

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 1999

SUBJECT: BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW - DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Abstract: The purpose of this report is to advise the Planning & Transport Policy Committee of the outcome of the Development Plan Best Value Service Review and to seek the Committee's approval of the Improvement Plan prepared by the Review Team.

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

1. note the terms of this report;
2. approve the proposed Improvement Plan outlined in Appendix 1 to this report.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In accordance with the previously agreed schedule of Best Value Service Reviews, the Service Review Team was established in October 1998 to examine the operation of the process of Development Planning in Angus. In particular, the Service Review Team focused on the delivery of the product of Development Plans (Structure and Local Plans) in terms of:-

- efficiency and effectiveness;
- accountability and transparency;
- ownership and user satisfaction;
- quality and cost.

3 SERVICE REVIEW REPORT

3.1 A full report is available in the Members' Lounge.

3.2 The Development Plan Service is responsible for a statutory function of the Council the output of which influences a wide range of investment decisions relating to land use development within Angus. During the 1998/99 financial year the value of development undertaken in Angus was in excess of £50m. However, the value of Development Plans is not just in financial terms since the policies contained in these documents also enhance sustainability and environmental protection. In recent years the role of the Development Plan - Structure Plan and Local Plan - has been strengthened by the primacy placed by the Scottish Executive on the plan-led system. In addition the development plan interfaces particularly with the Development Control process and other policy initiatives such as Environment Strategy/LA21; Community Planning; and Local Transport Strategy. It is an essential requirement of the Council to have in place a current, robust and effective development plan.

- 3.3 This Review of the service highlights and takes account of the complexities of the Development Planning process, which has several stages, and in planning itself which seeks to manage change in a world of rapidly evolving technology, development pressure and expectation. This is compounded by a steady flow of legislation, advice and guidance from the Scottish Executive and Scottish Parliament.
- 3.4 Consultation with, and involvement of, the community and a wide range of local and national agencies/groups is an important and integral part of the development plan process which influences the content and form of Structure and Local Plans. The documents have to satisfy a wide range of customers requirements and it is therefore important that the form and content of Local/Structure Plans continues to be pertinent and meets the various needs. In this context continuing dialogue with customers and assessment of their needs is important alongside the statutory requirements for public consultation and scrutiny which govern the preparation, monitoring and review of both Structure Plans and Local Plans.

4 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 4.1 I am happy to endorse the Improvement Plan (Appendix 1) in full and it is recommended that the Planning & Transport Policy Committee should now formally approve it.
- 4.2 The Improvement Plan seeks to build on the significant progress already achieved towards full Development Plan coverage in Angus during 2000. In particular the adoption of a single Local Plan format facilitates selective updating of specific parts of the plan without compromising its overall integrity. This approach should enable Angus Council to maintain and improve performance in line with the requirements of the Scottish Executive to keep plans current.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. In the event of there being particular financial implications linked to any of the recommendations for improvement, a further report will be submitted to the Committee.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Directors of Finance and Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In terms of performance the service compares favourably with the other benchmarking partners. There is currently only one approved national indicator (Accounts Commission) - % population covered by an adopted Local Plan less than five years old - and Angus will achieve 100% coverage in 2000.
- 7.2 The Best Value Review of the Development Plan Service has identified several areas where further improvements will continue to be made to the products and/or process building on the significant achievements and progress in developing and delivering this service since local government reorganisation in 1996:-

- project management;
- monitoring, review and implementation;
- the corporate role;
- public participation and involvement; and
- human resources.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/GDP/IAL
4 October 1999

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning and Transport

APPENDIX 1

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**Project Management**

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Further develop project management procedures streamlining the Development Plan process.	Ongoing	Head of Planning & Transport Policy/ Development Plan Manager
Extend timetabling and work programming progressing the Angus Local Plan to adoption, and preparing the Dundee & Angus Structure Plan	December 1999 (Ongoing)	Development Plan Manager
Investigate options for time-recording and establish pilot scheme	December 2000	Directorate

Monitoring, Review and Implementation

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Review key monitoring and data tracking requirements for Development Plan	March 2000 (Ongoing)	Development Plan Manager/Information Manager
Introduce and develop bi-annual monitoring report	January 2001	Development Plan Manager
Liaise with other Councils to undertake further benchmarking related to Development Plans including development of Local Performance Indicators	Ongoing	Best Value Team

Corporate Role

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Highlight and further strengthen relevant links between the Statutory Development Plan and other corporate strategies including Community Planning in Angus	Ongoing	Director and Head of Planning & Transport Policy

Public Participation and Involvement

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Alongside statutory consultation requirements, investigate opportunities for enhanced community involvement at various stages throughout ongoing Development Planning process	March 2000 (Ongoing)	Head of Planning & Transport Policy/Development Plan Manager
Undertake further customer/user survey(s) having regard to stages reached in Local Plan adoption/Structure Plan preparation	March 2000	Development Plan Manager
Consider need and opportunities for preparing an "easy read" type summary in addition to Statutory Plans documentation	December 2000	Development Plan Manager
Make selected Development Plan material available on Intranet/Internet	March 2000	Development Plan Manager/Information Manager

Human Resources

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Continue to assess requirements and develop opportunities to access Development Plan training	Ongoing related to Training Plan, liP, Performance Appraisal and Development	Development Plan Manager