

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2020 - 2021





Cyclists at Strathclyde Park, Motherwell

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Photography by Brian Cairns and North Lanarkshire Council

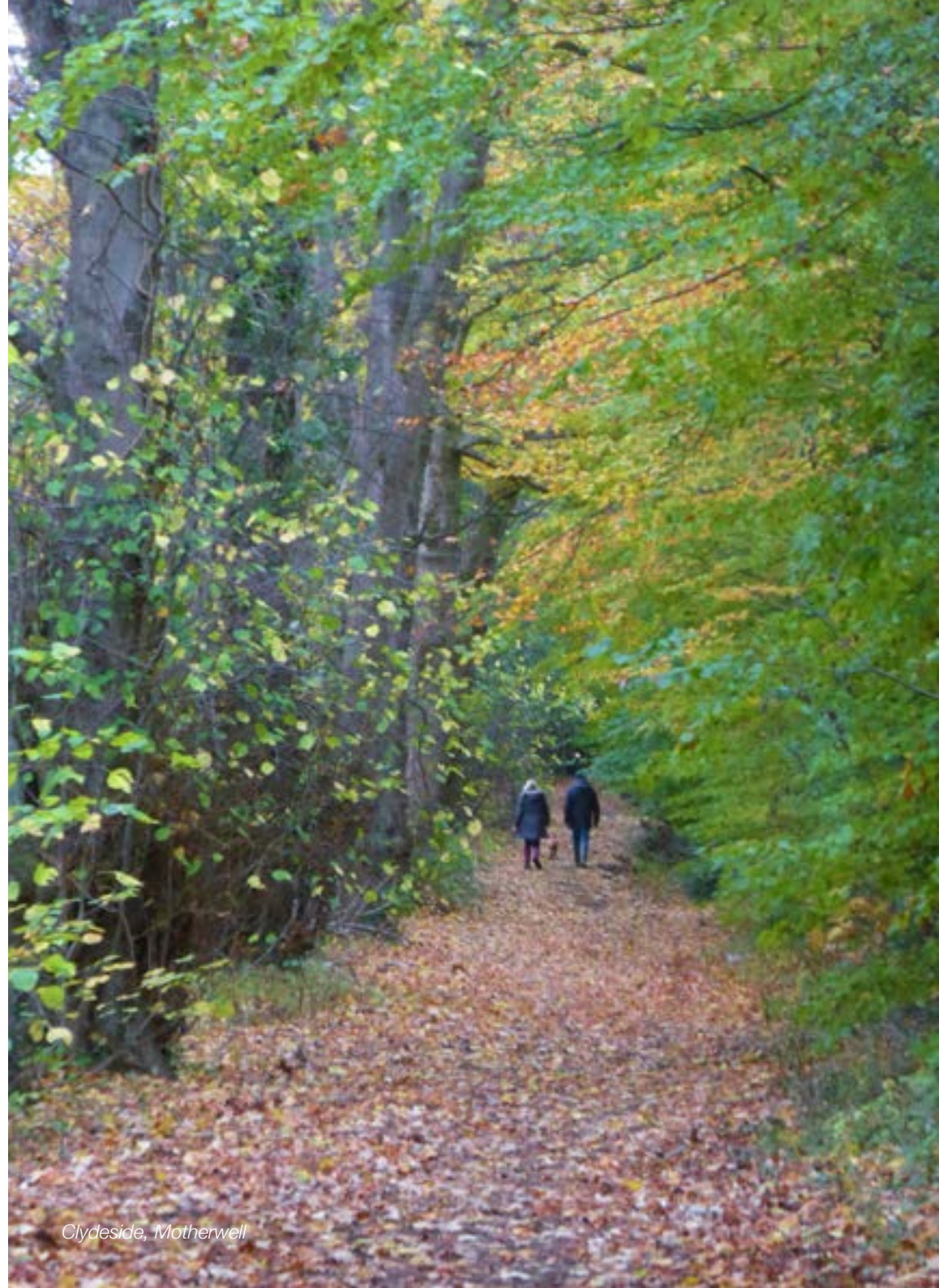
Introduction

We are pleased to provide our tenth annual performance report on our planning services.

This Planning Performance Framework reports on our performance across a broad range of areas covering the 12 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

As well as looking at speed of decision making, we cover other key factors including, quality, workloads, resources, organisation and outcomes. Our case studies demonstrate how we adapted our service delivery during the coronavirus crisis, and how we continued to add value to our communities and contribute to the enhancement of our natural and built environment over this challenging year.

We welcome this opportunity to highlight our achievements, successes and individuality with you, as well as some areas we have identified for improvement.



North Lanarkshire

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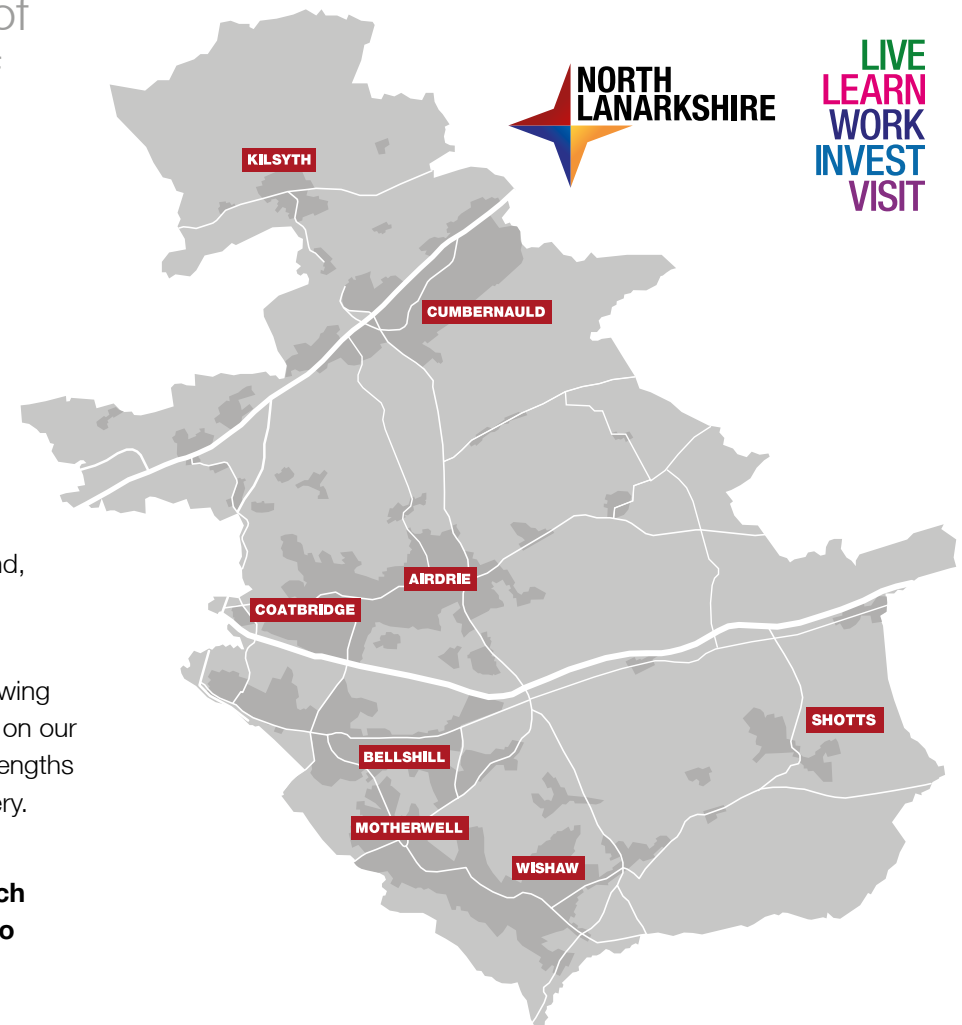
It is Scotland's fourth-largest local authority and with a population of over 340,000.

With eight established town centres, North Lanarkshire forms a geographically diverse area between the conurbation of Glasgow which we border to the west, and the moorlands of central Scotland to the east.

North Lanarkshire's historical development of the coal, steel and heavy engineering industries has resulted in one of the largest areas of vacant and derelict land in Scotland, accounting for 1,387 hectares*. These traditional industries have now largely been replaced by a modern business infrastructure supporting new and emerging sectors.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, North Lanarkshire had one of Scotland's fastest growing economies. While it is still too early to fully assess the economic impact of coronavirus on our local economy, North Lanarkshire's location and connectivity are some of the many strengths that will help create opportunities which can contribute to supporting economic recovery.

We want North Lanarkshire to be a place where everyone is given equality of opportunity, where individuals are supported, encouraged and cared for at each stage of their life and for North Lanarkshire to be a place where people want to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit.





[The Plan for North Lanarkshire](#) supports the shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire over the long term. The Plan is designed to communicate priorities and provide a focus for activities and resources. This aims to ensure we work towards a shared ambition and challenges are addressed through integrated solutions.

To deliver our shared ambition of inclusive growth and prosperity, our five priorities are to:

- Improve economic opportunities and outcomes
- Support all children and young people to realise their full potential
- Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities
- Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities
- Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base

These five clear corporate priorities set out a strong emphasis on integrated solutions to tackling barriers to growth, unlocking potential and delivering change in a dynamic way that will support growth and deliver broader economic and social benefits for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire.

[The Place, The Vision](#) sets out the council's ambitions for the area's businesses and its people, boosting the local economy and creating jobs. It aims to invest £3.5billion over the next 10 years, which, along with private sector inward investment, will create around 12,000 jobs and generate an additional £1billion for the local economy.

The councils [Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan \(ERDP\)](#) provides a framework which aims to co-ordinate the physical and economic regeneration of North Lanarkshire. The four interrelated themes are:

- Housing - Increasing housing supply across all tenures to meet current and future housing requirements and support wider regeneration objectives.
- Town centres - Supporting the regeneration of North Lanarkshire's town centres through the development of long-term visions and strategic projects.
- Infrastructure - Developing the strategic infrastructure to support physical and economic regeneration, primarily through the City Deal programme.
- Business and industry - Enabling and promoting the provision of good quality industrial and office space in the right locations to help attract and retain businesses and improve economic output.

The ERDP is supported through a range of projects such as our [Town Visions](#) which aim to encompass the transformation of town centres including proposals to reposition our towns as mixed-use spaces, promoting town centre living and delivering services closer to communities. There will be a much stronger focus on new-build housing, residential conversion and refurbishment.

We'll use land no longer needed for retailing and improve town centre access and active travel. We will use our own new supply programme to deliver new affordable homes in town centres.

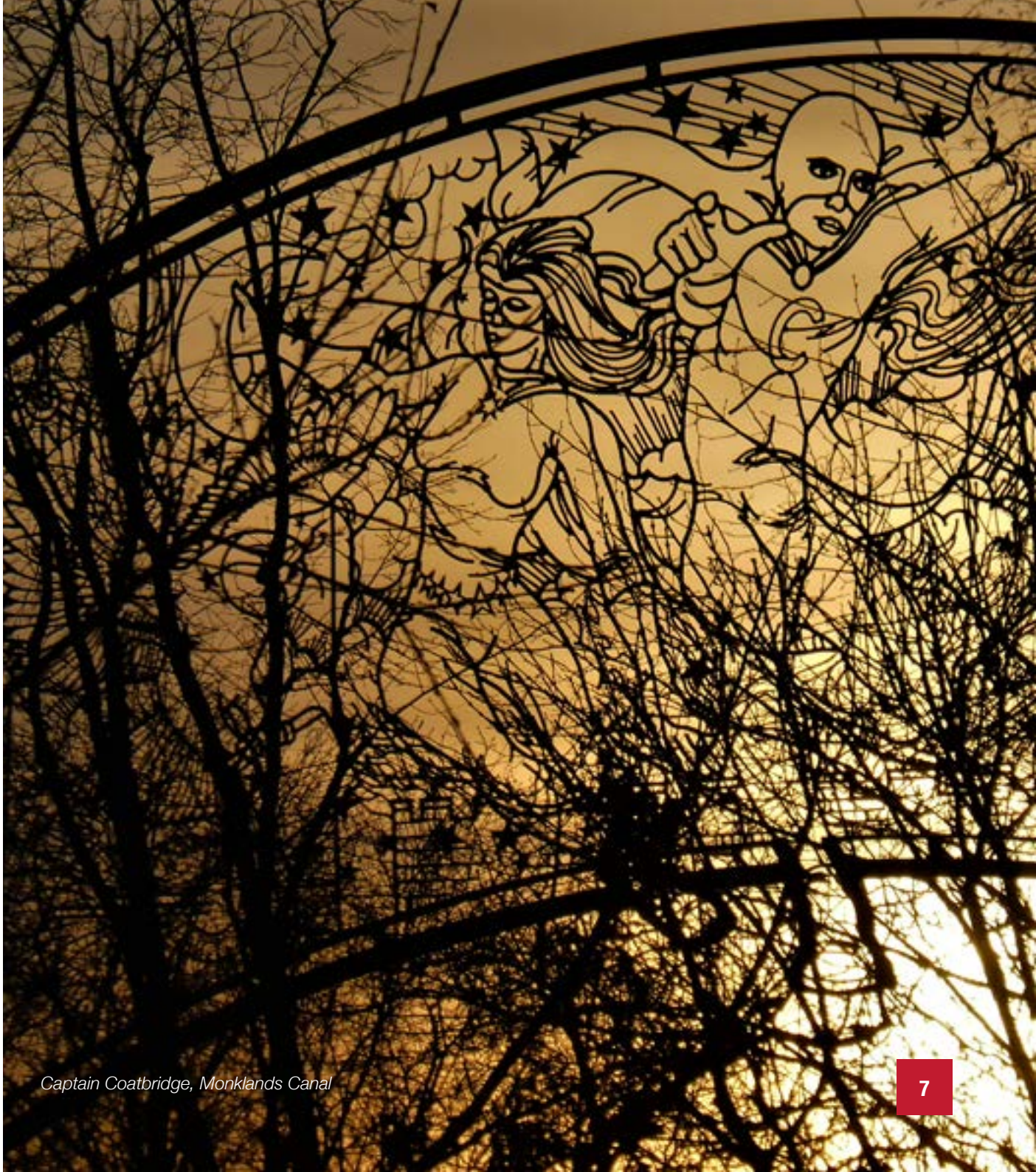
Our Vision for North Lanarkshire cannot be realised without working with communities to shape and develop it. Our people and communities play a crucial role in making the real decisions that will affect them and the area where they live.

For that reason the council continues to evolve with the formation of nine [Community Boards](#) to further strengthen the focus on communities. The aim of the nine Boards being to put local people, communities and Elected Members at the heart of the council's operating model and to fully support inclusive growth and prosperity.

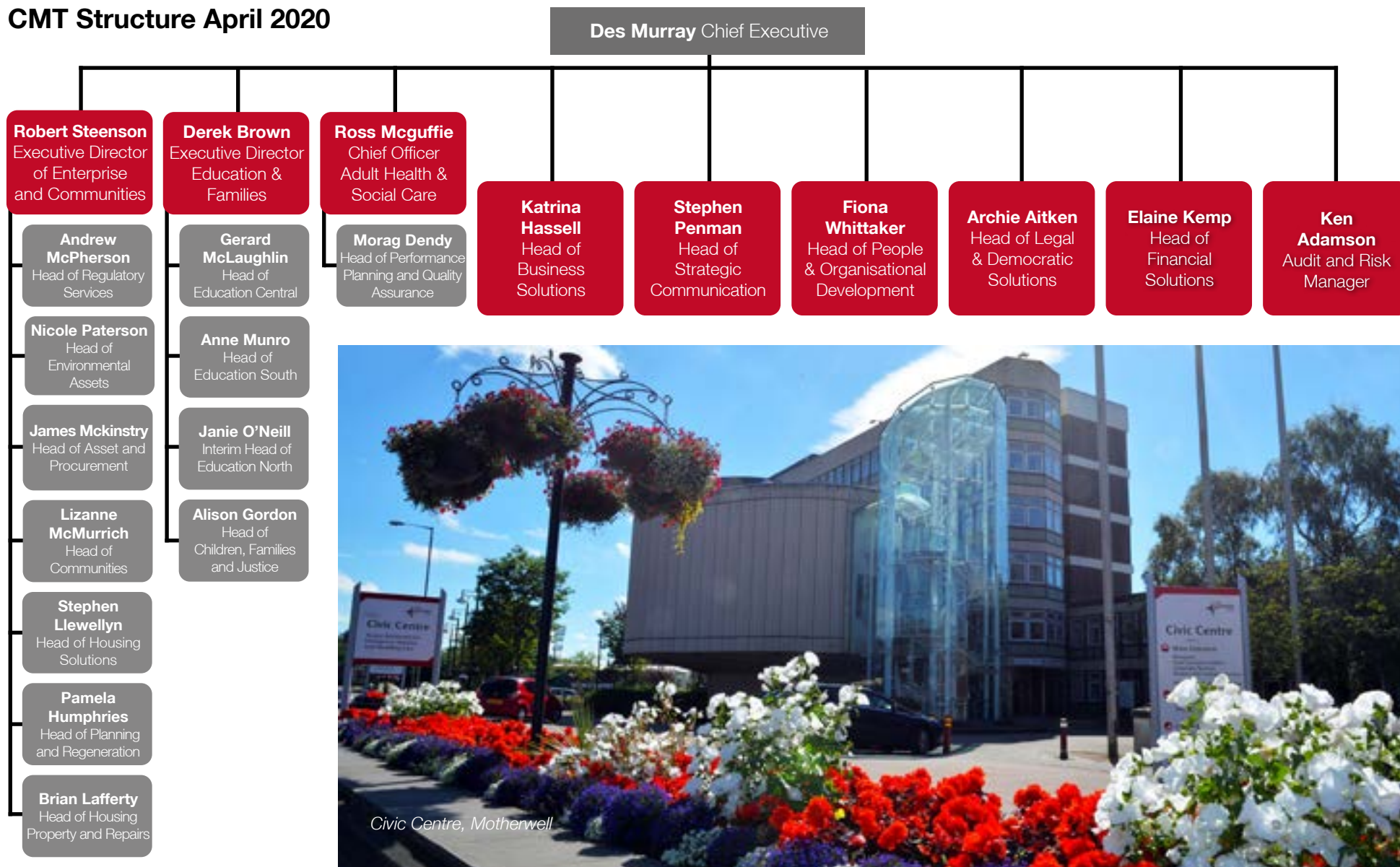
The nine Boards will ensure a partnership focus on supporting service design, delivery and community action reflecting both the ambitions within The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the priorities and circumstances of individual areas.

They will drive streamlining and better alignment of engagement with communities across services and the community planning partnership to ensure a coordinated and easy to navigate approach providing integrated, meaningful opportunities to influence priorities around a variety of issues including input to master planning.

Our Planning and Place team sits within Enterprise and Communities. This service cluster has been aligned to support and enable the delivery of growth in North Lanarkshire and has a central role in the delivery of our priority outcomes. The structure enables us to combine skills and resources to address challenges through integrated solutions, making our areas attractive business locations, improving employment opportunities, encouraging strong sustainable communities, and enhancing and protecting our natural and built environment.



CMT Structure April 2020



Further supporting growth in North Lanarkshire is the [Glasgow City Region City Deal](#) which will create economic growth and attract investment by improving transport and regenerating or developing sites over the next 20 years.

The NL City Deal Programme has expanded and the investment in North Lanarkshire has increased from £172.5 million to £240 million. This important change will allow us to focus on delivering the Pan Lanarkshire Orbital Transport Corridor to enable the regeneration of Ravenscraig and the development of the East Airdrie Link Road to achieve wider economic, social and environmental benefits across North Lanarkshire.

This [infrastructure fund](#) will allow us to provide major road infrastructure to connect communities and place, increase access to businesses locations and employment opportunities and enhance sustainable transport. The regeneration of the overall Ravenscraig site is a key element of the council's vision for the area, which will see £3.5 billion invested over the next 10 years, creating around 12,000 jobs and generating an additional £1 billion for the local economy.

As a council, we are making an additional £29.5 million available to support the Ravenscraig road development. Additional NLC capital funding has also been approved to allow for the delivery of the East Airdrie Link Road which collectively will form the Strategic Pan Lanarkshire Orbital Transport Corridor, creating a critical North South link to support economic growth in North Lanarkshire.

North Lanarkshire City Deal Programme has three core headline projects:

- [A8/M8 corridor access improvements](#)
- [Glenboig link road](#)
- [Pan-Lanarkshire orbital transport corridor](#)

The core projects comprise a number of sub projects that work together to deliver wider connectivity, transportation improvements and enable economic development.



Cliftonville daffodils

Part 1: Qualitative Narrative and Case Studies

There are many ways of defining and measuring a high quality planning service. The Scottish Government has asked that we cover our:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement

Quality of outcomes:

The quality of our outcomes can be demonstrated by analysing the value our planning service adds to development in our area.

We ensure a proactive approach to protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment through our design policies, local plan, development frameworks and by engaging positively with developers before, during and after the application process.

Our comprehensive planning policies, guidance and collaborative approach has led to high quality development using innovative design to create comfortable, accessible places to live, learn, work, invest and visit.

We continue with our challenging commitment towards raising standards and achieving quality change we can be proud of. Our [Local Development Plan Modified Plan](#) will be used to guide development, inform decisions and planning policy for the area. The

policies and guidance within, and that evolve from the plan will continue to contribute to the delivery of improved economic opportunities and outcomes for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire through the delivery of high quality development on the ground.

To ensure the plan is effectively implemented, our main focus remains on the continuation of the successful process of urban renewal through town centre regeneration and environmental improvements, including a complementary network of safe, active, attractive and healthier places and spaces by improving the connectivity to and between North Lanarkshire's places and spaces.

Our Masterplanning and the promotion of [Ravenscraig](#), (Scotland's biggest regeneration site and a national development within National Planning Framework 3), contribute to achieving high quality development. Case Study 1 is an update on the revised regeneration proposals for the former steelworks at Ravenscraig.

Our identified Community Growth Areas (CGA) are locations designated for large scale planned urban expansion, to accommodate the demand for new housing and associated facilities that can't be met in established built up areas.

The [Gartcosh:Glenboig Community Growth Area](#) is an example of where major long term project delivery is now being realised. This work has required great co-operation, co-ordination and planning by

landowners, developers, the local authority and other public and private agencies and service providers. It demonstrates how collectively, Scottish Planning Policy, the Strategic and Local Development Plans and Strategic development Framework has achieved the delivery of both national and local policy on the ground.

[Town centres](#) are, once again, being increasingly recognised as the core of communities which should be protected, promoted and enhanced. In North Lanarkshire the reshaping and repopulating of our eight town centres so that they become vibrant places with mixed-use spaces which maximise social, economic and environmental opportunities is one of the key objectives of our ERDP. Our Town Visions represent a long-term strategy for each town centre with a focus on delivering a broader mix of investment and promoting town centre living so our towns have a sustainable future. With a focus on new residential provision and protecting and repurpose historic buildings future work will contribute to a sense of place. This place-based investment aims to address the range of different and complex economic, social, and health issues that exist.

Case Study 1 | New Community at Ravenscraig – Update

In the 2019/2020 Planning Performance Framework, we provided an update on the revised regeneration proposals for the former steelworks at Ravenscraig. We reported:

- Planning permission was originally granted for a new community on the site in 2005
- In 2018, a planning application for a revised and updated masterplan was submitted to the council, with more housing and less retail than previously approved.
- At 455 hectares, Ravenscraig is one of Europe's largest brownfield regeneration sites and accounts for 13% of the Glasgow City Region's vacant and derelict land.
- The site is identified as a 'national development' within NPF3
- The council is a key partner in ensuring that the promise of Ravenscraig is unlocked

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, we continue to see progress being made in the regeneration of the Ravenscraig site. Most notably from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 we have helped achieve the following:

Revised Masterplan

Planning permission for the revised masterplan was issued in October 2020. As well as setting out a framework for future developments within the site, it also requires the developer to facilitate new bus services and new schools in the site.

Ravenscraig Public Park

The council has created the new 7-hectare public park next to the Ravenscraig regional sports facility. The public park includes a play area, sensory garden, visitor hub with a disabled toilet and a cafe, events area, a network of walking and cycling routes, a multi sports pitch and an outdoor gym.

Following the issue of detailed planning permission in May 2019, works on site commenced the following month and continued (as far as possible in difficult circumstances during lockdown) until the park was opened to the public in July 2021 in time for the school summer holidays.

Funding for the £3.7m project has come from the Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and the council.

As well as being in accordance with the revised masterplan, the park is designed to cater for the needs of the new and growing residential community in Ravenscraig, and marks a significant step forwards in the regeneration of the area. It also demonstrates the council's commitment to playing its part in the regeneration of the site and highlights the benefits of partnership working.

Employment Access Road

Using funds secured from the sale of the land for the new park and supported by the Vacant & Derelict Land Fund, Ravenscraig Ltd successfully sought and secured detailed planning permission for the construction of a new section

of public road. Located off the existing Ravenscraig spine road, the new 400m long road opens up access to the business and industry zone of the updated Ravenscraig masterplan.

Following the issue of detailed planning permission in January 2020, Ravenscraig Ltd started work on the road shortly afterwards. When complete later in 2021, the new road will help facilitate the regeneration of a significant part of the Ravenscraig site and will also greatly assist in employment creation.

Infrastructure (City Deal)

In October 2020, investment of £61.9 million by the Scottish and UK Governments for the Ravenscraig Infrastructure Project was approved as part of the Glasgow City Region Project. The council is matching this funding with £65.3 million and this will allow for significant upgrades to the local road network but also (working with Sustrans and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport) the creation of new green transport links in and around the Ravenscraig site.

Ravenscraig is an important part of the council's long-term plan as it will bring new homes, schools, businesses, jobs and leisure facilities over the next 25 years. We look forward to reporting on further progress at Ravenscraig in next year's Planning Performance Framework.

Quality of Service and Engagement:

We are committed to delivering a high-quality planning service in a professional manner that meets the needs and expectations of our customers and stakeholders.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic we have faced uncertain and challenging times and have had to make rapid changes to the way we work and deliver our service.

By responding proactively and positively and by being flexible in our approach, we have ensured we can still deliver our service and meet our customer's needs. We have adapted our processes, updated our protocols and are making use of online platforms and digital solutions available to us.

As the council continues with plans to rationalise assets and develop its digital and online services, remote and agile working will be the new normal for the Planning and Place service. To support the changes made over the past year and to make sure we get it right moving forward, our working practices and processes remain under review and we continue to reflect on how we deliver our service.

Case studies 2 and 3 examine the steps we have taken to provide support for our workforce and how we have made use of digital technology to allow us to work remotely. It highlights our successes, the challenges faced and where we have identified opportunities to make improvements.

Quality of service and engagement remain in focus and positive changes to how we deliver our service will be made in the coming year to ensure we continue to meet customer's needs. Feedback from customers and staff engagement will help to inform future service delivery. For example, it has become clear following analysis of feedback that following the closure of our reception desk and shift to home working, we will need to further develop how our teams engage with customers.

As our service delivery evolves to fit our new circumstances, we will continue to keep our customers and stakeholders well informed and offer the best customer service possible. To do so we must communicate effectively to ensure we manage and meet expectation. Our [development management customer charter](#) and our [enforcement charter](#) are regularly reviewed and updated and tell our customers what they can expect and the level of service we strive to provide.

We communicate with customers and stakeholders in a range of ways. These include our website, Govdelivery (an email subscription service with 6800+ subscribers) social media, press and email. Govdelivery has been a valuable tool in keeping customers up to date with the Local Development Plan examination process and will continue to be used to communicate regarding progress.

Our '[Listening to You](#)' customer complaints procedure demonstrates that we value feedback and we welcome the opportunity to review our service delivery.

Our frontline staff are also key to gauging opinion on our service delivery and by listening to informal comments many improvements have been made for customers at all stages of their journey.

Supporting development in North Lanarkshire, we continue to monitor and update our online information. With our website often being the first point of contact for customers, it is important we listen to customers and publish our information in a way that is accessible, easy to find and easy to understand. Striving to achieve this, we harvest customer feedback through our 'Is this page useful' section on the website. We also seek feedback from other sources. During 2020 we engaged with the NL Access Panel to ensure our 2019-20 Planning Performance Framework was published for the first time online in a fully accessible format for customers using screen readers.

The promotion of [pre-application advice for major development](#) has been successful. By guiding customers to an online pro forma, we ensure they provide us with the relevant information we need to do a pre-application appraisal on proposed major development.

This enables us to provide a bespoke response for each and every proposal, requesting supporting information relating to the particular development that is both clear and proportionate. This approach to early collaboration also allows us to discuss requirements for developer contributions at an early stage. Our requests for supporting information and for developer contributions are based on the scale and nature of the

Case Study 2 | Our service response to working through the coronavirus crisis

Following lockdown, we faced an unprecedented scale of change in the way our planning teams work. There was much to consider and we needed to be fast paced and flexible in our approach to maintaining service delivery.

Initially there were practical considerations. While some staff already had flexible working patterns and equipment that would support home working arrangements, some of the team still worked from desktops. Staff working from desktops included some planners and the majority of our technical support team. Our first challenge was to quickly procure and distribute laptops and fobs that would enable remote connection to our systems for all team members.

In addition, we understood that everybody would have individual needs when it came to home working. The team was invited to come back into the office on an appointment basis to take whatever equipment they needed to create a workstation at home that suited their needs. This included dual screens, laptop docking stations, keyboards, lockable drawers and chairs.

Connecting remotely to our systems initially presented challenges. The volume of online connections had increased so dramatically overnight that our IT capability was under immense strain. To cope, there was a limit to when each service could make a connection with an allocated time given for each. This was resolved within the first few weeks, so that all staff had unrestricted access to the network and had access to the tools they needed to carry out their role. However increased loading times for Uniform and Idox DMS is still an issue and is being addressed through the use of remote desktops for those who are struggling most to connect while a cloud-based solution is developed to allow connection to be made more effectively.

Inevitably 'corporate' assistance can only go so far and there is an element of taking personal responsibility for being able to work from home. However, resolving these practical considerations within the scope of what we could achieve meant that within the first few weeks our planners had the capability of working from home.

It proved more of a challenge for our technical and support team as the majority of the team did not have the necessary equipment for homeworking and this took a number of months to put in place due to the level of similar demands across other council services. Through a combination of improved access to IT kit and a phased return to the office for a small number of staff, the technical support staff were fully operational by 1 September 2020.

Considering how we needed to adapt our service delivery with our offices closed, our team working from home and most of our technical support team unable to work, we had to rapidly change our process to ensure we could keep delivering a development management service. Only online applications and payment were accepted, a remote site assessment was carried out (rather than a site visit), we could only communicate by email and the majority of enforcement enquiries were suspended.

Thanks to the dedication, commitment and hard work from technical support team leader, the technicians and business development colleagues we were still able to provide a level of technical support. At the start of lockdown our technical support team leader worked round the clock to ensure applications were processed and decision notices issued while most of the team were unable to work.

During these early days this collaboration to support the team was vital in accepting and processing applications dealing with customer enquiries, setting up mailbox responses, dealing with urgent work, ensuring our website communication was up to date. However, the issue of reduced technical support staff coupled with the rapid change to home working, connectivity and IT issues and also increased time taken for consultees to respond did impact on our timescales and on our performance.

Within the technical support team our technicians now work from home and the rest of the team have a blended working arrangement with updated risk assessments, office protocols and PPE in place to protect staff and ensure their safety. For those working from home across

the teams, connectivity and increased loading times for Uniform and Idox still present an issue that we are working to address.

It is clear that supporting staff working from home means more than providing for practical needs – staff wellbeing is key.

As with all change, leadership buy-in is essential. Managers needed to find different ways to support and enable people to do their tasks. This included having informal contact such as online coffee and chat, enabling people to adapt their working day around other life commitments, encouraging people to check in, having 1-1s, and team meetings using platforms like Skype and Teams to create opportunities for regular and meaningful two-way communication.

Corporately a dedicated online health and wellbeing site provides considerable guidance and advice supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of the team.

The results of a council wide homeworking survey conducted during December 2020 was in the main very positive with the majority of staff have found working from home either easier or the same as being in the office, with many highlighting the benefits of a better work life balance. We do acknowledge however that home working doesn't suit everybody with some staff reporting a sense of isolation when working exclusively from home.

Looking forward as we continue with home working and blended working arrangements, the past year has offered insight into the resilience, dedication, and professionalism of the team. Lessons learned relate to the key role communication plays and in the need to involve staff in decision making to ensure there is an improved understanding of decisions being taken. To allow us to move forward effectively we have updated our action plan in an effort to address these issues.

proposal, the guidance contained within our SPGs, and discussions with key consultees who would be commenting on planning applications.

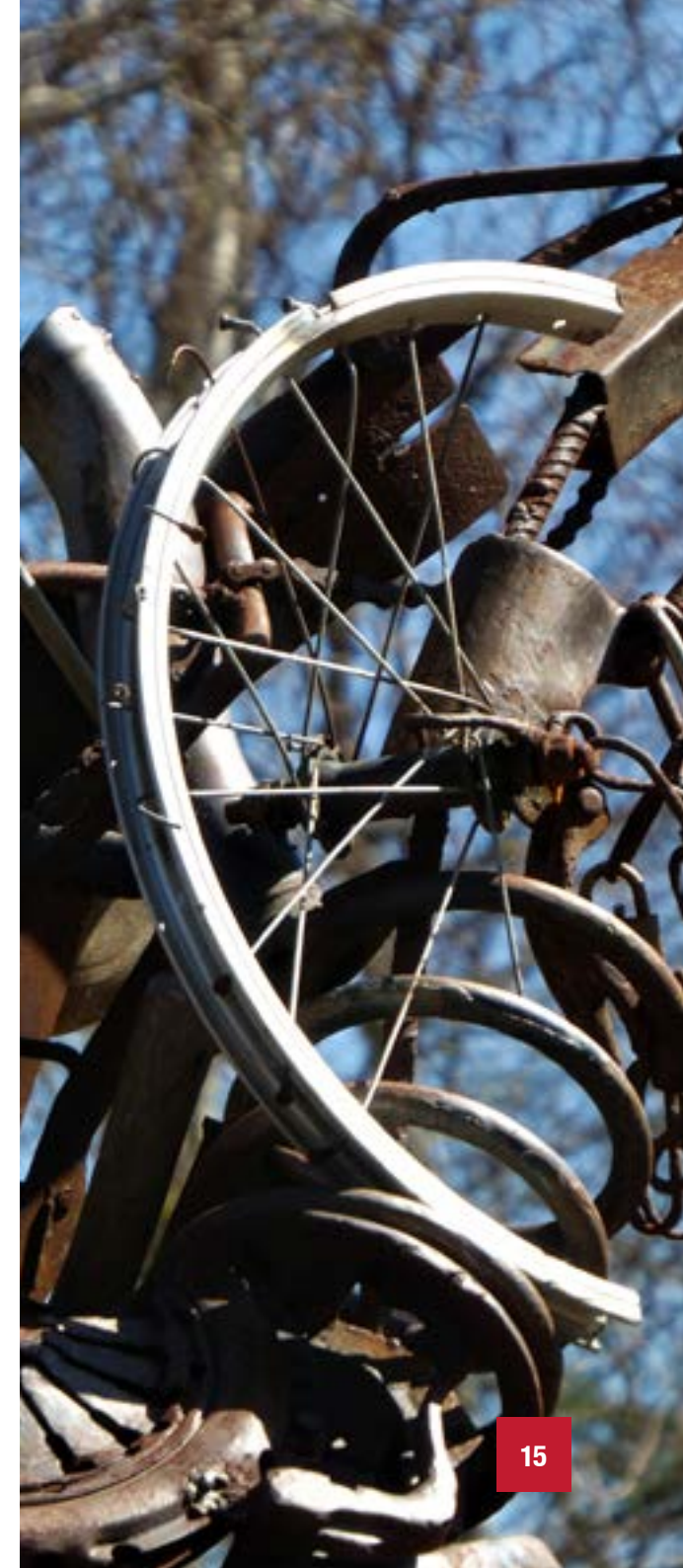
[Supplementary Planning Guidance \(SPG\)](#) forms an essential element for consistency, not only around decision making, but also in pre-application advice and submission making. The content of the SPG is being evaluated as part of the Modified Plan process.

We continue to offer and highly recommend [processing agreements](#) with all major development applications and many local development applications. Our direct and proactive approach to encouraging their use has had a positive response. Our commitment to timescales offers certainty to applicants and allows greater efficiency around case management.

Our [North Lanarkshire Local Plan](#) gives stakeholders certainty by delivering more consistency in decision making and in our advice to any party interested in new development. As a result, of the decisions made by the council, last year most were consistent with the plan.

Our use of Masterplanning and our identified [Community Growth Areas \(CGA\)](#) offer further certainty to developers looking to invest in North Lanarkshire. By providing a structured approach and framework across a wide range of complicated issues, they provide a vision for each area and set out clear aims, objectives and design principles, as well as expertly guiding the process.

Our [Town Visions](#) have been shaped through extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the community to build a consensus around the future development of our towns. To ensure people and communities play a crucial role in making the real decisions that will affect them and the area where they live the council embarked upon a three stage consultation and engagement programme in October 2020 with stakeholders and community board workshops culminating in a six-week public consultation during February and March 2021.



Case Study 3 | Impact of coronavirus on Local Development Plan examination process

Our Strategy & Policy Team had developed a standard procedure of collegiate working and triple sign off of decisions and documents throughout the process of developing the Local Development Plan (LDP). In light of our succession planning programme (Workforce for the Future), where we are seeking to ensure continuity of service in the longer term, in order to cascade knowledge of the LDP processes down to less experienced members of staff, at least three members of the team were to be present at all working meetings discussing and agreeing what would then be typed up on a PC.

At the time of lockdown we had been in close contact with the DPEA regarding the submission of documents in relation to the Examination of the Proposed LDP. The move to remote working and unfamiliarity with or lack of access to appropriate software (Skype and Teams principally) and hardware in the form of phones, in the early period of lockdown resulted in more complex, cumbersome and lengthy email exchanges and sign off procedures instead of meetings.

Despite these challenges our team were committed and thanks to their resilience and willingness to be flexible, we were able to submit the Proposed LDP for Examination in July 2020. By the time the Examination was commenced the availability of and familiarity with software allowed a replication of the previous collegiate practices via remote working, allowing us to respond to Further Information requests in almost exactly the way we would have if we had still been in a physical office environment.



Governance

Our Planning and Place team sits within Planning and Regeneration and forms part of the Enterprise and Communities service.

This service cluster encompasses Enterprise, Planning, Housing, Environmental Assets and Communities, and is responsible for all land and property management as well as planning and delivery aspects (including roads, future school building and all associated community infrastructure).

With the statutory elements of planning working together under the Planning and Place manager, we continue to develop the principle of concentrating appropriate and proportionate resources that will allow us to focus on our core business and address our priorities.

A high performing planning system will have a critical role in supporting our future recovery in North Lanarkshire, so both corporate and service communications over the reporting year were extensive in terms of the range and volume as guidance and advice was shared and updates made to address the changing risk environment.

For decision making, the council's emergency response to the coronavirus crisis meant that Planning Committee meetings were suspended from March until August 2020. During the intervening period when the committee was suspended a small number of applications were determined by the Chief Executive in

accordance with Section 56 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Our Planning Committee again now meet remotely on a four-weekly cycle with regular special meetings being held outside of the cycle for any urgent matters. Case Study 4 details the journey and challenges faced as we transitioned to online committee meetings.

While there were challenges in moving to online committee meetings, there have also been opportunities with online meetings bringing an unanticipated increase in 'attendance'. To ensure people know what to expect from these meetings, we publish the [protocol for planning application hearings](#) online.

The changes to our committee meetings didn't impact on our [scheme of delegation](#). Last year 92.5% of applications were decided under this scheme.

Applicants may seek a review of the decision made under the Scheme of Delegation to the [Local Review Body \(LRB\)](#). We provide an independent representative who provides professional planning input to this process. The work of the LRB was also suspended from March until August 2020, however meetings are now held online. Our committee service colleagues offer 1-1 guidance and support on how to participate online as required to anybody attending.

To ensure there is a capable, competent workforce for the future, we continue with our commitment to continuous development of staff. This is supported through our Performance Review and Development

(PRD) process. The NLC Learning Academy further supports employee and leadership development for all staff.

Workloads, resources and performance are closely monitored through our regular management team meetings, which are now held remotely. Case Study 5 details how enhanced performance reporting assists this process.

Throughout the year we have continued to participate in several partnership and peer groups. Through partnership working both across the council and with external partners, peer review, benchmarking and sharing best practice, a forum is created for sharing knowledge, comparing outcomes and discussing future direction.

Collaborating in new and different ways across the council, our priorities were rapidly reconfigured during 2020 to include the GIS Covid-19 response team. Case Study 6 looks at how we merged resources and skills to speed up the process of providing solutions as a response to the circumstances and how this work will benefit us in the future.

Establish links, such as working in partnership with the Housing service, enabled us to meet various statutory duties. This includes producing the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and Strategic Housing Investment Plan, delivering affordable housing and cooperating with the Housing Need and Demand Assessment.

Our partnership working has also enabled us to develop a system to more efficiently manage

Case Study 4 | Committee hearings following coronavirus restrictions

On 23 March 2020 Scotland moved into a lockdown resulting in the chief executive confirming to all Elected Members that all council and committee meetings were to be suspended with immediate effect. In addition, all necessary decisions, which would normally be taken by a committee, would now be dealt with under his delegated authority.

A [process for decision making under delegated authority](#) was established in order to ensure transparency.

Under emergency delegated powers, the chief executive was asked to determine applications or reports which would normally go to the Planning Committee for consideration and which met the following criteria:

- Recommendation accords with approved planning policy (i.e. the adopted Local Plan)
- MSC application, or application to extend planning permission, where PPP or full planning permission already granted
- Where the recommendation is to grant, the application has not received significant numbers of valid objections (i.e. no more than 15)

To enable committees to meet again, a new format had to be considered which adhered to all restrictions. Arrangements were made for alternative means of facilitating virtual committee meetings. This presented new challenges which needed to be addressed before committee hearings recommenced on 13 August 2020.

Initially, all hardware was reviewed and it was agreed that a standardised approach should be taken which ensured all Elected Members had updated laptops to work from. This exercise meant replacing some older laptops and other devices such as I Pads, however the advantage was that everybody would have the most up to date IT equipment the council could provide for moving forward.

Several platforms were considered for hosting online committee hearings, but it became clear that we weren't ready to use Teams, and Zoom had some well publicised security issues, so the council decided to move forward

using Cisco Webex for committee hearings.

To ensure the success of virtual committee hearings we had to consider the diverse range of skills amongst the Elected Members. Key to the committee meetings going ahead online was that a baseline could be established to gauge the collective IT ability. To this end, our committee services colleagues were committed to working closely with all 77 Elected Members to deliver 1-1 bespoke training and to ensure any connectivity issues were addressed.

While all Standing Orders remained, a protocol had to be established for online meetings. This protocol was clear, concise and set out how remote meetings would be conducted. This new protocol is now agreed and is now incorporated in Standing Orders.

A trial meeting was held and all technical issues addressed

and protocol reinforced before the official roll out of virtual committee meetings.

As a result, planning committee meetings and Local Review Body meetings now run seamlessly.

Where required, customers and public are given tailored support, for example on how to activate subtitles, to ensure they can participate in the planning process. Meetings were initially recorded but are now live streamed via the [North Lanarkshire Council Youtube channel](#).

Overall the feedback on the remote committee meetings has been overwhelmingly positive. The pace of change inevitably change brought challenges, however these challenges have been met and we are confident our approach to decision making is robust and effective.





information around surplus land supply. We will continue to work together to contribute to the delivery of housing, provide schools and to regenerate and develop vacant and derelict land in the area.

In addition, we are working in partnership with the LHS steering group towards outlining the Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement for North Lanarkshire. This is a key component of the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 being presented to Parliament in the autumn.

Across the reporting year we have also participated in research projects led by the London School of Economics and the RTPI. By taking part in these research projects we have been able to advance understanding of planning issues that will ultimately influence future planning policy and decisions.

During the reporting year we carried out a peer review with our colleagues from Glasgow City Council. This involved two online meetings where representatives from each planning service had the opportunity to discuss best practice and to exchange views and experience on relevant topics such as:

- Mobile working
- Local Place Plans
- Legacy Cases
- Appeals
- Enforcement
- Local Review Bodies

Case Study 5 | Performance monitoring and management

Good performance management allows us to essentially create a link between the goals of the organisation and the work being done. It provides a framework that allows us to get the best outcomes for our team. To be effective and to add value, performance management must align with the organisations goals and be integrated into our culture and practices.

In North Lanarkshire we have a clear vision of what we want to achieve. Our plan outlines a programme of place-based investment that aims to address the range of different economic, social, and health issues that exist. We need to reshape our towns to focus on to a broader mix of investment and promote town centre living so our towns have a sustainable future.

This transformation needs to be supported by a robust and high performing planning service and, with leadership support, performance management can be successful and have a positive impact on the performance of our planning team.

A performance management system will enable managers to track and analyse performance. Currently our development management managers rely on day to day performance information from Enterprise (our workflow tool) and the Scottish Government mid-year and year end returns.

While the tools and information available is valuable, and our planning managers are committed to and actively support and engage in the performance management process, the process needs to be ongoing and meaningful. To gain better insight into

the performance of the team we needed a clear and precise report that gave a picture of performance in real time.

To address this a performance report was developed by our business development colleagues that could be ran as required. In addition to the report containing the same information as the Scottish Government return, additional detail and information has been added to give a more comprehensive overview of our team performance.

The report is currently prepared quarterly and covers the full range of application types. It can be broken down to create a wide range of detail in specific areas of work and it can drill into the detail of specific application types, team performance and individual performance. The report creates a snapshot in time that enables our senior management a broader overview than Enterprise gives and a more regular overview of performance than the Scottish Government six monthly returns allow.

Managers have a key role and need to invest time in performance management to ensure people are reaching their potential and meeting agreed standards and objectives. It is anticipated that recognising areas of high performance and highlighting areas requiring improvement through our reporting will allow the managers to identify good practice that may be replicated across the team, and take any necessary steps or to make any adjustments to ensure we continue to meet our goals.



While we always welcome the opportunity to meet with a range of colleagues and to develop links and nurture working relationships, during this challenging year making time to discuss matters with our peer review partners was particularly helpful. It enabled us to share experiences and to get insight into the similar, but different challenges faced by another planning authority.

Peer review has influenced and shaped our service improvements in various ways. Our new householder validation process and our update to our appeals process to make use of the DPEA document library are examples of how peer review partners, Aberdeen City Council (2019) and Glasgow City Council (2020) respectively, have had a positive impact on how our service has evolved.

In addition, over the year participation in the following groups has add value to our service and to our communities:

- Heads of Planning Scotland (HoPS)
- HoPS Executive
- HoPS Development Plan group
- National Development Planning Forum
- HoPS Development Management group
- Glasgow and Clyde Valley Development Planning Forum
- Clydeplan Industry Topic Group
- Clydeplan Steering Group
- Scottish Land Commission's Vacant and Derelict Land Task Force
- Digital Office for Local Government, Local Government Sector and associated COVID-19 Data Task Force
- Antonine Wall World Heritage Site Steering Group
- eDevelopment and ePlanning project boards
- Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership
- Climate Ready Clyde
- Housing and Planning liaison group
- North Lanarkshire Council Community Empowerment Working Group
- Glasgow City Region Land Use and Sustainability Portfolio
- NLC New Build Delivery Group
- North Lanarkshire Access Panel
- NLC Extended Corporate Management Team
- NLC Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan Group
- NLC Planning, Regeneration and Communities Liaison Group
- NLC Joint working group with Planning, Building Standards and Pollution Control
- Ravenscraig Development Steering Group
- Monklands Hospital replacement board
- London School of Economics (Value, Incidence and Impact of Developer Contributions in Scotland)
- Kevin Murray Associates (RTPI Measuring Planning Outcomes Research)

Case Study 6 | Pandemic response: GIS, data and digital transformation

The emergency response by the council in supporting the people, communities and businesses of North Lanarkshire due to the coronavirus crisis was fast paced and flexible and focused on the continuity of essential frontline services and the ongoing safety and wellbeing of service users and staff.

The Planning conceived and led GIS Joint Covid Response Team was constituted during March 2020 following discussions with the Chief Executive and the council's strategic (Gold) and tactical (Silver) emergency response groups following an initial request for paper mapping output to assist in schools planning.

A broad range of skills were required so a range of staff were gathered from across the service to form the team. From Planning and Place, the Planning Manager (Strategy & Policy), a senior planner and a planning technician joined the team. From the GIS Team, two GIS Officers and a GIS assistant were appointed and a Business Development Officer (BDO) with specific IT skills. Other Planning and Place staff, BDOs and staff from across our services were ready to assist the team as required.

Throughout the three phases of activity relating to Covid (response, recovery and renewal) the team has been involved in identifying challenges, creating, constructing and mapping data sets, developing insights and solutions and sharing knowledge with fellow practitioners through the digital office task force squads and colleagues across the council.

This effective way of working, sharing resources and skills within and across organisations has reinforced the need to develop and maintain a single source of truth for our data. This single source of truth will improve decision making processes enabling rapid, responsive data driven decision making that ultimately leads to better service planning and delivery for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire.

During the pandemic the GIS Joint Covid Response Team also developed working relationships with external

partners and stakeholders such as the Digital Office and the Improvement Service for Scottish Government, as well as other local authorities. The team members are directly involved in the definition and development of a Data Ecosystem, based on the 20 minute neighbourhood model, which is part of the Driven by Data initiative led by the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government, through the cross-council Data Task Force Advisory Group as well as leading and contributing to capability and data drive squad respectively.

Within the council the work done by the team has brought the importance of shared data and the use of GIS to the attention of a wider audience and seeing its use in a practical application has helped to raise awareness of its usefulness and capabilities to other service areas. All of this helps to raise the profile of the planning and GIS services with the council and its partners.

It is also very important to take knowledge gained and consider wider challenges for our planning service delivery, as data underpins the digital transformation of the planning system.

The development tracker app being developed to assist in monitoring development and forward planning of land allocations and interventions, and the new Planning Act requirements around education and health data being analysed and presented in Local Development plans will directly benefit from the work undertaken and shared and lessons learned over the last 18 months. The GIS Joint Covid Response Team still meets on a weekly basis to facilitate discussion on ongoing COVID recovery support and wider matters related to data, mapping and the Digital Transformation of Planning agenda complimented by the continuing work of the Data Task Force.

As such we believe these relationships and networking is not only important to effectively tackle challenges like COVID pandemic, it also allows us to merge resources and skills across organisations and speed up the process of providing solutions within Planning and Place.



Culture of Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is embedded in our culture and is critical in ensuring our success as we seek to deliver a high quality service. Thanks to the hard work of our skilled and committed workforce we meet this challenge and we continue to strive to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to help to ensure improved outcomes for our customers.

Our staff development policies add value by ensuring we have the skills to meet our goals and our online resource 'Work Well NL' provides wellbeing support for all employees. We continue to work to strengthen our team resources and enhance staff retention to help address succession planning. Regular training and cascade learning sessions ensure all staff have the right skill base and are up to date with all processes and policy they require to carry out their roles. In addition, mandatory training on topics such as data protection and public sector equality duty ensure that best practice is embedded in our day to day activities, our processes and our ways of working.

In addition, we are proud to be one of only two local authorities in Scotland to achieve [Disability Confident Leader](#) status, demonstrating that we lead the way for people with disabilities.

To enable more informed decision making, Elected Members training continues to be provided remotely around our service delivery and on topics such as

changes brought about by the new Planning Act, NPF4 and new Local Development Plan.

Staff consultation, development and the self-evaluation of our service delivery is key to continuous improvement. To ensure all changes to our service delivery over the past year have added value, the Planning and Place manager invited staff views on our how we deliver our services and maximise the use of the resources available to us.

These sessions have proved valuable, providing feedback and insight from the team in terms of the impact of rapid changes to process and service delivery. As a result, we have made immediate adjustments to our workflow system and provided additional hardware at the request of individuals. An action plan is being developed to assist with progressing proposed change and to enable effective feedback to the teams directly on the points raised during the sessions. Just as important as acting where we can, is communicating what change we can't deliver, and why.

Further process review sessions will take place that will ensure a consensus on how we move forward as a team and ultimately find solutions for our evolving service delivery.

While some work has been reprioritised due to the coronavirus crisis, our improvement measures set out in last year's Planning Performance Framework report have still made progress and the benefits are now being realised.



Case Study 7 | Development Management Processes

Our work to continuously improve development management has seen us face ongoing issues regarding how much case officers' time and resources are taken up by the validation of planning applications. This has impacted on the processing time and quality of planning application decisions.

While the service has always seen this issue as a challenge, we have found that readily available technicians with the resources and skills to assist have been in short supply given how staff profiles, turnovers and structures had evolved within the service. Although our relatively new technical team had been recently formed, the recruitment largely had come from the redeployment of existing staff with non-technical Support/administration backgrounds, potentially adding even more challenges to resolving this process issue.

From our communication with our sharing good practice partner Aberdeen City Council in 2019, we observed and learned about the extensive degree to which their administration/support staff took responsibility for the validation of planning applications. The information shared with Aberdeen City Council raised our awareness to the real possibility and potential of those staff traditionally with a more administration and support background playing a valuable role in the validation process. This communication also came at an opportune time, close to the emergence of the above-mentioned build of our technical team. So, far from being confronted with the extra challenges of a new team with a limited technical background, this communication with Aberdeen City Council allowed us to see the issue from a different perspective, presenting us with the opportunity to look at a new approach involving the up skilling of support/administration staff.

Therefore, following assessment and consideration at management level, we set the goal of householder planning validation tasks being carried out in full by the staff of the technical team.

Although the staff previously had some input in to the application registration process in terms of document labelling, site plotting and neighbour plotting and identifying digital addresses, we identified that the fundamental objective was to train and upskill all staff within the technical team in the

following key areas:

- How to understand and interpret the requirements for validation in accordance with Government guidance;
- How to provide a consistent and accurate description of the development proposals;
- How to read and assess technical drawings (and use supportive software such as GIS and Trapeze measurement tools);
- How to assess a proposal for permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (as amended), in accordance with Government guidance;
- How to assess planning fee requirements;
- How to communicate and liaise with agents on all validation matters and;
- How to confirm neighbour notification and identify consultation requirements.

We delivered this training and development of our new technical team staff would be running it all in real time as part of the day to day development management process. To this end, we ran a pilot project whereby the staff would take responsibility for the validation of householder applications lying within the service's South team area (covering approximately half of the number of householder applications received by the council). As essential groundwork, we produced comprehensive and detailed step by step process guidance for staff, and we re-designed the Idox Enterprise tasks model to facilitate the pilot process. We also set up a small project working group (comprising Senior planning officer, technical team leader, support/administration manager and representatives of the council's business solutions team) that would meet on a fortnightly basis to monitor the progress of the pilot and to discuss issues and questions, and make any changes or additions to the training and guidance as required. This arrangement was complemented by the setting up of regular communication between the south area planning team and the technical team leader and staff. This approach worked effectively using the Microsoft Teams software platform; an essential component of communication

and particularly conducive in this project by helping staff become focused, in touch, engaged and feel valued during the challenges imposed by remote working.

The pilot ran for four months from December 2020 and, during that time, the technical team staff members worked closely and direct with senior staff to ensure the validation was being carried out to a high standard before case officers were allocated the case. That time was a steep learning curve for all staff and, given the variety of skills and experiences, some initially adapted and performed at a higher level than others. However, as the pilot progressed, the learning and development process developed to the point that all members of the technical team staff were individually validating practically all householder applications.

With the clear and established success and progress of this pilot, the team were then in the strong position to work autonomously (with minimum supervision from planning staff) and ready take on more workload in this area. The decision was therefore taken in May 2021 to conclude the pilot and roll out the validation of all householder planning applications across the entire North Lanarkshire area (North and South).

Although this roll out is still relatively new, the planning case officers are already experiencing the benefit of being released from the heavily administrative side of application validation, and are able to concentrate and focus more on the professional assessment of applications, which should inevitably have positive impacts on how effectively and efficiently we provide the development management service. The new process should also provide a more consistent level of customer service as the focused team develop a naturally more unified way of working. Furthermore, the technical team itself has now taken ownership of this task and, as skills and confidence consolidate, we expect to form a sound foundation for rolling out other aspects of process work including the full handling of all householder related Certificate of Lawfulness applications. In the longer term, as progress continues, the service will consider the further roll out of the validation process to cover other planning applications, including those involving more complex development types.

These benefits include adapting our processes and ways of working in response to the coronavirus crisis to enable us to continue to deliver our service and to continue to meet customer's needs and improvements to our website content to make sure all information was up to date and accessible for customers.

Other improvements include the development of new training and guidance for our technician's team in the validation of householder applications, and our successful pilot in preparation for the implementation of the revised process. Case Study 7 looks at what steps were taken and what factors were considered to support the change. We anticipate that the new process will free up considerable time for planning officers and reduce processing times for householder applications.

Further enhancing the development management application process, we have prepared and updated the Uniform system and Enterprise workflow tool to smooth out the approval process for planning decision notices to be issued. Concerns around rolling out training while the team worked from home had led to the delay in implementation, however the development of training videos means we are able to implement this process in the coming year. It is anticipated this change will also contribute to reduced processing times for householder applications.

Our appeals process has also been improved with the inclusion of our regularly used documents in the [DPEA core documents library](#). Following discussion with our peer review partners, Glasgow City Council, it was

clear that referring to regularly used documents via the library saved time in preparing evidence for appeals.

Review of our SPGs continues with progress made around education, noise and air quality. A previously drafted model is being considered for future use in updating some of the more straight forward SPG to accelerate the process.

Following on from these service improvements, we are now focusing on our 2021/22 improvement action plan. We continue to review the demand on our service and work to identify need and build in solutions to ensure we progress our service improvement actions and continue to deliver a high quality planning service.

We are committed to providing modern, digital services and harnessing digital tools and systems to enhance our planning service. Working in partnership with the Business Development and Support team has already cut out inefficiencies and promoted consistency, improving the processing of planning applications. Looking to further build on these successes, we will work closely with DigitalNL in the coming year undertaking digital sprints that will examine further our customer journeys and allow us to continue to develop an efficient and streamlined planning service.

We listen to feedback from partners and stakeholders and we strive to continually improve our performance and service delivery. Each layer of feedback, through both formal and informal sources helps us get to know

our main customer groups and gives an insight as to their needs and preferences. This knowledge helps us prioritise improvement activity and communicate to our customers the accurate and detailed information they need to make our service easily accessible and to understand the steps taken in the planning process while managing the expectation of what we can deliver.

Part 2: Supporting Evidence

Wildflowers at Skytower

The style of our Planning Performance Framework has evolved over the years and has been influenced by peer review.

The report was compiled drawing on evidence from the following sources.

Click on the links below to take you to the document or website described:

- [Link to The Plan for North Lanarkshire](#)
- [Link to North Lanarkshire The Place, The Vision](#)
- [Link to North Lanarkshire Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan](#)
- [Link to North Lanarkshire Town Visions](#)
- [Link to Community Boards](#)
- [Link to Glasgow City Region City Deal](#)
- [Link to Infrastructure Fund](#)
- [Link to A8/M8 corridor access improvements](#)
- [Link to Glenboig link road](#)
- [Link to Pan-Lanarkshire orbital transport corridor information](#)
- [Link to Local Development Plan Modified Plan](#)
- [Link to Ravenscraig information](#)
- [Link to Gartcosh:Glenboig Community Growth Area](#)
- [Link to Town Centres](#)
- [Link to Development Management Customer Charter](#)
- [Link to Enforcement Charter](#)
- [Link to 'Listening to You' complaints procedure](#)
- [Link to Pre-Application Advice for Major Development](#)
- [Link to Supplementary Planning Guidance](#)
- [Link to Planning Processing Agreement](#)
- [Link to Protocol for Planning Application Hearings](#)
- [Link to Scheme of Delegation](#)
- [Link to the Local Review Body](#)
- [Link to Disability Confident Leader](#)
- [Link to DPEA Core Documents Library](#)

Case Study Topics	Issue covered by case study (pg number)	Case Study Topics	Issue covered by case study (pg number)
Design		Interdisciplinary Working	Case study 1
Conservation		Collaborative Working	Case study 1,6
Regeneration	Case study 1	Community Engagement	
Environment		Placemaking	
Greenspace	Case study 1	Charrettes	
Town Centres		Place Standard	
Masterplanning	Case study 1	Performance Monitoring	Case study 5
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	Case study 3	Process Improvement	Case study 2,7
Housing Supply		Project Management	
Affordable Housing		Skills Sharing	Case study 7
Economic Development	Case study 1	Staff Training	Case study 7
Enforcement		Online Systems	Case study 2,4
Development Management Processes	Case study 7	Transport	
Planning Applications		Active Travel	
Other: Our service response to working through the coronavirus crisis: Case study 2,3 and 4			



Carnegie Library

Planning Performance Framework 2020 - 2021

Part 3: Service Improvements



Public rights of way and core paths

In North Lanarkshire, Planning and Place will play a significant role in supporting future economic recovery in the area following the coronavirus crisis.

During this uncertain and challenging year, we have moved swiftly to adapt our service and our actions reflect the need to review these changes as our service evolves.

While this report lays out our service improvements for the coming year, our plans may be adapted with changing priorities.

In the coming year covering the 12 months from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, we will:

Review:

- New ways of working, including working from home and development management and enforcement processes to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our customers.
- Our customer journeys through digital sprints in partnership with DigitalNL.
- Customer communication methods with a view to introducing a duty officer rota to ensure our communication methods are still appropriate and meet the needs of our customers.
- Communication methods within the team to ensure effective engagement and the efficient cascade of information following the shift to home working.
- Succession planning strategy to date in light of challenges and opportunities presented over the past year.
- Methodology used to undertake annual Housing Land Audit.
- Householder CLP process to move task from planning officers to technical support team to make efficiencies and to further develop role of the technical support team.
- Enforcement Charter with a view to ensuring it is up to date, accessible and relevant to how we are carrying out our enforcement process.
- The structure and composition of the service to ensure we have adequate staff resources allocated in the correct teams to deliver the new requirements placed upon the service by the introduction of the new Planning Act.
- Our partnership working and peer groups to ensure the groups we participate on add value to our service, customers and communities.

Develop:

- A timetable for delivery of Supplementary Planning Guidance identified as required following Adoption of the Local Development Plan.
- Appeals process to streamline the task of collating information and develop Enterprise tasks to automate the exchange of information within the team.
- A standardised approach to developer contributions and strengthen our policy guidance (ongoing).
- A streamlined and improved process for dealing with Section 69 and Section 75s (ongoing).
- A process for dealing with legacy cases with Section 75 attached (ongoing).
- A New Build Development Monitoring report in collaboration with Business Development colleagues.
- New customer guidance on how to view and comment on planning applications for the new version of Public Access.

Implement:

- Physical records management plan of work to reduce paper files.
- Householder validation process across the whole area to realign tasks and to increase consistency ensuring that planning applications are processed consistently and with minimum delay.
- Our development management Enterprise workflow tasks to assist the issue of planning permission following decision (ongoing).

Continue to:

- Seek opportunities for peer group and partnership working to identify service improvements.
- Engage with local communities on planning matters.
- Deliver elected members training reflecting on relevant topics such as changes brought about by the new Planning Act, NPF4 and new Local Development Plan.
- Contribute to the development of the North Lanarkshire Environmental Strategy 2021 and lead on the development of the Open Space Audit and Strategy (ongoing).

Monthly meetings will be scheduled to monitor the progress of these actions.

Delivery of service improvement actions committed in previous year in 2020-21

Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
Review	
Working practices as our service adapts and evolves in response to the circumstances around coronavirus crisis.	Looking at how we deliver our service, we have adapted our processes and ways of working to accommodate the circumstances around coronavirus. Staff work from home, we continue to promote online submission and payment, our website has been reviewed and our methods of communication adapted to suit with officers all having mobile phones.
Physical records management in response to the circumstances around the coronavirus crisis.	Physical record management has been reviewed and a plan of work prepared to back scan paper records. Office rationalisation means that all paper files will be removed from Fleming House.
Householder validation process and realign tasks to increase consistency and to ensure that planning applications are processed with minimum delay.	Good progress has been made over the year with guidance, training for technicians and a successful pilot undertaken to allow us to address any initial issues. Due the challenges faced this year implementation of the new process took longer than expected but with the correct foundations in place success of the project is fully anticipated.
Supplementary Planning Guidance with a view to preparing a programme for updating and replacing existing SPG.	The Report of Examination into the North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan – Modified Proposed Plan 2019 made a number of recommendations relating to the provision of guidance (statutory and non-statutory). These are currently being assessed for their implications and a revised timetable of works will be developed. Internal drafts of guidance on contributions to Education and Noise & Air Quality are affected and will be revised and delivered as appropriate.
Website material for update and publication on new web platform in line with the new North Lanarkshire Content Style Guide.	All website material was reviewed and where appropriate updated in line with the new North Lanarkshire Content Style Guide to better suit the needs of customers. Our new web platform went live during November 2020.
Appeals process to ensure it is as streamlined and efficient as possible.	The Appeals process has been reviewed and a plan of work prepared to make updates. We made use of the DPEA document library to have immediate impact on time scales for dealing with appeals and a plan of development has been prepared. Thanks to colleagues in Fife who shared their work, we will develop new methodology for collating 'interested parties' information. We will develop automation of tasks to ensure workflow progresses efficiently and within DPEA timescales.

Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
Develop	
A standardised approach to developer contributions and strengthen our policy guidance.	This work is ongoing and links to work being carried out with SPG. Ongoing
A streamlined and improved process for dealing with Section 69 and Section 75s.	A model agreement has been prepared however further progress has been hampered due to the reprioritisation of tasks over the year to accommodate changes to service delivery during the coronavirus crisis. Ongoing
A process for dealing with legacy cases.	A regular report on legacy cases is provided to development management managers and standard letter templates prepared for case officer use. Regular 6 weekly meetings have been scheduled. Further consideration will be given to cases with S.75 attached. Ongoing
Our development management workflow tool to assist the issue of planning permission following decision.	Due to the challenges presented by the shift to home working, focus was on adapting our processes to accommodate this change. In addition, new training methods had to be developed. Training will now be delivered over Teams and a training video will support the written guidance document. Ongoing
A plan for electronic updates on the progress of the Proposed Modified Local Development Plan to customers through the Govdelivery email platform. There are currently over 6,000+ subscribers for the topic, planning.	Electronic updates are now available for the team to use as and when is appropriate.
A structured, scheduled review of performance, process and service improvement to ensure performance management and business development align and support individuals to reach their potential.	New performance reports have been created across a broad range of work and are produced quarterly. Regular management meetings are scheduled to look at performance and to address any issues arising, including process and IT issues. Process review will continue as we evaluate the changes we have made in the past year.
A policy and guidance, in partnership with colleagues in Housing and Business Solutions, in response to the Government requirement to identify and introduce a target for the provision of wheelchair accessible housing in new developments.	Policy and guidance are now developed. Following further consultation with community groups the policy will be included in the Local Housing Strategy.

Committed improvements and actions	Complete?
Continue to	
Seek opportunities for peer group and partnership working to identify service improvements.	Over the year we have worked with a broad range of peer groups and partners, including Glasgow City Council for our PPF peer review meeting, Kevin Murray Associates on the pilot regarding LDP outputs and the London School of Economics to support research into developers contributions. In addition, we have contributed to projects such as the new Monklands hospital and the redevelopment of Ravenscraig.
Deliver elected members training reflecting on changes brought about by the new Planning Act.	Elected members training now continues via an online platform and this year had focused on the new Planning Act.
Work with our Pollution Control and Building Standards teams to enhance our customer communication around contaminated land. This will ensure the advice on what information is required from developers around contaminated land is clear and consistent.	This well-established group continues to meet to address issues arising from the industrial legacy of contaminated land.
Contribute to the development of the North Lanarkshire Environmental Strategy 2021 and progress the Open Space Audit and Strategy.	Work is ongoing and progressing with the next steps that include the development of the project initiation document.

Ongoing

Part 4: National Headline Indicators



A (NHI) Key outcomes Development Planning

Development Planning	2019-20	2020-21
Local and Strategic Development Planning:		
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	8 years and 6 months	9 years and 6 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	N	N
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	Y-later	Y-later
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	N/A	N/A
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
Established housing land supply	23,283 units	22,255 units*
5-year effective housing land supply programming	9,913 units	9,079 units*
5-year effective land supply total capacity	18,828 units	16,849 units*
5-year housing supply target	5,300 units	5,300 units*
5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)	9.4 years	7.4 years*
Housing approvals	1,762 units	2,673 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	5,328 units	5,546 units*
Marketable employment land supply	335.85 ha	479.72 ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	18.90 ha	6.26 ha

* Draft figures from Draft 2020 Housing Land Audit (HLA). ** Final figures

B NHI Key outcomes - Development Management:

Development Management	2019-20	2020-21
Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	9.2 %	10 %
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	63.6 %	46.6 % (7)
Decision Making		
Application approval rate	96.6 %	97.7%
Delegation rate	95.8 %	94.2%
Validation	32.9 %	37.3%
Decision-making Timescales		
Major Developments	20.7 weeks	26.5 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	10.9 weeks	13.9 weeks
Householder developments	8 weeks	10.1 weeks
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	8	19
Number remaining	49	64



Drumpellier Park

Development Planning and Development Management

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Development Planning: The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan is up to date. Following the legal challenge to the Strategic Development plan during 2017-18, the decision was taken to modify the proposed Local Development Plan. This Modified Proposed Local Development Plan has gone forward to Examination during 2020/2021.

Modifying the Proposed Plan offers more control and benefits to the plan making process. Changes have been made to site designations, area boundaries and policies reflecting feedback received through the Local Development Plan consultation process.

Effective land supply and delivery of outputs:

The housing land audit helps to address any housing supply issues through the plan making process in order to ensure that there is an adequate land supply available for house building. The land supply varies year-to-year as a result of the status of sites changing, being built on, or new sites being added.

Following publication of Scottish Planning Policy 2020 and PAN 01/2020 on 18 December 2020, the 5-year effective housing land figures are to be derived using the housing land requirement, not the housing supply target. Our 5-year housing land requirement is reported as 6,100 units.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Project Planning: We offer anyone seeking pre-application advice on major development the opportunity to meet with us to discuss their proposal. This option ensures a high quality and targeted approach to adding value to development in the area. To make this new way of working user-friendly we encourage the use of our [pre-application enquiry form](#) ahead of the meeting.

Our practice of directing those dealing with Local Development to our website for information has streamlined the process. The resulting drop in the number of applications that are subject to pre-application advice allows officers to devote more time to offering a dynamic and modern service that meets our customer's needs.

Decision Making: Our decision making figures have held steady on last year's performance. We continue to monitor these figures closely.

Decision-Making Timescales: Despite the significant challenges thrown up by the coronavirus pandemic we were pleased to be able to maintain a planning service throughout and moved quickly from a standing start to enable all professional staff to work from home. It proved more of a challenge for our technical and support team as the majority of the team did not have the necessary equipment for

homeworking and this took a number of months to put in place due to the level of similar demands across other council services. Through a combination of improved access to IT kit and a phased return to the office for a small number of staff, the technical support staff were fully operational by 1 September 2020.

Our performance has reflected the various challenges posed by our support team not being fully operational, home working, the inability to carry out site visits and the extended time taken for consultees to respond. However, we consider it an achievement that we have provided a service throughout. As we continue to look at how we deliver our service in these challenging times and as we allow new process and ways of working to bed in, we are confident that moving forward performance will improve.

Legacy Cases: We have increased our number of legacy cases cleared during the reporting period. However, the overall figure for legacy cases has increased. Having initiated work on a new strategy around how we deal with legacy cases, we will further develop our process in the coming year to look at how we manage applications with a S75.

C Enforcement activity

Development Planning	2019-20	2020-21
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed Requirement: review every 2 years	1 month	13 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	48	10
Breaches identified – no further action taken	130	33
Cases closed	48	140
Notices served	0	1
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Enforcement: The impact of coronavirus has presented various challenges over the past year in the way we deliver our services, and particularly how we deal with enforcement.

As a result of restrictions in movement preventing all but the most urgent of site visits, it has not been possible for us to investigate enforcement cases in the way we would do under normal circumstances. Given the volume and nature of enquiries received, for many cases we did not use our powers (which are discretionary) to investigate or to pursue formal enforcement action.



Sentines, Centenary Park, Airdrie



Part 5: Scottish Government Official Statistics

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

Timescales	2019-20	2020-21	2020-21
Overall			
Major developments	20.7 weeks	26.5 weeks	
Local developments (non-householder)	10.9 weeks	13.9 weeks	
	7 weeks	6.8 weeks	22.1%
	14.6 weeks	15.9 weeks	77.9%
Householder developments	8 weeks	10.1 weeks	
	7 weeks	6.2 weeks	42.8%
	10.1 weeks	12.6 weeks	57.2%
Housing Developments			
Major	18.6 weeks	28.3 weeks	
Local housing developments	13.9 weeks	17.3 weeks	
	7.3 weeks	7.1 weeks	8.5%
	18.3 weeks	18.2 weeks	91.5%

Timescales	2019-20	2020-21	2020-21
Business and Industry			
Major	0 weeks	9.2 weeks	
Local business and industry developments	9.1 weeks	13.5 weeks	
	6.6 weeks	7.1 weeks	25%
	11.8 weeks	15.6 weeks	75%
EIA Developments	0 weeks	10 weeks	
Other Consents	7.1 weeks	10.4 weeks	
Planning/legal agreements			
	25.6 weeks	20.2 weeks	
	45.6 weeks	29.7 weeks	

B Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Original decision upheld				
	2019-20		2020-21		Total number of decisions 2020-21
	No.	%	No.	%	
Local reviews	11	84.6%	8	88.9%	9
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	5	55.5%	7	58.4%	12



Stane Gardens, Shotts

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

As previously discussed, there have been significant challenges in providing a service through the coronavirus pandemic and this has impacted on our performance. We prioritised the safety of our staff and our communities making the move to home working and we consider it an achievement under the circumstances that we have provided a service throughout.

As we continue to look at how we deliver our service,

and as we allow new process and ways of working to bed in, we are confident that moving forward performance will improve.

Performance is monitored in a continuous and cyclical basis, allowing us to make adjustments and to recognise where improvements need to be made. This approach allows us to establish a consistent approach and to support and develop individuals to meet their potential.

Decision-making: Local Reviews and Appeals

As anticipated the number of appeals has remained steady.



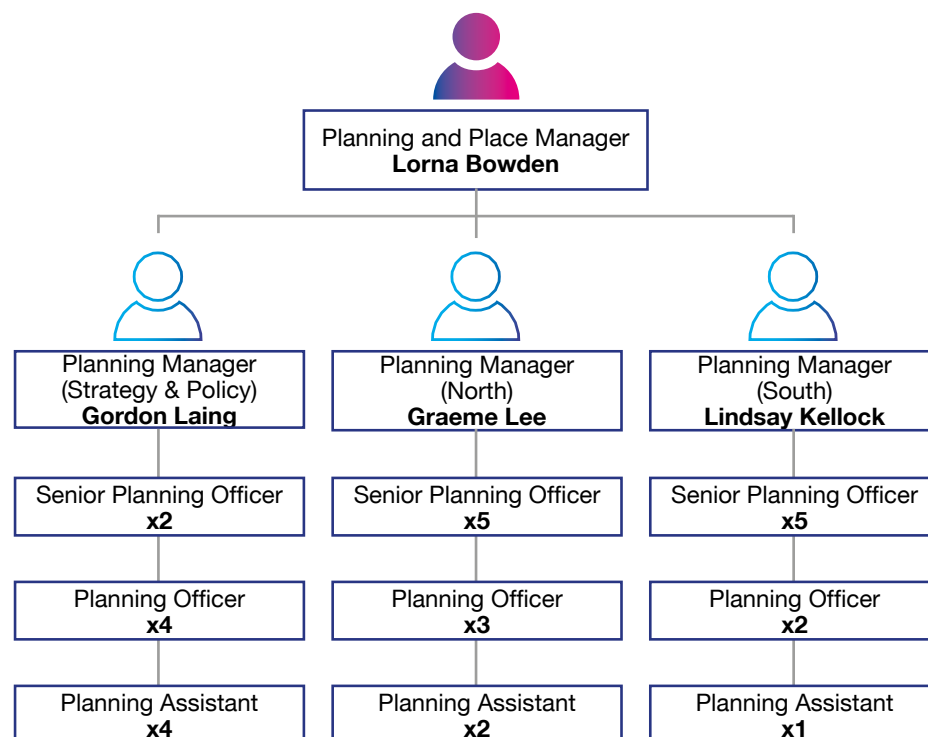
Part 6: Workforce Information



Management Levels	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
	Chief Executive	Director	Head of Service	Manager
Head of Planning Service				1

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	0
30-39	5
40-49	11
50 and over	15

RTPI Chartered Staff	Headcount
Chartered staff	23



Part 7: Planning Committee Information



Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full council meetings	0
Planning committees	11
Area committees	0
Committee site visits	0
Local Review Body	5
LRB site visits	0



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