



DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

REVIEW OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN SCOTLAND

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise the panel of the publication of Scottish Government's response to a review of Strategic Development Plans in Scotland. The review considered whether the current procedural arrangements and approaches to the preparation of Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) were fit for purpose.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the panel notes the contents of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	There are no SEA requirements, equality issues or requirements for health or risk assessment associated with this report. However, strategic development plans are, themselves, subject to these requirements.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegation to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance indicators	Preparation of SDPs and local development plans (LDPs) are statutory requirements. Progress with the preparation of the SDP and LDP are monitored by Scottish Government as a performance indicator for local authorities. Local Authorities are required to review and update plans at least every five years.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<p>Outcome 3 - Our economy is diverse and dynamic and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business.</p> <p>Outcome 8 - We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.</p>

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The actions proposed by Scottish Ministers do not have any specific or immediately quantifiable resource implications for the council.
VII Consideration at PDSP	The review and its findings were previously reported to the PDSP meeting on 26 June 2014.
VIII Other Consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The 2006 Planning (Scotland) Act introduced Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) for the four largest city regions in Scotland - Aberdeen City and Shire, Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan), Glasgow and the Clyde Valley, and Dundee, Angus and Fife (TAYplan). This new system has been operational since 2009, when the relevant planning Regulations came into force and detailed guidance was issued by the Scottish Government.

SDPs set out a vision for the long term development of the city regions and deal with cross boundary issues such as housing and transport. SDPs are prepared by Strategic Development Planning Authorities (SDPAs), which are groups of planning authorities working together to produce these plans. SDPs need to be approved by Scottish Ministers. West Lothian is included within the SESplan area.

In October 2013, the Scottish Government commissioned a review into whether the procedural arrangements and approaches to the preparation of SDPs were still fit for purpose. A team from Kevin Murray Associates and Glasgow University were appointed to carry out the review and their findings were published in April of this year (see **Appendix 1**). The review can also be viewed at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00448818.pdf> It sets out twenty two findings relating to six themes and has previously been summarised and reported to the PDSP at a meeting of 26 June 2014.

D.2 Review conclusions

Since publication, the Scottish Government has held discussions on these findings and possible next steps with a range of stakeholders identified as leads by the research team. It has latterly published its response which identifies 14 separate actions it proposes to take, referenced to the same six themes in the original review, and these are summarised below.

1 : Collaborative leadership and governance

- (1) The importance of indicators on strategic level planning is recognised and their inclusion in performance frameworks is to be pursued;
- (2) The Minister is to offer to meet with the convenors of the four SDPAs to identify further ways to strengthen strategic development planning;
- (3) SDPs are to be highlighted and discussed in the Development Planning Forum, Heads of Planning and Convenors events in the coming year;

2 : Effective engagement and scrutiny

- (4) SDPAs are to be encouraged to work with the RTPI, Improvement Service and Planning Aid to take stock of effective approaches and share best practice;
- (5) Scottish Government is to share their experience in securing engagement in strategic level planning with the SDPA managers and their teams;
- (6) Hearings are not to be made a mandatory part of the SDP process but SDPAs will be encouraged to co-opt others onto SDPA committees to widen input and engagement;

3 : Housing and community building

- (7) SDPAs are to be encouraged to work with the Scottish Government and Architecture and Design Scotland to explore how the HoNDA can feed into an effective place-making approach to strategic development planning;
- (8) Scottish Government is to work with SDPAs to support the effective implementation of the refreshed HoNDA guidance and to take stock of the situation once all four HoNDAs in SDP areas have been completed;

4 : Transport and infrastructure role

- (9) Scottish Government is to commission research on funding approaches to support strategic infrastructure provision;
- (10) Scottish Government is to work with Transport Scotland to refresh current guidance and encourage SDPAs and Regional Transport Partnerships to clarify roles and responsibilities;
- (11) The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS), Heads of Planning (HOPS), SDPA managers and RTPI Lead Officers' Group is to be encouraged to identify and share good practice on strategic planning;

5 : The influence on delivery

- (12) Scottish Government is to explore options for improving the integration of land use and community planning with a view to piloting approaches in at least one local authority;
- (13) There is scope for SDP Action Programmes to be more delivery focussed and effective and Scottish Government will bring forward further guidance; and

6 : Resourcing and skills

- (14) SDPAs to be encouraged to work together to identify the scope for shared resources and skills development.

The agreed actions may have implications for the preparation and delivery of SDPs. If these are carried through and result in a more efficient and effective plan preparation process this can only be welcomed.

E. CONCLUSION

Scottish Ministers have published their response to the review of strategic planning. The response outlines 14 actions the Scottish Government will take, including working with others, to support strategic planning to realise its full potential.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Circular 6/2013 Development Planning
Circular 1/2013 Strategic Development Plan Areas
Circular 2/2008 Guidance on Strategic Development Planning Authorities
Review of Strategic Development Plans in Scotland
Report to Development and Transport Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, 26 June 2014 'Review of Strategic Development Plans in Scotland'

Appendices/Attachments: One

- Scottish Government Response to the Findings of the Review of the Strategic Development Plans in Scotland

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28 August 2014