

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/PC/3

**Minutes of the Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (Shadow)
Planning Committee held on Tuesday 2 September 2014 at 2.00pm in Mourne
Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick**

In attendance:

(Councillors)

Councillor C Casey	Councillor P Clarke
Councillor G Craig	Councillor L Devlin
Councillor S Doran	Councillor G Hanna
Councillor T Hearty	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor K Loughran	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor C McGrath	Councillor H McKee
Councillor M Murnin	Councillor B Quinn
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor G Sharvin (Chair)
Councillor JJ Tinnelly	

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor Brown
Councillor Walker	

(Officials)

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive Designate
Mr R Dowey, Head of ICT and Finance
Mr J McBride, Change Manager
Ms C Miskelly, Head of Human Resources
Mrs D Starkey, Committee Administrator

Mr J Dumigan, Chief Executive
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Recreation and Community
Services
Mr C O'Rourke, Director of Environmental Services
Mrs M Ward, Group Chief Building Control Officer

Mr J Farrell, Director of Environment, Health & Building Services
Mr J McCorry, Director of Technical and Leisure Services

Mr A McKay (Planning Manager)
Mr P Rooney (DoE Planning)

Mrs M Stewart, Development Management Manger, Fife
Council

PC/19/2014: APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Bailie, W. Clarke, Curran, Donnelly, Fitzpatrick and Mr E Curtis, Chief Executive (Newry and Mourne District Council) and Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director of Administration (Equality).

PC/20/2014: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PRESENTATION

PC/21/2014: VISIT BY MS MARY STEWART, DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT MANAGER, FIFE COUNCIL

NOTED: Presentation from Ms Mary Stewart, Development Management Manager, Fife Council. **(Attached at appendix 1)**

NOTED: A question and answer session ensued during which Ms Stewart responded to several queries from Members on the operation of a Planning Committee.

During discussion the following key points were highlighted:

- A Scheme of Delegation was required
- Members of a Planning Committee should remain Members for the duration of term of Council
- Use of an Early Alert System was beneficial. This involves the agreed list of applications being sent to Members 2 weeks prior to the Planning Committee Meeting (allowing Members time to review case files) and an Officers report and recommendation circulated 5 days prior to the Planning Committee Meeting
- An agreed process for managing communication to contact the Planning Department
- Invalid applications were not accepted and returned
- Need to agree protocols with Statutory consultees to minimise the number of times consultation was required
- Need to consider charges for discretionary services ranged from £140 to £250
- Site visits can be requested by Members and arranged by Officers at all times. Fife Council adopted a practice that all major applications require site visit and this is taken into account when scheduling meetings.
- Visuals such as photographs are used for case files. Video visual may be considered in future.
- An appeals procedure is used (3 months from day decision issued)

NOTED: The Chief Executive confirmed a study visit to Fife Council was to be arranged for October/November 2014 to give all Members the opportunity to view a Planning Committee in operation.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Ruane, **SECONDED** by Councillor Casey for Planning Committee Members to visit Fife Council to view a Planning Committee in operation.

The Chief Executive to confirm the availability of funding from DoE Capacity Building Programme for the visit to Fife.

Members who wish to have any particular issues examined during the study visit to Fife should forward details to the Committee Administrators, Mrs Starkey and Mrs McAteer.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

PC/22/2014: **WELCOME TO THE NEW PLANNING MANAGER**

NOTED: The Chief Executive took the opportunity to welcome Mr Anthony McKay and congratulate him on his appointment as Planning Manager.

PC/23/2014: **ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM (SHADOW) PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON 5 AUGUST 2014**

Read: Action Sheet arising from (Shadow) Planning Committee Meeting held on 5 August 2014. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the Action Sheet 'noted'.

PC/24/2014: **TRANSFER OF PLANNING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Read: A report on the Transfer of Planning to Local Government. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Casey, **SECONDED** by Councillor Craig to grant authority to draft and submit a response on behalf of the (Shadow) Planning Committee further to correspondence received from DoE (dated 27 August 2014).

PC/25/2014: REMINDER RE: CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING ON PLANNING

NOTED: The Chairman reminded Members of the importance of attending all four capacity building and training sessions for Planning as follows:

- Session 1: Overview of Planning for Councillors (10 September 2014, Craigavon Civic Centre)
- Session 2: Development Plans and Working with the Community (16 October 2014, Down Arts Centre, Downpatrick)
- Session 3: Practical Planning (20 November 2014, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon)
- Session 4: Development Plans and Working with the Community (11 December 2014, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick)

PC/26/2014 NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN/DoE PLANNING PILOT

NOTED: The Chief Executive provided an update on the Newry, Mourne and Down/DoE Planning Pilot and reported Planning Service would shortly be confirming the names of specific staff transferring to offices in Greenbank, Newry and Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick.

A meeting was scheduled to take place with the Chief Executive and Planning Agents and Architects on 15 September 2014.

CONSULTATION

PC/27/2014 DRAFT NILGA RESPONSE TO DoE (PPS 2)

PC/28/2014 DRAFT NILGA RESPONSE TO DSD (DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING)

Read: The draft responses to DoE (PPS2) and DSD (Developer Contributions for Affordable Housing). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Craig, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hanna for NILGA to submit the responses as presented on behalf of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

There being no further business the Meeting concluded at **4.20pm**.

For consideration at the Shadow Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 7 October 2014.

Signed: **Councillor G Sharvin**
Chairperson

Signed: **Mr L Hannaway**
Chief Executive Designate

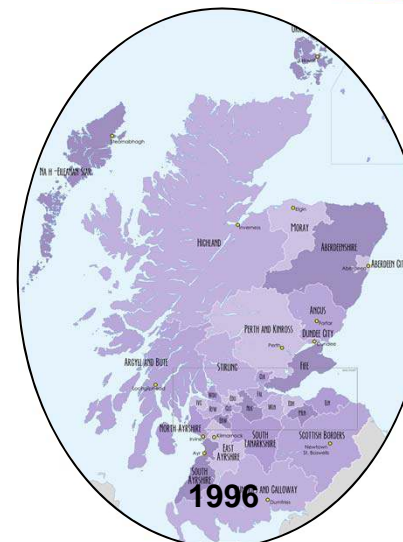
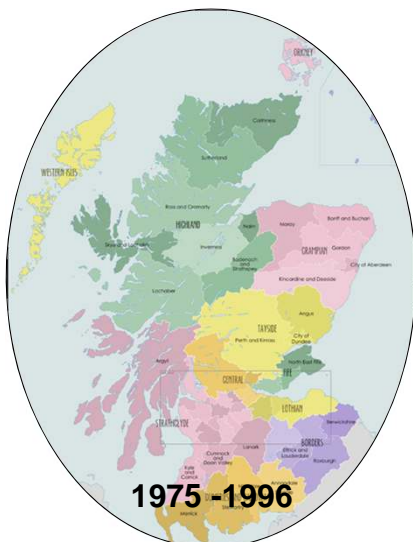
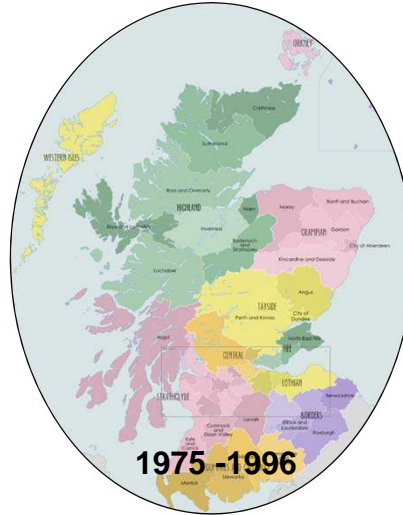
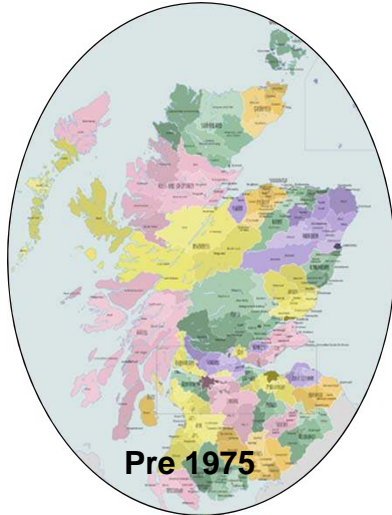
Planning for Development The Fife Experience

Mary Stewart
Service Manager, Fife Council

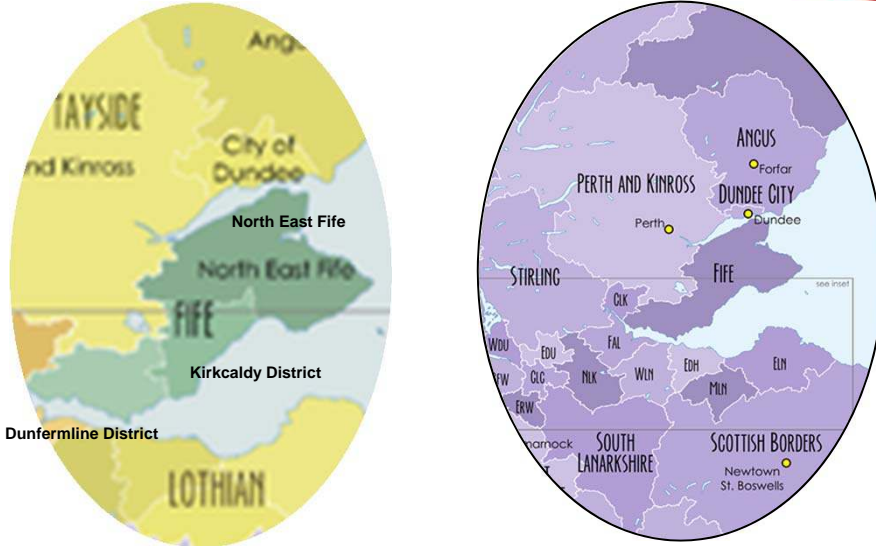
Outline

- Scottish Local Government Reform
- Fife in Figures
- Fife Governance
- Enterprise Planning & Protective Services
- The Planning Portfolio
- Processing Planning Applications
- Committees

Local Government Reform



Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services



Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services



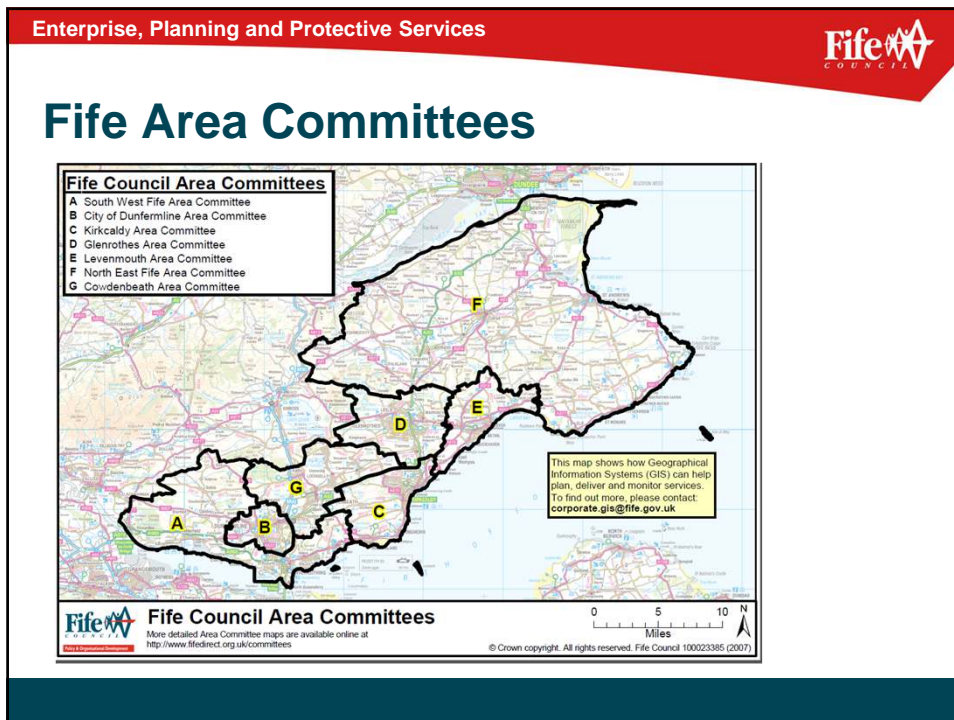
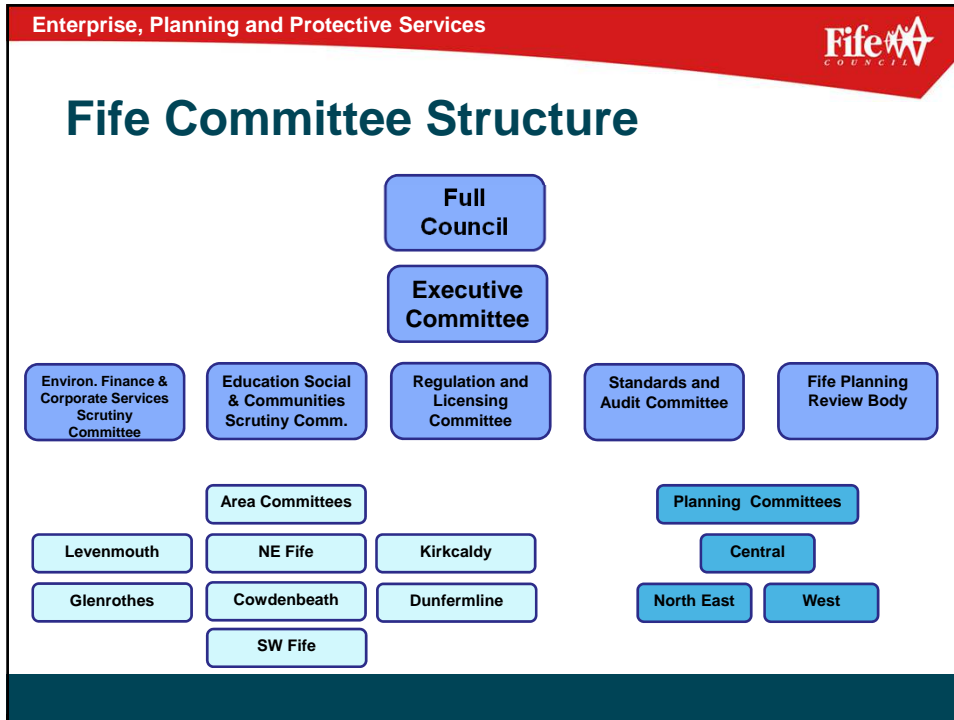
Fife in Figures

- In population terms Fife is the third largest Scottish local authority after Glasgow and Edinburgh, with a population of 360,000
- The Council has an annual revenue and capital budget of over £1 billion
- The Council has 22,000 staff
- The Council delivers over 500 key services to the people of Fife

Elected Members

23 Multi-member Electoral Wards

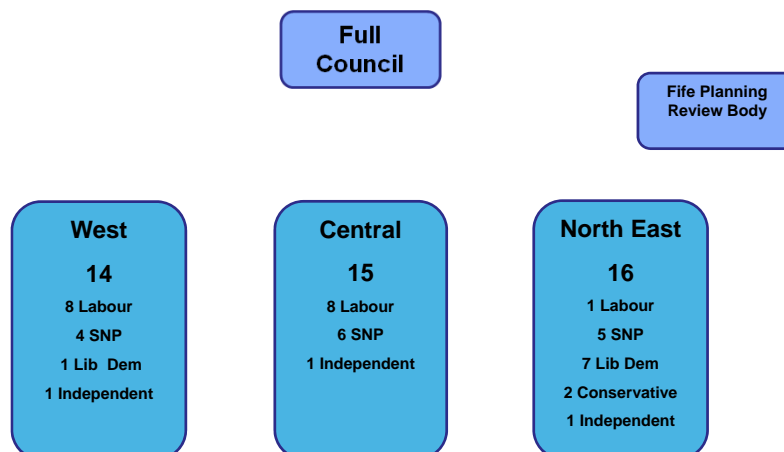
35	Scottish Labour Party
26	Scottish National Party
10	Scottish Liberal Democrats
3	Scottish Conservative & Unionist
3	Independent
1	Other
78	Total

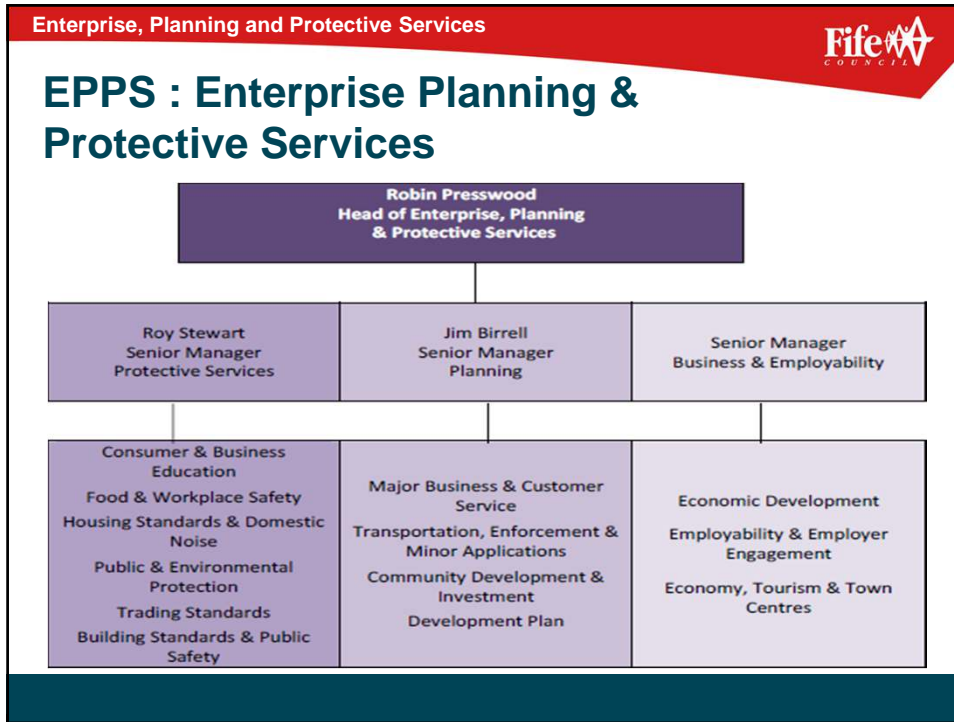



Quasi-judicial or Regulatory Functions

- Planning
- Taxi licences
- Liquor licensing
- Street traders
- Traffic orders
- Enforcement, disciplinary or adjudicatory role

Fife Planning Committees





- Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services
- 
- The Planning Portfolio**
- Key Facts**
- 33 chartered town planners
 - A total of 84 staff
 - 3 floors of one building
 - Costs £3million a year
 - Took more than 10 years to create

Planning Portfolio Remit

Forward Planning

- Structure Plans
- Local Plans

Planning Applications

Enforcement

Project Implementation

- Development Briefs
- Improvement Projects
- Regeneration

Protection

- Natural Heritage
- Landscape
- Trees
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings

Transportation

- Road Construction Consents
- Transportation Assessment

Planning Portfolio Priorities

- Providing an excellent, multi skilled planning service
- Making Fife the Best Place to do Business
- Improving Town Centres
- Improving Decision Making Timescales
- LEAN Management & Continuous Improvement

Planning Applications

Key Facts

- 2408 applications determined
- 62% submitted online
- 77% validated within 3 working days
- 20,000 neighbour notification letters per year
- 90% of applications were determined by officers 93.6% of planning applications were approved
- The DPEA determined 29 appeals, 18 were allowed.
- The Council held 51 Local Reviews and 27 of the decisions were overturned or had the conditions varied. (53%).

Triggers for Change

- Financial Challenges & Diminishing Resources
- Poor Performance Levels
- New Legislation – Hierarchy, Delegation, Neighbours,
- Customer Feedback – One Door, Certainty
Consistency, Clarity, Communication
- Business Concerns/Solutions – Easiest Place to Do
Business

Processing Applications

Major	2 Hectare Sites 50 Houses
Local	Everything Else
Minor	Household Extensions Adverts

Customer Focus

- 3 Application Processing Teams each with different focus reflecting needs of our Main Customer Groups
- Householders, Local Communities and Businesses
- One door approach for Customer contact – Managed Communication
- Fife Planning Gateway
- Embrace Complaints – Valuable Feedback

New Ways of Working

- Invalid Applications Returned
- Telephone & Meeting Appointments
- No Stamped Paper Plans
- Electronic Working / Communication
- Enhanced Web Information
- New Charges for Discretionary Services
- Mobile & Flexible Staff

Small Issues – Big Impacts

- “The Cupar Way”
- My desk ☹️
- Levels of Resources & Support
- Personal Chats / Noise / Music / Wall Art
- Tea & Smoking Breaks
- Office Cover Levels & Ringing Phones
- Car Use / Mileage & Excess Travel

Planning Committees

Key Facts

- 10% of Applications
- High Resource Demand
- Costly Process
- Slow Process

Information Available

- Weekly Update
- 12 Week Pre-Application Public Consultation Process
- Direct Consultation
- Public Notices in Local Newspapers
- Site Notices
- Online Planning System
- PANS
- Early Alert List



Major Applications

- Design & Access Statement
- Sustainability Checklist
- Flood Report
- SUDS
- Retail Impact Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Habitat / Species Report
- Noise Assessment Report
- Environmental Statement



Committee Timetables

	September															October															
	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	
North East Plan Com	2																														
Central Plan Com																															
West Plan Com																															
Planning Review Body																															
EF&CS Scrutiny Committee																															
Executive																															
Fife Council																															
		November															December														
	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	M	Tu	W	Th	F	
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Planning Review Body																															
EF&CS Scrutiny Committee																															
Executive																															

Code of Conduct

The Test:-

“Whether a member of the public, acting reasonably, would think that a particular interest could influence your role as a Councillor”

Lobbying Councillors

- You will be lobbied – keywords are **transparency** and **probity**
- You can indicate you are listening to concerns, but you should confirm you can't arrive at a settled view until the committee
- Political group meetings can't be used for forming views on applications or individual staffing matters

Individual Applications

- Duty to take decisions properly and fairly
- Must not pressurise officers on recommendations
- Must not lobby or advocate to promote a recommendation
- Must not be associated with a course of action without declaring an interest
- Must remain (and be seen to remain) impartial

Committee Mechanics

- Venues & Technology
- Site Visits
- Representations
- Member Referral Scheme
- Full Council Role / Relationship
- Committee Clerks & Legal Advisors
- Overturn of Officer Recommendation

Add Presentation Title in Handout Master



Enterprise, Planning and Protective Services



Thank-you for Listening