Aberdeenshire **COUNCIL** **A** **Infrastructure Services**

Aberdeenshire Council
Infrastructure Services

Head of Service Plan
Planning and Building Standards
2012-2015

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Foreword

Welcome to the Head of Service Plan for Planning and Building Standards for 2012-2015. The plan builds on the successes and achievements of the previous year. 2011/2012 was an important year for the service with a number of its key targets being achieved and steady progress being made towards achieving its strategic objectives. For example:-

In March this year, nearly a year after submission to Scottish Ministers, the Council received the results of an examination of its Local Development Plan (LDP).The examination considered representations to the proposed plan and was carried out by the Government's Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA), on behalf of Ministers. Following examination, the DPEA reporter submitted a report to Aberdeenshire Council with conclusions and recommendations on each issue. The report supported the Council's innovative approach to the production of the plan - much of the local detail for the LDP is contained in Supplementary Guidance. It shows how the Scottish Government's hopes for a short, concise, map-based plan can be achieved. The Plan identifies sites for major and significant developments including a new settlement near Newtonhill and a corridor supporting developments northwards to Peterhead related to the Energetica project.

In terms of environmental work, development of the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan was completed in November with the plan being submitted to the Scottish Government for approval. The Banff Townscape Heritage Initiative was successfully completed having brought significant investment into buildings and structures in the town.

We played a key role in the successful Haddo Heritage Lottery Fund bid and in the Boddam Gateway and Coastal Paths projects in the Energetic Corridor. We successfully completed the Peterhead Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme and secured funds for a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme at Portsoy. Further sections of the Deeside Way and Formartine & Buchan Way and the Aboyne to Tarland cycle route were completed. A further phase of the Local Nature Conservation Sites projects was also completed.

The Building Standards service has continued to be high performing, while within the Development Management service the focus has been on performance improvement as measured by speed of decision making.

The Ranger Service was the object of a Service which restructured and reformed the services while making significant savings.

A number of teams achieved KDI Bronze Awards.

The service has built up a good reputation within the Council and wider community and I am confident that the actions within this Head of Service Plan will continue to enhance our reputation.
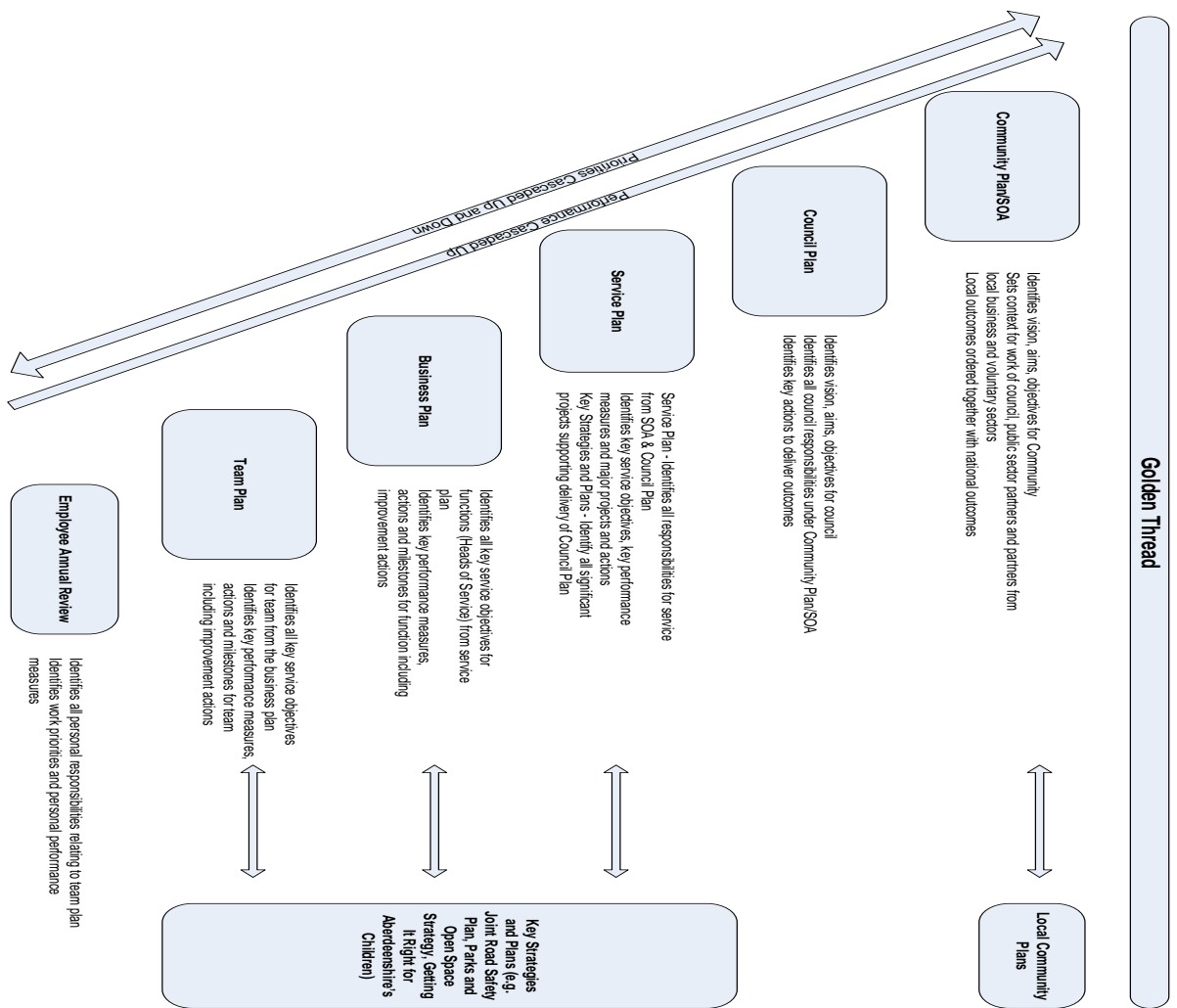
Robert Grey Head of Planning and Building Standards

1   Vision

Planning and Building Standards will support Aberdeenshire Council's vision to be the best area and Council by managing Aberdeenshire's unique environment and use of land and resources in the interests of current and future generations through the development of a framework of land use plans, master plans, policies and guidelines and by managing development through the planning system in accordance with the local plan.

2   Introduction

2.1   The Head of Service Plan for Planning and Building Standards covers the period 2012 to 2015 and sets out the operational activities that Planning and Building Standards will undertake during the years and in particular in 2012/13.

2.2   The Head of Service Plan summarises the main operational activities for the service but does not include all tasks that have to be undertaken. Activities which are carried out as the normal part of the day to day management of the service have been excluded. In addition, although reference has been made to actions contained in documents such as the Core Paths Plan, Local Development Plan Action Programme and an Improving Performance Strategy in relation to speed of determining planning applications, full details have been omitted. Because different monitoring regimes have been put in place for these programmes of work there is no need to duplicate them in the Head of Service Plan.

2.3   Apart from being a sub-set of the Service Plan for Infrastructure Services the Head of Service Plan supports key priorities set out in the Council Plan, Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). The diagram below explains this relationship:-

Priorities Cascaded Up and Down

Performance Cascaded Up

Golden Thread

Community Plan/SOA
Identifies vision, aims, objectives for Community
Sets context for work of council, public sector partners and
local business and voluntary sectors
Local outcomes ordered together with national outcomes

Council Plan
Identifies vision, aims, objectives for council
Identifies all council responsibilities under Community Plan/SOA
Identifies key actions to deliver outcomes

Service Plan
Service Plan - Identifies all responsibilities for service
from SOA & Council Plan
Identifies key service objectives, key performance
measures and major projects and actions
Key Strategies and Plans - Identify all significant
projects supporting delivery of Council Plan

Business Plan
Identifies all key service objectives for
functions (Heads of Service) from service
plan
Identifies key performance measures,
actions and milestones for function including
improvement actions

Team Plan
Identifies all key service objectives
for team from the business plan
Identifies key performance measures,
actions and milestones for team
including improvement actions

Employee Annual Review
Identifies all personal responsibilities relating to team plan
Identifies work priorities and personal performance
measures

Key Strategies and Plans (e.g. Joint Road Safety Plan, Parks and Open Space Strategy, Getting It Right for Aberdeenshire's Children)

Local Community Plans

3   About Planning and Building Standards

3.1   Planning and Building Standards covers a wide range of functions across Aberdeenshire. The main areas of work are:-

- Development Management
- Building Standards
- Planning Policy and Environment
- Strategic Development (in partnership with Aberdeen City)

3.2   **Development Management**
Development Management is the process which regulates development and the use of land. Through the Development Management process the Council is able to control the location and quality of development in ways that comply with the Council's objectives and policies as set out in the development plan.

The Council, as planning authority, enables the development process, safeguards the quality of the environment and mediates between conflicting land uses or development proposals. At times unauthorised developments can occur and these require investigation and may result in enforcement action to cause them to cease, to minimise their effect or to make such development acceptable.

During 2011/12 Aberdeenshire processed 3,724 planning applications – the highest number in Scotland. Of these 257 related to wind turbines (6.9%). This equates to 20.9% of the total number of wind turbine applications for Scotland.

3.3 **Building Standards**

The purpose of Building Standards is to ensure a healthy and safe environment throughout Aberdeenshire. This is primarily achieved by ensuring that building works comply with Building Regulations through the issue of Building Warrants and the inspection of completed works on site. The Regulations legislate for the Health, Safety and Welfare of people in and about buildings, the conservation of fuel and power, the provision of access and facilities for disabled people and for furthering the achievement of sustainable development.

The range of work covered by the Building Standards Service includes:
• Pre-application discussion, information/advice.
• Processing of Building Warrant applications.
• Processing of submissions of Completion Certificates (2003 Act)
• Processing of applications for Certificates of Completion (1959 Act)
• Inspection of Works in progress and at completion stage.
• Property Inspection Service for minor works completed without final completions.
• Search out information relative to Building Warrant and Completion Certificates.
• Consultation and advice to the Licensing Section for public entertainment, Homes in Multiple Occupation, temporary structures and premises which require a liquor licence.
• Inspection of Dangerous and Defective Buildings and Structures.

Aberdeenshire Council typically receives around 4,500 Building Warrant applications in a year which represents one of the highest workloads in Scotland. Applications are decided by way of officers acting under authority delegated to them by the council.

3.4 **Planning, Policy and Environment**

This encompasses many of the strategic functions of the service as follows:-

▪ The Development Planning Team is responsible for producing the **Local Development Plan** which, along with the **Structure Plan**, provides the framework for development in Aberdeenshire. The Team also provide guidance on the interpretation of policy, prepare development briefs for individual sites and produce detailed studies of relevant topic areas.

▪ The Environment Teams (North and South) are involved in surveying, protecting, enhancing and monitoring the natural and physical resources and the built and cultural heritage of Aberdeenshire and promoting sustainable development. They also include the *Outdoor Access team*.

▪ The Specialist Services Team includes the *Archaeology Service* which has the job of locating, evaluating, safeguarding and explaining all known archaeological sites in the area and the *North East Scotland Biological Records Centre* (NESBREC). NESBReC covers the areas of Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Moray and the Cairngorms National Park and collates, co-ordinates, manages and disseminates

biological data for a range of organisations, groups and individuals. NESBReC currently holds around 850,000 individual species records, together with information on habitats and designated sites. NESBReC carried out the first survey in Scotland to use the Intergrated Habitat System methodology to map habitat types.

- The Ranger Service are involved in a wide range of work including environmental education, biological recording, practical conservation, organising events, visitor monitoring and recreation management to promote and enhance the natural environment.

- The Sustainability, Information and Research Team provides information, advice and support on a wide range of issues, across the Council and to external customers. They are involved in the collection, interpretation, analysis and publishing of statistics and information relating to Aberdeenshire and the North East and deal with a wide range of internal and external enquiries. Topic areas covered include population, land development for housing and industry, monitoring the effectiveness of Development Plan policies, and the economy – employment and the labour market, agriculture, fishing, rural facilities and deprivation. They co-ordinate cross-service work within the Council on sustainability issues and work to promote sustainability within the wider community. They also provide training and support on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3.5 **Strategic Development**
The Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) is a partnership between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and has a key role in guiding development over the next 25 years. The SDPA was formed in 2008 and is one of 4 city-region planning authorities in Scotland. Its primary role is to prepare and keep up-to-date a strategic development plan, engaging with both stakeholders and communities - all with an interest in the future of the area.

The current structure plan was approved in 2009 and work has already started on a replacement strategic development plan.

3.6 The work of the service is governed by a number of key strategic documents, these include:-

- Development Management Charter. The main purpose of the charter is to improve access to the Development Management Service in Aberdeenshire and to promote quality in the delivery of the Service. It can be found on the Councils website at:- http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/devservices/Charter.pdf

- Planning Enforcement Charter (April 2009) – this explains how the enforcement process works, the role of the Council and the service standards it sets. It can be found on the Council's website at:- http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/devservices/Charter-Enforcement_000.pdf

- Building Standards Charter (August 2009) - this gives an introduction into the work

carried out by the Building Standards Service. The main purpose of the Charter is to explain how the Service is organised, the Service standards and details of the complaints procedure. It can be found on the Council's website at:-
http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/buildingstandards/Charter_000.pdf

- Local Development Plan. This provides the local interpretation of national planning guidance from the Scottish Government and the Structure Plan. The Plan is key to realising the long term vision for economic growth and maintaining the unique environment and high quality of life in Aberdeenshire. The document can be found on the Council's website at:-
http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans_policies/plan.asp

- Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. This was formally approved by Scottish Ministers in August 2009 and provides a strategic context for specific land use policies and proposals contained within the Local Development Plan. (The document can be found on the Strategic Development Planning Authority website at:- http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/home/home.asp

- Historic Environment Strategy – this provides a framework for managing the historic environment of Aberdeenshire. Building on existing planning policies it looks to find the best way to focus limited resources. It suggests areas which will bring most benefit given the current priorities and constraints as well as new obligations such as those under the Marine (Scotland) Bill. It can be found on the Council's website at:- http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/built_heritage/index.asp

- Core Paths Plan- Under The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (LRSA) the Council has to draw up a system of paths for its area - *" that provides a basic framework of routes sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout their area"* The Core Paths Plan (The Plan) is not only for walkers; it considers the full range of non-motorised use (including small motorised vehicles used by persons with a disability) of routes, including cycling, horse riding and various water-based craft. The Plan has yet to be formally adopted but the draft plan (drawn up in 2009) can be found on the Council's website at:- http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess/corepathsplan/maps.asp

- Countryside Access Strategy - Since 1997, the Strategy has been the Council's main delivery mechanism for countryside access. Drawing in funding from Council, National and European sources, the Strategy works in conjunction with land managers and the community to create local path networks for communities, providing access close to where people live, in accordance with the Paths For All concept and the Paths to Health initiative. Details can be found on the Council's website at:- http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess/strategy/index.asp

- Climate Change Action Plan which was first approved by the Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee in June 2008 but updated and reviewed in April 2010 and April 2011. This plan covers the period 2011 – 2015 and sets out the actions the Council will take to meet its carbon reduction targets. (The document can be found on the Council's website at:- http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/green/greenhouse.asp

4   Opportunities and Challenges

4.1 This Head of Service Plan is set within a background of financial constraints which will require us to achieve significant savings and efficiencies at a time when expectations and demands for our services will continue to increase. This will impact on priority projects and strategies. However, every effort is being made to maintain the quality of service provision.

4.2 The Scottish Government's modernisation of the Planning System has resulted in significant change to and additional duties for planning authorities. These changes have impacts on resources which are still being assessed. No additional allocation of resources has been made by the Scottish Government. The Audit Scotland review on Modernising the Planning System has also made a number of key recommendations for Local Authorities in order to improve the performance the Planning services.

4.3 The challenge for the Council is to address the issues set by the Government and Audit Scotland to improve the overall performance of the Planning System, both in terms of speed of decision making and in meeting customer expectations and to achieve these improvements largely within existing resources.

4.4 In response to the challenges of improving performance, the Planning Service is working to finalise and implement an Improving Performance Strategy (IPS). The IPS focuses on improving performance and efficiency through a continuous improvement agenda. The strategy will set objectives to identify methods of improvement, set targets and focus on an overall cultural shift to one of performance management with resulting short and long term improvements. The Strategy will continue to evolve, be updated and modernised as necessary.

4.5 There is however a great deal of work still to be carried out to reach set targets in many elements of work. Most specifically to reach an overall performance figure of 70% of all applications determined within 2 months. A new Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for measuring and reporting performance is due to be implemented by all Scottish Local Authorities in September 2012. This will set out a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures to represent a more comprehensive and balanced "toolkit" to provide a more effective scorecard for scrutiny and assessment purposes. This Framework will also include Development Planning.

4.6 Specific to the overall challenge of improvement is the management of new and continuous pressures and change. Pressure results for example from the continuing influx of wind energy developments and the associated workload implications. Change comes in the form of delivery of the Local Development Plan and, in particular, the new policies and the Master Planning process associated with the newly allocated sites.

At a time when it is likely that Council resources will be reduced the Service will be expected to play a key role in securing funding for and delivering projects to support the Council's regeneration programme. This will require a different approach to resource management and working with partners and the community to secure delivery,

The Service is responsible for a number of historic and countryside assets. The

challenge is to ensure that we manage these assets to ensure the best and most effective use of the resources available.

4.7 The Scottish Government's new advanced Building Standards Performance Framework builds on improvements that have already been achieved and aims to drive forward better compliance with building regulations. This will be supported by continuous improvement plans and will be underpinned by the introduction of nine new Key Performance Outcomes. These are introduced from 1 May 2012 and are to be measurable from 1 October 2012.

4.8 Despite the challenges facing Planning and Building Standards there are still great opportunities for the service to make a difference to the people living and working in Aberdeenshire.

4.9 Implementation of workSPACE and the KDI initiative will provide opportunities to improve performance and deliver efficiency savings through changing how staff work and streamlining business processes.

4.10 Further opportunities will be presented to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of business processed through reviewing our ICT system systems and an organisational review of the Development Management Service.

4.11 Implementation of the Improving Performance Strategy (IPS) should give opportunity for greater engagement with stakeholders as well as creating efficiencies through process rationalisation and the setting of goals and targets for performance.

4.12 Changes to planning legislation introduced in February (Permitted Development Rights) are predicted to reduce the number of planning applications for householder developments. This should provide opportunities to improve the service provided to applicants, although currently this expected reduction has yet to become apparent. Other proposed changes to procedures, including the fee structure, may assist in further streamlining the system.

4.13 Changes to Building Standards Legislation will allow a reassessment of priorities and lead to a review of the service to ensure if remains fit for purpose.

4.14 The successful adoption of the Local Development Plan will allow resources to be directed towards looking again at controversial policies such as those relating to wind turbines.

There are also opportunities to use our resources more effectively by developing partnerships, supporting our communities and encouraging volunteer involvement in the delivery of initiatives and projects.

5   Objectives and Actions for 2012/13

5.1 The overall aim of the service is to protect and enhance the quality of life and Aberdeenshire's unique environment in the interests of current and future generations.

In accordance with this aim the key objectives for the service are to:-

- Managing development through the planning system by streamlined, sound, effective, fast and efficient decision making in accordance with the objectives of the Local Plan.

- Securing the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings, further the conservation of fuel and power and further the achievement of sustainable development.

- Development of a framework of land-use plans, policies and guidelines.

- Managing access to the outdoor environment.

5.2 The service priorities for the next 3 years will be;

Policy
- To keep the development plan up to date in accordance with the published Development Plans Schemes including engagement with the emerging Strategic Development Plan and reviewing the adopted Local Development Plan
- To complete outstanding supplementary guidance and planning advice, including dealing with wind turbines
- To deliver the Local Development Plan Action Programme

Development Management
- To continue to improve customer engagement and performance
- To implement the Planning Performance Improvement Strategy and review process, ICT and staffing
- To deliver design improvements in new development through the Masterplanning process including driving forward the place making agenda of the Energetica Project

Building Standards
- To keep the service operating at its current high level of performance
- To improve processes related to dangerous buildings
- To implement new and emerging legislation
- To carry out a modernisation review to ensure the service remains fit for purpose under the new legislative framework

Environment
- To identify regeneration opportunities and attract inward investment for the historic, built and natural environment including delivery of the Portsoy Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme
- To improve access in the Energetic corridor including bridges at Cruden Bay and Newburgh
- To complete the Core Path Plan process
- To complete and improve the Deeside Way, the Formartine and Buchan Way and progress an Aberdeenshire Coastal path
- To assist in the delivery of the South Mearns Regeneration Area
- To complete the Management of Countryside Paths and Sites Silver KDI

- To review the Council's management of its historic assets and develop a plan for improvement
- To conintue the programme of Conservation Area Reviews and Designations

Information and Research
- To review processes and keep the housing land audit, the employment land audit, population projection and school roll forecasts up to date
- To ensure that appropriate data is collected and analysed as part of the Local Development Plan monitoring process

Specialist Services
- To review processes and keep the natural environment and archaeology databases up to date

Countryside Rangers
- To develop the draft Service Strategy produced as part of the Service Review process
- To work with the Bennachie Centre Trust to prepare a management plan for the Bennachie Centre

5.3 To help deliver these priorities a number of key actions have been agreed for the Planning and Building Standards service. These are detailed in the following tables along with performance measures which demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. The table also shows the link between the action or measure and the strategic priority set out in the Council Plan.

Service Objective 1				
Managing development through the planning system by streamlined, sound, effective, fast and efficient decision making in accordance with the objectives of the Local Plan.				
Key Performance Measures	**Targets & Achievements**			
	Achieved In 2010/11	**Achieved in 2011/12**	**Target**	**Ranking against 32 LA's 011/12**
All Planning Applications Determined Within Two Months	53%	61%	68%	26th
Projects/Actions That Contribute to This Objective				
Strategic Priority	**Key Action**		**Milestone**	**Responsibility**
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses	Hold topic based agent focus groups every three to six months to help improve the quality of applications submitted		Focus Group covering all six administrative areas	Development Management Manager
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses	Customer Surveys to be sent out every six months to identify and address, if required, customer satisfaction issues to help improve Service delivery.		Survey sent out	Development Management Manager

Future Performance through a new Planning Performance Framework (PPF) (to be implemented from September 2012)			
Key Component Parts of Planning Performance Framework DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT			
National Headline Indicators (NHI's)	Project Planning • % subject to pre-applications • Nos. subject to Processing Agreements • % planned timescales met Decision Making • % Application approval rate • % Delegation rate Decision Making Timescales • Average number of weeks: • Major/Local/Household developments Enforcement • Times since Enforcement Charter published/renewed • Number of breaches – identified/resolved		
Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service (8 Areas of agreed activity)	• Open for Business • Development on the ground • Certainty • Communications/engagement/customer service • Efficient and effective decision making • Effective Management Structures • Financial Management and Local Governance • Culture of continuous improvement		
Supporting evidence and links to related reports and studies	• Related reports, studies to evidence performance		
Service Improvements and timescales for delivery of improvements	Service Improvements 2012-13 In the coming year we will: • Delivery of our Service Improvement Actions 2011-12		

	Service Objective 2
	Securing the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings, further the conservation of fuel and power and further the achievement of sustainable development.

Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved In 2010/11	Achieved in 2011/12	Target in 2012/13	Ranking against 32 LA's 010/11
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses Percentage of applications assessed for compliance with technical standards within 20 working days of validation.	82%	96%	85%	N/A
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses Percentage of completion certificate requests inspected within 6 working days.	85%	90%	100%	N/A
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses Percentage of Completion Certificate Acceptance Notices issued within 3 working days	79%	94%	90%	
Attend potentially dangerous buildings within 4 hours of notification	100%	100%	100%	N/A

Future Key Performance Outcomes – There will be nine new Key Performance Outcomes introduced in 2012 (New Advanced Building Standards Performance Framework)			
KPO1	Year on year reduction in the average time taken to grant a building warrant		
KP02	Increase quality of assessment and compliance during the construction process		
KP03	Increase commitment to meeting customer expectations		
KP04	Adhere to service commitments of a National Customer Charter		
KP05	Improvement of the customer experience		
KP06	Financial governance		
KP07	Improved partnership working underpinned by engagement with a National Forum		
KP08	Development of and adherence to objectives in balanced scorecard		
KP09	Increased commitment to Continuous Improvement		

Service Objective 3			
Development of a framework of land-use plans, policies and guidelines.			

	Targets & Achievements			
Key Performance Measures	**Achieved In 2010/11**	**Achieved in 2011/12**	**Target in 2012/13**	**Ranking against 32 LA's 010/11**

Projects/Actions That Contribute to This Objective

Strategic Priority	Key Action	Milestone	Responsibility
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses	Following adoption and implementation of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan publish the supporting Action Programme setting out actions to deliver development proposals set out in the Plan. Review regularly.	Publish August 2012. Review every two years.	Planning Services Manager
JE2 Attract and Support Businesses	Prepare and re-consult on Supplementary Guidance affected by the Reporters' recommendations (carbon neutrality, wind farms / turbines, open space) Complete publication of Supplementary Guidance on Development in the Energetica Corridor and Developer Contributions Review non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance on Wind Energy and Retailing so as to make it fit for use as Planning Advice in the context of the Local Development Plan Start preparation of the Local Development Plan 2016 (Stage 1, Monitoring)	Completed by March 2013 Completed August 2012-08-27 Complete by December 2012 Complete by December 2013	Planning Service Manager

Future Performance through a new Planning Performance Framework (PPF) (to be implemented from September 2012)	
Key Component Parts of Planning Performance Framework Development Planning	
National Headline Indicators (NHIs)	<u>Development Planning</u> • Age of LDP/SDP in years • Development plan scheme on track
	<u>Effective Land Supply and Delivery Outputs</u> Effective housing land 5 years supply – units Effective housing land supply – units Housing approvals – numbers Effective employment land supply – ha Employment land take up – ha Effective commercial floorspace supply – m2 Commercial floorspace delivered – m2

Service Objective 4
Managing access to the outdoor environment.

Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved In 2010/11	Achieved in 2011/12	Target in 2012/13	Ranking against 32 LA's 010/11
SE4 Protect and Promote The Natural Environment The length of path in the Core Paths Plan (in km) opened or improved annually (Local Indicator)	9.407 Km	20.91km	15 Km	N/A
SE4 Protect and Promote The Natural Environment Leverage achieved for outdoor access projects.	X 3.4	X 3.09	X3	N/A

Projects/Actions That Contribute to This Objective			
Strategic Priority	**Key Action**	**Milestone**	**Responsibility**
SE4 Protect and Promote The Natural Environment	To develop a plan for implementation of the Core Paths Plan following approval by Scottish Ministers.	Complete Phase 1 plan by April 2013	Environment Planners
SE4 Protect and Promote The Natural Environment	Deeside Way – complete the development of the Kincardine O'Neil to Drumduan section of the path. Improve signage and interpretation on Blackhall to Drumduan section	Work to commence by April 2013	Environment Planner (South)
SE4 Protect and Promote The Natural Environment	Formartine and Buchan Way – complete bridge improvements at Honey Neulk and Parkhill	Complete by end April 2013	Environment Planner (North)

	and terminus improvements at Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Parkhill/Dyce and Maud		

6 Resources

6.1 Revenue

The base budget for the service for 2012/13 can be broken down as follows:-

Heading	Planned Expenditure 2012/13 £'000
Building Standards	(257)
Development Management	1345
Information and Research	652
Policy and Environment	1425
Ranger Service	351
Total	3516

6.2 Capital

The service only has a small Capital Budget to be spent mainly on access and environmental projects.

Project	Planned Expenditure 2012/13 £'000
Logie House Lodge	143
SNH and Access/Environmental Projects	50
Total	193

6.3 Staffing

The Planning and Building Standards service has 152 employees (126 full time equivalents) to deliver its key services.

6.4 ICT Resources

Infrastructure Services has invested in a range of line-of-business systems to help streamline processes and to improve service delivery. The developments that have been scheduled to take place within Planning and Building Standards for 2012/13 are detailed below.

TRIM –this is an electronic records management system which is still being developed in order to realise its full benefits. It may be expanded into new areas. In particular expansion into Development Management and Building Standards will be investigated in support of the Councils Information Management Strategy.

Northgate iLAP - this consists of 3 modules: iPlan (for Development Control); iBuild (for Building Standards) and iGaz (Corporate Address Gazetteer). There is an ongoing project to improve or potentially replace the iGaz module and upgrade the other 2 modules to V2.12 initially and V2.13 later in the year. A comprehensive review of these systems with a view to their potential replacement will take place in 2012/13.

GGP Geographic Information System - will be considered alongside any review of iLAP as it is integrated with the system.

iDox - Planning currently has an external contract with iDox to provide a bureau service for scanning and indexing documents and images. iDox also provide a hosted website which makes the images available to members of the public via links from the Aberdeenshire Website. There is the desire to reassess all systems including that provided by iDox. The Planning Service are currently aware of issues and changes taking place with other system providers and are looking to undertake a comprehensive review of the suitability of the systems that support its business.

Work is progressing on looking at the fitness for purpose and value of iLAP, GGP and iDOX. Within the period of this plan decisions will be made on retention, development or replacement of these systems.

The service will support corporate initiatives such as Worksmart, Kaizen for Daily Improvement and Customer Services Contact Centre through increasing the location flexibility of business systems and processes, improving procedures and performance management and by further developing customer contact processes.

7 Monitoring

The Head of Service Plan sets out main operational actions for the service and the key performance measures. Progress with each action and with the performance measures shown will be reported to the Planning and Building Standards Management Team every three months.

In addition to the performance indicators the service will continue to develop processes for capturing customer feedback and measuring outcomes. Customer satisfaction measures will be used to review quality of service delivery and to show that we are making a difference. Other objections and measures may be added to the tables over the 3 year period of the plan. For example, developing access in the Energetica corridor is an emerging priority and a programme of key actions is being developed.