

Development Services

Service Plan 2017-2022

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Strategic Outcomes Local Delivery **(SOLD)** plan sets out the community planning partnership's commitment over the coming five years to focus its attention, resources and efforts on the things that will make our area 'The place to be'. To achieve this, the partnership has identified a number of strategic outcomes it will work toward as well as the specific priorities that its partners will have a significant focus on over the period of the plan.
- 1.2 How the Council will contribute toward delivering on these priorities and outcomes is set out in our Corporate Plan, which directs what the Council does over the coming five years. The Corporate Plan also identifies how we intend to transform the Council to better enable us to meet the aspirations of the community planning partnership whilst continuing to deliver essential services that address the needs and expectations of our communities.
- 1.3 This Service Performance Plan demonstrates how our service is aligned with the priorities of the Council and includes a programme of activities to deliver against our strategic outcomes, the resources we have to do this and the context in which we are operating. It also sets out the projects we are taking forward to transform the way we work for the better, as well as how we will ensure that we are providing services that are fit-for-purpose and that represent best value.

2. The Service

- 2.1 Development Service's purpose is to contribute to safeguarding, developing and promoting our communities, the local economy and our environment. We aim to ensure that we meet the priorities and outcomes in our community partnership's SOLD Plan and the council's Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 We continue to review the services our customers need and want to ensure they are fit for purpose, efficient and effective. We do this by engaging our staff, reviewing and improving processes and procedures, and challenging decisions. Our customers range from communities, citizens and businesses to elected members and employees.
- 2.3 With a net revenue budget of £29 million and 730 employees we must be smart and transparent in how these resources are managed to deliver the services we provide.
- 2.4 The principal functions and services the Service delivers both internally and externally are noted below:

Design, Roads & Transport	Environmental Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• building design & construction• roads, bridges & lighting design & construction• bridge & lighting maintenance• roads network• roads maintenance• facilities management• grounds maintenance• flood risk management• transport policy & planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• waste strategy• refuse collection• street cleansing• vehicle maintenance• consumer protection• environmental health

Planning & Economic Development	Emergency Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land use planning • development management • building standards; • environmental planning • growth and investment • economic development • asset management • employment & training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • civil contingencies • business continuity management

3. Context

3.1 Development Services operates in a complex environment including significant economic pressures, institutional and legislative change. We work to maintain standards and enhance prospects.

3.2 Political initiatives, policies and legislation impact heavily on Development Services due to the regulatory nature of many of our functions. Some upcoming examples that will impact on us over the period of this plan include:

- The Seatbelts on School Transport (Scotland) Bill;
- The Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016;
- The Bus Services Bill 2018;
- Decriminalised Parking Enforcement;
- The Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse (COPLAR) national review;
- The new Code of Practice for Roads & Lighting;
- The National Planning Review;
- The review of the National Transport Strategy;
- The Cleaner Air for Scotland (CAFS) Strategy.

3.3 The performance of our economy remains a priority for Development Services and there continue to be significant trends in the local labour market particularly exerting an effect on our area. The Falkirk area has a consistently higher level of economic activity amongst its citizens than does Scotland and the UK as a whole. Self-employment and part-time employment continues to represent a growing proportion of overall employment however full-time employment is decreasing. Earnings are improving in Falkirk as wages continue to edge closer to national Scottish levels however earnings have reduced in real terms as inflation continues to outpace wage growth. Where Falkirk can excel in the future is in building upon the area's existing strengths in chemical sciences, manufacturing and logistics as well as the new opportunities around tourism to develop new innovative businesses and provide more high-value jobs for our residents.

3.4 The growing and ageing population also continues to create pressures that impact on a wide range of Council services. Changes such as the phasing in of the higher retirement age and the Welfare Reform Programme are resulting in additional working age residents seeking employment, making it more difficult for school leavers, young people and those who are longer term unemployed. Furthermore, we are seeing more skilled and experienced workers filling lower entry level posts. Unemployed graduates are also filling posts traditionally filled by school leavers or new labour market entrants. This results in a squeezing-out of job seekers who are less qualified, less skilled and less experienced.

- 3.5 We are increasingly using digital technology and social media to engage with our citizens as this enables us to provide them with information through multiple communication media and in a more interactive way. This presents more opportunities to engage with our citizens in a way that is more flexible, cost effective and better aligned to the ways in which our customers want to engage with us.
- 3.6 Scottish planning policy specifies that our open spaces and green networks should be protected, enhanced and promoted and this continues to be a significant area of work for our service. We recognise that the development of a high quality, multi-functional green network will provide a range of benefits for the people, businesses and wildlife of our area and contribute toward delivering on our broader aspirations for the economy and the health and wellbeing of our citizens.
- 3.7 Climate change legislation requires public bodies to act sustainably by embedding an economic, social and environmental balance, to contribute to the reduction/mitigation of carbon emissions which contribute to greenhouse gases and to contribute to climate change adaptation by working with communities, colleagues and partners to cope with changing weather and climate impacts.

4. The Area We Need to Be

4.1 The Council's Corporate Plan priorities are:

- **People**
 - raising aspiration and ambition
 - reducing the impact of poverty on children and young people
 - reducing the impact of poverty on families
- **Place**
 - grow our economy
 - improving the neighbourhoods we live in
 - promoting vibrant town centres
- **Partnership**
 - working with communities to deliver better services
 - empowering and enabling people to be self-reliant
 - promoting stronger, more self-reliant communities

4.2 Our partnership SOLD outcomes are:

- our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live
- we will grow our economy to secure successful businesses, investment and employment
- our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults
- our population will be healthier
- people will live, full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities
- our area will be a safer place to live

4.3 A programme of high-level activities is provided below that reflects how Development Services will work to deliver on the priorities and outcomes of the Council and its partners:

Priorities	Service Action(s)	Impact Sought	Timescale
People			
Raising aspirations and ambitions	Deliver employment and training programmes to enable access to the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase skill levels and improve access to employment. 	2017-2022
Place			
Grow our economy	Promote the Falkirk-Grangemouth Investment Zone to upgrade the areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment to generate new business growth and the attraction and retention of jobs. 	2017-2022
	Deliver the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of new/upgraded infrastructure and creation of development sites. 	2017-2022
	Deliver Business Gateway activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth of Falkirk's business base 	2017-2022
Improving the neighbourhoods we live in	In collaboration with partners implement local flood protection schemes. The Grangemouth scheme is a local and national priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our communities and businesses are protected from the impact of flooding. 	2017-2021
	Local Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment while maintaining the standards of the communities and environment in the area. 	2017-2022
	Maintain and enhance the areas open space and green networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access for our communities and visitors. 	2017-2022
	Maintain standards of street cleansing, environmental health, food inspection, trading activities and safety across communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interests of Falkirk's communities and businesses are safeguarded. 	2017-2022
Promoting vibrant town centres	Protect and enhance town centre environments and assist the promotion of town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained footfall and reduced vacancy rates. 	2017-2022
	Complete Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of Falkirk town centre properties and attraction of jobs/investment. 	Dec 2018
	Regularise parking in town centres through the implementation decriminalised parking enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise indiscriminate parking i.e. the misuse of parking places for people with disabilities, for loading and places with waiting restrictions. Improved access to the town centre for vulnerable people and for businesses. 	October 2018
Partnership			
Promoting stronger,	Enable Community Asset Transfer for surplus Council properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of properties to active community led organisations. 	2017-2022

Priorities	Service Action(s)	Impact Sought	Timescale
more self-reliant communities	Embed community and business resilience across the area.	Our communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are aware of risks that may affect them and • are able to use their existing skills, knowledge and resources to prepare for, and deal with, the consequences of emergencies, • work together to complement the work of the local emergency responders before, during and after an emergency 	2017-2022

Outcomes	Service Action(s)	Impact Sought	Timescale
We will grow our economy to secure successful businesses, investment and employment	Deliver the Falkirk Economic Strategy and promote the work of the Falkirk Economic Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased jobs, business growth and investment. 	2017-2022
	Deliver the Falkirk Employability Strategy, operate training programmes and respond to changes in Welfare Reform and national skills development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased level of skill and access to employment. 	2017-2022

5. The Council We Need To Be

5.1 Development Services has a number of significant projects ongoing, or commencing, through the lifetime of this plan. These projects form part of our Council of the Future programme of change which will improve how we work internally to allow us to provide a modern, smarter and more efficient service to our customers.

5.2 Each project has a timescale for completion. Each project will be monitored on an ongoing basis and the overall change programme will be subject to an annual fit for purpose / progress check based on the following criteria:

- the change to be delivered
- the saving to be achieved
- customer improvements
- efficiencies in processes

Council of the Future	Project	Impact Sought	Timescale
Enabled and Empowered Communities	Employment & Training Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To better connect, align and integrate employability support across our Services in order to improve outcomes and generate efficiency savings 	June 2018
Modern and Digital	Grey Fleet Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce employee mileage and introduce new ways of working through shared transport and technology solutions 	From April 2018
	Strategic Property Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationalise the Council's properties to achieve a reduced number of operational premises and increase cost effectiveness. 	March 2018

6. The Service We Need To Be

6.1 Development Services currently has a revenue budget of approximately £29 million per annum with an additional £14million capital spend on improving our towns, open spaces and infrastructure. Over the next five years we anticipate the revenue budget will reduce by £11million to approximately £18 million. This takes into account:

- current spend
- an estimated £80m the Council has to save over five years
- fixed costs the Council has to honour.

6.2 This means over the next five years Development Services will be very different. We will put in place a challenging programme of review and reform that covers all our functions and spend over the next five years. This programme will seek to radically change what we do so we can achieve our priorities. At the same time we must ensure we are delivering effective and efficient services that our citizens and customers value and importantly at a cost the Council can afford.

6.3 The principles we will apply to this review include:

- what are we delivering and why?
- why do we deliver these in the way we do?
- what is the cost of delivery, i.e. £, assets, people?
- how can these be delivered with a third less resource?
- how do those costs compare with other providers?
- who are we delivery those services to and do they value them?
- what outcomes are those services achieving and are they good enough?
- what is our plan for improving these?

6.4 We will also:

- eliminate duplication
- promote self service as the first choice for delivery
- know what our customers value
- understand the impact of what we do and what we potentially won't do
- work with citizens, communities and the third sector to promote further engagement in local delivery.

6.5 All our functions listed in 2.4 will be reviewed to reform how services are provided. These reviews will be based on the principles outlined in 6.3 above ensuring we take account of the criteria in 6.4.

7. Important Indicators

7.1 Development Services has identified a number of important indicators. These are monitored by the service management team on a regular basis.

Indicator	2016/17 Performance	2016/17 Target	RAG	Benchmark	2017/18 Target
% of FOI requests to Development Services responded to within 20 days	96.30%	100%		None	100%
Sickness Absence % in Development Services - Overall	5.29%	4%		None	4%
% of all Development Services complaints closed as "Not Upheld" or "Partially Upheld"	70.73%	60%		None	60%
% of business properties leased by the council that are occupied	95.20%	95%		None	95%
Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	89.32%	90%		79.6%	90%
Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	86.29%	85%		81.5%	85%
No. engaged in Employment Training with Council support	1,228	920		None	850
No. of Modern Apprentices in programmes managed by the Council	435	450		None	400
No. of unemployed people accessing jobs via Council funded/operated employability programmes	568	475		None	480
% of premises that hold a Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS) Pass rating	90.01%	90%		None	90%
% of Trading Standards Business Advice Requests dealt with within 14 days	98.10%	95%		None	95%
% of Building Warrant applications responded to within 20 days	99.53%	100%		None	100%
Average time taken (in weeks) to determine a Local Development (Householder) planning application	7.22	6.6		7.5	6.6
Average time taken (in weeks) to determine a Local Development (Non-Householder) planning application	11.89	11.4		12.87	11.4
No. of jobs created/secured through Business Gateway with Council-funded support	681	750		None	187.5
Net number of new businesses supported and sustained	214	376		None	94
% of overall carriageway length to be considered for maintenance treatment	35.20%	34%		37%	34%
No. of missed bins per 100,000 collections (all bins)	108	N/A		None	N/A
% of Traffic Light repairs completed within 48 hours	96.80%	95%		96.1%	95%
% of Street Light repairs completed within 7 days	93.90%	93%		90.1%	93%

8. Resources

- 8.1 The following tables provide a breakdown of the financial, human, and technology resources required for Development Services to provide the services we are required to deliver for 2017/18.

Financial	Design, Roads & Transport	Environmental Services	Planning & Economic Development	Directorate & Emergency Planning
Expenditure				
Employee Costs	12.975m	8.274m	7.475m	0.784m
Other	14.162m	13.085m	6.806m	1.469m
Income				
Grants	-	0.07m	3.048m	-
Fees and charges	0.298m	0.112m	1.613m	-
Other	16.058m	6.475m	6.320m	2.377m
Net Budget	10.781m	14.702m	3.300m	0.124m

Human	Design, Roads & Transport	Environmental Services	Planning & Economic Development	Directorate & Emergency Planning
No of Permanent FTE staff	258	165	81	7
No of Permanent PTE staff	69	12	16	0
No of Temporary FTE staff	50	49	8	3
No of Temporary PTE staff	9	0	3	0
Total No of FTE staff	386	226	108	10

Technology
Uniform
M3
Propman
Location Centre
Profess Project Manager
Key2
Maytas
ArcGIS
WDM
AutoCAD

9. Risk

- 9.1 The high risk areas that Development Services lead on are under review following the recent risk workshop.