

NATIONAL PLANNING IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Improvement Action Plan 2024

Fife Council





A high performing planning authority needs to have the right number of people to do the work expected of it with the rights skills set. It also needs to have a strategy to ensure that it retains and recruits the right staff in the future. It supports staff to upskill and to be prepared for changes in policy, legislation, and new circumstances.

Attribute	Score (1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)
1. The planning authority has sufficient resources and skills to maximise productivity	2
2. The planning authority has a valued and supported workforce	2

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action <small>What action will you take? What will the outcome be?</small>	Owner	Importance <small>High Medium Low</small>	Timescale <small>Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years</small>	Resources
Attribute 1 – Working corporately to ensure that systems and processes are in place to reduce the impact of recruitment difficulties into specialist service who are critical to determining planning applications.	Planning Services	High	Short-Medium	People Time
Attribute 2 – Develop and implement staff skills survey to identify transferable skills to meet	Planning Services	High	Short	People Time Skills



aspirations and objectives of place-based agenda
(NPF4).





A high performing planning authority has a positive culture through ensuring it has sound governance, effective leadership and a commitment to continuous improvement. The authority has an identified chief planner, who is supported by a strong leadership group to advise on decision-making, policy and operational management.

Attribute	Score (1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)
3. This Planning Authority has embedded continuous improvement	1
4. This Planning Authority has sound governance	2
5. This Planning Authority has effective leadership	2

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action What action will you take? What will the outcome be?	Owner	Importance High Medium Low	Timescale Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years	Resources
Attribute 3: Review and prioritise the actions identified in Planning Services existing Service Improvement Plan.	Planning Services	High	Short	Service Managers Improvement Team
Attribute 4: Developing a suite of e-learning modules for local elected members.	Planning Services	High	Short	Improvement Team Digital Skills Team





A high performing planning authority needs to have an effective local development plan and other strategies in place to provide a vision for the future of the area. It needs to be able to set and deliver on policy ambitions and priorities by clearly informing decision making and providing certainty and predictability for communities, developers and investment. The authority's development management systems need to be effective in making the right decisions about development and be as efficient as possible in doing this. The planning authority makes best use of digital technology and how it manages and uses data.

Attribute	Score (1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)
6. The planning authority has a robust policy and evidence base	2
7. The planning authority makes best use of data and digital technology	3
8. The planning authority has effective and efficient decision-making processes	2

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action <small>What action will you take? What will the outcome be?</small>	Owner	Importance <small>High Medium Low</small>	Timescale <small>Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years</small>	Resources
Attribute 7: Developing spatial analysis further to inform decision making.	Planning Service	Medium	Medium	GIS Support
Attribute 7: Training for staff on the use of GIS.	Planning Services	Medium	Medium	Staff Development



Attribute 7: Horizon scanning of digital solutions which could enhance delivery of the planning service.

Planning Services

Medium

Ongoing

Service
Development





A high performing planning authority should ensure a wide range of people are involved in shaping their future places. Engagement should be fair and inclusive, early, collaborative, meaningful and proportionate and should include difficult to reach groups. The authority should engage with a wide range of partners at a national, regional and local level to ensure a joined-up approach and that links are made across policies and programmes. The planning authority should demonstrate good customer care, transparency and effective communication.

Attribute	Score (1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)
9. This planning authority has good customer care	2
10. The planning authority has effective engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and communities.	2

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action <small>What action will you take? What will the outcome be?</small>	Owner	Importance <small>High Medium Low</small>	Timescale <small>Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years</small>	Resources
Attribute 9: Continue to develop the Planning Services website to include more simplified guidance including video and visual demonstrations to help with reduction in invalid submissions.	Planning Improvement Team	High	Short	Improvement Team



Attribute 9: New invalid process being scoped out through process improvement event (LEAN) with agents to improve validation rates.	Planning Service	High	Short	Improvement Team Agents Forum
Attribute 9: Further develop Planning Services customer survey to include selectable key areas (themes) where customers feel their experience fell short.	Planning Improvement Team	Medium	Short	Improvement Team
Attribute 9: Training programme to be developed to improve on how staff communicate more effectively with customers.	Planning Improvement Team	High	Short	Improvement Team HR Possible External Resource





A high performing planning authority should demonstrate place leadership by taking a collaborative place-based approach in line with the Place Principle. It should use the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes in decision-making processes, to achieve the three spatial principles outlined in NPF4: sustainable places, where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity; liveable places, where we can all live better, healthier lives; and productive places, where we have a greener, fairer, and more inclusive wellbeing economy. The planning authority should seek to ensure that there are no impediments to delivering agreed development.

Attribute	Score (1=Making excellent progress, 5= No progress)
11. The planning authority supports the delivery of sustainable, liveable and productive places	2
12. This planning authority supports the delivery of appropriate development	2

Based on the grading above, outline any areas of improvement that are required and by whom and their level of importance (High/ Medium/ Low) and by when (short/ medium/ long term).

Improvement Action What action will you take? What will the outcome be?	Owner	Importance High Medium Low	Timescale Short term – 1 year Medium term – 3 years Long term – 3+ years	Resources
Attribute 11: Delivery of training and project work relating to the identification of how the planning service will meet the Wellbeing and Sustainability objectives set out in NPF4.	Planning Services	High	Short	Climate Change and Zero Waste Team
Attribute 12: Regularly review new development schemes built on the ground and embed learning and training opportunities.	Planning Services	High	Short-Medium	Development Management Staff



Attribute 12: Work with Legal Services and associated services to identify opportunities to streamline the Section 75 legal process.	Planning Services	High	Short	Major Business and Customer Service Team
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