

The Highland Council- Planning Performance Framework Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd - Frèam Dèanadas Dealbhaidh



Foreword

As the Chair of the Planning, Environment and Development Committee I am particularly pleased to submit our Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for 2012/13.

We have a strong commitment to sustainable economic growth through our Council Programme – Working Together for the Highlands. We see the important role planning has to play in the delivery of our ambition and aspiration for the Highland area.

Our ambition is to have the best planning service in Scotland and through this PPF I believe that we are demonstrating that we are well on our way to realising that ambition. As a Council we have a strong set of core values: listening, open, valuing, improving, supporting, partnering and delivering. I believe that this PPF demonstrates that our planning service is at the forefront of delivering and demonstrating these values which will have significant benefit for Highland.

While we are very proud of our achievements to date, we recognise there is room for improvement and we feel that we are well placed to deliver these improvements over the coming year and I look forward to reporting on these in the 2013/14 PPF.



Cllr Thomas Prag

Chair of the Planning, Environment and Development Committee
The Highland Council

National Headline Indicators

Key Outcome

Development Planning

	2012-13	2011-12
● age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years)?	0	6
● development plan scheme on track?	Yes	Yes

Note - Highland-wide LDP adopted in April 2012. Before that 8 Local Plans were in force, some being relatively recent and 1 or 2 being over 10 years old. The average age of these Local Plans was 6 years.

Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs

	2012-13	2011-12
● effective housing land: years supply	Yes	Yes
● effective housing land supply	31495 units	31518 units
● housing approvals	673 units	819 units

Note - Not including Cairngorms National Park. These figures are based on draft figures taken from our emerging Housing Land Audit - as such their effectiveness has not yet been confirmed.

● effective employment land supply	3752ha	4181ha
● employment land take up	286ha	429ha
● effective commercial floor space supply	N/A	N/A
● commercial floorspace delivered	N/A	Not supplied

Development Management

Project Planning

● percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice	9.9%	12.3%
● number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan	0	2
● percentage planned timescales met	0%	50%

Decision-making

● application approval rate	93%	93.2%
● delegation rate	94.3%	93.8%

Decision-making timescales (average number of weeks to decision)

● major developments	29.4	79.9
● local developments (non-householder)	15.0	17.1
● householder developments	7.4	7.9

Enforcement	2012-13	2011-12
● time since enforcement charter published/review	22 months	24 months
● number of breaches identified/resolved	N/A	N/A

Further Information on Adopted Plans

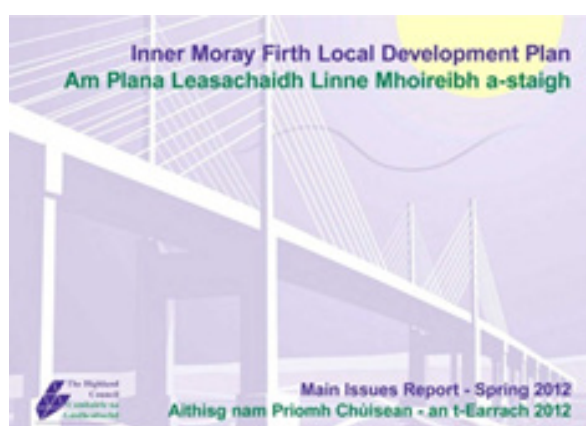
Adopted Local Development Plans/Local Plans	Date Approved	Years Passed
● Highland-wide Local Development Plan	5/4/2012	0
● Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan (as continued in force)	11/9/1997 (5/4/2012)	15
● Nairnshire Local Plan (as continued in force)	21/12/2000 (5/4/2012)	12
● Caithness Local Plan (as continued in force)	12/9/2002 (5/4/2012)	10
● Inverness Local Plan (as continued in force)	2/3/2013 (5/4/2012)	7
● Wester Ross Local Plan (as continued in force)	29/6/2006 (5/4/2012)	6
● Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan (as continued in force)	8/2/2007 (5/4/2012)	6
● Sutherland Local Plan (as continued in force)	24/6/2010 (5/4/2012)	2
● West Highlands and Islands Local Plan (as continued in force)	9/11/2010 (5/4/2012)	2

Emerging Local Development Plans	Stage
● Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan	Main Issues Report
● Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan	Pre-MIR publication - Call for Sites
● West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan	Pre-commencement

Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

Open for Business

Following adoption of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan in April 2012 we have an up to date planning policy framework upon which to base planning decisions. The Highland-wide Local Development Plan received a commendation at the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning 2012. A number of key aims detailed in its action program have been delivered in partnership with stakeholders to allow priorities in the plan to be brought forward. This includes the statutory adoption of 16 Supplementary Guidance documents, both general policy topic guidance and area/site specific briefs. A number of key projects are also moving towards delivery; in particular we are minded to grant permission (subject to legal agreement) for the Tornagrain New Town and construction of the 87 hectare Inverness Campus began (and is now substantially complete). Significant progress has also been made on the Inner Moray Firth Local Development with the publication of the Main Issues Report in spring 2012.



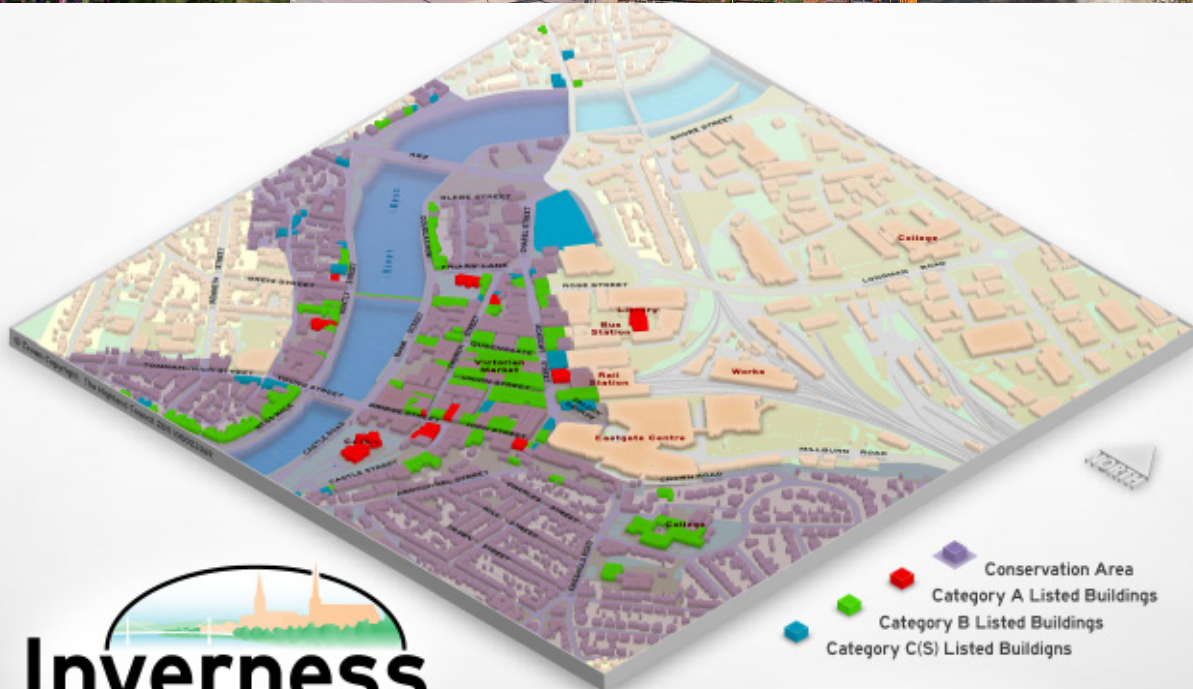
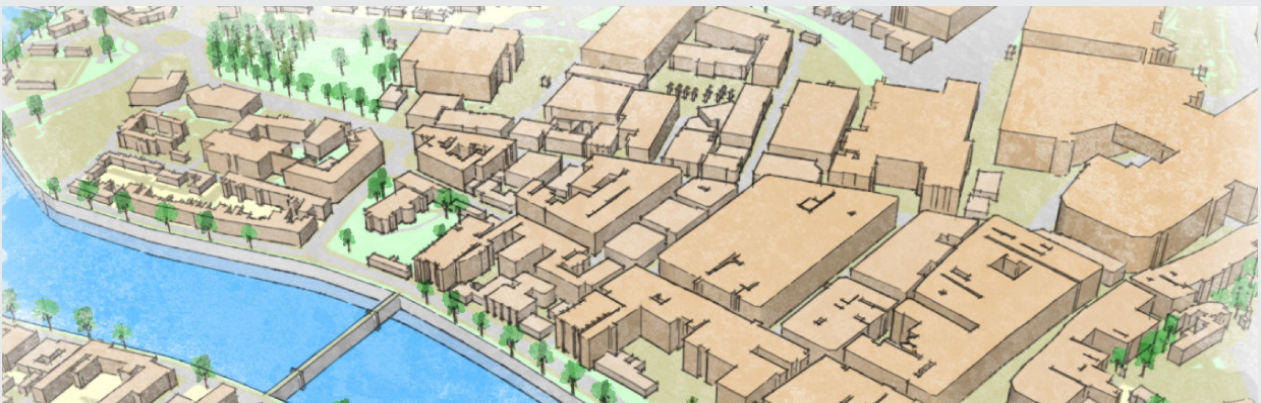
We have prepared an Economic Recovery and Development Plan for the period 2013-2018. It sets out our strategy for growth for the public and private sectors to ensure Highland climbs out of recession with a stronger and more sustainable economic base and potential for growth. Planning has to play a key role in the implementation of this plan.

In partnership with key agencies we have prepared Planning Protocols for the three Enterprise Area strategic sites within Highland – Inverness Campus, Nigg and Scrabster. These commit all partners to work together to facilitate the planning process in these designated areas.

We recognise that delays in dealing with development proposals for new or expanding businesses can have a negative financial impact and can effect local employment and economic growth. As such a Planning Advice Note and Planning Protocol are in place to ensure that these types of applications dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

1 - Inverness City Centre Development Brief

The Inverness City Centre Development Brief was produced to help deliver the aspirations set out in the Inverness City Vision by identifying and promoting areas for redevelopment and enhancement. A key component of the brief will be effective partnership working. Proposals focus on: the built and natural heritage and environment; movement and transport including connectivity of the city centre; tourism; the economy; and living in the City Centre. Many projects are underway with more coming throughout 2013.



Inverness
City Centre Development Brief

■ Conservation Area
■ Category A Listed Buildings
■ Category B Listed Buildings
■ Category C(S) Listed Buildings

Built Heritage

We statutorily adopted supplementary planning guidance on Developer Contributions in March 2013. It provides details of the instances where improvements or financial contributions are likely to be sought and, where possible, an indication of the scale of those contributions towards affordable housing, education, transport, green and community infrastructure and public art. The Highland-wide Local Development Plan also identifies key infrastructure likely to be required to support developments allocated in the plan. The Council's Planning Gain Negotiator continues to provide a single point of contact for contributions which injects improved certainty, consistency and speed into the system. We have continued to deliver an effective and efficient pre-application advice service for Major Development and Local Developments. These services are resourced and delivered in partnership with other Council services and public bodies. The proportion of planning applications subject to pre-application advice is continually rising, with 20% receiving formal pre-application advice in 2012/13. At pre-application and post-decision stages applicants are provided with contact details for relevant officers and external agencies that can provide further advice. We are resourcing a restructured planning enforcement team to more effectively monitor post-decision activity.

As part of the written feedback to customers using our pre-application advice services the level of supporting information to accompany a future planning application is made clear. This allows requests for supporting information from applicants to be reasonable and proportionate, helping to save time and costs for all. We are also working on a validation checklist for applicants.

On receipt of a planning application being delegated to a case officer all relevant consultees are consulted in the first instance regardless of the likely acceptability in principle of proposal.

As far as possible the case officer providing pre-application advice will be the allocated officer for any future related applications and post-decision advice. Area managers and team leaders delegate advice requests appropriately amongst their teams to reflect officers level of experience with the scale and complexity of advice requested. All decisions and advice are signed by senior management before being provided to applicants.

We are committed to the delivery of high quality customer service. Our newly implemented Shared Business Support service allows telephone calls to be channelled effectively and for quick responses to meeting requests to allow meetings to take place as soon as practically possible.

Due to these systems being in place we have received feedback through our customer survey which indicates over 65% of our customers think our service is good or excellent.

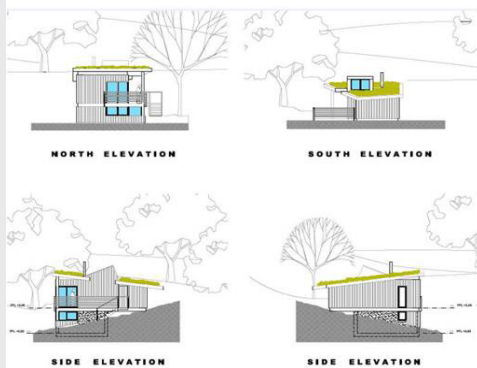
2 - Ensuring Quality Development on the Ground

Below are examples of enhancements to the design of proposals brought forward through negotiation between development management officers and applicants.

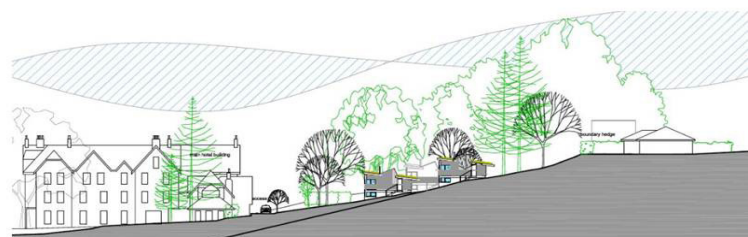
Ben Wyvis Chalets, Strathpeffer



As submitted



As amended



Original submission

Approved elevations



Before

After negotiat

Before

And after negotiations

3 - Using Charrettes to Engage People in the Planning System

Wick and Thurso Charrettes were the first pre-Main Issues Report Charrettes in Scotland:

- 2 Charrettes running consecutively.
- Whole town masterplans produced for the Main Issues Report.
- Full report from consultants due at the end of March 2013.



The Thurso Charrette

It's your chance to shape the future of your town
- come along and share your ideas.

www.highland.gov.uk/thursocharrette

The Pentland Hotel
A vision for Thurso
Friday 22 Feb: 2pm-8pm
Saturday 23 Feb: 11am-4pm

The emerging options
Monday 25 Feb: 6.30-7.30pm

Report back on Thurso's future
Wednesday 27 Feb: 7pm

Drop in for a few minutes, a few hours or come along to every session and share your ideas.

Hands-on Planning

SOLUTION

Report Back

THURSO WESTERN EXPANSION

KEY:

- IMPROVED CLIFF-TOP WALKWAY
- POTENTIAL ROUTE FOR A3
- EMERGING COMMUNITY WOODLAND
- GOLF COURSE
- EXISTING BURN & PERISHED FLOOD-LANE FIELDS & AMENITY
- RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION POTENTIAL
- PERISHED BUSINESS & INDUSTRIAL

High Quality Development on the Ground

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan contains policies on Sustainable Design and Design Quality and Place Making. A number of supplementary guidance documents related to design have also been statutorily adopted including Public Art, Historic Environment Strategy, Housing in the Countryside Siting and Design and a Sustainable Design Guide. Preparation has begun on Residential Design and Layout Supplementary Guidance which will provide detailed guidance and developer requirements related to quality placemaking.

Our planning and development service has a range of specialist officers, including conservation and landscape officers. We frequently negotiate with applicants to reach improved design solutions for all levels of development (see case study 2).

We continue to support PLACE – the Design Review Panel in Inverness. It recently considered a Council led affordable housing scheme in Inverness and it is hoped that this will reinvigorate the process. We supported and provided sponsorship to the Inverness Architectural Association Awards 2012. We have ‘added value’ to and promoted developments that were winners and commended in these awards well as the Saltire Housing Society Design Awards 2012 and the 2012 RIAS Andrew Doolan Awards.

Architecture and Design Scotland have provided Master Planning training for our planning officers. We held specific training sessions for our Councillors and Community Councils following elections in 2012. This helped these groups to gain a better understanding of the planning system and their remit within it.

Investment in a number of strategic development sites has delivered benefits for communities. For example the first phase of Inshes District Park in Inverness opened in August 2012, part of which was funded by developer contributions.

Two Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes were operational during 2012/13. The Wick scheme ended in March 2013; it invested in five large grant projects and over 30 smaller grant projects which have contributed to preserving and enhancing the Pulteneytown Conservation Area and delivered a range of education and training events. The Dingwall scheme aims to support regeneration through investment in the historic environment. A number of regeneration projects are planned including the repair and conservation of Dingwall Townhouse; small building repair grants, training in traditional building skills and engagement with local schools to raise pupils’ awareness of the town’s historic built environment.

We seek to put local people at the heart of the process of designing their communities. In doing this we held a Charrette to gain a general consensus on the land uses the Torvean and Ness-side expansion area of Inverness, the outcome of which was an outline masterplan which influenced the content of the Development Brief.

As part of the Scottish Government supported Charrette Mainstreaming Programme charrettes were held in Wick and Thurso to give their communities a unique opportunity to shape the future of their community and influence future development decisions in the area. The aim of the Charrette events was to prepare whole-town masterplans that focused on creating design and quality of place to feed into the Caithness and Sutherland Main Issues Report.

Delivering Certainty

Significant prepared in conjunction with key agencies. It names the lead agency involved in the delivery of each action and progress is reviewed on a regular basis. As detailed in the 'open for business' section a number of key aims detailed in the action plan have been delivered.

Detailed project management plans are in place to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of our four local development plans. These plans are regularly discussed at section meetings and updated to reflect progress. Our development plan scheme contains a timetable of key milestones for preparing our development plans, this is updated every six months and reported to Committee.

Our up to date development plan provides a robust and defensible development planning policy framework. During the reporting period 27 applications were approved that were advertised as contrary to the development plan; equivalent to 0.7% of all applications. Furthermore, during the reporting period no applications were reported to Committee that were recommended for approval significantly contrary to the development plan.

Our Local and Major Pre-application Advice Services provide a broad statement stating whether we are likely to support proposals based on the evidence provided. Weekly team meetings are held in all development management area offices to discuss cases and all pre-application advice is signed off by Area Managers or Team leaders to ensure consistency and reliability of officer advice. A total of 10 applications were determined contrary to officer recommendation at planning committees held during the reporting period.

Regular liaison meetings are held with other Council services and key agencies to discuss the level, detail and reliability of advice expected to be provided on development proposals. These partners are aware of the importance of meeting specified timescales for providing advice to development plans and development management for both pre-applications and applications. Standard planning conditions that cover a range of different disciplines were drawn up with input from other Council services and key agencies. These are now being used and help to avoid delay and provide greater certainty. We have been working with our solicitors to set defined timescales for the preparation of Section 75 Agreements following decisions on applications being taken. As detailed in the 'open for business' section, in partnership with key agencies we have prepared Planning Protocols for the three Enterprise Area strategic sites within Highland. These commit all partners to work together to facilitate the planning process in these designated areas and are being actively implemented.

Regular major application monitoring meetings continue to be held which aim to identify likely decision timescales. Processing agreements have been prepared by the Council for all outstanding major applications that specify clear and realistic timescale for actions and decisions.

Our website provides clear guidance on expected standards for application submissions, including links to eplanning guidance notes. Our Pre-application Advice Services provide clear information on any assessments required to support an application.

Communications, Engagement and Customer Service

We appointed a dedicated Customer Services Officer for the Planning and Development Service and implemented a new two stage complaints procedure in 2012. Our Customer Services Officer attended area office team meetings to train planning officers on the new procedure.

A link to our Planning Service Satisfaction Survey is included at the foot of all outgoing emails from Planning Service staff and a customer feedback form is attached to all completed Local and Major Pre-application advice packs. The results of completed feedback forms and surveys are collated by our Customer Services Officer and reported to senior management and officers. The results help to inform improvements to the service.

Five Focus Groups attended by over 60 agents were held across the Council area in 2012. This allowed us update agents on policy and procedures and to gather feedback on performance suggestions for improvement.

Approximately 147 complaints were received in connection with the Planning and Buildings Standards Services in 2012/13. Due to the change in the complaints procedure during the reporting period the number of complaints upheld is not currently available, this will be reported in our next PPF. Where complaints are upheld a 'Lessons Learnt' paper is prepared and distributed to relevant officers. Dependant on the nature of the complaint a meeting may be held between officers and senior management and policy or procedure may be changed and/or additional training given to officers.

Significant improvements have been made to our website during the reporting period to make it more user friendly and to provide a wider range of information. Feedback on the website redesign received via an online survey found that all users rated it much better, better or the same in terms of ease of use, time spent looking for information of services and how it looks. Customer hit rates are analysed regularly and show a high number of page views on the planning pages of our website. We provide regular planning related updates on Facebook and Twitter, both of which experienced a considerable increase in the number of 'likes' and 'followers' respectively.

The proportion of applications submitted electronically in Highland in 2012/13 was 64%. This figure has increased each year since implementation and is much higher than the current Scottish average of 45%. In 2012/13 approximately 10% of representations to planning applications were submitted online, this is almost double the amount in 2011/12. We proactively encourage the use of ePlanning and our facility for online representations as the easiest and most efficient way to submit or comment on planning applications.

Our Development Plans Team is increasingly making use of online consultation methods. Comments could be received by email on the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan Main Issues Report and various pieces of Supplementary Guidance and an online form was developed for comments on the Inverness City Centre Development Brief. More innovative methods are currently being trialled and will be reported in next PPF.

We held numerous consultation events during the reporting period on development plan documents and supplementary guidance. These took the form of exhibitions, workshops and charrettes. To allow for meaningful and balanced engagement for the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan Main Issues Report we held over 35 widely publicised consultation events in each of main settlements in the Inner Moray Firth Area. As a result, we received comments from almost 1000 individuals and organisations.

We continue to have Crystal Mark Status on our Development Plan Scheme and have been working with our graphic designers to make our development plan documents easier to read. We also provide all headings in our publications in English and Gaelic and can provide copies of documents, on request, in audio, large print and other languages. We have made progress in engaging with hard to reach groups by producing protocols and implementing protocols for working with access panels.

Efficient and Effective Decision Making

We have two area planning committees, North and South, which meet once a month, The Planning Review Body meets every 6 weeks. In 2012/13, committee dealt with 150 applications, 16% were council applications. The meetings are webcast and archived.

Decisions on development planning documents are made by Planning, Environment and Development Committee. In 2012/13 we have been successfully utilising the new local area committee structures to debate the content of planning documents where they are of significant interest and may have a greater interest for a particular area giving a more local voice on planning issues without slowing down the process.

In 2012/13 we have worked with our legal team to bring forward changes to the scheme of delegation to bring more proportionality to the decision making process for planning applications, enforcement issues and development planning.

We have made a concerted effort to proactively reduce the number of planning applications which have been in the system for a number of years. This has led to a number of these cases being determined and reduction in these type of cases to only 29, while still high this is being addressed by development management officers.

Recognising the significant benefits of processing agreements, we now encourage all major developments to be accompanied by a processing agreement and we have delivered training to our staff to ensure that the benefits can be realised. We have prepared processing agreements for every major application which is currently in the system in Highland to aid a project management approach to the determination of these complex applications. During 2012/13 we adopted a procedure that once the Proposal of Application notice is submitted the case officer will contact the applicant to begin preparing the processing agreement.

We have regular liaison with many of the agencies which contribute to the delivery of a high quality planning service to ensure that there is mutual understanding over policy, procedures and service delivery. This has been particularly important in bringing forward the production of development plan documents and understanding new approaches to planning liaison from key agency.

We offer a comprehensive time management course which all staff are encouraged to attend.

Effective Management Structures

The development management function is based across 8 locations: Headquarters, Inverness, Kingussie, Fort William, Portree, Dingwall, Golspie and Wick. The development planning and enforcement teams are based at Headquarters.

The introduction of Idox Enterprise has enabled us to more closely monitor performance and workload issues which has led to improved management of performance in particular determination of planning applications. This has ensured that resources can be targeted to areas of need at the correct time.

Over the course of 2012/13, the Council has revisited its PDP process and now undertakes a more comprehensive Employee Review and Development, which was introduced in March 2013. This will enable us to create a comprehensive training plan for the service, meeting the needs of our staff in an effective and efficient manner. We also continue to support the delivery of CPD to our staff by working in partnership with the RTPI Highlands and Islands Chapter to deliver free CPD events. We are currently supporting six Graduate Planners through their Assessment of Professional Competence.

Financial Management and Local Governance

The Planning and Development Service identifies the key actions required to meet the Council's corporate objectives as set out in our Corporate plan and the Programme for Administration.

Following an Employee Survey carried out in September 2012 we have established an Action Plan and Employee Forum to create a dialogue and exchange of views on matters of mutual concern.

We continue to utilise a Consultancy Framework contract in partnership with other local authorities in the north of Scotland. This contract allows call-offs to be made against three preferred suppliers. This has been used to deliver a range of work in the period 2012/13 but most notably an update to the Inner Moray Firth Traffic Model which is a key piece of supporting evidence for the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

Culture of Continuous Improvement

We continue to strive to improve every aspect of our service and through initiatives which have been put in place such as processing agreements we are becoming even more accountable for our own performance.

As set out elsewhere in this Framework we are committed to Continuous Professional Development for our staff, elected members and community councils and we have developed a service wide training plan to address the needs of the service to ensure we can deliver the best planning service in Scotland.

Looking back at the Service Improvements we identified for 2012/13 we are proud that we have continued to improve our service in the majority of areas.

Open for Business

- **Deliver to the timescales set out within the Development Plan Scheme.**

Progress with Development Plans is good with various items of Supplementary Guidance progressing towards adoption and/or consultation. Work on the Wick and Thurso Charrettes as part of the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan has been successful. The timescales for the Inner Moray Firth Plan have been pushed back by a few months but it is hoped that time can be saved later in the process.

- **Improve our processes and procedures to continue to deliver 100% of Major Development Pro-application advice service within 4 weeks.**

During 2012/13 100% of major application pre-application packs were delivered within 4 weeks.

- **Improve our process and procedures to deliver 90% of local Pre-application advice packs within 6 weeks (and work towards a 4 week determination timescale for implementation 2013/14).**

The figures for pre-application packs at the end of the year stood at 74% delivered within a 6 week period. Further discussion required in respect of whether 4 week target should be implemented in 2013/14.

- **Improve our processes and procedures to determine 65% of all Planning Applications determined within 2 months.**

Performance against this target has been reached for the year as a whole with 65% being delivered within 2 months - an improvement of 2% on last year's performance and a 9% improvement on the 2010/11 figure.

- **Improve our processes and procedures to determine 85% of householder planning applications within 2 months.**

Performance is well above target in respect of this measure with the year end figure standing at 88%, an improvement of 7% over the 2011/12 total and a 12% improvement from the 2010/11 period.

High Quality Development on the Ground

- **Work with partner to ensure the effective operation of the PLACE Design Review Panel in Inverness.**

The PLACE Review Panel has recently met to discuss a Council development scheme and it is hoped that this will reinvigorate the process.

- **Provide evidence of high quality designs being approved and implemented.**

The year end achievements include a range of good examples.

- **Carry out a formal review of the Enforcement Charter and put in place processes and procedures to support implementation.**

This review is now underway. A revised charter is being considered by the May 2013 PED Committee. Further resources have been agreed by Council to ensure that this part of the Service is fully staffed.

Certainty

- **Implement the protocols for Enterprise Areas and assist in the delivery of development on the ground in these areas.**

The protocols are being actively implemented with development interest on all three sites at pre-application stage.

- **Ensure that all Major Development proposals are accompanied by Processing Agreements by end of 2012.**

This work has not been completed and there is a revised timescale of end of March 2013.

- **Develop a protocol with other services/agencies for delivery of joint consents e.g. Road Construction Consent or Hydro Scheme CAR Licence applications.**

Although meetings have been held with SEPA, an initiative to link the planning application and CAR licence procedures has not been taken forward to date.

- **Provide better information to developers on the standards of information expected to accompany planning applications (validation checklist).**

This was actively progressed and will be the subject of further discussion amongst the team leaders prior to implementation.

- **Monitoring database to be further developed for employment and commercial developments.**

No progress to date.

Communications, Engagement and Customer Services

- **Increase number of planning applications submitted electronically by actively promoting the e-planning system.**

Numbers of planning applications being submitted electronically stands at 63%.

- **Provide evidence of efforts to engage with hard to reach groups.**

The protocols for working with access panels have been produced and are being implemented.

- **Deliver focus groups for planning across the Highland area during 2012/13.**

Focus groups were held during 2012/13.

Financial Management and Local Governance

- **Put in place a procedure for time recording of 5% of planning applications to be implemented in last quarter of 2012/13.**

No progress to date although although the lead on this may be taken at a national level.

Culture of Continuous Improvement

- **Ensure that all staff have PDPs delivered and the Service Training Plan produced and implemented.**

All staff have been given up to date PDPs and a training plan is being implemented.

Supporting Evidence

Much of the evidence to support The Highland Council's performance and achievements is documented in committee reports and papers.

A full list of our key publications, customer guidance, planning policies and procedures can be found on our website: www.highland.gov.uk/planning

Follow us on Twitter: @Highlanddevplans

Like us on Facebook: Search for 'HighlandLDPs'

Service Improvements 2013-2014

Our Service Improvement Plan for 2013/14 is set out below, and this Plan implements many of the issues set out in the Key Performance Markers produced by Scottish Government. These Service Improvement targets were agreed by the Council's Planning Environment and Development Committee on 14 August 2013

Open for Business

- We will deliver 100% of Major Pre-application packs within 4 weeks.
- We will deliver at least 80% of Local Pre-application packs within 6 weeks.
- We will ensure that all Major Development proposals are accompanied by Processing Agreements by end of June 2013.

High Quality Development on the Ground

- We will prepare and publicise a presentation of high quality developments supported by the Service by March 2014.
- We will prepare a Development Plans Scheme by April 2013 and prepare a progress report by September 2013.
- We will prepare our Plan documents in line with the timescales set out in the Development Plans Scheme.
- We will deliver the actions within Development Plan Action Programmes to stated timescales.

Communications, Engagement and Customer Service

- We will deliver Focus Groups for Planning across the Highland area during 2013/14.
- We will provide Community Council planning training during 2013/14.
- We will provide evidence of efforts to engage with hard to reach groups during 2013/14.
- We will carry out a comprehensive customer survey during 2013/14 and prepare an action plan from the results.

Efficient and Effective Decision Making

- We will achieve at least an average of 24 weeks for determination of major planning applications.
- We will achieve at least an average of 11 weeks for determination of local planning applications.
- We will achieve at least an average of 9 weeks for determination of Other applications.
- We will determine at least 68% of all Planning Applications within 2 Months.
- We will determine at least 90% of Householder Planning Applications within 2 Months.
- We will put in place procedures to ensure that legal agreements are concluded within 4 months following a minded to grant decision.

Certainty

- We will deliver at least 70% of Scoping Opinions within 5 Weeks.
- We will deliver at least 60% of Screening Opinions within 21 Days.
- We will implement the Protocols for Enterprise Areas and deliver development to stated timescales.
- We will put in place more effective Monitoring Systems for Development Plans (audits) during 2013/14.

Financial Management and Local Governance

- We will contribute to a national project on costs of delivering the planning service.

Culture of Continuous Improvement

- We will implement a new Enforcement Charter by June 2013.
- We will prepare and implement a Validation Checklist for use by October 2013.
- We will implement Development Management for Enterprise by March 2014.
- We will implement the Uniform Module for Enforcement and new processes for Enforcement by December 2013.
- We will design and implement new systems for gathering, administering and analysing Development Plan responses by March 2014.
- We will carry out a benchmarking exercise with other rural planning authorities (Aberdeenshire/Dumfries and Galloway/Scottish Borders/Argyll & Bute) during 2013/14.
- We will prepare our Planning Performance Framework for submission to Scottish Government by end September 2013.

Conclusion

This Planning Performance Framework sets out the progress made in delivering a number of key improvements over the last year. The Service Improvement Plan has also been developed following feedback from last year's report, and takes forward a number of actions that we feel will help us to deliver improved performance over the coming year.

Appendix 1 - Official Statistics

Decision-making timescales

Category	Total number of decisions 2012-13	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2012-13	2011-12
Major developments	20	29.4	79.9
Local developments (non-householder)	1727	15.0	17.1
● less than 2 months	58.3 (%)	6.8	6.6
● more than 2 months	42.9 (%)	26.3	29.3
Local developments (householder)	730	7.4	7.9
● less than 2 months	88.4 (%)	6.0	5.9
● more than 2 months	11.6 (%)	17.5	17.7
Major housing developments	2	51.9	138.7
Local housing developments	924	14.6	20.2
● less than 2 months	53.6 (%)	7.0	6.8
● more than 2 months	46.4 (%)	30.7	32.5
Major business and industry	6	14.7	64.4
Local business and industry	233	9.8	12.6
● less than 2 months	67.0 (%)	6.4	6.4
● more than 2 months	33.0 (%)	16.8	25.5
EIA developments			
● Local developments subject to EIA	8	28.2	19.5
● AMSCs (subject to EIA)	1	14.1	
Other consents*			
Listed building and conservation area	138	13.6	12.0
Advertisements	98	8.9	(for all other consents)
Hazardous substances	2	13.4	
Other consents and certificates	112	6.0	
Planning/legal agreements**	51	36.1	
Local reviews	21	10.0	N/A

* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and conservation area consents, control of advertisements consents, hazardous substance consents, established use certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO parts 6 & 7 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by coal authority of licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

** Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or Section 69 of the Local Governments (Scotland) Act 1973.

Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions 2012-2013	Original decision upheld			
		2012-2013		2011-2012	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	21	9	43	28	67
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	20	4	20	9	26

Enforcement activity

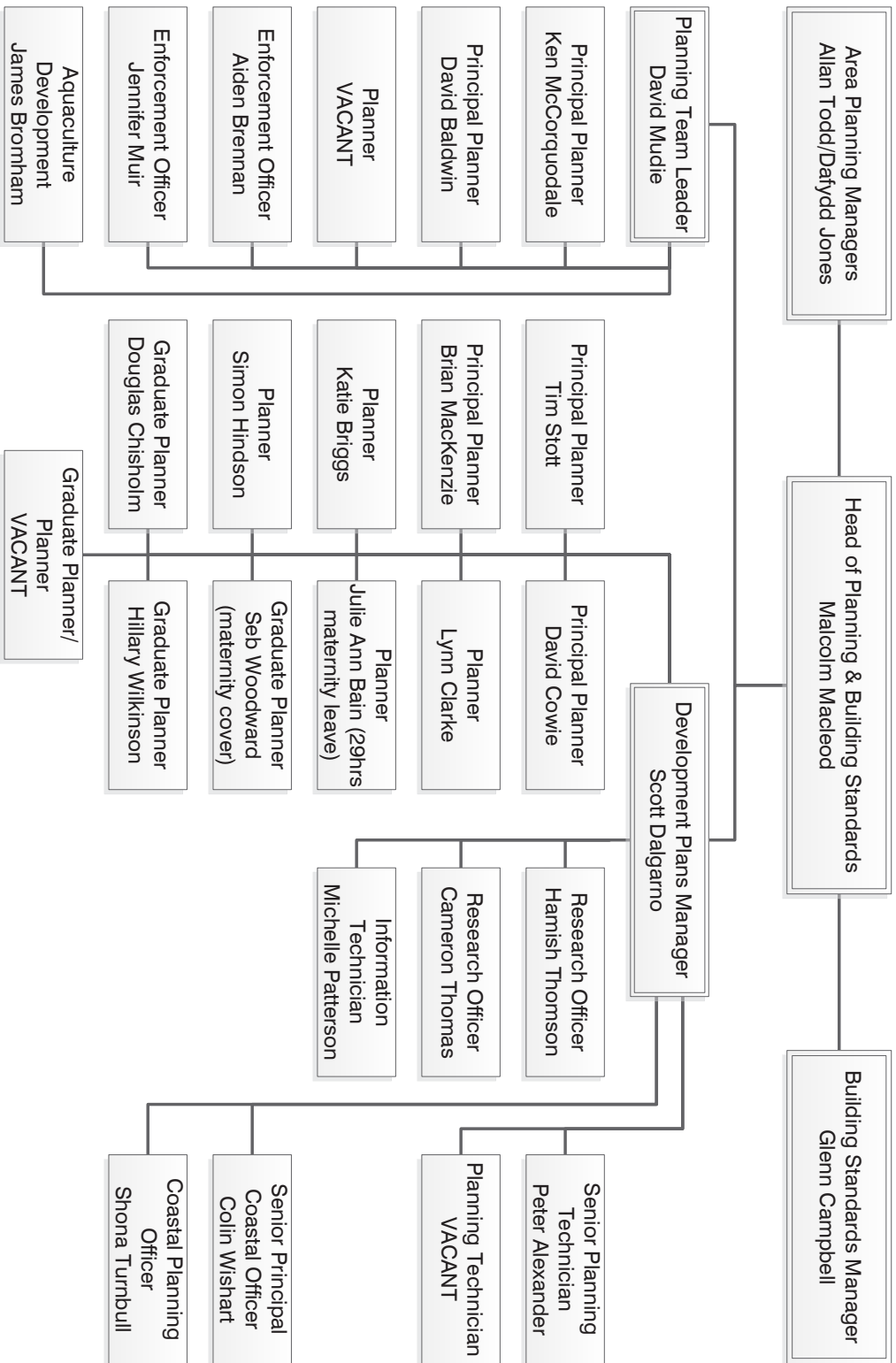
	2012-13	2011-12
Cases taken up	139	330
Breaches identified	N/A	N/A
Cases resolved	N/A	N/A
Notices served***	39	37
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	None	None
Prosecutions	None	None

*** Enforcement notices, breach of condition notices, planning contravention notices, stop notices, temporary stop notices, fixed penalty notices and Section 33 notices.

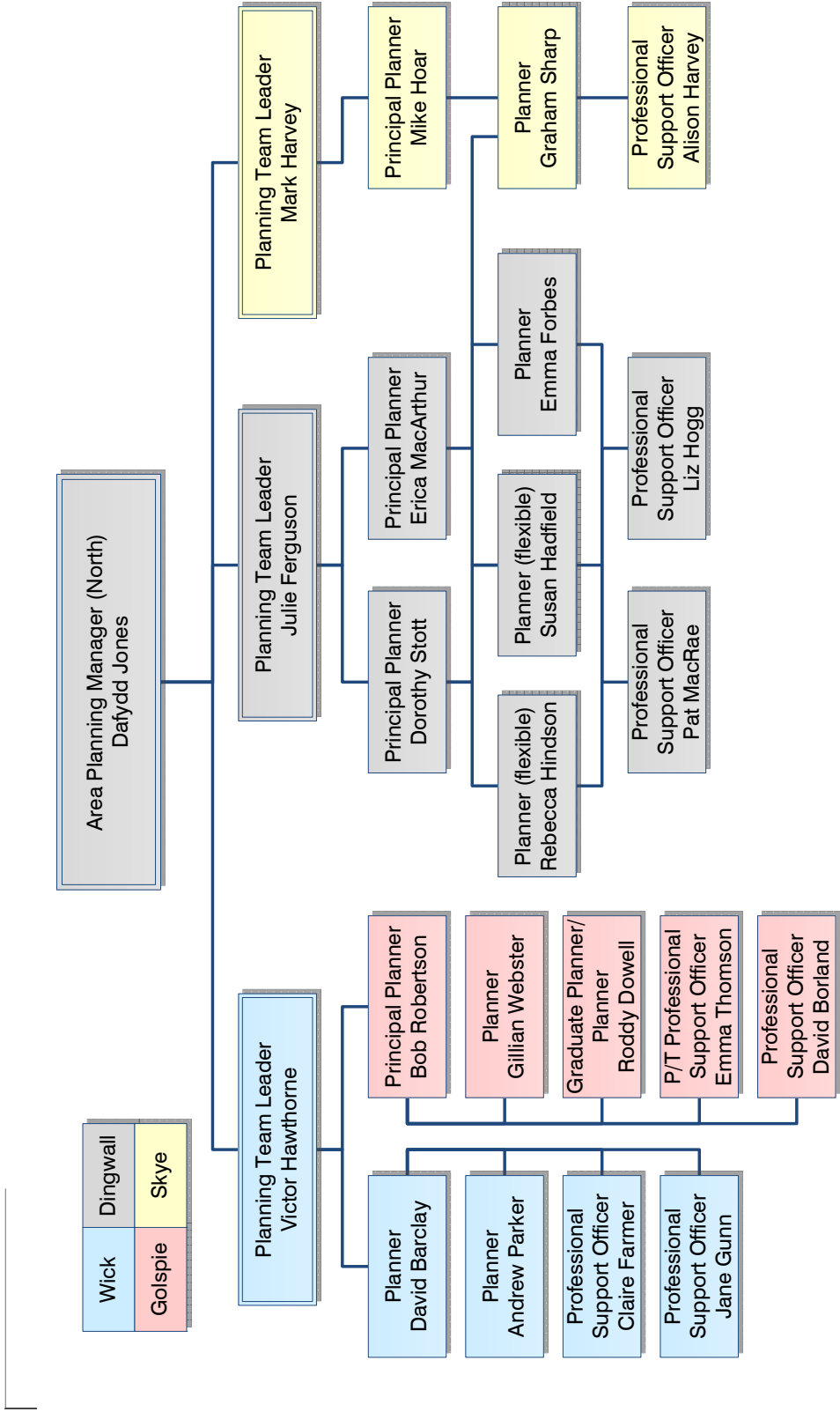
Appendix 2 - Workforce and Financial Information

Team structures

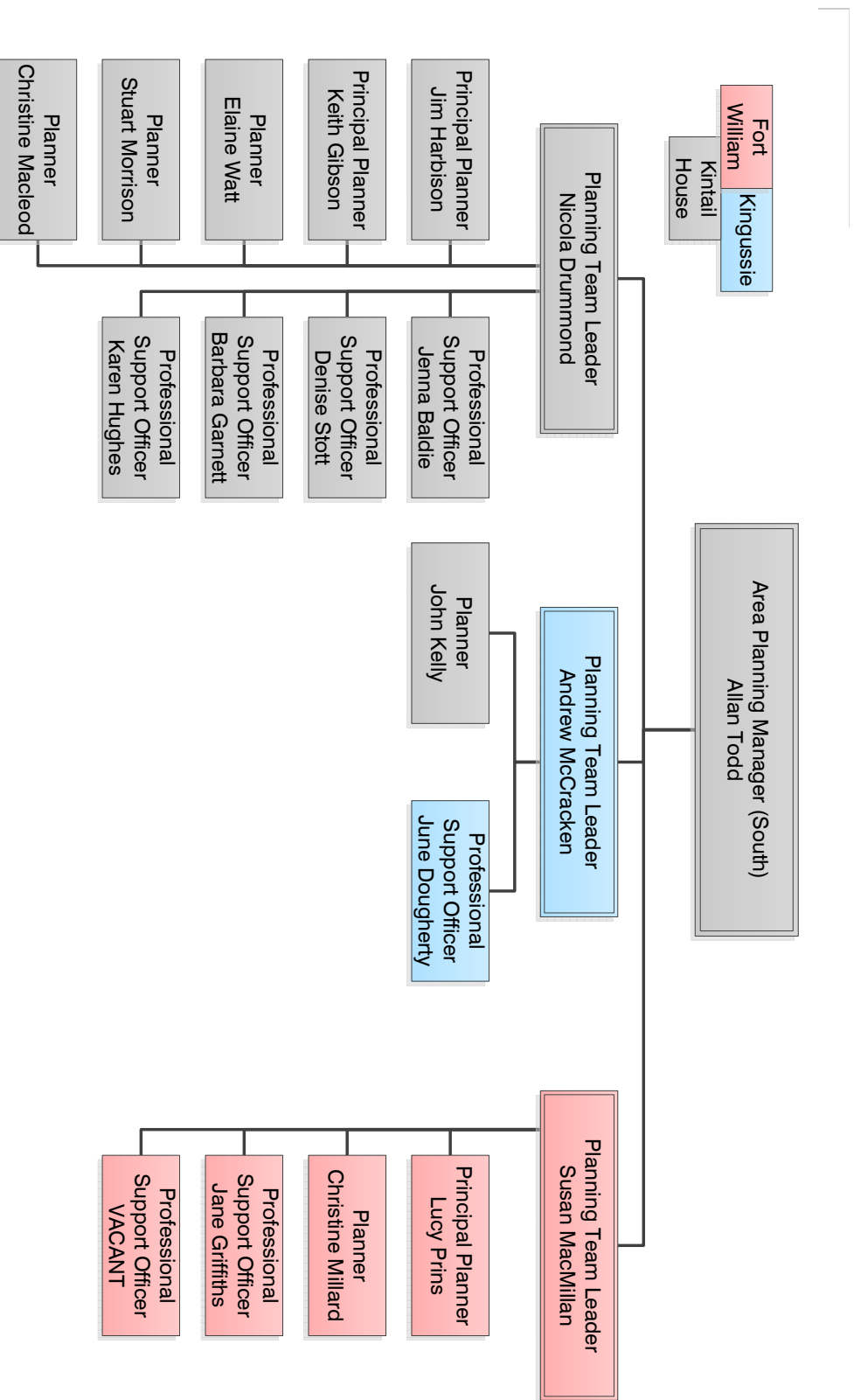
Planning and Development Service: Planning and Building Standards



Planning and Development Service: Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Skye and Lochalsh



Planning and Development Service: Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, Lochaber



Staffing profile

Staffing age profile	Number
Under 30	10
30-39	14
40-49	24
50 and over	16

Committees

Committees and site visits		Number per year
Full Council committees		7
Planning committees	Planning, Environment and Development Committee	5
	Planning Applications Committee (North)	9
	Planning Applications Committee (South)	10
Area committees	City of Inverness and Area Committee	6
	Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee	4
Committee site visits		6
LRB		8
LRB site visits		0

Budget Information for 2012/13

Gross Revenue Budget: £12.083.

Breakdown by section:

Section	Gross Budget (£m)
Planning and Building Standards	
Development Plans Team	0.628
Development Management and BS team (HQ)	0.315
Development Management and BS Team(Areas)	3.263
Public Local Inquiries	0.050
Environment and Development	
Economy and Regeneration	4.609
Countryside and Natural Resources	2.330
Business Support	0.888
Total	12.083

Breakdown by staff and other costs:

Section	Gross Budget (£m)
Staff costs (205 staff members)	7.340
Other costs	4.743
Total costs	12.083
Income (Planning and building warrant fees)	3.501
Other income	0.697
Net budget	7.885

The Planning and Development Service also lead on a number of small capital projects through the Environment and Development side of the Service. Our Capital budget for 2010/11 - 2012/13 is set out below:

Year	Net Budget (£m)	Gross Budget (£m)
2011/12	1.317	1.565
2012/13	0.915	1.134



**The Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gàidhealtachd**

