



**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
26 MARCH 2019**

SUBJECT: PLACEMAKING

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report asks the Committee to note the steps taken in promoting better Placemaking in Moray and to approve a revised Quality Audit 2 to replace the existing Quality Audit on adoption of the new Local Development Plan.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (E) (2) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the Review and Preparation of Strategic and Local Plans.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee;

- i) notes the steps being taken to promote better Placemaking in Moray;
- ii) notes the role of good Placemaking in preventative planning and in supporting Scotland's public health challenges;
- iii) agrees the content of the Quality Audit 2 as set out in Appendix 1;
- iv) agrees that Quality Audit 2 replace the current Quality Audit on adoption of the new Local Development Plan, with delegated authority given to the Head of Development Services to make any changes to the Audit as a result of the Local Development Plan Examination;
- v) agrees that Quality Audit 2 is applied to relevant applications submitted after adoption of the new Local Development Plan;

- vi) **agrees that Quality Audits are a material consideration in the development management process when the new Local Development Plan is adopted and that Quality Audits form part of the report of Handling and Committee Reports, as appropriate; and**
- vii) **agrees that training for elected members be organised on Placemaking and Quality Auditing.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) requires the planning system to support development that is designed to a high quality which demonstrates the six qualities of a successful place;

- Distinctive.
- Safe and Pleasant.
- Welcoming.
- Adaptable.
- Resource Efficient.
- Easy to Move Around and beyond.

3.2 Para 47 of SPP also requires the planning system to “adopt a consistent and relevant approach to the assessment of design and place quality such as that set out in the forthcoming Scottish Government Place Standard.”

3.3 To support the aspirations for better Placemaking, Moray Council has implemented the following actions to date;

- The Moray Local Development Plan 2015 introduced Placemaking as a primary policy.
- The Council has promoted Masterplanning for large development areas to promote better Placemaking. This has been particularly successful at Findrassie, which won a national planning award and also at Bilbohall, Elgin; Dallas Dhu, Forres and at a smaller scale, Kinloss Golf course. The Masterplans at Findrassie and Dallas Dhu were also subject to review by a design panel from Architecture and Design Scotland (ADS), which proved a very useful review and learning process.
- Elected members undertook Masterplanning training with ADS and officers.
- Elected members have visited Tornagrain new town, the Housing Expo site in Inverness and the UHI/ Inverness college campus to see a variety of design approaches.
- A requirement has been introduced that all projects to be funded through the Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) are to comply with local planning policy and to achieve a “green” standard in the Quality Audit. This has been included in the SHIP published February 2019.
- The Council has been operating a Quality Auditing (QA) process since it was approved at a meeting of this Committee on 1 December 2015 (para 5 of minute refers).

The existing QA consists of a wheel of 12 categories which development proposals of 10 or more houses are assessed against and scored using a traffic light system. Where a proposal is assessed as “red” it fails to meet the required standard and the necessary mitigation is identified to the applicant/developer. One of the best aspects of the QA process is the joint working between services as the QA, led by development plans, involves officers from Transportation, Housing, Flood Risk Management, Development Management and Scottish Natural Heritage assessing the placemaking qualities of a proposal. The Quality Audit has generated significant interest from other authorities who consider it to be best practice, which is being replicated in other authorities.

- 3.4 This Committee agreed on 29 January 2019 (para 11 of minute refers) a report on Aligning Planning and Roads Construction Consent and that existing procedures be reviewed to enable the consenting processes to be aligned. The review of the QA includes criteria to support this alignment process.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 While the steps outlined above have brought some improvements, notably on masterplanning, collaborative working and process, it has made limited progression from delivering “anywhere” development to successful places being delivered on the ground, which the Scottish Government and Council aspire to achieve. The Proposed Plan contains stronger policies to deliver the Placemaking aspirations set out in Scottish Planning Policy. Further improvements are proposed;

- The current QA will be replaced by QA2 (**see Appendix 1**), to support the wording of the proposed new policy and to support the national health challenges such as loneliness, dementia and obesity, the need for better quality, multi benefit open spaces and the opportunity to align planning consent with roads construction.
- Training for members on Placemaking and Quality Auditing.
- Awareness raising for developers and landowners, which will be delivered through events on the new policies in the Local Development Plan.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Promoting and delivering quality Placemaking supports 3 of the 4 main priority areas set out in the LOIP, aiming to make Moray a more attractive place to live, work and invest.

(b) Policy and Legal

Placemaking is a primary policy in the statutory Local Development Plan.

(c) Financial implications

None.

(d) Risk Implications

None.

(e) Staffing Implications

Quality Auditing involves staff from a number of services across the Council.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

None.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure), the Head of Development Services, the Legal Services Manager, the Development Management Manager, Paul Connor (Principal Accountant), Lissa Rowan (Committee Services Officer), the Housing Strategy & Development Manager, the Senior Engineer Transport Development, the Consultancy Manager and the Equalities Officer have been consulted and their comments taken into consideration in this report.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Placemaking is a priority for the Scottish Government bringing social, economic and environmental benefits and in doing so can bring a key preventative role.

6.2 A number of policies, processes and training activities have been undertaken over the last few years, which have brought some improvements to promote better Placemaking, however, further improvements are required and this report highlights a number of proposals, including the introduction of a revised Quality Audit tool to assess planning applications for 10 or more houses.

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Background Papers:

Ref: