

The Role of Elected Members in the Planning System

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Planning is about place making

- It is an enabling tool-kit
- It allows you to demonstrate leadership
- It lets you shape the place you represent

Your role in place making

- Localisation of the planning system
- Culture change in the planning system
- The role of elected members:
 - The Code of Conduct
 - The key issue of relationships
 - Creating stronger communities

The localisation of the planning system

- Alignment with national party
- The central – local debate
- Budgetary pressure and innovation

The localisation of Scottish planning

A system based on hierarchy of development types pushing more decisions to the local level

- National – e.g. new nuclear power
- Major – e.g. a school sized housing development
- Local – small scale housing, retail, etc.
(but with in-house appeal procedure)

The intended culture change: aims of the system

- Pursue sustainable economic growth delivering ‘mixed communities’
- Make provision for community needs and engagement with the system
- Promote social equality and protect environmental assets
- Guide the future development and use of land
- Provide for robust and consistent decision making in the public interest

Role of Councillors

- The Code of Conduct
 - It is YOUR responsibility
 - You have the right and also a duty to be involved in the process

BUT REMEMBER

 - The reasonable observer!

Role of Councillors

- Relationships
 - with the electorate
 - decision maker OR advocate?
 - with your officers
 - they advise, you decide
 - with YOUR plan
 - you must feel ownership of your plan

Role of Councillors

- Leadership & Ownership
 - National policies
 - Local priorities
 - A framework for decisions

Role of Councillors

- As decision makers
 - Advice from your own officers
 - External expert advice, e.g. agencies
 - The applicant's case
 - Objectors/Supporters
 - Weighing up the pro's and con's

Role of Councillors

- How do you deal with?
 - Policy commitments in local manifestos
 - Personal election statements
 - The other service areas (e.g. education)
 - Your party colleagues in other levels
 - The political timeline of next few years

Role of Councillors

- Planning is inherently confrontational
 - Issues often arise from complaints
 - Often lack of knowledge of planning process
- BUT**
- Planning sets the context for all public services
- Use it to help build stronger communities

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