



NATIONAL PLANNING IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Improvement Action Plan 2024/25

Moray 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	4
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 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 1: Update Applicant Validation handbook incorporating revised procedures and process map.	DM Manager	High	1	Using existing temporary 1-year resources
Attribute 1: Temporary Planning Officer post – 1 year	DM Manager	High	1	Use resources from Acting up arrangements
Attribute 1: Performance Coordinating role within Economic Growth & Development Service	Chief Planner	High	1	Use additional fee income



Attribute 2: Dedicated Planning skills training plan with focus on areas for improvement. Consider shared training with other councils and Improvement Service.	SPD & DM Manager	High	2	Use existing shared resources and Planning skills programme
Attribute 2: Future Planner training programme	SPD Manager	High	1	Resources from corporate training budget





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	3
4. This Planning Authority has sound governance	1
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 Pre-application advice process. Review if fast, focused advice can be provided.	DM Manager	Medium	3	Internal resources
Attribute 3: Succession plan for Development Management & Strategic Planning & Development	SPD & DM Manger	High	1	Internal resources
Attribute 4: Member Training Plan and Refresher/update training.	SPD & DM Manager	High	1	SG & Planning Skills, Internal resources



**Attribute 5: Chief Planner Job description part of
Management re-structuring**

Chief Executive

High

1

Internal





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	1
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 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 7: Review how data is stored moving from existing server to share point	SPD & DM Manger	Medium	3	Internal resources
Attribute 7: Review of Planning Web pages. Improve Elected Member access to GIS mapping.	DM & SPD Manager	High	1	Internal resources



Attribute 8: Review committee presentations moving to power points slides to aid understanding of proposals	SPD & DM Manager	High	1	Internal
Attribute 8: Review DM procedures and use of Uniform	DM Manager	High	1	Internal
Attribute 8: Review of handling reports to ensure effective and efficient decision-making. Use of shorter, focused reports. Review standard conditions.	DM Manager	Medium	3	Internal





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	3
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: Embed improved timescales for customer e-mail and phone call responses	SPD & DM Manager	High	1	Internal
Attribute 9: Annual stakeholder workshop with Agents/consultees.	SPD & DM Manager	Medium	1	Internal
Attribute 10: Annual Community Council stakeholder workshop	SPD & DM Manager	Medium	1	Internal



**Attribute 10: Prepare a plan to engage with
Secondary schools on the role Planning plays in
communities**

SPD Manager

High

3

Internal





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: Prepare a plan to focus on brownfield sites, vacant land, empty homes and re-use of existing properties	SPD Manager	Short	3	Across all services
Attribute 11 & 12: Re-engage with RTP1 and Planning Awards to promote high quality development in Moray	SPD & DM Manager	High	1	Internal resources

