoria Street where the Virgin Hotel is currently being developed. A further five entries relate to the Old Royal High School where it is hoped that the St Mary's Music School proposals will form the focus of a renovation scheme for the site.



Relevant performance marker number: 6 (see Appendix 1)

Quality of Service and Engagement

In this PPF year we drove a range of service improvements which increase our effectiveness and improve service users' experience.

Our Service Improvement Plan, developed with and implemented by staff at all levels of the service, continues to direct and join up actions which improve our performance statistics and overall service quality.

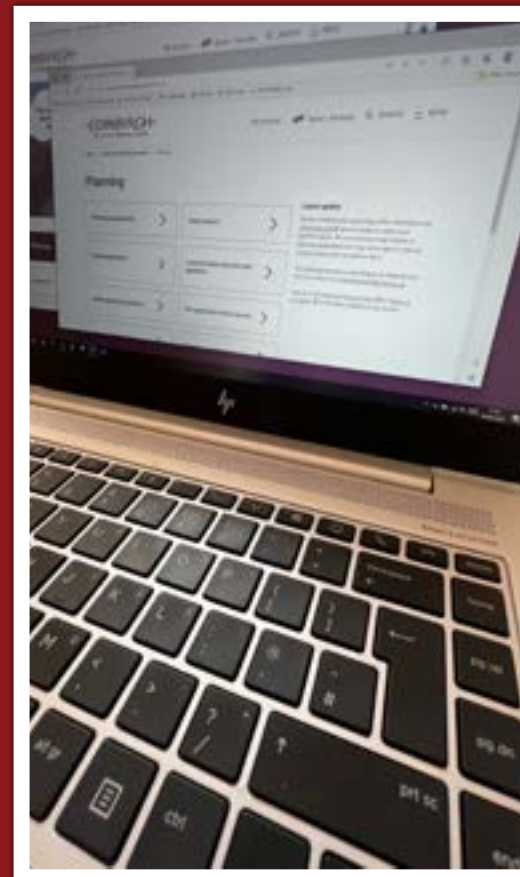
We reviewed our paid-for pre-application advice service this year and made some changes which are described in Case Study 4. We also introduced some changes to our public help desk and these are set out in Case Study 3.

CityPlan 2030 maintained its momentum in this PPF year as shown in Case Study 6.

Our social media platforms and channels continue to grow and deepen and are a great means of keeping our service users up to date on planning issues and service changes. The planning.edinburgh.gov.uk blog and our twitter feed continue to provide a steady flow of up to the minute, rich, interactive content covering Planning Committee decisions, upcoming public consultations, emerging policy and guidance, and all aspects of the service for our growing subscriber community.

Case-Study 3: Help Desk Improvements

The Planning service's public helpdesk function is managed by a working group made up of officers who are responsible for its operation and supervision. The group have worked consistently to adapt the helpdesk to the post-covid working environment where it no longer operates as an in-person service but is now conducted predominantly through email communication. Improvements have included establishing a call-back procedure for instances where customers cannot access emails, providing a named officer who is able to resolve more difficult or complex enquiries when required, developing a comprehensive guide to assist officer, and providing regular training to improve officers' own professional knowledge and development, while at the same time creating better outcomes for service users.



Relevant performance marker number: 6 (see Appendix 1)

Case-Study 4: Pre-application Advice Service Review

In the PPF year, we undertook a review of how we deliver our paid-for pre-application advice service (PPA) with a view to improving the quality of the service received by applicants, reflecting on customer feedback and the experiences of the service since implementation of the existing PAA service in July 2019. The review identified that the PAA service has been well received by customers but the amount of officer time used to provide PAA has been more than initially envisaged. This meant the intended full cost recovery had not been realised.

Whilst the existing level of service was to be maintained, a simplification of the charging schedule was proposed to standardise the offer to customers, improve the level of customer service and ensure the long term sustainability of the service. These changes were approved and implemented on the 1st April 2023 so will apply for PPF year 2023/24. As part of our review of the service we will continually review it, gathering feedback from customers and learning from this process.



Relevant performance marker number: 3, 15 (see Appendix 1)

Case-Study 5:

Applications for tree works - validation improvements.

The Planning Service receives around 1,000 applications each year for work to trees in conservation areas and to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

Previously, our Tree Officers had to contact and chase up applicants/agents for details of the proposed works, particularly on issues such as correct addressing, location plans and the extent of the work.

Following a process lean review, prior to allocating applications to Tree Officers, they are now reviewed by a planning technician, who checks whether the information is adequate to assess the proposals. If necessary, the applicant/agent will be advised of any deficiencies and given a 14-day timescale to remedy these. Unresolved applications will be returned to the applicant/agent undetermined; complete applications are validated and work-flowed to Tree Officers to assess.

To enable this, a new process was created using our back-of-house systems (Uniform and IDOX) to manage and workflow cases and queries. This has improved the auditing process and ensures a consistent approach to validating applications.

To support the new process and inform/engage our key customer group (in this instance agents/companies who submit tree work applications) we also renewed our Tree webpages and guidance. And an online customer forum was held with a number of agents. This was used to explain the new process, provide support and guidance on how to improve the quality of submissions and to get customer feedback."



Governance

The Planning and Building Standards service continues to be located within the Council's Place Directorate, sitting alongside other functions with responsibility for the development and environmental quality of the city. These include waste services, transport, culture and parks and greenspace. At a political level, planning-related matters are reported to a matrix of member Committees. These include full Planning Committee, the Development Management Sub-Committee, the Local Review Body, Housing and Economy Committee, and Transport and Environment Committee. This continues to be a real strength which builds collaboration on cross-service projects, programmes and policies and fosters a culture of inter-disciplinary joint-working.

In 2022/23 we recruited to a variety of professional planner posts and created a new Development Management Operations Manager post to focus on delivery.

We also changed our team structures and reporting lines which better align with current pressures and opportunities, while maintaining flexibility. A new team was created to focus on short-term let applications and enforcement, a significant issue for Edinburgh. Officer caseloads generally continue to be actively monitored across teams and applications are equitably distributed to ensure officers have a manageable and as varied a caseload as is practicable.

Our new report templates have bedded in and were adapted to reflect the adoption of NPF4 during the PPF year.

Culture of Continuous Improvement

The service provided a full programme of regular training for staff and members in this PPF year and also trained new members of Planning Committee. All-staff feedback sessions continue to be held to deliver updates on the outcome of Development Management Sub-Committee and Local Review Body meetings and to stimulate discussion about how our development plan policies and guidance are shaping decisions.

A successful change management project prepared the ground for the changes ushered in by the adoption of NPF4 and there's more detail on this in Case Study 8

We regularly review our extensive set of internal development management process notes and guidance to make sure they continue to be fit-for-purpose, including in the post-NPF4 planning policy landscape.

Case-Study 6: CityPlan 2030, incl project management

City Plan 2030 continued to be progressed from the period of representations ending in December 2021, based on the project Framework of its Board (senior officers), Project team and Leadership Forum (elected members). The project plan and the review of the Development Plan Scheme in July 2022 set a date for approval for submission to Examination before the end of 2022. This reflected project schedules updated after delays to National Planning Framework 4 and to manage any remaining risk to amendment of the responses or the proposed plan. City Plan 2030 has been developed alongside the review of the National Planning Framework but has generally run ahead of it, taking cues from the direction of other, informing, national policies including those on climate change and transport.

The City Plan Project Board approved the Schedule 4 responses to representations in July 2022 which meant we could meet the Development Plan Scheme timescales, with the Schedule 4 responses to representations approved by Planning Committee on 30 November 2022 for submission for Examination. These were duly submitted to Scottish Ministers on 8 December 2022.

The adoption of NPF4 on 13 February 2023 confirmed a supportive policy framework for City Plan, which is helpful for the Examination context. The DPEA confirmed the appointment of a lead Reporter on 20 February 2023 and of 4 additional Reporters on 8 March 2023. The following day we received confirmation that Stage 1 of the Examination had been concluded along with confirmation that Stage 2 was to commence 20 March 2023, the statutory minimum period following appointment of the Reporter. No further information requests on Stage 2 were received before the end of March. With no set timescale or programme for the Examination other than the statutory period for the first stage (examination of the Report of Conformity with the Engagement Statement), the project plan objectives and focus for the last quarter of the period and going forward has been to ensure the team understands the relationship of NPF4 policies to those of City Plan and preempt Further Information Requests (FIRs) on policy, to ensure their workloads are flexible to allow for quick responses to the FIRs as they are submitted and



continue the regular project team meetings to discuss other examinations in progress and any lessons from these, and ensure other service input within the Council for FIRs. To date all FIRs have been responded to within the ten working days requested. Senior officers have and will be updated of the progress of the Examination through Board meetings and Members through updates at Planning Committee.

The final quarter of 2022-23 also saw project initiation for a new local development plan under the new legislation and guidance. A new project plan and updated governance arrangements have been agreed with the Project Board.

Relevant performance marker number: 2, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15 (see Appendix 1)

Case-Study 7: WHS Draft Management Plan

With partners, we reviewed the Management Plan for the Old & New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site during the PPF year. An updated Draft Management Plan was prepared by the Council, [Historic Environment Scotland](#) and [Edinburgh World Heritage](#). It identified issues and opportunities within the site and presented an action plan for implementation over a five-year period.

The issues identified included:

- care and maintenance of buildings and streets
- control and guidance and contribution of new development
- awareness of World Heritage Site status
- visitor management
- influence and sense of control



We ran a public consultation which gave people the opportunity to tell us what matters to them and their thoughts on how the World Heritage Site has been looked after, what works well and what we could be doing better. We specifically wanted to know whether people felt we were doing enough to protect and enhance the Site, and any other ideas or suggestions which they had.

The consultation ran until 12 December 2022.

Relevant performance marker number: 7 (see Appendix 1)

Case-Study 8: Embedding adopted NPF4 in DM process

When the revised NPF4 was published and its timescale for adoption was known, the service undertook an exercise to cross-reference our LDP policies with NPF4 policies.

A series of workshops were held with a range of planners that involved comparing LDP policies with NPF4 policies and determining which LDP policies no longer applied. The result was a table outlining the NPF4 policies and the relevant LDP policies as well as those that no longer applied. This was circulated to officers, published on the Council's website and presented to Planning Committee. There were communications via the Council's Blog to raise public awareness of the change.

Internally, there was a series of high-level and detailed training sessions on NPF4 itself to ensure planning officers understood the themes and objectives as well as the individual policies. Once NPF4 was adopted, a series of drop-in sessions were set up to discuss individual applications and how the policies should be interpreted and applied.

The adoption of NPF4 required us to change our planning application templates and in particular the determining issues, and there was significant work to amend these to ensure the NPF4 policies were embedded in our decision-making process.

Relevant performance marker number: 2, 11 (see Appendix 1)



Case-Study 9: Staff Wellbeing Group

The Planning service values its staff and takes their health and wellbeing very seriously, especially in this PPF year, when colleagues were adapting to the challenges of the working environment post-Covid. This is why we created our Wellbeing Group with a remit to maintain and improve colleague wellbeing by identifying problems likely to have an impact and driving solutions.

The group meets quarterly and also runs an annual staff survey which identifies issues of most concern to colleagues; this allows us to take early remedial action and track changes in staff wellbeing over time.

There are reps on the group from across the service which allows staff to raise emerging issues with their reps, which can then be followed up by the group. It also allows reps to feedback updates on actions directly. Reps can also signpost colleagues to wellbeing help and advice on the Council's intranet, including to a 24/7 confidential telephone counselling service.

In the current PPF year, the group brokered agreement on minimising meetings between 12 noon and 2 pm, co-ordinated the provision of equipment appropriate for homeworking; and arranged informal outdoor events where colleagues could meet in person, including a very popular series of guided 'place quality walks' around key development areas.

And feedback from the annual staff survey identified the need to make improvements to the office environment to better support hybrid working and confirmed that stress levels dropped over the year as colleagues increasingly struck a more satisfactory and productive balance between home and office-based working.



Relevant performance marker number: 6 (see Appendix 1)

Case Study 10:

RTPI Scotland Awards for Planning Excellence

We value highly external recognition of the work of the service and we were delighted that several of our initiatives and projects were showcased at national awards ceremonies.

Two major Council projects that will transform Edinburgh for future generations were recognised at the 2022 Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Scotland Awards for Planning Excellence. An entry for Edinburgh's City Centre Transformation, submitted by design consultants Jacobs, won 'Best Plan' in Scotland. It will be key to creating a vibrant and people-focused city centre for the nation's capital. Another project made the final: the Green Blue Network Project, which was entered by consultants Atkins, takes a holistic approach to sustainable water management and climate change adaptation. This also went through to the UK/Ireland National RTPI awards.

Both projects flowed from successful partnership working with organisations including Sustrans, Scottish Water, SEPA, Paths for All, Scottish Wildlife Trust and NatureScot.



Relevant performance marker number: 6, 12 (see Appendix 1)

Case Study 11: Focusing on Short-term Lets

We continually monitor changing trends in the economy and society and review our organisational structures and processes to ensure they are optimised for the challenges the service faces. We therefore created a new, specialist team to focus on short-term let applications and enforcement. We received a high volume of applications in this PPF year and the new team ensures consistency of assessment and advice in the context of the new Regulations and NPF 4 policy. The team has updated our non-statutory planning guidance to assist applicants and members of the public in understanding how applications are considered in relation to amenity. Our web site has also been updated to provide guidance on certificate of lawfulness applications.



Relevant performance marker number: 6, 11 (see Appendix 1)

Case Study 12: Updated LB & CA guidance

Edinburgh has a superb range of historic buildings and we always aim to balance their protection with the need to make them as energy-efficient as possible, to help meet our Net Zero targets. So to ensure our guidance addresses contemporary issues, we updated our Non-Statutory Guidance for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. It now contains revised guidance on roof terraces, ensuite bathrooms and the way we assess listed building consent applications.

The updated Guidance also gives more detail on windows in listed buildings and what is termed 'narrow-profile glazing', previously known as 'slim-profile glazing'. Where narrow profile-glazing is proposed in listed buildings the guidance still advises that the 6mm cavity gap between two 4mm panes is the maximum we will usually accept; larger cavity gaps may be accepted in defined circumstances.

Listed building consent applications for narrow profile glazing in existing windows must be accompanied by cross-section drawings showing the depth of the cavity gap and glazing panes.



Relevant performance marker number: 6, 11 (see Appendix 1)

Part 2 - Supporting Evidence

The service has used a variety of qualitative and quantitative sources to prepare this year's PPF. This includes customer feedback, discussions with Edinburgh's community councils and other local groups, staff training, and benchmarking through Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS). Sources used to compile this report include:

- Planning Committee Reports
- Planning Committee Training
- Planning's Service Improvement Plan
- Planning's People Plan
- Scottish Government Transforming Planning Programme
- Adopted Edinburgh Local Development Plan
- Development Plan Schemes
- Edinburgh Design Guidance
- Planning Enforcement Charter
- Non-Statutory Planning Guidelines
- Planning Committee and Local Review Body webcasts
- Edinburgh [Planning Blog](#) and [Twitter Feed](#)
- Planning and Building Standards Customer Care Charter
- Edinburgh Urban Design Panel
- Emerging LDP: City Plan 2030
- Planning Service Improvement Plans
- Processing agreements guidance and templates

Part 3 – Service Improvements

The table below summarises progress on the Planning Improvement Plan 2022/2023

Improvement	Themes Actions
Leadership and Management	<p>Our Future Operating Model again sets out a workforce strategy which emphasises succession planning and staff development, recognition and wellbeing. We continue to monitor and review our workforce to adjust to the demands of the service and to shifts in policy towards climate change and biodiversity.</p> <p>Our recruitment strategy has created new positions within the service where we can train new assistant planners across a range of disciplines. This has included opening opportunities to those who are close to graduation and allowing graduates to start prior to completion of their degrees on a part-time basis. The use of social media has become ever more important in reaching out to candidates and a recruitment video has been prepared to raise our visibility in the jobs market.</p> <p>And in the PPF year, as well as welcoming on board new assistant planners, we made a series of promotions to Senior Planner and Team Manager. We also created a new Development Management Operations Manager role to take an overview of all our casework and drive consistency of decision and process improvements.</p> <p>Managing the move to hybrid working</p> <p>Running a planning service from our homes remained one of our biggest challenges in the year under review. Strong team working practices have been developed with regular 1:1s, team meetings and a full programme of online and in-person staff training.</p> <p>Regular face-to-face meetings are held at both team and individual levels. It has been particularly important to allow staff to adjust their working environments to suit their needs and wellbeing. Staff have embraced the hybrid working environment and come together for team training days both within the office and to review on-site developments. Wellbeing surveys have helped us understand the need for desk and meeting space, equipment and opinions on hybrid working across the office.</p>
Customer Improvement	<p>We undertook a review of the way in which we provided our pre-application advice service (PAA) with a view to improving the quality of the service received by applicants, reflecting on customer feedback and the experiences of the service since implementation of the existing PAA service in 2019 (case study 4).</p> <p>We also made improvements to our planning help desk function to improve the customer journey (case study 3).</p>

Performance and Continuous Improvement	<p>We received a high-volume of applications and created a team focusing on service improvements to ensure consistency of assessment and advice given the new regulations and NPF 4 policy. The team has also updated non-stat guidance to assist applicants and members of the public in understanding how applications are considered in relation to amenity. And our web site has been updated to provide guidance on certificate of lawfulness applications.</p> <p>A programme of training for new Planning Committee members was delivered, covering the Planning system and how the service operates. A full training programme for officers was also carried out. Most training opportunities were via Teams but a series of on-site visits was also held and were well-received.</p> <p>We also had a series of internal audits and we were re-accredited for ISO9001.</p>
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The table below sets out the improvement priorities for the year ahead as set out in the Planning Improvement Plan 2022-2023

Improvement Themes	Actions
Leadership and Management	We will produce a new Service Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026 which will set out our strategic approach to delivering our priorities and service. We will continue to use the skills matrix to make best use of the skills and expertise within the service and will develop our People Plan to ensure we are able to attract, develop, train, engage and retain a talented workforce and get the right people in the right role.
Customer Improvement	We will gather feedback from customer forums to improve communications and processes. We will continue the use of social media and the planning blog to inform the public. We will review and update Planning’s pages on the Council’s external website to make it easier for customers to navigate and ensure the content is fully accessible where possible.
Performance and Continuous Improvement	We will review the application validation process to identify efficiencies and improvements in the process. We will refresh the staff training programme covering a range of topics identified by the management team and through staff and customer engagement.

Part 4 – National Headline Indicators

A: NHI Key Outcomes – Development Planning

Development Planning	2022/2023	2021/2022
Land and Strategic Development Planning		
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period	6 yrs 4 mths	5 yrs 4 mths
Will the local/strategic development plan be replaced by their 5 year targets	No	No
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in development plan scheme changed over the past year	Yes	Yes
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year	Yes	Yes

B: NHI Key Outcomes – Development Management

Development Management	2022-2023	2021-2022
Project Planning		
Percentage and Number of applications subject to pre application advice	2.6% (101)	3.4%
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	33.3% (4)	79.3%
Decision Making		
Application approval rate	88.4%	92.1%
Delegation rate	94.4%	94.9%
Validation	89.2%	78.1%
Decision-Making Timescales		
Major Developments	46.8	24.9 weeks
Local Developments (non-householder)	15.8	13 weeks
Householder Developments	8.8	8.1 weeks
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	33	23

C: Enforcement Activity

Enforcement	2022-2023	2021-2022
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/26753/planning-enforcement-charter	15 months	4 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	807	689
Breaches Identified - no further action taken	340	843
Cases Closed	770	748
Notices Served	87	64
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

D: NHI Key Outcomes - Commentary

Good progress on City Plan 2030, our new local development plan, was maintained in the PPF year, as described in Case Study 6. Schedule 4 responses were approved by Planning Committee in November 2022 and submitted to ministers the following month which allowed us to meet our Development Plan Scheme timescales. Reporters were appointed by March 2023 and the Stage 1 Examination was concluded by the end of the PPF year. However, the replacement plan will not be able to be adopted within the five-year target.

Our overall application approval rate fell slightly from last year's level of 92% to 88% while the delegation rate, at 94%, is unchanged.

Decision-making timescales for major development almost doubled from last year's average of 25 weeks to 47 weeks. There has been a significant number of legacy major applications that were subject to legal agreements issued.

Local development timescales also, rose by around 205. This is attributed to the number of short stay let applications submit which have had a disproportionate impact on the reporting figures.

We received and investigated 17% more enforcement cases this year and served 36% more notices. This is to a large extent attributable to significant increases in reports of unauthorised short-term let uses.

The number of legacy cases cleared continued to show good progress: 33 were cleared, 40% up on last year. This reflects the service's strong focus on removing these barriers to development.

Part 5 – Scottish Government Official Statistics

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

Timescales	2022-23	2022-23	2021-22
Overall	Numbers	Weeks	Weeks
Major Developments	12	46.8	24.9
Local Developments (non-householder)	1192	15.4	13.0
• Local: less than 2 months	457	6.8	6.8
• Local: more than 2 months	735	18.9	14.2
Householder Developments	1403	8.8	8.1
• Local: less than 2 months	848	7.0	7.2
• Local: more than 2 months	555	11.7	20.3
Housing Developments			
Major	3	44.7	21.6
Local Housing Developments	105	23.0	15.2
• Local: less than 2 months	25	7.0	7.2
• Local: more than 2 months	80	28.4	20.3
Business and Industry Developments			
Major	0	-	-
Local Business and industry developments	17	13.2	9.3
• Local: less than 2 months	6	7.1	7.4
• Local: more than 2 months	11	16.1	11.3
EIA Developments	2	19.1	-
Other consents	1536	9.4	8.5
Planning/legal agreements			
• Major: average time	6	52.1	25.7
• Local: average time	627	62.3	29.0

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

	2022-2023		2021-2022	
	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld
Local Reviews	86	81.4%	38	63.2%
Appeals to ministers	93	53.7%	52	48.1%

C: Context

The service again strove to keep our performance levels, including the rigour of how we assess proposals, high during what was another challenging year where we dealt with the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with major procedural change ushered in by NPF4 and a steep rise in short-term let planning applications and enforcement cases.

A continued flexible approach to how we deploy our staff helped us maintain a high quality service across the full range of the service. This was assisted by good progress on recruiting to posts across the service and the creation of new posts designed to face contemporary issues, including a new Development Management Operations Manager role.

The nature and balance of our caseload was significantly different in some key respects to recent years. We received less than half the number of major development applications from 2021/22 while the number of non-householder Local development applications increased by 453 or 61%. The volume of householder applications was down by 14% but at just over 1,400 this is still a relatively high level.

The level of local review cases was more than double that of last year, with 86 compared to 38 in 2021/22. Original officer delegated decisions were upheld in 70% of cases, up from 63% last year.

Appeals to ministers were up by almost 80% on levels in the previous 2 PPF years. Original decisions were upheld in half of cases, broadly comparable to previous years.

Part 6 – Workforce Information

In this PPF year we realigned staff and teams to better focus on the issues the service faces. This included creating a new Operations Manager post to focus on service delivery.

The service is now organised into nine teams. There are two area-based teams handling major development applications, and two other development management teams dealing with householder and local-scale applications and treework cases. There is also a team covering enforcement and monitoring activity.

Local development plan and policy-related activities are undertaken by a development planning team while a new cross-disciplinary team contains specialists who make essential contributions to the service's casework and policy development functions. This team includes ecologists, landscape architects, transport and biodiversity officers. Another new team contains all our development management technicians and undertakes Local Review Body support and street-naming.

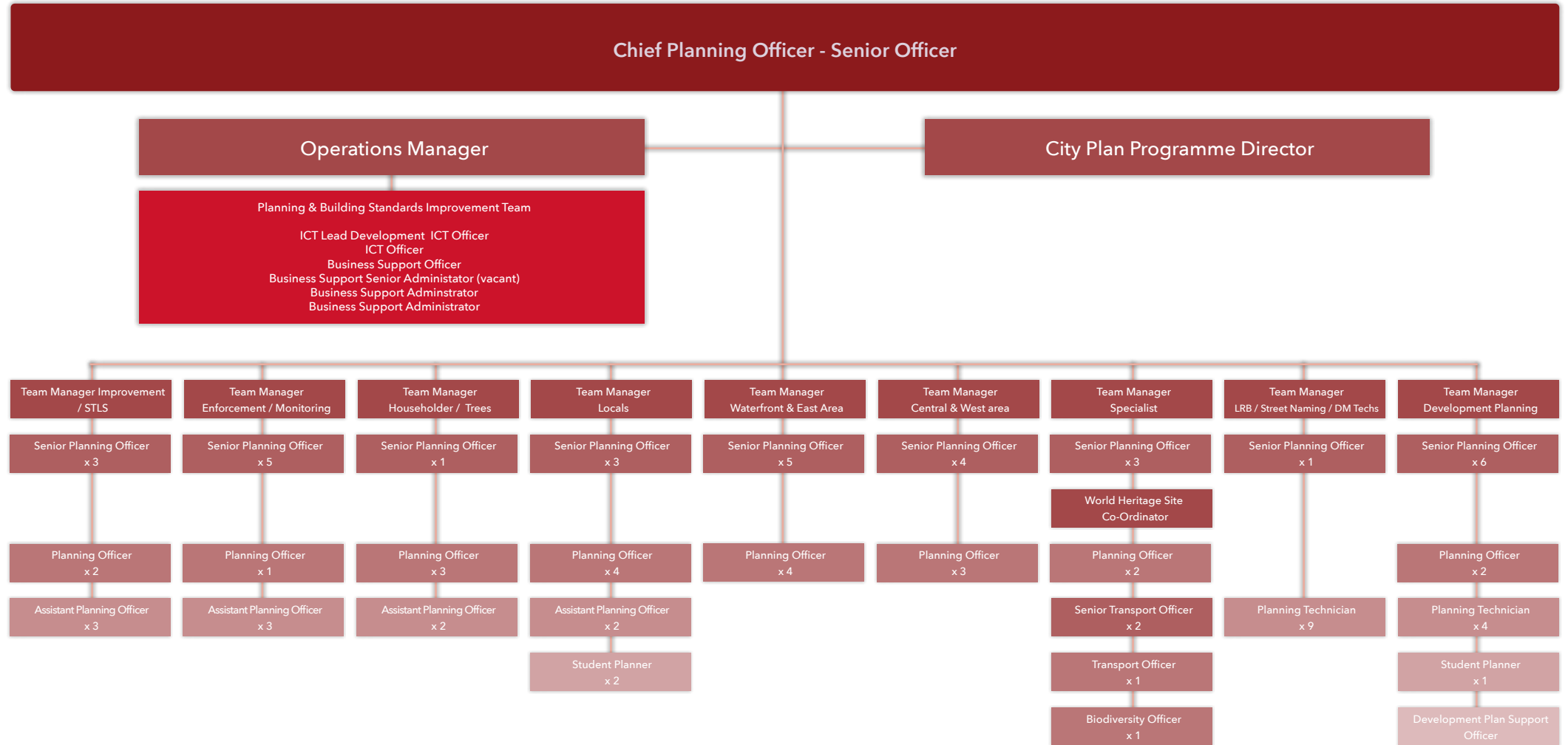
Most professional staff in the service are members of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) or eligible for membership.

Administration and business support is provided from a central Council resource and are not included in the information opposite.

RTPI Chartered Staff	Headcount
Chartered Members	49
Associate RTPI members	0
Legal Associate RTPI members	0
Licentiate RTPI members	15
Total	64

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	10
30-39	23
40-49	22
50 and over	38
Total	93

Planning Service Structure (at March 2023)



Part 7 – Planning Committee Information

The table below sets out the Committees for the past 2022-2023 year

Committee and Site Visits	Number Per Year
Full Council Meetings	11
Planning Committees/ Development Management Sub-Committee Meetings	6 and 18
Area Committees	Not Applicable
Committee Site Visits	18
Local Review Body Meetings	13
LRB Site Visits	3 (Due to COVID restrictions)

Appendix 1 – Performance Markers

Performance Marker		Part of PPF report demonstrating evidence for this marker
Driving Improved Performance		
1	Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	Part 4 – National Headline Indicators Part 5 – Scottish Government Statistics
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website	Part 4 – National Headline Indicators Case Studies: 6, 8
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	Part 1 – Governance Part 4 – National Headline Indicators Case Studies: 4
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of ‘resolving to grant	Part 5 – Scottish Government Official Statistic
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Part 4 – National Headline Indicators
6	Continuous improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	Part 4 – National Headline Indicators Part 1 – Culture of Continuous Improvement Case Studies: 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11 and 12
Promoting the Plan-Led System		
7	LDP less than 5 years since adoption	Part 4 – National Headline Indicators Case studies: 6
8	Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5-year cycle project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	Part 4 - NHI Key Outcomes – Development Planning Case Studies: 6
9	Stakeholders including Elected Members, industry, agencies, the public and Scottish Government are engaged appropriately through all key stages of development plan preparation	Part 4 - NHI Key Outcomes – Development Planning Case Studies: 6

Performance Marker		Part of PPF report demonstrating evidence for this marker
10	No longer applicable – gap kept for data continuity	N/A
11	Production of regular and proportionate policy advice	Part 1 – Culture of Continuous Improvement Case Studies: 8, 11 and 12
Simplifying And Streamlining		
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Part 1 – Culture of Continuous Improvement Case Studies: 6, 7 and 10
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Introduction Case Studies: 6
Delivering Development		
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one-year-old	Part 4 – National Headline Indicators
15	Developer contributions: clear expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan) and • In pre-application discussions 	Part 3 – Service Improvements Case Studies: 1, 4 and 6

Appendix 2 – Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies Checklist

Case Study Topics	Issue Covered by Case Study
Design	1 and 10
Conservation	2, 7 and 12
Regeneration	1, 6 and 10
Environment	1, 6 and 10
Greenspace	1 and 7
Town Centres	6 and 7
Masterplanning	1 and 6
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	6 and 12
Housing Supply	6
Affordable Housing	1 and 6
Economic Development	6 and 8
Enforcement	11
Development Management Processes	4, 5, 11
Active Travel	6 and 8
Planning Applications	4, 5, 8 and 11
Interdisciplinary Working	6, 10 and 11
Community Engagement	6 and 12
Placemaking	1, 6 and 8
Performance Monitoring	6 and 11
Process Improvement	5, 8 and 11
Project Management	6 and 8
Staff Training	8 and 9
Online Systems	3 and 5
Transport	6 and 10

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2022 - 2023

