

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: PLANNING SERVICE PRIORITIES 2017/18

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Purpose of Report

To review progress over the last year and to ask the Planning Committee to consider and approve the proposed planning service priorities for 2017/18.

Summary

The Planning Committee considers a set of planning service priorities to be delivered each year as part of our pro-active approach to performance improvement. During 2016/17 the planning service completed 7 of the 10 priorities that had been identified for the year, and work is underway on the remaining 3. For the year ahead, 10 service priorities are proposed. Once approved, these will be included in individual staff work programmes for 2017/18.

Recommendation

That the Planning Committee consider and approve the proposed planning service priorities for 2017/18.

Background and Context

1. In April 2016, the Planning Committee approved planning service improvement priorities for 2016/17. These improvement priorities have informed the work of the planning service during 2016/17 and are an important part of the CNPA's annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) report. The planning service is now in the process of identifying improvement priorities to steer work over the coming year. The proposed improvement priorities outlined in this report are intended to complement and enhance the core planning services that the CNPA delivers (development plan preparation and delivery, development management, monitoring and enforcement). They are not a substitute for that work, but are about doing it in better ways to deliver better outcomes for customers and the CNPA.

Review of Service Priorities from 2016/17

2. The 10 service improvements agreed by the Planning Committee in April 2016 are shown in Table I below, along with a brief progress report on delivery.

Table I CNPA Planning Service Improvements 2016/17		Summary of Progress
1	Consolidate existing processes and procedures	Ongoing Best practice embedded through ongoing performance reviews, regular one-to-one meetings etc.
2	Review internal consultation procedures for specialist advice	Completed Review process concluded and improvements identified for implementation during 2017/18
3	Support move to an electronic/paperless Planning Committee	Ongoing All papers available to Committee members via either email or USB devices. Just over 50% take-up of electronic-only papers at present
4	Plan and deliver a Planning Committee training programme	Ongoing Site visits to key development sites undertaken, briefings/discussions held on key topics including design and housing land supply
5	Consolidate delegated authority provisions	Started Review of provisions underway – proposals to be reported to Board / Committee for completion in 2017/18
6	Carry out a review of infrastructure requirements for allocated development sites	Completed Review undertaken in liaison with key stakeholders

Table 1		Summary of Progress
CNPA Planning Service Improvements 2016/17		
7	Complete the Design Awards 2016 competition	Completed Awards announced at ceremony in November 2016
8	Undertake a programme of Town Centre Health Checks	Completed Heath checks undertaken for all settlements with identified town centre / village core
9	Develop a series of standard planning conditions	Started Drafting of standard conditions underway – to be completed 2017/18
10	Prepare and implement standard legal agreement templates	Started Initial discussions with legal counsel underway – to be completed 2017/18

3. Other notable successes during 2016/17 included receiving a Scottish Award for Quality in Planning for the Speyside Way extension. CNPA also successfully engaged with local high school pupils in relation to work on the new LDP and via a joint schools visit to the Planning Committee.
4. We will update the Planning Committee with a comprehensive report on PPF delivery and performance later in 2017. Planning staff are pleased with the last year's work and progress, particularly as it was a year when the service was affected by long-term absence due to illness of key staff members, significant development management and enforcement casework, and significant work in preparing the new National Park Partnership Plan.

Service Priorities for 2017/18

5. The proposed planning service improvements for 2017/18 are shown in Table 2. These further improvements have been discussed within the staff team and also aim to respond to general feedback received from stakeholders, including through the Planning Representatives Network and the Developers Forum. The proposed priorities build upon the progress that has been made in previous years.

Table 2	
Proposed 2017/18 Planning Service Improvements	
1	Develop a series of standard planning conditions (completing the priority identified in 2016/17)
2	Prepare and implement standard legal agreement templates (completing the priority identified in 2016/17)
3	Consolidate delegated authority provisions (completing the priority identified in 2016/17)
4	Continue to deliver our Planning Committee training programme (learning from past cases, improving understanding of current issues and practice)

Table 2 Proposed 2017/18 Planning Service Improvements	
5	Prepare advice on LDP developer obligations policy (to provide more clarity to officers and developers on where developer obligations will / will not be required)
6	Develop and deliver a schools engagement / involvement programme (building on the success of the recent Planning Committee visit)
7	Enhance the customer feedback process (broadening the scope of our customer feedback and using it to inform further improvements)
8	Plan and deliver workshop on natural heritage with SNH, SEPA and Local Authorities (consolidating understanding and ensuring a consistent approach to addressing natural heritage issues within the Park)
9	Develop further materials to raise awareness, understanding and expectations of good design in the Park (building on the success of the Design Awards 2016 competition)
10	Review the way we report monitoring and enforcement activity in public (to improve public understanding of the system, awareness of consented developments and of the prioritisation of cases.)

Next Steps

- Once the service improvements are approved, staff will incorporate them into the Planning Service Unit Plan for the year and into individual's work plans. It is intended that the Planning Committee will receive regular updates on planning service performance, including an update on delivery of the service improvement priorities in May and November 2017.

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