

Planning Reform

Transport Scotland Service Improvement Plan (Development Planning & Development Management)

Context

To help meet the Scottish Government's target of sustainable economic growth there is a requirement for widespread planning reform. The legislation that was introduced in 2006 (Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006) has laid the foundations and it is now the responsibility of all stakeholders to improve the way they work and make the necessary changes to deliver reform.

At the planning summit held in Edinburgh on 28 October 2008 a common statement 'Delivering Planning Reform' was published setting out key areas of focus. Transport Scotland is a co-signatory of this statement and is committed to working in partnership with others to deliver planning reform.

This Service Improvement Plan gives further detail to that commitment and has been developed in the context of Transport Scotland's Corporate Plan 2008-2011 that outlines our delivery priorities and working principles. We are bringing together all our expertise to develop and implement Scotland's transport priorities on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

In doing so we aim to be: engaged with our stakeholders and attuned to their needs; respected for our professional judgement and trusted in our advice; and effective and efficient in our delivery. We have developed more specific outcomes that we want to achieve from planning reform linked to these aims. These are outlined below.

Purpose of Engagement in Land-use Planning

Transport Scotland engages with the planning system to ensure that Scottish Ministers' interests in our national strategic transport networks are protected while supporting, as far as possible, the aspirations of Planning Authorities for the future development of their area.

Through our engagement with the planning system we seek to safeguard the integrity of our national strategic transport networks (trunk roads and rail) and to ensure that they perform their function of improving connections across Scotland to promote sustainable economic growth.

Our strategic networks require primarily to provide reliable and efficient connections between rather than within key locations. Transport Scotland gives primacy to maintaining and safely operating our networks. Investment in our networks is then further targeted at making most efficient use of our existing transport infrastructure and finally at enhancing capacity where it is clearly demonstrated that doing so contributes to the Government's Purpose of sustainable economic growth at a national level. Within this context we seek to ensure that our strategic networks can support and respond to changing land-use patterns.

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Outcomes we seek from our Service Improvement Plan

Improved stakeholder engagement

We will be recognised for the quality of our approach to partnership working on development plan preparation and delivery-, leading and learning where appropriate.

Partnership working will be based on mutual respect and understanding of the aims, objectives and professional expertise of different stakeholders. We will share our expertise openly and help our partners, as far as possible, to meet their obligations.

On development management we will be regarded for the high quality, professional service that we provide.

Improved plan development & delivery

We will offer expert transport analysis and advice throughout the development planning and management process – taking a more proactive role in helping Planning Authorities identify key strategic transport issues and solutions.

Greater efficiencies

We will put even more resources into improving the quality of development plans. As a result, over time, we expect to spend less time auditing transport appraisals at both development planning and development management stages.

We will share our data systems with other Agencies and Planning Authorities to gain greater efficiencies and a common analytical base.

We will continue to seek efficiencies in our development planning and management processes. Transport Scotland requires to be consulted on less than 2% of all planning applications and deals with over 85% of these in less than 14 days.

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Transport Scotland - Service Improvement Plan

		Outcomes			
Item	What We Will Do	Improved stakeholder engagement	Support plan delivery	Greater efficiencies	Timeline
1	Proportionate and Practical Planning Policies: Offer our expertise to assist development plan teams				
1.1	Provide our baseline analysis at the start of the process to inform the Main Issues Report.	yes	yes	yes	December 2008 to March 2009
1.2	Facilitate transport workshops to identify key transport issues arising from land-use proposals.	yes	yes	yes	December 2008 to March 2009
1.3	Offer the use of our strategic transport and land-use appraisal tools to assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of different transport and land-use options and make our appraisal tools more accessible to non-transport professionals.	yes	yes	yes	December 2008 to March 2009
1.4	Identify scope for joined up working and input to the development planning process with other agencies.	yes	yes	yes	December 2008 to March 2009
1.5	Collaborate with SESPlan and Highland Council in the pilot projects.	yes	yes	yes	December 2008 to March 2009
2	Clear and Consistent Planning Advice: Publish streamlined transport and land-use appraisal guidance				
2.1	We will test the practicality of this guidance with COSLA and other key stakeholders.	yes	yes	yes	January 2009 to April 2009
3	Effective and Efficient Planning Processes: Improve Outcomes & Deliver Efficiencies				
3.1	Develop a shared data collection & analytical base, where applicable, with Key Agencies to ease burden on planning authorities and to make more informed decisions and achieve better outcomes.	yes	yes	yes	Ongoing
3.2	Implement e-planning			yes	April 2009

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4	Developing Skills and Improving Performance				
4.1	Build capacity In conjunction with RTPi and COSLA we will develop bespoke transport training days for land-use planners.	yes			During 2009
4.2	Through our lead in the integration of Planning and Transport across the Scottish Government we will bring together all relevant expertise.	yes			Ongoing
4.3	Improve internal performance Over our Corporate Plan period 2008-11 and in line with the delivery of approved development plans, we will increase the number of planning applications we respond to in 14 days from 85% to 90%. We currently respond, with final comments, to 85% of all planning applications we are consulted on within 14 days.			yes	2008 to 2011
4.4	Improve communication with stakeholders Bring forward a communication strategy with the aim of improving our engagement processes to achieve better outcomes.	yes	yes	yes	Ongoing
4.5	We will look to collaborate with Key Agencies and the wider Scottish Government to communicate these messages where appropriate.	yes	yes	yes	Ongoing
4.6	We will support the development sector by encouraging pre-application discussions with the aim of reducing the time taken to respond to subsequent planning applications.	yes	yes	yes	Ongoing
5	Maintaining the Momentum Produce annual reports on performance and service improvements.				
5.1	This work is embedded in Transport Scotland's Corporate Plan and we will report on and review future targets as part of our business planning processes.	yes		yes	Summer 2009

This is a summary plan only and Transport Scotland will be taking forward these actions as part of a comprehensive program of work on planning reform.