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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