

Annex A

Progress on Key areas for Service Improvement 2010 - 2011

A user-oriented service:

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| 1. Convene a Planning Service Feedback Forum for developers, agents, community councils, amenity organisations, agency representatives and other interested parties to encourage feedback about our Planning Service. Feedback from this Forum will assist in preparing future Service Improvement Plans. | By February 2011 |
| <i>Four Planning Service Workshops were held in March 2011 in Aviemore and Ballater facilitated by Planning Aid Scotland. Summary of feedback is in Appendix B. This will contribute to the SIP for 2011-12. It is intended to run similar events later in 2011 to inform the SIP for 2012-13.</i> | |
| 2. Prepare a programme of planning training for communities and other interested parties | By March 2011 |
| <i>Programme prepared by March 2011 and Community Awareness events held in Newtonmore, Nethybridge, Braemar and Blair Atholl in early June 2011. This is not an end in itself, we will review progress and continue working with all parties to raise awareness.</i> | |
| 3. Publish an updated planning information leaflet and promote the Supplementary Planning Guidance and the importance of pre-application discussions to ensure that applications stand the best possible chance of being approved. | By March 2011 |
| <i>Information leaflet has been drafted to convey information with technical accuracy, language has been independently reviewed/ revised, and it is being tested via Community Awareness events prior to publication. SPG and pre-application discussions being promoted via leaflet and website.</i> | |
| 4. Review the planning information on the CNPA website and the language used in official correspondence to make sure it is customer friendly. | By March 2011 |
| <i>Redrafting has taken place and language being independently reviewed. Templates for official correspondence have had to be altered to fit with new e planning/OPIS system hosted by Loch Lomond</i> | |

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| <i>and Trossachs NPA – work underway through June 2011 to make this “live” in July.</i> | |
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A strengthened role for the Planning Service in achieving Sustainable Rural Development:

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| 1. Prepare plans, with partners, for a Sustainable Design Award scheme for the National Park. | By March 2011 |
| <i>A Cairngorms National Park Sustainable Design Award has been an aspiration for some time – the adoption of the Local Plan and Sustainable Design Guide in October 2010 now give the necessary context against which to promote design quality and to assess designs. We have been investigating existing models for Design Awards (e.g. Aberdeenshire Council) and will be making firm arrangements during the current year to formally launch an Award in 2012-13. A report to Planning Committee on 24 June 2010 will expand on this.</i> | |
| 2. Improve our capability to collate and analyse planning related data through development of a work-stream dedicated to this function | By December 2010 |
| <i>Over the last year we have improved our case management systems for planning applications, and we are introducing a new e planning package, all of which make it easier to manage and access data. A post has been created within CNPA specifically to co-ordinate and handle data, statistics and other evidence base for the Local Development Plan, National Park Plan, Development Management and other aspects of the authority’s activities. The postholder is now in place.</i> | |
| 3. Approve for consultation a further batch of Supplementary Planning Guidance | By February 2011 |
| <i>Following the adoption of the first suite of SPG in October 2010, a further tranche was published for consultation early in 2011 and the results of that consultation will be considered by the Planning Committee in July 2011 along with suggested revisions to allow the SPG to be adopted.</i> | |
| 4. Review and Update the Development Plan Scheme | By March 2011 |
| <i>The DPS for 2011 has been adopted by the Planning Committee.</i> | |

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| 5. Draw up a structured programme of development activity for the Planning Committee involving site visits and sessions on particular topics | By February 2011 |
| <i>Following a field trip on 28 April 2011 looking at some past decisions on the ground, the Planning Committee considered a report at the meeting on 27 May 2011 reflecting on this event and considering other development activity for the year. As a result a programme of activity is being prepared with priority given to design, planning obligations/planning gain and renewable energy schemes.</i> | |

Changes to “Call-in” procedure

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| 1. Finish the ongoing trial arrangements for the new electronic “call-in” system and review Committee meeting schedule accordingly | By January 2011 |
| <i>Following a trial period the Planning Committee in March 2011 agreed to move to electronic call-in. The process has now become established routine.</i> | |

Joint working with local authorities

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| 1. Agree revised Protocol for planning with partner local authorities | By February 2011 |
| <i>It was agreed with the local authorities in summer 2010 that the existing development management protocol required revision/expansion to cover development planning, greater explanation of how enforcement works in the Park, and offer clarity on responsibilities for housing. Other pressures of work have delayed progress, but this is now an absolute priority and work is underway.</i> | |
| 2. Make special efforts to work closely with Perth and Kinross Council who are new to the National Park | By March 2011 |
| <i>With part of Perth & Kinross coming into the Park in October 2010 it was necessary to establish a close relationship with the Council before and after that date. Contacts were established well in advance and arrangements made for call-in notifications, enforcement liaison and work on Local Development Plans. These arrangements are now in place and there is a good ongoing relationship and understanding with</i> | |

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| colleagues in Perth & Kinross Council. | |
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Enforcement activity:

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| 1. Publish and distribute the Enforcement Charter | By November 2010 |
| <i>Enforcement Charter now published, distributed and available on the CNPA website. The Monitoring and Enforcement Officer will be bringing a report to the Planning Committee during the year with a review of activity and the operation of the Charter.</i> | |
| 2. Initiate discussions on a shared services approach to enforcement across the National Park in conjunction with relevant local authorities | By February 2011 |
| <i>There had previously been informal discussion with 2 of the Councils on the potential for a shared enforcement service and some interest had been expressed at officer level. Since taking up post the CNPA Monitoring and Enforcement Officer has been busy establishing the function within the authority and it was then the intention to have more formal dialogue with the Councils on a shared services approach. This has not yet taken place, but with the revisions needed to the Protocol and the impact of the prevailing financial climate for all planning authorities, it is considered that this is a priority for 2011-12.</i> | |

E-planning:

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| 1. Make the Online Development Plan available | By March 2011 |
| <i>This has now been done for the Local Plan and is hosted by Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA. The process for the Local Development Plan will use the OLDP system.</i> | |
| 2. Make the Online Planning Information System live – to show same information online as other planning authorities in Scotland | By March 2011 |
| <i>This is being hosted by Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NPA which already has a Uniform E Planning System. We have been working with LLTNPA since early 2010 and it has taken a little longer than anticipated for technical reasons to incorporate the CNPA development management system, including “call-in”, and making this fit with LLTNPA who have full planning powers. Issues have now been</i> | |

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| <p>addressed and LLTNPA staff are installing and testing the OPIS system at CNPA through June 2011. It should be complete by the end of the month and we will then run the new and old systems in tandem for a short time until all testing has taken place and the OPIS is fully operational.</p> | |
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Determination rate of applications

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| <p>1. Conduct further discussions with relevant local authorities about the importance of the validation stage so that applications can be dealt with more effectively.</p> | By February 2011 |
| <p><i>Discussion has taken place and will be formally incorporated in the revised Protocol. The wider discussions between Scottish Government, planning authorities and the development sector have stressed the importance of competent applications to improve the effectiveness of the planning system. The adopted Local Plan and SPG along with more pre-application discussion will all contribute to effectiveness.</i></p> | |
| <p>2. Investigate the benefits of delegation of authority to refuse applications due to lack of information to Head of Development Management</p> | By February 2011 |
| <p><i>This has yet to be taken forward but, with the adopted Local Plan and SPG in place, prospective developers should now submit applications that contain all of the necessary information. Previously CNPA planning officers have devoted a significant amount of time and energy trying to secure all of the necessary information on various aspects of a planning application in order to bring it forward for determination. It is intended to bring a report to Planning Committee in the near future setting out the circumstances in which it should be delegated to the Head Planner to refuse planning permission due to lack of information.</i></p> | |
| <p>3. Make substantial new efforts to meet the target timescales for local and major developments as set down by Scottish Government (2 and 4 months respectively), recognising that an appropriate allowance has to be made for the time taken to “call in” the applications (which Scottish Government accept).</p> | By March 2011 |
| <p><i>Within the constraints of the “call-in” process this has been achieved. The overall caseload in hand has been brought down to no more than 20 applications at any point in time (it had been up to 50) and applications are being brought to Planning Committee as soon as all</i></p> | |

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| <p><i>information is available. We have established a protocol for provision of advice from internal CNPA specialists to enhance effectiveness and we are working with external consultees to ensure faster responses. It must be pointed out that the quarterly returns to Scottish Government are presented in a table that takes no account of the time taken up by the “call-in” process. This has been raised with Scottish Government, but they would not change the format for one authority – we are allowed to submit a commentary to explain our unique situation.</i></p> | |
| <p>4. Publish key planning performance statistics on our website including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) proportion of planning applications in the Park that are “called in” b) proportion of approvals/refusals c) determination rate of applications | <p>By February 2011</p> |
| <p><i>This work is in hand. We have been waiting for the completion of the OPIS installation, which will help with generation of statistics, and the revision to website format and content. This information will appear regularly from summer 2011.</i></p> | |