

# **East Renfrewshire Council**

## **Planning Performance Framework**

**Produced July 2015**





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## Introduction

This is the fourth annual National Planning Performance Framework to be produced by East Renfrewshire Council.

The purpose of the Framework is to demonstrate the achievements and performance of the Council's Planning Service and to explain the improvements to the service that are planned. It looks principally at the performance during the financial year April 2014 to March 2015; and then looks ahead at service improvements planned through to March 2016.

Planning Performance Frameworks (PPFs) have been introduced across the country by the Scottish Government. Every planning authority requires to submit a PPF to the Government in a similar format to demonstrate how it is performing and modernising.

The Framework consists of a mixture of:

- a. **Statistics**, to show how we are performing against a range of consistent measures; and
- b. **Commentary**, to explain what we have achieved through the year and how we intend to improve our service over the coming year.

East Renfrewshire Council's vision, as detailed in its Outcome Delivery Plan is to strive to be the best council it can be and to deliver a better future for all our residents

The Planning Service within East Renfrewshire is at the heart of this vision and works towards a more sustainable future, to reduce inequalities and to support the growth of the local economy. Our newly adopted Local Development Plan provides a framework for the economic, social and environmental future for the area and for implementing the Council's broader aims and objectives. The Plan sets a framework for the growth and development of East Renfrewshire Council up to 2025 and beyond to provide a consistency and certainty to our residents and potential investors. The Council and Planning Service in particular is focused on ensuring that East Renfrewshire Council is a great place to live in, to work in and to invest in.

The economic context has changed in recent times with particular issues for East Renfrewshire being the decline in house building and inward investment and the need to deliver affordable housing, whilst ensuring the protection and improvement of our natural and built environment.

Against this background the Planning Service has developed a culture of continuous improvement and partnership working to deliver much needed inward investment, house building, affordable housing and improvements to our natural environment.

This can be seen in our masterplan approach to the delivery of mixed use Strategic Development Opportunity sites with a variety of private and public partners, partnership working to deliver a new rail halt, primary schools and employment generating uses and deliver new private and affordable housing on the ground.

The Planning Service's culture of improvement and partnership working is demonstrated within the 8 applications put forward to the Scottish Quality in Planning Awards 2015, of which 5 entries made it to the final stage of that process. These projects range from on the ground delivery of fantastic buildings for the community, community gardens created on derelict land, guidance for green networks and development contributions to the Barrhead South Masterplan delivered in Partnership with house builders and land owners.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this document and hope that it provides useful information about how the Planning Service is performing.

*Gillian McCarney*

Planning and Building Standards Manager

## 1. National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
<b>Development Planning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of the reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i></li> <li>Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?</li> <li>Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?</li> <li>Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?</li> </ul>	<b>LDP 4 years and one month</b> (see note a) <b>SPD 2 years and ten months</b> (see note b) <b>LDP – Yes</b> <b>SDP – Yes</b>  <b>LDP (see note c)</b> <b>SDP – No</b>  <b>Yes</b>	LDP 3 years S  PD 2 years  Yes Yes	LDP 2 years  SPD 1 year  Yes Yes
<b>Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established housing land supply</li> <li>5-year effective housing land supply</li> <li>5-year housing supply target</li> <li>5-year effective housing land supply</li> <li>Housing approvals during the year</li> <li>Housing completions over the last 5 years</li> <li>Marketable employment land supply</li> <li>Employment land take-up during reported year</li> </ul>	<b>4786 units</b> <b>1973 units</b> <b>1250 units</b> <b>7.9 years</b> (see note d) <b>495 units</b> <b>1084 units</b> <b>30.02ha</b> <b>0ha</b>	2119 units  8.1 years  26.68ha 0ha	2049 units  7.35 years  27.31ha 0.06ha
<b>Development Management</b> <b>Project Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice</li> <li>number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan</li> <li>percentage planned timescales met</li> </ul> <b>Decision-making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>application approval rate</li> <li>delegation rate</li> </ul>	<b>27.4%</b>  <b>3</b> (see note e)  <b>N/A</b>  <b>94.6%</b> <b>97.8%</b>	23%  0  N/A  96.5% 94.3 %	24.8%  0  N/A  96.2% 94.4%

Key outcomes	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
<b>Decision-making timescales</b> Average number of weeks to decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>major developments</li> <li>local developments (non-householder)</li> <li>householder developments</li> </ul>	<b>19.6 weeks</b>  <b>9 weeks</b>  <b>6.4 weeks</b> (see note f)	16.7 weeks 9.2 weeks 6.6 weeks	39.9 weeks 14.2 weeks 6.7 weeks
<b>Legacy Cases</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number cleared during reporting period</li> <li>Number remaining</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>  <b>8</b> (see note g)		
<b>Enforcement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time since enforcement charter reviewed (months) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i></li> <li>number of breaches identified / resolved</li> </ul>	<b>13 months</b> (see note h)  <b>62 breaches</b> <b>92 enforcement cases resolved</b>	1 month  81 breaches 105 enforcement cases resolved	1 month  68 breaches 58 enforcement cases resolved

#### Notes

- (a) Adopted February 2011 - new Local Development Plan adopted 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015.
- (b) Strategic Development Plan Approved May 2012.
- (c) The date of submission of the LDP to the Scottish Ministers did not take place in accord with the timescale in the Development Plan Scheme published in March 2014. It was submitted to the Scottish Ministers three months later than expected due to the DPEA Reporters taking nine months to prepare their examination report rather than the anticipated six months. The Council sent all examination documents (and all follow-up requests for information) to the Reporters on time and there were no delays on the part of the Council. Additionally, on submission of the LDP to the Scottish Ministers, they needed an extended period for consideration of the documents taking 63 days (rather than the anticipated 28 days) to confirm that the Council could adopt the plan. The Ministers also made some modifications to the Plan (in addition to those proposed by the Reporters), which has resulted in further delays in the adoption timescale.
- (d) Draft 2015 Housing Land Audit

Period	A All Tenure Supply	B All Tenure Requirement	C Annual Requirement	D Surplus/ Deficit (A-B)	E Years Supply (A/C)	F 5 Years land supply met
2015-20	1973	1250	250	723	7.9	Yes
2016-21	2039	1270	254	769	8.0	Yes
2017-22	1959	1290	258	669	7.6	Yes

- (e) Council has a processing agreements policy in operation. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, five processing agreements had been signed with developers. One application had not been submitted and one had been withdrawn before decision. The remaining three had not progressed to a decision (one had been 'minded to grant' permission at Committee subject to a legal agreement - which had not been concluded, so the consent was not issued). Two of the five were for local developments and three were for major developments.

- (f) In 2014/15 we decided 683 planning applications (an increase of 5.6% from last year) and 109 other applications this year (an increase of 25.3% from last year). The above figures therefore show improved performance rates overall, despite increased workload and no increase in staffing levels.

We also registered 469 written pre-application enquiries (24% up on last year). This means that there were 69% as many pre-application enquiries as planning applications. Of the 683 planning applications, 187 had been the subject of a pre-application enquiry i.e. 27%. This indicates that we had at least 282 formal pre-application enquiries that did not result in a planning application and illustrates that considerable time is spent on planning work and advice that does not result in an application or receipt of a fee, but nonetheless provides a public service and saves time and costs with formal applications.

- (g) Of the eight legacy cases outstanding without a decision for more than a year on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, the following is observed.:

- Two relate to cases where advertisement fees have not been paid by the applicant, meaning that the Council is not allowed by legislation to decide the case – this situation is considered to be a legislative flaw and outwith the control of the Council.
- Three relate to wind turbine applications, where consultations with the Civil Aviation Authority (regarding safety issues) or Environmental Health (regarding noise issues) have significantly held up matters, but it is considered in the interests of achieving safe and acceptable sustainable development, that these matters need to be resolved.
- Three relate to other developments where the application has been delayed by continuing negotiation between the Council and the applicant. In each case, the development as submitted was not considered to be acceptable for approval. The Council could simply have refused permission for each within the target timescales in order to maintain good performance figures. However in the interests of encouraging development and providing good customer service, the Council has negotiated with the applicants to try to find mutually acceptable solutions – but unfortunately this has taken some time. One case was reported to the Planning Applications Committee in well under a year, who were minded to grant it, but a legal agreement (and delays at the applicant's side) has held it up. In none of these cases have the applicants appealed non-determination, so have been content to let the applications run to decision by the Council.

- (h) The Enforcement Charter was not updated in March 2015 due to the imminent adoption of the Local Development Plan. It was updated in July 2015.



## 2. Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

### 2A. Open for business

- (i) Our offices are open to customers from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.
- (ii) Customer advisors are on hand at the two main Council offices in Giffnock and Barrhead who can give initial planning information during the above hours. The customer advisors are trained in introductory planning and building standards matters.
- (iii) Specialist planning advice from planning service staff is available without appointment and free of charge at the planning office (Spiersbridge) from 8.45am to 16.55pm Monday to Thursday (to 15.55pm on Fridays). Customer feedback on the quality of the service that customers receive has been generally positive (see section 2Dii and appendix 2), comments included that staff were “very professional” and “helpful”. Many said with regards to the availability of information that it was “easy to find the information that they wanted” and that the information was “excellent”, “great” or “good”.
- (iv) We decided 683 planning applications (an increase of 36 i.e. 5.6% up from last year) and 109 other applications this year (an increase of 25.3% up from last year).
- (v) Written pre-application advice on development proposals is available free of charge. We registered 469 written pre-application enquiries (24% up on last year). This was in addition to informal enquiries taken via phone calls or informal discussions with people in our reception area; neither of which are formally registered as pre-applications. This means that there were 69% as many pre-application enquiries as planning applications. Of the 683 planning applications, 187 had been the subject of a pre-application enquiry i.e. 27%. This indicates that we had about 282 formal pre-application enquiries that did not result in a planning application and illustrates that considerable time is spent on planning work and advice that does not result in an application or receipt of a fee, but nonetheless provides a public service and saves time and costs with formal applications. The Council has a 10-day response target for pre-application enquiries (and this timescale is monitored). We ensure that all our planning officers dedicate adequate time to undertake this important function. We promote use of our pre-application service on our web site and the statistics demonstrate that this is well used in practice. Our responses normally include consideration of the principle and detailed aspects of proposals – as advised online.
- (vi) A comprehensive online planning information service is available giving customers access to a very wide range of planning information. Information on planning applications is available online for applications since year 2000. Customer feedback has been generally positive in this respect (see section 2Dii and appendix 2), with people saying that the online service is “easy to use”, “fine” and “straightforward”.
- (vii) The Council’s website gives a full range of planning information, documents and forms, including all local planning documents.
- (viii) Public access computer points are available for public use at three Council offices and all our libraries to give the public easy access to online planning information and advice.



- (ix) The Council has a relatively high approval rate of planning applications (94.6% of applications are approved, some subject to conditions), showing a positive approach to development.
- (x) We have a 'major development team' and give the public and developers a single point of access to a planning case officer for the duration of the application, thus providing consistent service and advice (see section 2C below). This is particularly valuable for major developments and planning applications which support the delivery of Local Development Plan policies and priorities. This procedure, in conjunction with our new processing agreements policy (see section 2Cxvii, allows planning applications to be project managed and provides a comprehensive and faster development management service. Development proposals are overseen by a named planning officer from pre-application through to decision and monitoring.
- (xi) We have fully integrated and co-located our 'Regeneration' and 'Economic Development' teams within the same Environment Directorate. This is in order to provide a holistic approach to economic development and positively encourage investment opportunities (see sections 2Cxii and 2Fii for more information).
- (xii) We have up-to-date Local and Strategic Development Plans (see section 2Ci & ii below). The Local Development Plan (LDP) Action Programme is up-to-date demonstrating the successful delivery of LDP policies and proposals.
- (xiii) We have up-to-date and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) on Affordable Housing and Development Contributions (see section 2Biii and appendix 9). The guidance provides a clear and transparent framework by which the planning system can support the delivery of development while alleviating any potentially negative impacts on land use, the environment and infrastructure that would make it unacceptable in planning terms. This guidance is applied consistently by a single point of contact Senior Project Officer.
- (xiv) Through the monitoring of building warrants and completion certificates we see that the Planning and Building Standards Service has facilitated the approval of more than £98.8 million of development in the area (up 34% on last year). Over £41.5 million of work progressed to completion certificate, but we believe that investment in reality will have been higher as not every developer applies for or obtains a completion certificate; while other developments may actually be complete but owners delay obtaining their completion certificate.
- (xv) We have guidance published to ensure that the information and documents that are required to accompany planning applications are necessary, proportionate and are clearly scoped to avoid unnecessary costs to the applicant and the Council (see section 2Cxvi below for more details). Our internal policies include a risk management approach to allocating and dealing with planning applications.
- (xvi) Our Planning Customer Service Standards Charter is published online to visibly demonstrate that we will deal with our customers quickly, politely and in as plain English as possible.



## 2B. High quality development on the ground

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- (i) We have up-to-date Local and Strategic Development Plans (see section 2Ci & ii below). This development planning framework gives developers an up-to-date policy and development management decision framework.
  - (ii) The Local Plan and the Local Development Plan promote high quality and sustainable building design, layout and places. We promote the principles set out in 'designing streets' and encourage the use of design statements to accompany new development. Policies promote the inclusion of green infrastructure and resource and energy efficiency.
  - (iii) We have two fully adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) covering Affordable Housing and Development Contributions. These assist in providing detailed, clear, transparent and proportionate advice to developers and landowners early in the planning process. Both SPGs have been fully reviewed and updated prior to adoption in June 2015 – see appendix 9 for more details
  - (iv) A further twelve SPGs have been published and have been the subject of consultation in parallel with the LDP. These are published on our website and are promoted in discussions with developers. These include a 'Residential Design Guide' which includes the principles of 'designing streets'. The Maidenhill Development Framework received a commendation from the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning (SAQP) - See appendix 5. The Barrhead South Development Framework was also shortlisted for an award in 2014. The SPGs have all subsequently been adopted in June 2015 alongside the LDP. The shortlist for the 2015 SAQP awards has been announced and three SPGs are shortlisted for an award (final outcome not known yet): Green Network and Environmental Management; Development Contributions; and Barrhead South Masterplan. Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on Renewable Energy has been approved by the Council and will be consulted upon over summer 2015.
  - (v) The Neilston Infill Development Guide SPG involved a Charrette process and extensive public consultation. The Guide will contribute to better development on the ground.
  - (vi) We are active in producing planning briefs to promote high quality development. We currently have 13 planning briefs for a variety of sites across East Renfrewshire, prepared in consultation with developers and published on our website.
  - (vii) Our regeneration and development plan teams are active in leading and promoting the strategic development opportunities as contained in the Local Development Plan, including 'Maidenhill/Malletsheugh, Newton Mearns'; 'Barrhead North' and 'Barrhead South'. We initially completed Development Frameworks for each of these areas, and followed each up with Masterplan Supplementary Planning Guidance. This work promotes a collaborative approach to achieving high quality and sustainable place-making development on the ground. See section 4B for further actions during 2014/15.
  - (viii) We operate a monitoring system to assess the level of 'added-value' that the planning process brings to the development. Every planning application is assessed by the case officer in terms of the improvements, added protections or added community value that have been introduced to the development by the application going through the planning process. These are included in every *report of handling*. It is assessed that over 43% of all planning applications have value added to them, with the main ways being through design, layout and/or external materials being improved; or by the necessary control of some aspect of the development through the use of conditions.

Significant added value is brought by improvements being made to proposals between the pre-application stage and the planning application – see appendix 8 for more information.

- (ix) Conservation Area Appraisals have been produced and have been the subject of public consultation in association with the Proposed Local Development Plan. Two new Conservation Areas are proposed and have been endorsed at the Local Development Plan Examination. These will guide high quality development in these protected areas.
- (x) We have a range of active environmental and educational projects and events which promote a sustainable environment, including the Dams to Darnley Country Park and Whitelee Access Project. See actions 14-16 in the **Delivery of Service Improvement Actions 2014-15** on pages 29-33.
- (xi) We are implementing a range of regeneration and town centre improvement initiatives through our regeneration team, including Barrhead Regeneration (through planning gain and the town centre resilience fund - see action programme item 15); the Neilston Town Team (see entry in section 2Dxvii and appendix 4); Business Improvement Districts and City Deal – see point xviii below.
- (xii) We are implementing green network improvements in particular around Barrhead, including the Waterworks site and the Barrhead North and South Strategic Development Opportunities.
- (xiii) We have a separate but co-located Economic Development Service leading on a range of economic initiatives and giving support to business in the area.
- (xiv) We have an up-to-date enforcement charter and are active in pursuing solutions to uses and development which detract from the local environment.
- (xv) Polnoon, located at the western edge of the conservation village of Eaglesham, involved a collaborative process between the Council, developers (Mactaggart & Mickel) and the Scottish Government to design the site for a new neighbourhood in accordance with the principles of Designing Streets and Designing Places. The development is a case study in the Scottish Government's 'Policy Statement for Scotland – designing streets' which stated that "the Polnoon project sets a new standard for residential development across Scotland". This development is underway and completions will be on-going for the next few years. This development was used to inform our Residential Design Guide SPG and as a case study/good example for other developments in the area.
- (xvi) Our planning community forum (see section 2Di below) provides opportunities for community councils and community groups to obtain information and training on planning issues so that they can be more informed and involved in contributing their views on behalf of their communities.
- (xvii) ERC is a participant in 'City Deal' which is delivering £44 million of major business and leisure infrastructure and improved transportation links over a 5-10 year period. See appendix 6 for more details. Appropriate officers have been brought together to ensure that high quality development and maximum community benefits are realised (see also section 2Fiii).





(xviii) Town Centres

**Clarkston BID.** The Business Improvement District (BID) hosted two extremely successful public events, attracting over 15,000 over two Saturdays. The BID has also held three events to promote legacy of Glasgow 2014. Liaison with the proprietor of the main parade of buildings on Busby Road led to repainting of the canopy. The BID has also funded Christmas lights and flower baskets for the shop fronts. The BID is awarding grants to business to help promote themselves and funding World Host training for independent businesses. The BID's work has been communicated by a dedicated website and social media pages.

**Giffnock BID.** The BID hosted its first two public events: Classic Car Spectacular in September 2015 and Christmas Lights switch on – the latter attracting over 7000 visitors. Events were also run jointly with Clarkston BID. To support local businesses, a Staff Loyalty Card has been introduced to all participating BID members and all ERC employees. The BID is funding World Host training for independent businesses. The BID's work has been communicated by a dedicated website and social media pages.

**Barrhead BID.** The BID is in development. A Steering Group has been established and the initial business survey carried out. The first steering group meeting has taken place with members from a range of sectors and locations across the town centre.

**Pan-Renfrewshire Rural BID.** A Project team was formed from ERC, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils and 6 project meetings have taken place, however Inverclyde have withdrawn and Renfrewshire have expressed reservations about being part of the project.

- (xix) The Lavern Works project has been successful in securing funding from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund and includes the construction of 850sqm of commercial units, remediation and reclamation of 0.8ha of land, the extension of the footpath network and the delivery of a community landscaped gateway to Barrhead which will be an extension to the Waterworks Garden. This waterworks garden was delivered and is managed through a partnership model which demonstrates how effective community engagement can contribute towards environmental and social outcomes.
- (xx) The transformation of a disused sewage works into the waterworks gardens has been achieved through a partnership between the Council's Environment and Education services along with Youth Enterprise Scotland and local community groups (see appendix 7). The water works project has been shortlisted for the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning (SAQP).
- (xxi) See further examples and more details on some high quality developments being delivered in appendix 7.

## 2C. Certainty

- (i) We have a complete up-to-date development plan, with the local plan (which was in force on 31st March 2015) adopted in 2011 and the strategic development plan approved in 2012. Monitoring Statements are produced annually. Action Programmes are monitored every six months.
- (ii) As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 we had a Proposed Local Development Plan (LDP). This was published in February 2013 along with associated documents including an Action Programme and Monitoring Statement. This presents the up-to-date planning thinking of the Council. The Plan was fully project-managed (see Section 2F below) and progressed on timescale through to examination over Summer and Autumn 2014. Adoption had been anticipated in Spring 2015, however delays from the timetable published in the Local Plan Scheme arose both from the Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals Reporters (there was a two month delay in receiving the Examination Report), and from the Scottish Ministers (five week delay in notifying the Council that it could proceed to adopt the Plan). The Plan was subsequently adopted in June 2015.
- (iii) Key agencies and a wide range of businesses and interested parties have been fully engaged in the LDP and Action Programme preparation ensuring that policies, proposals and actions are deliverable within timescale.
- (iv) We have maintained a generous effective supply of housing land to meet our housing needs and in accordance with Scottish Government's requirements. At the LDP examination, the Reporters acknowledged the findings of the Scottish Government's Centre for Housing Market Analysis that the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Housing Market Partnership Housing Need and Demand Assessment (on which the Housing figures in the LDP are based) has been certified as "robust and credible". The Reporter made the following supportive comments at Examination *"I am satisfied that the level of private house building proposed will ensure that a 5 year effective supply is maintained throughout the plan period. The range and choice of sites proposed as effective up to year 10 from the predicted year of adoption will ensure a continuous generous supply at all times. .... I consider that the potential private sector housing supply identified provides sufficient flexibility and generosity. Overall, I find that the council's approach to both private sector and affordable housing supply, is appropriate and in accordance with both Scottish Planning Policy and the strategic development plan"*.
- (v) An up-to-date local development plan (LDP) scheme is in place with LDP project management in operation through regular development plan team meetings using GANTT chart project scheduling.
- (vi) We have a cross-party Member-Officer Working Group to progress the Local Development Plan. This has been established since the inception of the Plan and has overseen all stages of its production allowing open discussion between Members (cross-party) and Officers, and guiding the strategic direction and the policy approach of the Plan. This approach has helped to ensure full cross party support for the Local Development Plan.
- (vii) Joint working on the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan (at officer and Member levels) ensures coordinated and collective action and delivery on a wide range of topics across the conurbation.






- (viii) We monitor a range of development approvals through the Strategic Development Plan, including greenbelt development which consists of departures from the development plan. This information is used to ensure that the policies are being successfully implemented; and helps to identify any shortcomings in the policies or in implementation/land supply commitments. We also monitor planning applications that are significantly contrary to the development plan, looking at the circumstances that may justify an approval or refusal. This assists us in monitoring the robustness of the development plan.
- (ix) We have supplementary planning guidance (SPGs) covering a wide range of topics, including Affordable Housing; Development Contributions; Management and Protection of the Built Heritage; Rural Development Guidance; Energy Efficient Design; Green Network and Environmental Management; Householder Design Guide; Daylight and Sunlight Design Guide, Residential Street Design Guide, Dams to Darnley Country Park and Neilston Infill Development Strategy. Development Frameworks followed by Masterplan SPGs have also been prepared for Maidenhill/Malletshead, Barrhead North and Barrhead South. These provide valuable proportionate guidance and a degree of certainty to the development industry to complement the development plan (see also section 2Biii and appendix 9).
- (x) We have 13 development briefs to guide acceptable development (see section 2Bvi).
- (xi) We have a 'major development team' which brings together professionals from across the Council. Potential developers of major developments have access to this team who will give a co-ordinated response to proposals and advise of what documents are needed to validate the application. Responses to the developers are co-ordinated by the planning case officer who oversees the project pre-application to decision.
- (xii) We have brought together key professionals (Planning and Building Standards, Property and Technical Services, Regeneration and Economic Development, Legal Services and Roads and Transportation) into one team at Spiersbridge (see section 2Ax). This approach allows a co-ordinated approach to key projects, Development Frameworks and Masterplans providing an integrated service to the public and developers.
- (xiii) We have a welcoming approach to potential developers and get good feedback on this from our customers when surveys are undertaken (see section 2Dii and appendix 2 below).
- (xiv) At the planning application validation stage, a senior officer checks the validation to ensure that developers receive high level support. We offer all developers a single point of access to a planning case officer who will see a proposal through from pre-application, application, approval of conditions and follow-up. We have an internal risk management approach to allocating and dealing with planning applications. This involves the Principal Officers who allocate planning applications to case officers assessing the complexity of the application and then matching that to the skills and experience of the planning officer who will be allocated the case.
- (xv) We have agreed working agreements with most internal and external consultees to ensure that consultations on planning applications and development plans only take place when necessary; and that responses are provided by the consultee within a reasonable timescale.

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## 2D. Communications, engagement and customer service

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- (i) We hold regular forums with agents, community groups and community councils to allow discussion and training on relevant and current planning issues. At each of these meetings contributors have the opportunity to raise issues and questions. Levels of community engagement are reported corporately to the Council through the Outcome Delivery Plan.
  - (ii) A customer survey is undertaken on an annual basis with a cross-section of customers of the development management team (applicants, agents and representees). The survey asks a number of questions, including their experiences of the time taken to speak to someone; the time taken to get a response; their experience of our online planning service; the quality of information that they received; how well staff did their jobs; and how satisfied they were with the overall with the service that they received. From the 2014/15 survey, 86% of those surveyed said that they were 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall service that they received from the planning service. Actions are considered after each survey if there are ways to further improve service delivery. Findings are reported to the Planning Applications Committee. A summary of findings are shown in Appendix 2.
  - (iii) All information on the web site is reviewed regularly. This includes Briefing Notes covering 'How we process a planning application' and 'What is a material consideration' in order to help the public better understand the planning system. 'Standard Conditions' have also been posted online in order to give comprehensive information to developers. Social media (facebook) has been used where appropriate to help share information with the public e.g. the proposed local development plan and the Neilston Charrette process.
  - (iv) Extensive public consultation was carried out as part of the Local Development Plan following a 'Publicity and Consultation Strategy'. The Examination Reporters concluded that the council had achieved what it set out to do in its participation statement and had complied with the legal requirements. They also found that the Council conformed with its participation statement and in many cases exceeded minimum consultation requirements with regard to consultation and the involvement of the public at large as envisaged by Scottish Ministers. Consultation with Key Agencies such as Scottish Natural Heritage, SEPA, Scottish Water, Historic Scotland, SPT, and Transport Scotland allowed for open and constructive discussions on the content of the LDP, allowing these agencies to comment at the key stages of the plan preparation. An early draft version of the Proposed Plan was issued to the Scottish Government and key agencies to allow them to inform the final content. This helped reduce the number of comments from these groups at the consultation stage.
  - (v) Significant consultations were also carried out upon publication of the Masterplans for the Strategic Development Opportunities. There were two public events in connection with the Maidenhill Masterplan. There were also two for the Barrhead Masterplans (one covering the wider Barrhead regeneration and one specifically on the Barrhead South Masterplan). Additionally, the Council established a Citizens space on-line consultation regarding the proposals for wider community feedback; and further community engagement was undertaken through meeting with the community council, resident/tenant associations and the delivery of the waterworks project at Glasgow Road.
  - (vi) We have good working arrangements with our communications team and submit articles regularly for our ER Magazine which goes out four times each year to every household in East Renfrewshire. We also have a quarterly LDP newsletter which is widely circulated giving updates on the plan's progress.

- (vii) When the proposed LDP was published we held briefing meetings with reporters from the local newspapers to ensure that they were well informed with accurate and up-to-date information.
- (viii) At our LDP consultation events and those events relating to the development frameworks/masterplans, we always invite customer feedback by way of an events questionnaire. The responses are analysed and comments used to inform future improvements to consultation methods.
- (ix) Documents and web information is written in such a way as to be as 'plain-english' as possible. We offer Braille and foreign language translations on all of our development plan documents, SPGs, briefs and charters.
- (x) A streamlined complaints procedure is in place for people who are unhappy with the service that they have received. A leaflet is available on the website and at our planning office. The number and substance of complaints is monitored on a six-monthly basis and, where appropriate, improvement actions are implemented. The monitoring results are reported to the Department's management team every six months.
- (xi) We have published service standards and have a Planning Customer Service Standards Charter. These are publicly available and published on the web site.
- (xii) In order to encourage online application submissions, we have stopped using our own ERC forms where there are forms available on the national eplanning portal. The portal allows online submission as well as the download of forms for completion by hand for those who do not wish to submit online. We also have printed copies of the national forms available to hand (or send) to people who request them. There are a few forms still available on our own website where there are no national equivalents.
- (xiii) We encourage and monitor online planning application submission and the percentage submitted online continued to rise to 45.2% in 2014/15. This percentage increased significantly after we stopped using our own ERC application forms and further encouraged people to use the eplanningscotland website. In the fourth quarter of 2014/15 the online submission rate rose to over 55%. We encourage online submission of representations to planning applications and the Local Development Plan and monitor the communication means that people use. 37% of representations on planning applications came in via the online planning system in 2014/15. We encourage the use of email for communications with us as that gives faster response times and cost savings. Where people contact us (or submit electronically) we will always respond electronically.
- (xiv) The Council's website was assessed in early 2015 by the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) and retained its 4 star rating. The assessment including consideration of how easily the public can find out about permitted development and the Council received a perfect score for this task. All of the planning web pages were reviewed and updated (where appropriate) in advance of this assessment.
- (xv) We have long opening hours and our staff are easily approachable at the planning office and by telephone (see section 2A). Officer contacts are on all correspondence with the public to assist them in contacting the right person.
- (xvi) We have a one-stop-shop at our Spiersbridge office for developers and the public needing to speak to planning officers or see planning documents (see section 2A above). Professional planning staff are available five days a week throughout the standard opening hours (see section 2Aiii above). Once a member of staff deals with a formal customer/developer enquiry, they will follow the proposal through to the application and monitoring, giving consistency of contact and advice. Further professionals may be called upon





for advice through our 'major development team' (see section 2Ax above), thus recognising the differing needs of major developers.

- (xvii) We have actively participated in (and financially contributed to) the Neilston Charrette project. This involved considerable public consultation, public meetings, workshops and other community engagement; followed by the preparation of a Charrette Report which outlined the projects and implementation schedule. This was developed into the Neilston Infill Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance which was itself the subject of public consultation - which included newspaper advertisement; a newspaper article; publicity on website, facebook, twitter & citizen space; LDP newsletter, posters in library, shops and other public buildings; formal notification to consultees and people on the Council's database of interested parties; a drop-in session at the library where there were displays and planning staff were available to answer questions.
- (xviii) The Planning Service is administering the implementation of the High Hedges Act. We have produced forms, notes and guidance to assist the public in understanding the legislation. In the lead-up to the implementation of the Act and since its enactment, we have dealt with a significant number of enquiries and spent considerable time speaking to the public on the phone and in person at the planning office. This is done without any additional finance or income to cover these costs. This provides a customer service and assists people in resolving amenity issues associated with high hedges. A knock-on implication is that it takes planning officers away from dealing with planning applications. We received two High Hedge Notice applications during 2014/15.
- (xix) We have audio-visual equipment in the Council Chamber which means that all plans and documents relevant to a planning application or Local Review Body case can be displayed. Elected Members therefore have access to all documents at all of their meetings and the public can follow discussions better.

## 2E. Efficient and effective decision-making

- (i) The Council performs well against national and local performance indicators. This year we have been unable to include comparative figures across Scotland for 2014-15 due to the national figures being unavailable at the earlier submission date of July 2015. In past years we have compared very positively with the other 33 planning authorities in Scotland – see figures and charts in appendix 1. The figures show steady year upon year improvement:

- 85.1% of all applications were decided within 2 months, improved from 82.1% last year (despite a 5.6% increase in planning applications decided).
- The average time taken to deal with a local planning application in East Renfrewshire was 7 weeks, improved from 7.3 weeks last year. The Scottish average was 10.3 weeks, which placed ERC in 3<sup>rd</sup> equal place in Scotland.
- 91% of householder applications were decided within their 2 month decision target (very similar to the 91.2 % achieved last year, despite an increase in householder application numbers of nearly 9% - therefore showing improved performance per officer). The average time taken to deal with a householder application was 6.4 weeks (improved from 6.6 weeks last year). The Scottish average was 7.5 weeks, and for this measure ERC was in 7<sup>th</sup> place Scotland.

The above two figures show that the Council is in the top quartile in each these measures across the country.

- (ii) The Council has adopted an efficient scheme of delegation which has a relatively high level of delegation (97.8 % of decisions were delegated to officers in 2014/15 - compared to the Scottish average in 2013/14 of about 92.5%).
- (iii) We keep our 'legacy' planning applications (applications over a year old) under review. Some of these cases cannot be decided due to the way that the legislation is worded (unpaid advertisement fees), and vital consultation responses not being received, see note (e) on page 3. Other cases are kept under control through individual officers managing case-files and regular meetings with Principal Officers, which helps identify areas where delays occur and where means to progress applications can be discussed. Sometimes however it is better to take time to negotiate and find mutually acceptable solutions in the interests of sustainable development and customer service (rather than simply giving quick refusals of permission). The Council has (published on the internet) a Protocol for dealing with Planning Obligations, designed to help speed up the conclusion of legal agreements. Our Processing Agreements policy also includes encouragement to discuss and agree planning obligations and the terms of legal agreements at an early stage during the discussion on on-going applications, and an expectation that legal agreements will be concluded within three months of the recommendation being made.
- (iv) The Planning Applications Committee is relatively small and is trained on planning matters. It is supported by the Planning and Building Standards Manager, as well as other senior support staff e.g. Roads Engineers, Environmental Health Officers as appropriate. The Committee meets once every four weeks to ensure that applications are dealt with expediently. When applications are dealt with by way of a pre-determination hearing,



procedures are in place to ensure that the full-council is convened immediately afterwards, thus ensuring a quick and consistent decision. The Local Review Body also meets every four weeks which ensures decisions are reached as quickly as possible. This all demonstrates East Renfrewshire Council's commitment to a collective sense of urgency to enabling development within East Renfrewshire.


- (v) The Planning Applications Committee also annually considers reports on the performance of the planning service, customer surveys and receives reports on appeal cases and decisions on a monthly basis. This gives the Council and Councillors the opportunity to monitor performance and learn from customer feedback and appeal outcomes.
- (vi) The full-Council approves development plan documents which ensure that all members are committed and kept informed of these important planning matters.
- (vii) We have a Local Development Plan Member – Officer Working Group (see section 2Cvi above) which meets on an ad-hoc basis, as-and-when required to discuss and agree the local development plan strategy and policy approach.
- (viii) Full and active participation in the national eplanning system gives the council efficiency savings. In 2014/15, 45.2% all planning applications were submitted electronically which shows a continuous year-upon-year rise. The majority of incoming and outgoing correspondence (including all of our consultations) is conducted by email (giving time and cost savings over traditional mail). The online public access system gives the public more efficient access to information. Electronic payments for applications have risen to 22.4%, which reduces overhead costs for the Council. Customer feedback rates this online service highly, people saying that it is “easy to use”; “fine” or “straightforward” (see appendix 2).
- (ix) We have implemented the ebuildingstandards system, which allows the submission of building warrants and completion certificates online. This gives developers a complete online submission system for the whole development process, bringing significant efficiencies to the system and should lead to improved take-up across the board of electronic submission of applications and documents. When the system was launched, we publicised both the online planning and building standards services.
- (x) Our computerised document management system (IDOX) coupled with the UNIFORM casework system ensures comprehensive and easy access to information for staff. Corporate Address Gazetteer is linked to the national gazetteer and ensures consistent addressing across the council and Scotland. Our geographic information system (GGP) allows comprehensive geographic and spatial analysis of information and mapping. Our Data Information Group shares this information and resource across the Council.
- (xi) Key stakeholders receive a weekly e-list of the new planning applications that we have received. These lists provide a direct hyper-link into the e-planning system, allowing readers to directly access papers relating to applications of interest.
- (xii) Council procedures along with forms and guidance notes for the public are kept up-to-date with new and updated legislation.



- (xiii) We have a lawyer who is based in the Environment Department and who specialises in planning and environmental matters. This now gives us quicker and more comprehensive legal support. In particular it is expected that this will speed up the preparation of legal agreements and the issuing of planning decisions - which will facilitate development on the ground being commenced more quickly. The lawyer has also been dealing with Legal Agreement negotiation and completion, trying to meet our agreed protocol of completion within 3 months of the decision to grant permission subject to the appropriate legal agreement. The solicitor has also prepared protocols for Stopping Up Orders (for planning staff) and for preparing Legal Agreements (for solicitors). She has also reviewed our standard conditions and reasons for refusal to ensure they are more robust and less open to challenge.
- (xiv) We have a published Processing Agreement Policy – for more information see Section 2Cxvii above.




## 2F. Effective management structures

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- (i) Fortnightly departmental management meetings are held involving the managers of all services in the Environment Department. Each team in the service holds team meetings 4-weekly attended by the manager. This allows management information to be cascaded to staff and discussion of relevant information, including performance figures, health & safety and current planning applications and issues and Local Development Plan progress. This also facilitates corporate priorities to be advised and implemented effectively.
  - (ii) Working arrangements across the Development Plans and Regeneration Team have been modernised during the course of the year in order to facilitate the delivery of planning and development priorities. A team consisting of planning, regeneration, economic development, estates, roads and legal staff work together at our Spiersbridge offices. The purpose of this is to facilitate the delivery of the Masterplans for Maidenhill/ Malletsheugh, Barrhead South and Barrhead North; in partnership with developers and service providers/agencies. This restructured team will also drive the planning and delivery of the City Deal projects.
  - (iii) With regards to the City Deal projects, these are major and fast moving projects, and the Council has to be able to respond quickly and effectively to changing circumstances. In some cases this will require the Council to appoint external consultants to support us in the development, design or implementation of our projects. In all circumstances, the Council has to ensure compliance with procurement rules and this can sometimes lead to delays going through tender processes. To effectively manage this, and in discussion with our procurement team, the development team initiated a framework contract to secure the professional services required. This covered master planning and architectural services, economic impact assessments, business planning and community engagement. This was successfully completed giving 3 high quality consultants in each of the service categories. This now allows the Council to make direct appointments as/when the service is required. This allows us to be agile in response to project delivery requirements and to minimise any potential delays to our timescales.
  - (iv) The Local Development Plan project management is implemented through regular staff meetings and GANTT chart project management. This has ensured that work projects are monitored and implemented within realistic timescales. Full team meetings were held fortnightly during the preparation of the Proposed Local Development Plan in response to particularly high workloads and pressures. The Development Plan Scheme is kept up to date. This advises the public of development plan and project preparation schedules and allows the Service to monitor implementation.
  - (v) Up to date staff appraisals (Personal Review and Development Scheme - PRDs) are in place for 100% of staff within the Planning Service. Every member of staff has been trained in the scheme and has two formal meetings with their line-manager annually. Staff and their manager agree their (SMART) objectives for the year (linked to corporate and managerial priorities); consider their core competencies; and agree their development/training needs for the year.



- (vi) Individual staff training needs are assessed annually (see PRD above) and participation in internal and external courses is encouraged. The service has a training budget. The Council runs a wide range of training courses in its 'insider learning' programme, including online courses covering such matters as time management, health & safety, equality & diversity, community engagement, digital skills, personal development and management training.. Individual planning training events are held when new legislation and procedures are introduced e.g. training was held when the new High Hedges procedures were introduced in 2014. This ensures that staff are not just professionally competent, but are trained and work well as a team. It also ensure that best use is made of staff abilities. Skills and staff numbers are also assessed at the end of each PRD round to ensure that the Service has the right people to meet future needs.
- (vii) Effective corporate absence management arrangements are in place. Absence statistics are monitored every quarter and show for 2014/15 that absence levels in the planning service were just over a quarter of the departmental average.
- (viii) Comprehensive health & safety systems are in place (health & safety staff are embedded in the Environment Department), and audits are regularly undertaken.
- (ix) Succession planning arrangements are in place in line with the Council's succession planning policy.
- (x) There are strong co-ordinated working links within the Environment Department with close partnerships particularly with Economic Development, Regeneration, Roads and Property & Technical Services.
- (xi) We have regular meetings with outside organisations/partners, particularly through the Strategic Development Plan. There are also regular meetings on development planning matters for instance with Transport Scotland; and 'tripartite meetings' twice each year with SEPA, Scottish Water and our Roads Service. Key Agencies have been actively involved in the preparation of the LDP at all stages.
- (xii) Flexible working and staff deployment arrangements in place allow staff to be shared and move between teams (including compressed hours of work) in order to utilise staff most effectively; allow staff personal development and good life/work balance. At present we have one member of staff working across the development management and development plans teams, preparing Supplementary Planning Guidance and site briefs. This ensures both good development management input to these and continuing professional development for staff. This demonstrates a flexible workforce able to respond to needs.
- (xiii) A pilot "new ways of working" (agile) programme is being investigated across the Department. This will consider the extent to which new technology could assist with improved efficiency in assessment and decision making.
- (xiv) We receive adequate appropriate specialist advice through external organisations e.g. the West of Scotland Archaeological Service.
- (xv) We have good working relationships with other agencies and businesses in the area, as illustrated for example through our joint Masterplans team (see second bullet point above) who also work closely with service providers.



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- (xvi) We undertake benchmarking with our neighbouring Councils. We participate in the West of Scotland Benchmarking Group (which concentrates on development management issues) which hold regular meetings, which are minuted. This work allows the sharing of good practice and evidences our continued efficiency in decision making. It has also allowed us to improve our work practices by learning from best practice elsewhere and sharing our good practices with others. See appendix 3 for the participants, a summary of the issues covered during 2014/15, and a note of benchmarking that takes place across other parts of the Planning Service, including Development Planning.
- (xvii) The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Local Development Plan (LDP) Forum consists of the eight Clyde Valley authorities including the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) Core Team. It met once throughout 2014/15, although meetings are scheduled every 6 months, its principle purpose being to share and exchange best practice in respect of LDP and SDP development and implementation. In 2014/15 it was hosted by East Dunbartonshire Council and at its meeting in February 2015 the following matters were discussed:
- Supplementary Guidance - Approaches and procedures – Authorities discussed what guidance they had/will produce and reflected on recent guidance from the Scottish Government. As a result, research on all the topics to be covered was collated with a view to discuss consistency and best practice at the next Forum.
  - Examinations – Report findings and procedures – Where applicable authorities discussed key recommendations from their LDP Examination and discussion on key themes across the authorities were discussed. The administration of Examinations was also discussed in order to share best practice.
  - Main Issues Reports (MIR) – Consideration of approaches to MIR and the types of issue to include following adoption of an up to date LDP. Authorities are now beginning to consider their next MIR and approaches were considered.

## 2G. Financial management and local governance

- (i) Departmental and service budgets are considered within a three-yearly budget cycle to ensure effective long-term financial planning.
- (ii) Budgets are planned to coordinate with our Single Outcome Agreement priorities, thus being aligned to Council priorities.
- (iii) The Planning and Building Standards Manager has responsibility for six revenue budgets which are monitored regularly and updated on a monthly basis by the manager. The manager and the finance business partner review the budgets monthly to ensure spend and income are on track. Additionally the Director of Environment along with his Heads of Service review their budgets on an on-going basis.
- (iv) Risk management procedures are in place. Strategic and operational risk registers exist and are updated at 6 monthly intervals. Training on risk management is given to all managers and supervisors.
- (v) Corporate arrangements are in place regarding ordering and procurement using appropriate online financial procurement systems. Managers have authority to authorise all ordering and procurement requests. The Environment Department now has an embedded Procurement Officer.
- (vi) Quick-quote is used to obtain online competitive quotes for services below £50,000. This provides a quick method of procuring relatively low value services whilst still demonstrating fairness and transparency, and provides management information and auditability.
- (vii) The Planning Service has been successful in securing external match funding for the implementation of a range of environmental and physical enhancement works. Examples this year include funding for a feasibility study by Sustrans at Dams to Darnley Country Park; Central Scotland Green Network funding for works at Barrhead South; and for the implementation of the Waterworks Phase 2 improvements.
- (viii) We participated in the second phase of 'Costing the Planning Service' which was coordinated by the Improvement Service. This provided significant in-depth analysis of staff time, performance statistics and financial analysis. This provided interesting information on the costs of various parts of the planning service, and comparative information on costs relative to other Council's planning services. This showed East Renfrewshire Council to be near the Scottish average in terms of the cost of handling planning applications. It also showed that income from planning application fees only covered about 60% of the costs of processing planning applications (again, about average across the country), indicating that the public are receiving a good value service at below actual-cost.
- (ix) A council-wide staff survey is conducted annually and the results are presented down to service-level. These results are analysed annually, staff are consulted on the findings and actions implemented to address any shortcomings or improvements to the working environment and procedures that can be made.





## 2H. Culture of continuous improvement

- (i) The planning service is planned and delivered within the framework of a Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement, the Council's own Outcome Delivery Plan, an Environment Department Service Improvement Plan and Service Improvement Plans. These have been produced annually over a number of years and improvement actions implemented and monitored on a six-monthly basis.
- (ii) We participate in a 'benchmarking' group with five other authorities to compare work practices and learn from the others' experiences – see section 2F xvii above and Appendix 3.
- (iii) We actively participate in the Heads of Planning Group and their sub-group on Development Management, where work practices and training are shared across authorities.
- (iv) The Strategic Development Plan (SDP) topic groups and regional planning group meet regularly to prepare the SDP and to share best practice and knowledge – see section 2F xviii above
- (v) We have a proactive participation record in responding to government consultations. We have a 'consultations' page on our website which lists (council, agency and government) documents that are out to consultation in order to encourage public participation.
- (vi) We have guidance (including online) for the public when appropriate, including our 'Processing Agreements Policy' and 'Supporting Information Requirements' guidance. We keep all of our forms and guidance notes up to date with new legislation and best practice.
- (vii) We actively seek to continually improve our development management planning performance results with discussions on means of improvement at monthly team meetings.
- (viii) Planning decisions and appeal decisions are monitored in order to ensure continued effective decision-making. Appeals decisions are reported to the Planning Applications Committee. The Committee/LRB members are kept informed of significant changes to the planning system and procedural changes, and training is provided when appropriate.
- (ix) Staff personal development and training is a high priority, see section 2F xiii. Elected Member training is co-ordinated at a council-level, but does include planning training both as part of induction and subsequently when the need arises.
- (x) All staff members at 'senior' level and above are being trained in 'Leadership Competencies'. These competencies are set within the context of the Council's vision and values, and provide a tool for self-evaluation and development. Senior staff are also being invited to participate in the Council's *Professional Development Award* and the training scheme *Yellow Belt for the Future* (which assists in undertaking a lean service review).

### 3. Supporting evidence

Part 2 of this report was compiled, drawing on evidence from the following sources.

A number of areas of evidence relate to more than one heading, but for brevity each has only been listed once below. All underlined text are hyperlinks that will take you to the appropriate webpage.

#### 2A Open for business

- A wide range of [planning and building standards](#) information is published on the Council's website
- Information on [business resources](#) is available on the Council's website
- [Service standards](#) and [Customer Service Standards Charter](#) are published on the Council's website
- The [planning information service](#) is online giving access to a wide range of planning application information and documents
- [Building Standards information](#) is available on the Council's website
- [Economic Development information](#) is available on the Council's website

#### 2B High quality development on the ground

- Environmental project information and annual events guides for the [Dams to Darnley Country Park](#) and the [Whitelee Countryside Ranger Service](#) are available on the Council's website
- Information on the [Polnoon development](#) is available on the Scottish Government website
- [Conservation area information and appraisals](#) are available on the Council's website
- [Neilston Development Trust](#) and related information is available online
- For policy, guidance and masterplan documents, see below
- [Business Improvement District information](#) is available on the Council's website
- [City Deal information](#) is available on the Council's website
- [Barrhead Waterworks Project information](#) is available on the Council's website

#### 2C Certainty

- [Local Development Plan](#), [supplementary planning guidance](#) (including masterplans), [planning briefs](#), [development plan scheme](#) and [newsletters](#) are available on the Council's website
- [Processing Agreements Policy](#) and [Supporting Information Requirements](#) are available on the Council's website
- [Strategic development plan](#) information is available at the website of the Clydeplan Authority
- [Housing Land Audit](#) information is available on the Council's website
- [Core Paths Plan](#) is available at the Council's website
- Up to date [local biodiversity](#) information is available on the Council's website
- [Enforcement information and charter](#) are available on the Council's website

#### 2D Communications, engagement and customer service

- Contact details (postal address, email address and phone numbers) are published on virtually every web page so that people know how and where to contact us should they have any questions
- Our Forums with agents & community groups are minuted
- [Customer survey findings](#) are reported to the Planning Applications Committee and are available on the Council's website
- Our Customer [Service Standards Charter](#) is available online
- Our latest [Planning Performance Framework](#), which includes development management performance figures, is available online.
- Planning application forms are available at the [eplanningscotland](#) website. Additional Council [application forms](#) are available on the Council's website
- [High hedges](#) information is available at the Council's website
- Our [formal complaints procedure](#) is available on the Council's website

**2E Efficient and effective decision-making**

- Planning application and pre-application statistics are gathered from the Council's UNIFORM casework system
- Comparative Scotland-wide planning application statistics are published on the Scottish Government [Statistics Page](#) and Audit Scotland's [Performance Information](#)
- Monitoring of housing, business and other data is undertaken annually, much of which is submitted to the Strategic Plan team for collation with information from other authorities
- The [Online Planning Information System](#) is available on the Council's website providing information on planning applications since year 2000, and documents for planning applications over the past 4 years. [Weekly lists](#) of registered and extant applications are also published online. This system also allows searches for Building Warrant information
- Our [Scheme of Delegated Functions](#) is available on the Council's website and the [Planning Scheme of Delegation](#) is available on the Planning Applications Committee page
- [Planning Application Committee and Council agendas and minutes](#) are available on the Council's website
- Planning Applications can be submitted online via the [national eplanning website](#)
- [Payment of fees](#) can be made on the Council's website – we also have documents outlining what the fees are, and payment methods on our '[Planning documentation and forms](#)' page

**2F Effective management structures**

- Staff team meetings are held 4-weekly and minuted
- Formal 'Personal Review and Development Scheme' is in place, training records are kept and annual personal plans produced
- Absence management records kept and a maximising attendance scheme is in place
- Health and safety management and training records kept and monitored
- Succession policy and arrangements are in place

**2G Financial management and local governance**

- [Outcome Delivery Plan](#) is on the Council's website
- The Council Wide [Annual Performance Report 2013-14](#) is on the Council's website
- Monthly reviews and updates to budgets undertaken
- Training records for risk management are kept
- Corporate procurement policies are in place

**2H Culture of continuous improvement**

- Environment Department Service Improvement Plan is monitored quarterly
- Service Improvement Plans have been updated annually and action plans updated six-monthly
- Heads of Planning (including sub-groups) are minuted
- Scottish Government Working Groups are minuted and outcomes (where relevant) published
- Strategic Development Plan topic groups and regional planning groups are minuted
- Notes are kept of the Benchmarking Group
- Government consultation responses are published online by the Scottish Government
- Complaints analysis (with actions) is undertaken six-monthly
- Staff PRD and training records are updated six-monthly

## 4A. Service improvements: 2015-16

Our planned service improvements have been grouped under four themes of *Customers*, *Outcomes*, *People & Efficiency*; although there is some overlap as actions can impact on more than one theme. More details of a lot of these actions can be seen in our Environment Department Service Improvement Plan.

### Customers

1. We will back-scan our archive of planning files back to 2004 in order to increase public and staff access to information.
2. We will enable our online Enforcement Register (with copies of notices) in order to provide the public with access to more information.
3. We will assess our planning application validation standards in the light of national guidance that is anticipated to be published.

### Outcomes

4. We will strive to improve our planning application performance rates.
5. We will adopt the Local Development Plan with associated Supplementary Planning Guidance.
6. We will prepare new Supplementary Planning Guidance on Renewable Energy and Design for Domestic Waste. We will also prepare additional Planning Briefs for sites identified for development in the Local Development Plan.
7. We shall increase the supply of affordable housing delivered through the planning system.
8. We will commence the designation of two new Conservation areas at Crookfur Cottage Homes and at Netherlee, including the instigation of conservation area appraisals.
9. Maidenhill Strategic Development Opportunity - we will work with developers to implement the masterplan including pro-active engagement with developers pre-application and through the planning application process. This will involve the co-ordination of shared infrastructure provision between developers, Council departments and external agencies
10. Barrhead North – We will deliver 850sqm of commercial units within the Crossmills Business Park (through Regeneration Capital Grant Funding, Council Capital and City Deal funding). We will demolish/remediate and reclaim approximately 0.8ha of land within the former Nestle factory site. We will install a new path network linking East Renfrewshire and Glasgow City Council path networks, provide up-front landscaping to the brownfield site and a landscaped community gateway to Barrhead (an extension to the successful community Waterworks Garden). The Council continues to work towards finalising legal arrangements towards the clearance and development of the Shanks Park site. We aim to complete site preparation and market the former Nestle site.
11. Barrhead South - We will progress the masterplan with developers and infrastructure providers, consider planning applications enabling the start of building on site, including shared roads infrastructure. We will progress funding, proposals and detailed designs associated with opportunities to promote access, play, community growing, biodiversity and health and well-being within Barrhead South greenspace.
12. We will conclude landowner discussions and design work associated with the Whitecraigs Rugby Club to Balgray Reservoir path.
13. We will secure all funding and agreements associated with the development and operation of Balgray Wake Park and the wider recreational use of the reservoir, with construction to begin late in 2015/16 or early 2016/17. We will also secure funding for, and undertake detailed site investigations and designs associated with, country park access improvements, including the proposed Balgray Reservoir boardwalk.
14. We will implement further infrastructure improvements including path construction/upgrading, additional viewpoint development, site signage and interpretation. We will expand the orienteering provision with the addition of a mountain bike orienteering course. We will



develop & install a toilet block adjacent to the mountain bike site. The website and printed media will be updated and on-site interpretation will be expanded. We will continue to provide volunteering opportunities and environmental education linked to the curriculum for excellence. We will expand the visitor monitoring/survey. We will support project partners in the development of cycle hire facilities.

15. Town Centres - We will continue to develop and enhance the Clarkston, Giffnock and Barrhead Business Improvement Districts (BIDs):
  - a) The **Clarkston BID** will be subject to the BID receiving a positive vote in the renewal ballot in June 2015, and various projects will be implemented, including: street banners being refreshed; vacant shops being covered with 3D decorative vinyls; funding for Christmas lights/Christmas event; grants for shop front improvements; digital screens; and refreshed Christmas lights. The BID will also liaise with ERC and community groups to improve cleanliness around the town.
  - b) The **Giffnock BID** includes: refreshing all street banners; purchasing of a Christmas tree; a foldable pocket map to be produced which will be reproduced on street information stands; two major events will take place again; the BID will continue to run Loyalty Scheme and will subsidise the World Host training.
  - c) The **Barrhead BID** will involve: monthly steering group meetings; a decision regarding the levy will be made; consultations will take place with businesses; the local press will be engaged for coverage and support; a Christmas event is being planned; and new branding and a new website will be developed.
  - d) We also will continue our investigations into the development of a **Pan-Renfrewshire Rural BID**, looking at a day out proposition focussed on East Renfrewshire and surrounding areas; and working with ERC Environment Officers to develop a visual map of activities that could be the basis of a BID proposition.
16. Newton Mearns town centre masterplan – Newton Mearns is now being considered as part of a Town Centre review that considers all the town centres in East Renfrewshire and will put forward plans of action for each centre. This review will be completed in July 2015 and more detailed actions will follow. It is intended that any more detailed action plans will be the subject of community consultation.
17. City Deal projects – we will develop a number of City Deal infrastructure projects across East Renfrewshire.
  - a) **Visitor Centre at Dams to Darnley Country Park** - design work will commence towards the end of financial year 2015/16.
  - b) **Eastwood Business Incubation Centre** – a feasibility study is in preparation and consultants have been appointed to undertake design options. Negotiations with the landowner will be undertaken during 2015/16.
  - c) **New Railway Station at Barrhead South** – the STAG appraisal will be submitted to transport partners to enable progress through Network Rail GRIP process, with the programme for the station opening in 2020.
  - d) **New light industrial space at Glasgow Road/Crossmills Business Park, Barrhead** – Planning consent to be in place with construction programmed to commence September 2015 and units ready for occupation end Jan 2016.
  - e) **Foundry Links, Barrhead** – an options appraisal will be undertaken to assist the Council in determining the appropriate way forward.
  - f) **M77 junction 5 road improvements** – an options appraisal and feasibility study is to commence in 2015/16.
18. We will support the delivery of development within the area while offsetting any environmental or social impacts by securing appropriate community benefits through the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Development Contributions.

## People

19. The staff resources in the Development Management team will be assessed to ensure that staff are in place with appropriate experience and at appropriate grades to cope with the expected increase in workload and high number of major applications anticipated during 2015/16.
20. New guidance on the role of councillors in pre-application planning procedures will be produced and Member training will be implemented to ensure full understanding of it. Training will also include the content of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**Efficiency**

21. We will migrate all users to the new GIS Windows 2012 Server.
22. We will run a pilot project on the use of 'Agile' working in the Development Management System, by testing the hardware, software and procedures involved.

The above actions will be monitored through the year.

## 4B. Delivery of service improvement actions 2014-15

Actions programmed for 2014/15		Actions undertaken and comments as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015
Customers	1. We will implement our new processing agreements policy and offer the use of processing agreements for major planning applications.	We have an approved Processing Agreements policy and we offer it for all major developments. As at 31/3/15, four have been signed, but none have run their full course through to decision on the planning application. We have a further seven in discussion. Others have been offered, which have either been declined or have not generated a response from applicants.
	2. We will back-scan our archive of planning files back to 2004 in order to increase public and staff access to information.	We have not progressed as fast as intended with our back-scanning due to administration staff shortages and the prioritisation of 'live' applications. The documents continue to be available in hard format so no lack of public access is experienced.
	3. We will enable our online Enforcement Register (with copies of notices) in order to provide the public with access to more information.	The online Enforcement Register is now live using the online planning system and a specific 'Enforcement' search. The copies of notices were not live as at 31/3/15 as they were in the process of redaction of signatures, but this is expected to be completed by July 2015.
	4. We will assess our planning application validation standards in the light of national guidance that is anticipated to be published.	The national standards have not been published as anticipated this year. These have been discussed at 'Heads of Planning Scotland' and further discussions are taking place to try to get them accredited by RICS, RIBA, RIAS & RTPI. The Council does not wish to progress in isolation with its own standards and wishes to wait for the national standards, therefore this action will carry forward to 2015-16.
	5. We will finalise our protocol for dealing with planning obligations, to ensure that there is no time delay in agreeing them and that procedures are in place to deal with any cases which do become stalled.	We have a Lawyer embedded into the environment department who specialises in environmental and planning matters. This gives dedicated support, for instance, to the preparation of legal agreements and will lead to the speeding up of the conclusion of these applications.
Outcomes	6. We will strive to improve our planning application performance rates.	Our performance rates have largely improved this year. See Section 2E above (first bullet-point) and Appendix 1 below for further figures and commentary on performance during 2014-15. Overall we dealt with 5.6% more planning applications than last year, so the increased performance rate shows up all the more positively with the background of an increased workload and no extra staff.
	7. We will assess the Local Development Plan Examination Report and move to adoption of the Plan with associated Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs).	The Examination Report was received in January 2015 (three months later than anticipated). The findings were reported to the Council meeting in March 2015 along with modifications to the Plan and SPGs. The Council approved the Adoption of the documents. The Plan and SPGs were sent to the Scottish Ministers, who also took longer than expected to respond (63 days). The Ministers requested modifications, the Council agreed to these and the Plan was subsequently adopted on 25th June 2015.

Actions programmed for 2014/15		Actions undertaken and comments as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015
Outcomes	8. We will prepare and consult on three additional Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs): the Neilston Infill Strategy; Residential Design Guide; and Dams to Darnley Country Park.	These additional SPGs have been prepared and have been through public consultation and subsequent modification. They were adopted by the Council on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2015 (see entry 7 above).
	9. We will consider the outcome of the consultation on the Development Contributions SPG, summarise the comments and prepare a revised version for submission to Scottish Ministers.	The consultation responses were considered and subsequent modifications were made to the SPG. The revised version was adopted by the Council on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2015 (see entry 7 above).
	10. We will prepare Masterplans for the <i>strategic development opportunities</i> , at Maidenhill/ Malletsheugh; Barrhead South and Barrhead North.	The masterplans for these three areas have been through public consultation and subsequent modification. They were adopted by the Council on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2015 (see entry 7 above).
	11. Barrhead Masterplans - we will market Council owned land at the Barrhead South and Barrhead North (Glasgow Road) sites in facilitation of the strategic development opportunities. We will also promote the development and delivery of site remediation at Shanks Park.	We have marketed Council owned land at Barrhead South. Preparation has been made to bring Barrhead North (Glasgow Road) site to the market. We have promoted the development and delivery of site at Shanks Park.
	12. We shall increase the supply of affordable housing delivered through the planning system.	33 units were brought into supply outwith the planning system in 2014/15, meaning that the Council is on track to meet its cumulative Outcome Deliver Plan target of achieving 150 additional units over 5 years to 2017. In addition, construction has commenced on a number of affordable housing projects granted through the planning system which are due for completion in 2015/16.
	13. The Core Paths Plan will be implemented with the promotion of access across the Council area. In particular we will construct (a) a further section of the Levern walkway between Glasgow Road, Barrhead and Nitshill, Glasgow; (b) a key footpath link connecting Whitecraigs Rugby Club to Balgray Reservoir within the Dams to Darnley Country Park; and (c) a mountain bike track at Whitelee Access Project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Landowner discussions and design work have taken place.</li> <li>b. Following the anticipated City Deal and Developer Contribution funding to support the realignment of Aurs Road, the path link from Whitecraigs Rugby Club to Balgray Reservoir have been integrated as part of the wider road project.</li> <li>c. The Whitelee mountain bike trails were completed in summer 2014, including blue &amp; red graded trails, skills loop, pump track, picnic/viewing area &amp; shelters)</li> </ul>
	14. We will promote future recreational and access opportunities within the Dams to Darnley Country Park. These will be implemented using City Deal funding and development contributions associated with the Strategic Development Opportunities as included within the Proposed Local development Plan.	Proposals for the construction of Balgray Wake Park are ongoing and on target for implementation during 2016. Discussions are underway with Scottish Water in relation to the lease of the Reservoir and associated land for watersports and the construction of a boardwalk which will provide a circular route around Balgray Reservoir. A stage 1 application for SportsScotland facilities funding associated with the Wake Park is progressing. Dams to Darnley Country Park SPG has also been Adopted alongside the LDP.

Actions programmed for 2014/15		Actions undertaken and comments as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015
Outcomes	15. We will promote future recreational and access opportunities within Whitelee Windfarm in line with the Whitelee Access Plan (2014-19).	A network of bespoke mountain bike trails opened summer 2014. The phased installation of signage and orientation panels have been implemented. An off-road equestrian link has been constructed. Visitor information, including access booklets, horse-riding leaflets, site maps etc have been provided. Support has been given to event organisers including 'Dirt Crit' junior mountain bike race organisers and the Scottish Siberian Husky Club.
	16. We will continue to develop proposals to enhance the green network. Implementation will be funded through development contributions and external funding opportunities.	A qualitative audit of open space has been undertaken and a range of proposals are being developed to enhance key aspects of the green network. External grants are contributing to path improvement works at Capelrig Newton Mearns and grant funding together with development contributions are funding planting at Barrhead Waterworks Phase 2 and temporary greening at Glasgow Road, Barrhead. Funding has also been secured for green network design works at Barrhead South Strategic Development Opportunity. Green Network and Environmental Management SPG has been adopted alongside the LDP.
	17. Barrhead - We aim to maximise the outcomes of the supermarket planning gain & town centre resilience fund in the town centre; market sites within the Glasgow Road Corridor; and continue to promote and facilitate the residential redevelopment of 'Shanks' through a 'Shanks/Glasgow Road' development strategy/masterplan. We also aim to set up a Barrhead Business Improvement District.	<p><b>Town centre resilience fund (TCRF) &amp; Supermarket planning gain</b> - The public realm at the Foundry has now been designed and will be put out to tender in August 2015 and the work will be completed by November 2015. This will provide an attractive entrance to the Foundry, enhanced parking and public realm improvements. TCRF has been used to promote businesses on banners, fund shopfront improvement grants and roads infrastructure improvements to the rear of the Foundry and ASDA.</p> <p><b>Barrhead North Master Plan &amp; Glasgow Road Corridor</b> – The new roundabout and access the to the former Nestle site has been constructed along with further remediation of the site through the grubbing up of hardstanding remnants of the factory. Regeneration Capital Grant Funding has been secured for various projects, including the Lavern Works, Crossmills Business Park, the Nestle factory site, a new path network and landscaping (see section 4A above for further details)</p> <p><b>Barrhead North Master Plan &amp; Shanks Park</b> – the site has been made secure and the majority of the redundant buildings demolished through partnership working between the land owners and the Council as a result of a pro-active strategy to develop an interest in the site and expedite its regeneration. The Council continues to work towards finalising legal arrangements towards the development of the site.</p> <p><b>Barrhead Business Improvement District</b> – This is now under development (see below)</p>

Actions programmed for 2014/15		Actions undertaken and comments as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015
Outcomes	18. Town Centres - We will continue to develop and enhance the Clarkston and Giffnock Business Improvement Districts (BID). We aim to establish the Barrhead BID and aim to develop a pan-Renfrewshire BID with Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils.	<p><b>Clarkston BID.</b> The BID hosted two extremely successful public events, attracting over 15,000 over two Saturdays. The BID has also held three events to promote legacy of Glasgow 2014. Liaison with the proprietor of the main parade of buildings on Busby Road led to repainting of the canopy. The BID has also funded Christmas lights and flower baskets for the shop fronts. The BID is awarding grants to business to help promote themselves and funding World Host training for independent businesses. The BID's work has been communicated by a dedicated website and social media pages.</p> <p><b>Giffnock BID.</b> The BID hosted its first two public events: Classic Car Spectacular in September 2015 and Christmas Lights switch on – the latter attracting over 7000 visitors. Events were also run jointly with Clarkston BID. To support local businesses, a Staff Loyalty Card has been introduced to all participating BID members and all ERC employees. The BID is funding World Host training for independent businesses. The BID's work has been communicated by a dedicated website and social media pages.</p> <p><b>Barrhead BID.</b> The BID is in development. A Steering Group has been established and the initial business survey carried out. The first steering group meeting has taken place with members from a range of sectors and locations across the town centre.</p> <p><b>Pan-Renfrewshire Rural BID.</b> A Project team was formed from ERC, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils and 6 project meetings have taken place, however Inverclyde have withdrawn and Renfrewshire have expressed reservations about being part of the project.</p>
	19. City Deal projects – we will develop a number of City Deal infrastructure projects across East Renfrewshire.	A team consisting of planning, regeneration, economic development, estates, roads, environment and legal services staff has been brought together at our Spiersbridge offices to facilitate the delivery of the LDP masterplans and drive the planning and delivery of the City Deal projects, including employability and community benefits.
	20. Newton Mearns town centre masterplan – we will prepare and consult on a masterplan for Newton Mearns town centre.	The council has been actively engaged with the new owners and management team of the Avenue and will continue to engage in a positive manner as proposals come forward for expansion or improvements.
People	21. The staff resources in the Development Management team will be assessed to ensure that staff are in place with appropriate experience and at appropriate grades to cope with the expected increase in workload and high number of major applications anticipated during 2014/15.	Workload is monitored through monthly meetings of Principal Officers with the Manager and at monthly team meetings. Major applications (current and anticipated) are monitored through a spreadsheet. Staff resources have been reassessed and in view of an expected significant increase in major applications, an additional (temporary contract) planning officer's post was approved and advertised, although filling the post was unsuccessful. The position will be monitored again mid 2015, which will include the option to re-advertise.

Actions programmed for 2014/15		Actions undertaken and comments as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015
People	22. New guidance on the role of councillors in pre-application planning procedures will be produced and Member training will be implemented to ensure full understanding of it.	A report has been prepared for our Council, taking account of Scottish Government guidance, and comparing the procedures of our benchmarking authorities - this has still to be approved.
Efficiency	23. We will upgrade our Geographical Information System to the latest version. We will set up a structured training plan and provide training as necessary. We will identify datasets which require metadata and work on completing these to INSPIRE standards.	A new version of GGP was installed on the server. This was not rolled out to users due to forthcoming replacement of the server. Datasets have been identified in a data audit for users to populate with Metadata and a User Audit has been undertaken in order to identify targeted training options.



## 5. PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK OFFICIAL STATISTICS

### 5A: Decision-making timescales

Category	Total decisions 2011-2012	Average timescale (weeks) 2011-2012	Total decisions 2012-2013	Average timescale (weeks) 2012-2013	Total decisions 2013-2014	Average timescale (weeks) 2013-2014	Total decisions 2014-2015	Average timescale (weeks) 2014-2015
<b>Major developments</b>	4	19.9	5	39.9	5	16.7	3	19.6
<b>Local developments (non-householder)</b>								
• Local: less than 2 months	89(57.8%)	6.5	60(52.2%)	6.8	98(64.9%)	6.1	100(72.5%)	6.3
• Local: more than 2 months	65(42.2%)	20.2	55(47.8%)	22.3	53(35.1%)	14.9	38(27.5%)	16.3
<b>Householder developments</b>								
• Local: less than 2 months	423(90.4%)	6.5	400(92.8%)	6.3	396(92.1%)	6.2	430(91.9%)	6
• Local: more than 2 months	45(9.6%)	11.7	31(7.2%)	11.5	34(7.9%)	10.7	39(8.1%)	11.4
<b>Housing developments</b>								
<b>Major</b>	1	8.9	3	26.7	3	15.3	2	21.9
<b>Local</b>								
• Local: less than 2 months	28(57.1%)	6.8	12(35.3%)	7.3	28(62.2%)	6.2	27(56.3%)	6.2
• Local: more than 2 months	21(42.9%)	20.8	22(64.7%)	35.9	17(37.8%)	17.0	21(43.8%)	17.3
<b>Business and industry</b>								
<b>Major</b>	0	0	0	0	1	14.9	0	-
<b>Local</b>								
• Local: less than 2 months	7(63.6%)	6.1	5(83.3%)	7.7	8(72.7%)	5.6	7(77.8%)	6.7
• Local: more than 2 months	4(36.4%)	17.2	1(16.7%)	12.0	3(27.3%)	12.2	2(22.2%)	11.0
<b>EIA developments</b>	1	181.9	0	-	0	-	0	-
<b>Other consents*</b>	30	7.4	52	7.1	61	7.0	74	5.9
<b>Planning/legal agreements**</b>	6	86	4	70.9	7	21.6	3	41.7
<b>Local reviews</b>	4	9.4	12	8.6	6	7.2	8	8.8

**NOTE FOR TABLE 5A ABOVE**

\* Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 7 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO.

\*\* Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

**COMMENTARY ON TABLE 5A ABOVE**

Our performance rates have generally improved through 2014/15 although there are some ups and downs within the figures above. Table 1 shows that both 'local (non-householder)' and 'householder' application processing times (average timescale in weeks) have both dropped overall, to 9 weeks and 6.4 weeks accordingly. For some further comments see section 2Ei on page 16.

Although the timescale (average timescale in weeks) for major applications rose slightly from last year (as did a few other indicators), the rates were generally below that for 2011/12 and 2012/13, thus showing a general trend downwards.

Overall we dealt with 5.6% more planning applications than last year (plus 25.3% more other applications and 24% more written pre-application enquiries), so the performance rates show up positively with the background of an increased workload and no extra staff.

**5B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals**

Type	2013/14 Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld							
		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-14		2014-15	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Local reviews</b>	6	6	66.7 %	8	66.7 %	3	50%	3	33.3 %
<b>Appeals to Scottish Ministers</b>	3	4	40%	4	36.4 %	2	66.7 %	8	25%

**5C: Enforcement activity**

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Cases taken up (note a)</b>	48	34	24	28
<b>Breaches identified (note b)</b>	141	68	81	62
<b>Enforcement cases resolved</b>	135	58	105	92
<b>Notices served (note c)</b>	3	3	0	1
<b>Reports to Procurator Fiscal</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Prosecutions</b>	0	0	0	0

- (a) Formal cases taken up, as per Scottish Government returns, defined as all cases where parties are formally notified in writing that enforcement action may be taken by the authority under Sections 127 - 137 of the T&CP (Scotland) Act 1997.
- (b) All cases recorded where a breach occurred, irrespective of whether formal notification took place.
- (c) Includes enforcement notices; breach of condition notices; planning contravention notices; stop notices; temporary stop notices; fixed penalty notices, and notices requiring application for planning permission for development already carried out.

**5D: Context**

See commentary in relation to table 5A on the page above and section 2E starting on page 16.

## 6. WORKFORCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TABLE 6A

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
<b>Head of Service</b>			1	

Note: Tier 1=Chief Executive; Tier 2=Director; Tier 3=Heads of Service; Tier 4=Managers

		Development Management	Development Plans	Enforcement	Other
<b>Managers</b>	No. Posts	2	2	-	2
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
<b>Main grade posts</b>	No. Posts	4.3	7.7	(see note c)	4
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
<b>Technician</b>	No. Posts	2.3	1	-	-
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
<b>Office support/clerical</b>	No. Posts	2	-	-	-
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		10.6	10.7	-	6

### NOTES

- (a) As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015  
 (b) The above figures equate to *full time equivalent* positions  
 (c) All of the development management planners have a role in enforcement work.

TABLE 6B

Staffing profile	Number
Under 30	1
30-39	6
40-49	15
50 and Over	7

TABLE 6C

Committees & site visits	No. per year
Full Council Meetings	2
Planning Committees	9
Committee site visits	3
LRB	8
LRB site visits	0

TABLE 6D

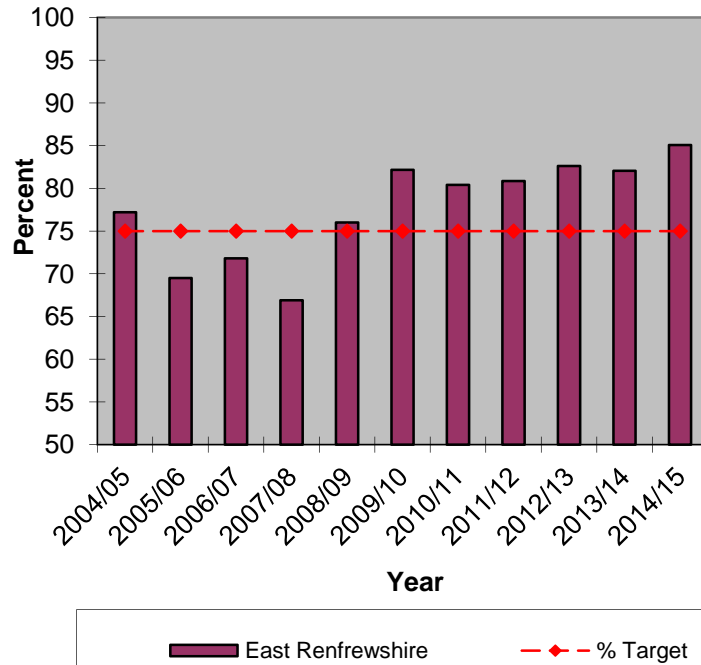
	<b>Total Net Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure 2013/14</b>	<b>Income 2013/14</b>	<b>Net Expenditure 2013/14</b>
Development Management (including enforcement)	£548,000	£886,000	£463,000	£423,000
Development Planning	£1,037,000	£1,564,000	£486,000	£1,078,000
Other	£10,000	£2,000	0	£2,000

## NOTES

- (a) The Net Budgeted figures are the net expenditure budgets for the 2015/16 year as per East Renfrewshire Council's Provisional Outturn and Budget Estimate (POBE) return.
- (b) The actual expenditure, income and net actual expenditure figures are taken from draft Local Financial Return figures for East Renfrewshire Council.
- (c) Costs reported are for the whole services in each case, not just planning applications.

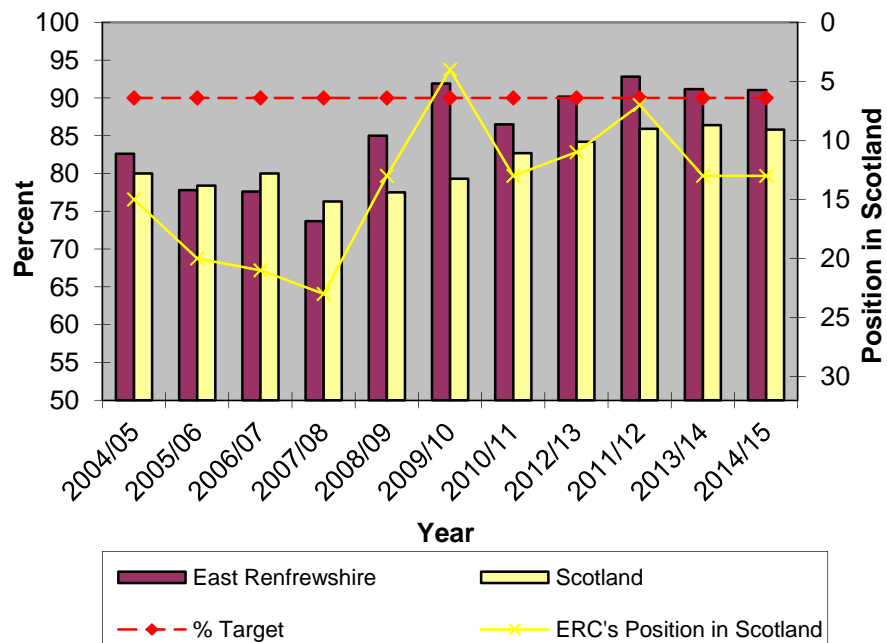
## APPENDIX 1 PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

**Chart 1**  
**Percent of applications decided within two months**



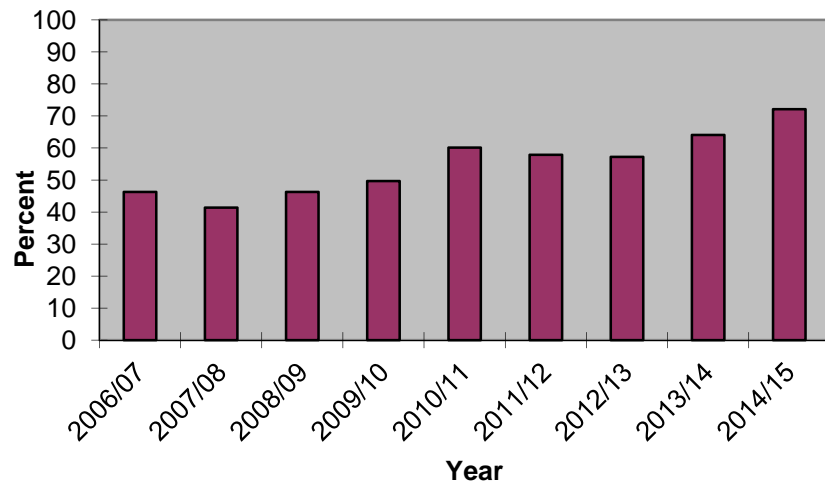
East Renfrewshire      % Target

**Chart 2**  
**Percent of householder applications decided within two months**

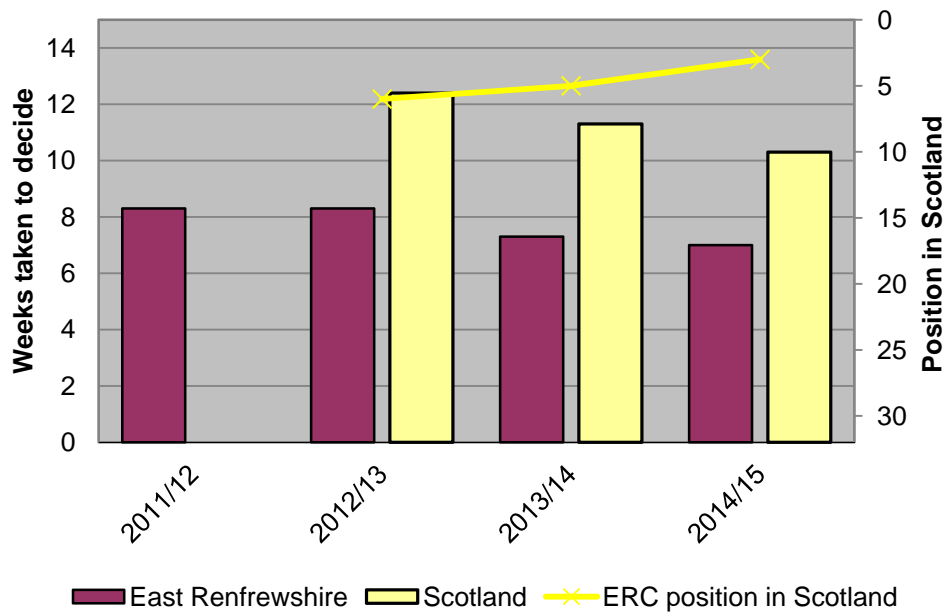


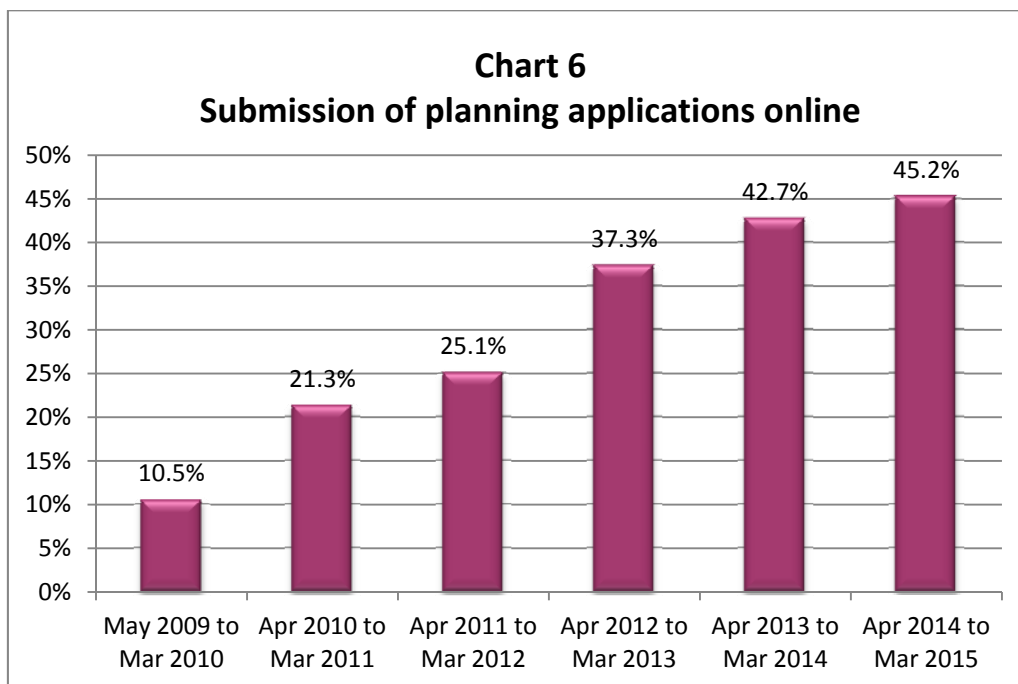
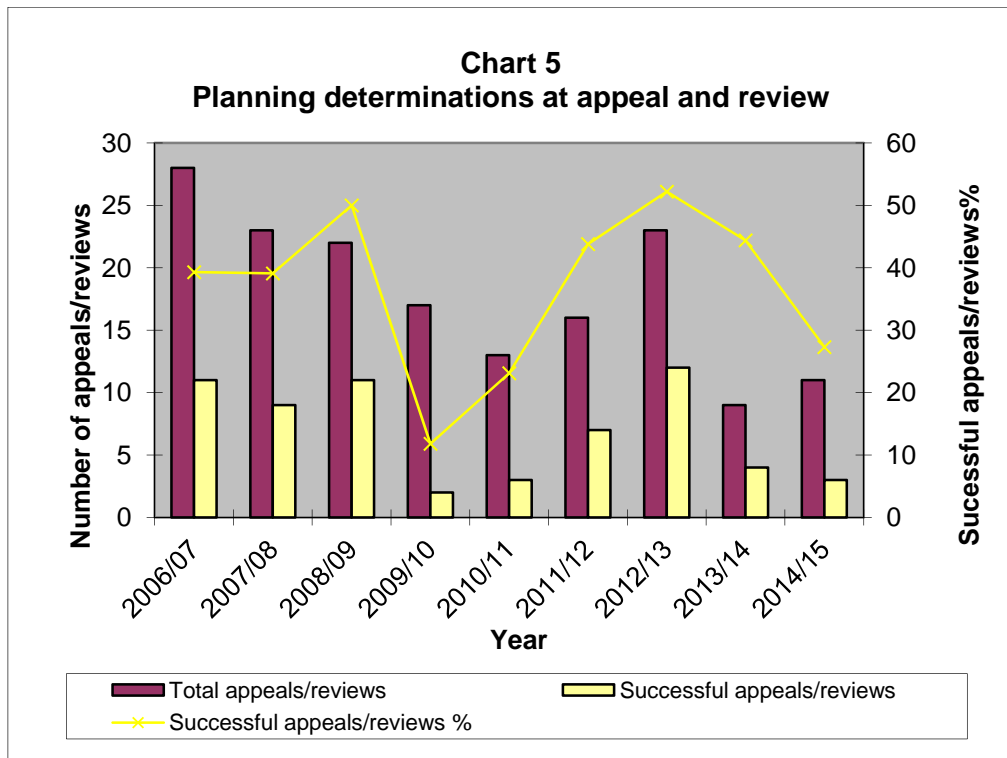
East Renfrewshire      Scotland  
% Target      ERC's Position in Scotland

**Chart 3**  
**Percent of non-householder applications**  
**decided within two months**



**Chart 4**  
**Weeks Taken To Decide Local Developments**







## APPENDIX 2 CUSTOMER SURVEY 2014/15 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The customers of the Development Management section of the Planning Service were surveyed in February-March 2015. Overall the results are generally positive and it is not considered that specific follow-up actions are necessary.
2. A summary of the results show (see charts below):-
  - a. 80% were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the time taken to speak to someone on the telephone (none were dissatisfied).
  - b. 78% were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the time taken to get a response to a written enquiry (again, none were dissatisfied).
  - c. 77% had used our online planning services. Of those who didn't use it, 70% of them answered simply that they "prefer not to", while two people said that they were unaware of the service and one didn't have access to the internet.
  - d. 74% were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the quality of information that they received from the Council (three people expressed dissatisfaction – see further discussion on this issue below).
  - e. 67% were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with how well staff did their jobs (only one person expressed any dissatisfaction).
  - f. 86% were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' overall with the service that they received from the Planning Service (with two people expressing some dissatisfaction).
3. Summary of the comments that were made in response to the questions:-
  - a. **Comments about the online services**  
Seven people commented that it was easy to use; with eight saying that it was fine or straightforward. Two people commented that the drawings did not scale and one said that the software was difficult to use. The software is provided by a third party so is not directly within our control. All drawings must be provided to scale (and many have a scale bar) but the software does not contain a facility to take scaled measurements from the drawings.
  - b. **What would you say about the quality of information that you received?**  
14 people said that it was easy to find the information that they wanted and eight said that the information was excellent, great or good. One person gave a negative feedback that they were unhappy with the attitude of the planning officer and hired a planning consultant (and that intervention from the Head of Service was required before planning permission was agreed). The case in this instance is not known so we cannot check the circumstances, but it looks like they got a satisfactory outcome in the end, but that this experience seems to be the exception.
  - c. **Do you have any comments to make about the way staff did their jobs?.**  
Eleven people commented that the staff were very professional and helpful. One person felt that their objection was not looked at properly and that consideration of the planning application was one-sided in favour of the applicant – however all representations are fully considered, this is explained in all reports of handling, and we do not accept that consideration is one-sided. One person said that there was communication problems due to changes in staff – unfortunately as staff move job, case officers sometimes have to change, but this is rare and we do try to be as consistent as possible. One person suggests that communication between building control and planning needs to be more flexible – the exact circumstances here are not clear, but the officers in the respective services do sit in the same office and there is a lot of communication between the teams.

**d. Do you have any other comments about the service you received from East Renfrewshire?**

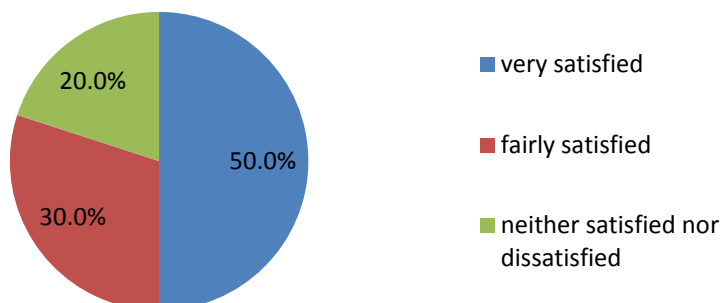
A number of positive comments were received, including “very helpful”, “one of the best councils to deal with”, “keep up the good work”, “all went relatively quickly and smoothly”, “good service”, “very happy with the way things went, all went to plan”.

Some comments were made which are responded to below:

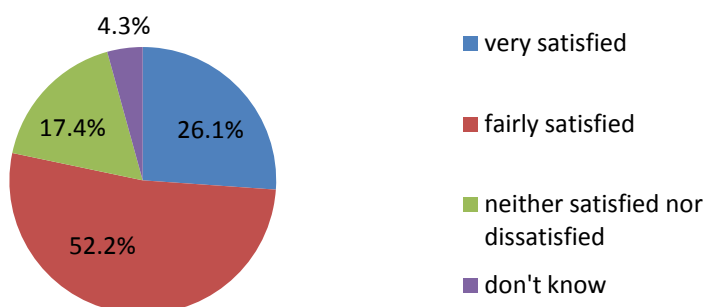
- *Details of who would be contacted during an application needs to be highlighted more – response:* the consultation procedures are explained on the website.
- *If someone makes decision then this should be explained. Grounds for approval/disapproval should be given – response:* this is done in the report of handling.
- *Concern cannot review application after completion – response:* planning applications can be subject to ‘non-material variations’ after consent is granted, however it is proper that if more significant changes are to be made, then the proposal needs to be reconsidered and neighbours given the chance to comment again.
- *Criteria followed not understood, no personal contact to look at reason for objection. Felt objection wasn't heard and no input from objector allowed. – response:* all objections are fully considered as explained in reports of handling. Additionally the criteria for assessing planning applications are contained in the Local Plan which is available online.
- *Improve communication and give better explanation of process, length of time, closing / review dates etc - response:* an explanation of all these matters are given on the website in a briefing note called ‘How we process a planning applications’.
- *It would be helpful if comment acknowledged and given some response - response:* all comments are acknowledged and the reason for the decision given in the report of handling, however individual responses to every objector would be too time-consuming to undertake.
- *Council officers too busy to check progress and concerned final outcome is problematic and cause further delay – response:* it is correct that officers do not have the time to check progress on every planning application, but certainly should issues arise or be reported to us, then they are investigated quickly.
- *Objections should be published – response:* all objections are available for inspection in the planning office. There has been some discussion regarding the issue of publication online and after considerable consideration it was considered most appropriate not to publish them online.
- *Clear conflict between advice from Officer and Senior Officer and this needs to be addressed – response:* we are not aware of the circumstances here, but there is a lot of communication between planning officers and senior/principal colleagues, and we are not aware of any significant issues in this regard.
- *Problem with changes of permission from two dwelling to one was a bit cumbersome given permission already received – response:* even if proposals are down-sizing, then a new planning permission is needed as amended designs can cause different impacts and neighbours have a right to comment on these impacts.

## Customer Survey 2014/15 Summary of Findings - Charts

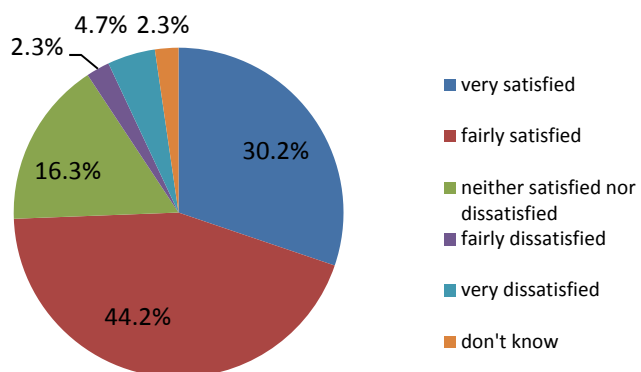
If the respondent contacted us in person or by telephone, please rate how satisfied you were with the time taken to speak to someone who could help you.



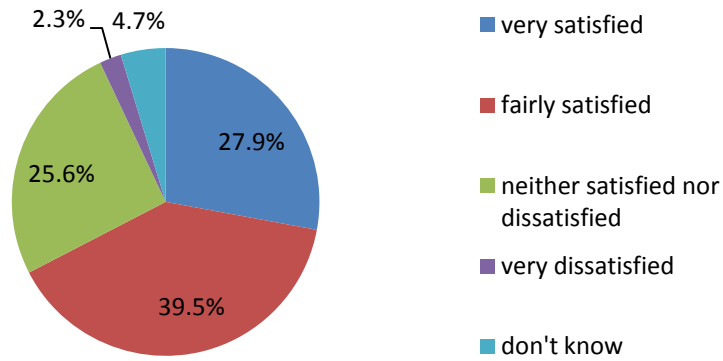
If the respondent contacted us by writing, email or via our website, please rate how satisfied you were with the time taken to get a reply from us.



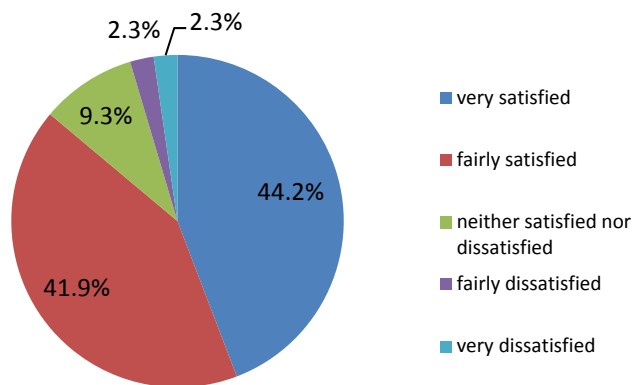
How satisfied were you with the quality of information you received from East Renfrewshire Planning service?



**How satisfied were you with how well the staff did their jobs?**



**How satisfied were you with the overall service you received from East Renfrewshire Council Planning Service?**





## APPENDIX 3

### WEST OF SCOTLAND PLANNING BENCHMARKING GROUP 2014-2015

The Benchmarking Group consists of participants from the following Councils: East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire & West Dunbartonshire. The Group normally meets every 3 – 4 months and met three times between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014 (at East Renfrewshire); 23 September 2014 (at North Ayrshire) and 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015 (at Inverclyde). The meetings are minuted, with the host council and chairperson rotating around the councils.

A wide range of topics were discussed at these meetings:-

1. Planning Performance Framework
2. Scottish Minister call-in of applications
3. Decision Notice contents
4. High Hedges Act and DPEA appeal interpretation
5. Restoration Bonds
6. Electric car charging points in new developments
7. Pre-application briefings & guidance for councillors
8. Legal Agreement procedures
9. Retention of planning registers procedures
10. Charging for pre-application enquiries
11. Certificates of Lawful Use or Development
12. Charging for street naming and numbering
13. Costing the planning service
14. Local Review Body procedures & judicial review
15. Processing agreements
16. Staffing levels
17. Review of quarries and landfill sites
18. Validation standards guidance note
19. EPlanning and EBuilding Standards portal and agency agreement
20. Content of reports of handling
21. Hearings procedures
22. Section 42 applications
23. Advertisement Stop Notices
24. Policy on houses in the countryside
25. Obtaining archaeological expert advice
26. Pay-day loan government consultation
27. Format of EIA screening opinions
28. Procedures for Rights of Way diversion orders

The meetings allow for the sharing of experiences and of best practice. This does not necessarily lead to standardisation of practice, but allows for legislative interpretation and practice to be shared.

Of particular note this year have been our discussions on:

- **The Planning Performance Framework**, where the Councils' submissions and feedback reports were discussed, with the Council's learning from each-other's reports.

- **The High Hedges Act**, where policy and practice was shared, leading to a better understanding of the legislation, and experiences shared of the approaches which can be taken on a range of issues on this new subject.
- **Pre-application councillor briefings**, allowing the authorities to share how they are implementing the government advice.
- **Staffing levels** within the authorities, looking at how each authority's service is staffed, allowing comparisons with performance statistics.
- **Archaeological advice** and how the authorities purchase this service through either the West of Scotland Archaeological Service or from private consultants, and whether value-for-money is obtained.

In addition to the formal meetings, the participants also use the email list as a 'forum' for quickly asking questions on areas of uncertainty.

This group concentrates on development management issues. Development plans teams benchmark extensively with the eight Councils who prepare the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan (including sub-groups); as well as through Heads of Planning and the national Development Plans Forum. Benchmarking also takes place supporting environmental and technical functions, including through the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership; the Scottish Outdoor Access Forum; the Scottish Strategic Environmental Assessment Forum; the Local Authorities Historic Environment Forum; the Corporate Address Gazeteer Forum; the One-Scotland Mapping Agreement Group; and the Ordnance Survey User Group.

## APPENDIX 4

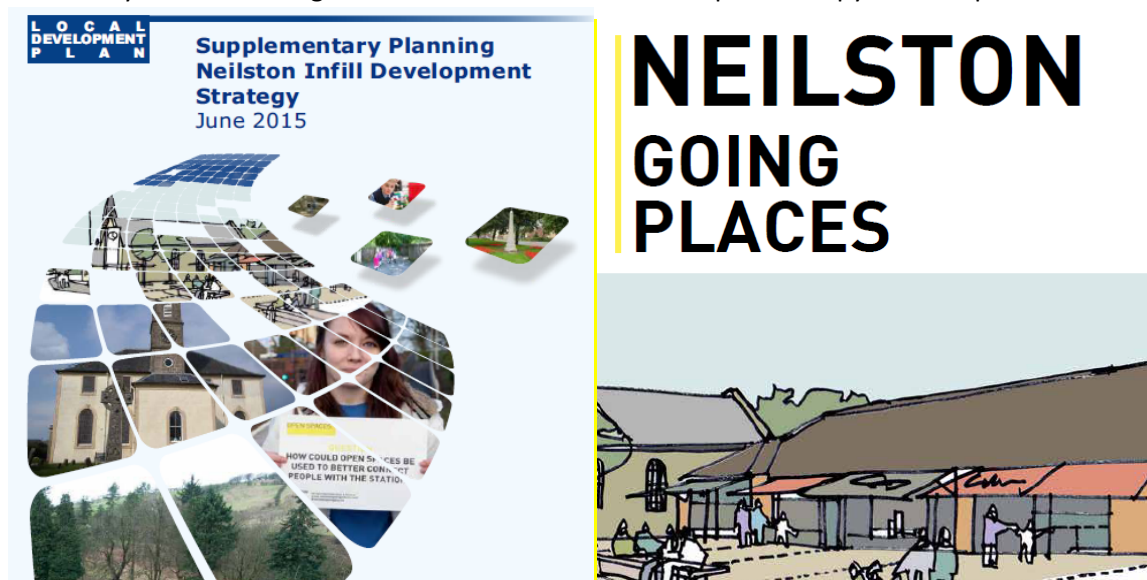
### NEILSTON INFILL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND THE NEILSTON GOING PLACES CHARRETTE REPORT

The Neilston Infill Development Strategy was published in January 2015. It is to be adopted as *Supplementary Planning Guidance* as part of the *East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan*.

It provides planning guidance for the development of infill sites in Neilston; the creation and enhancement of leisure and community facilities; plus environmental and townscape improvements. It translates the aspirational elements of the Neilston Town Charter into site-specific guidance, and embeds it into the statutory Local Development Plan in order to provide a degree of certainty for developers and interested parties. It is a key step in facilitating the delivery of sustainable development and regeneration within Neilston.

The project has been implemented involving a wide range of partners, including Neilston Development Trust, national agencies, consultants & academics, local businesses, landowners and the community. It has evolved following extensive public consultation with interested parties, including a comprehensive charrette programme involving the widest possible range of local stakeholders.

A 'Charrette' project was set up during 2014 which involved public meetings, themed workshops and a wide range of consultations with the public, community groups, traders and interested parties. **NEILSTON GOING PLACES** summarised what took place and sets out all of the findings. You can have a look at the full document at [www.neilstontrust.co.uk](http://www.neilstontrust.co.uk) where you can trace the whole process and see videos and accounts of the many ways in which people came forward to give their views. You can also pop into the Bank, Neilston Library or the Planning Office in Thornliebank to read a printed copy of the report.



The Charrette Project Team consisted of East Renfrewshire Council and Neilston Development Trust, with project work undertaken by Tom Sneddon Architect, City Design Co-operative, Urbis Ltd, Snook, University of Stirling and Neilston Partnership. Funding and other support was provided by The Scottish Government, Architecture and Design Scotland, East Renfrewshire Council and The National Lottery & Big Lottery Fund.

## APPENDIX 5

### MAIDENHILL MASTERPLAN

East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out a development strategy based on long term planned urban expansion. Maidenhill is an 85ha greenfield site identified within the Plan as capable of delivering a mixed use development including 1,060 new homes. Following the publication of the Proposed Plan in December 2012, work commenced on the delivery of the Plan's key elements. This commenced with early engagement with the community and the five landowners/developers to understand the likely issues with delivery and to discuss how the disparate owners could come together to prepare a master plan.

Given the need for a strategic approach to the master plan and to resolve common infrastructure issues, the Council took the lead and managed the entire process. This gave the Council more control over the outcomes, allowed managed input from key departments and agencies and ensured that the vision for Maidenhill could be articulated clearly and unequivocally to the developers.

This master plan is not simply a spatial planning document to sit on a shelf. It is a live document focused on delivery, underpinned by commercial reality. Partners involved have praised the process. The developers have been able to satisfy their Boards and banks and have now invested heavily to progress their sites – they have the confidence to proceed. The LDP, the Development Framework and now the Master Plan/SPG are focused on delivery of sustainable development and place making. The approach of front loading and partnership working strongly aligns with the Scottish Government objective to modernise planning. Development on the ground will commence in summer 2016. Effective delivery in a short timescale.

The SPG received a commendation in the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning in November 2014

**FIGURE 3:  
MASTERPLAN**

*"Working on the Maidenhill Masterplan presented a series of challenges and opportunities.*

*The sites that make up the area vary in character, but collectively are a key part of the amenity of a key edge of Newton Mearns. The community were understandably concerned about the impact of development on the wider neighbourhood and as urban designers we were concerned about the fact that the development of the sites will impact on the wider perception of Newton Mearns from the Ayr Road approach, the A726 and from the M77.*

*Prior to our appointment ERC had carried out a significant amount of work to embed the need for best practice and high quality development with the developers. Understandably, each developer concentrated on their individual site and was not focussed on the key issues of interface between developments sites. We were able to build on this work, and identified and illustrated the design issues which were important for the whole area. The developers shared their site investigation knowledge allowing us to take cognisance of key issues such as SUDS, flooding, ground conditions and topography.*

*In the masterplan we have illustrated that standard house types can be used within sites but that quality greenspace, connectivity and a sense of place is critical in the area. The community stressed this in all our discussions with them. Notwithstanding, developers will need to develop or use house types that have appropriate character and materials and ensure that homes face the shared roads and are not inward looking."*

Anderson Bell and Christie, March 2015





## APPENDIX 6 City Deal

# WELCOME

The Economic Development and Regeneration team has an important role to play in maximising growth and improving both economic sustainability and employment in East Renfrewshire. Over the coming years there will be further investment dedicated to regenerating the local area. In particular the Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal, which is worth £1.13 billion, has allocated £44 million for East Renfrewshire.

We are delighted to be overseeing East Renfrewshire Council's participation in City Deal while our continued commitment to Employability, Community Benefits and Business Improvement District co-ordination present new and exciting challenges for the department's future in getting the best outcomes for the citizens of East Renfrewshire.



## Glasgow & Clyde Valley City Deal

Expected Timeframe	2015 – 2022
Expected Value	£44,000,000

The Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal is an agreement between the UK and Scottish Government and eight local authorities across Glasgow and the Clyde Valley. It sets out how the region will create growth through:

- Setting up a £1.13 billion Glasgow and Clyde Valley Infrastructure Fund to improve transport and regenerate/develop sites
- Supporting growth in the life sciences sector
- Providing help to small and medium enterprises to grow and develop
- Delivering programmes to support unemployed people
- Testing new ways of boosting the incomes of people on low wages

The projects being overseen by the Economic Development and Regeneration team include:

- Glasgow Road corridor employment
- A new railway station serving Barrhead South
- Dams to Darnley Country Park Infrastructure, Aurs Road straightening
- Dams to Darnley Visitor Centre
- A new link road from M77 Junction 5 to Barrhead
- Foundry Links, extension of business and training space
- Employment support projects







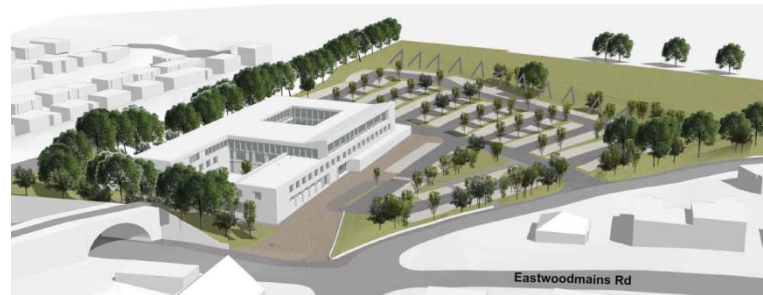
## APPENDIX 7

### EXAMPLES OF HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENTS ON THE GROUND

#### Eastwood Health and Care Centre, Clarkston

The Planning Service facilitated the delivery of a new Health and Care Centre which is presently under construction in Clarkston. The building will provide a range of primary care, clinical, social care and voluntary self help services for the population of Eastwood under one roof, including GP services, outreach clinics, physiotherapy & podiatry, adult & older people's mental health services, children & families services, rehabilitation & enablement services (including social work, district nurses, occupational and physiotherapists), and voluntary & independent sector organisations (e.g. carers, dementia support).

The Planning Service was involved in this development from an early stage, with the production of a design brief to guide an acceptable development (which was published online).



This was a 'major' development with consent being issued in 3½ months (less than the 4 month target for such major developments). It involved consultation and joint working, not just with the applicant (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde), but also internally within the Council with the Community Health and Care Partnership, Environmental Health, Roads Service and Waste Services.

The development consists of a site of just over 2 hectares and internal floorspace of just over 6,000sqm. The building is of a contemporary design in a combination of two and three storeys. The site is located adjacent to a main road and a railway

station. It will include 300 car parking spaces (inclusive of 32 park and ride spaces) and recycling facilities. Additional housing land is retained adjacent to the site.

Although a big building, it has been located and designed to minimise its visual impact on the surrounds, being close to raised railway lines with trees on the embankments. It involves the redevelopment of a brownfield and vacant site and will bring significant benefits to the community by providing new and upgraded healthcare facilities.





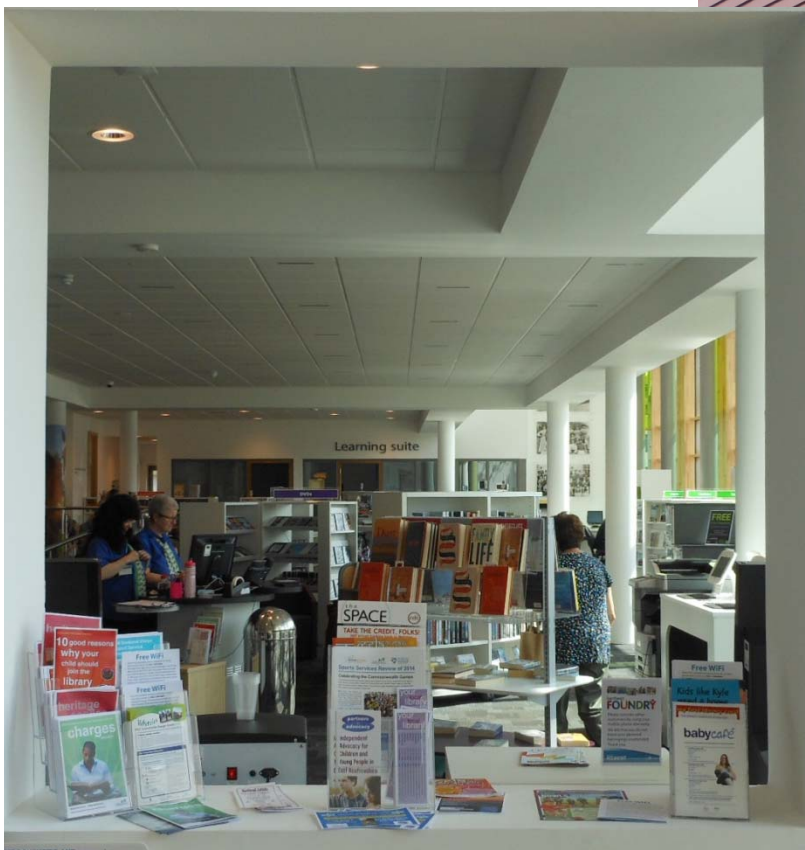
### **The Foundry, Barrhead**

In January 2015 the Council opened the Barrhead Foundry. This £3.8m, 1200sq. m. two-storey extension and refurbishment of Barrhead Sports Centre has transformed it into a multi-purpose learning, leisure and business centre that will play a key role in minimising inequalities and contributing to more positive outcomes for the people of Barrhead and the surrounding area.

The Foundry is the final major project within Barrhead Town Centre as part of the Better Barrhead regeneration initiative. It was delivered through a collaborative project alongside a range of private and thirds sector partners to create an innovative new community facility to provide residents with access to a state-of-the-art library, enhanced sports facilities, flexible community meeting spaces, back-to-work and employment support as well as a café and business centre that supports local SMEs and promotes entrepreneurial spirit.

Whilst the function of the Foundry will be key to its success, the high quality design has contributed to the regeneration of the town centre completing the transformational change that has established a stronger sense of place within the town.

Work is currently underway on £270,000 of improvements to the sports area of Barrhead Foundry. The public realm at the Foundry has now been designed and will be put out to tender in August 2015. The work will be completed by November 2015. This will provide an attractive entrance to the Foundry, enhanced parking and public realm improvements.





### **The Waterworks, Barrhead**

Barrhead Water Works is an innovative project that transformed a derelict sewage works into wild flower meadows using former sewage tanks as giant experimental planters where wild flower habitats could be created.

Derelict for 30 years the old sewage works, located beside the main road and rail link into the town of Barrhead made a poor first impression. The East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan sets out a forward-looking, visionary and ambitious strategy to provide a long term framework for development up to 2025 and beyond. The project is a key component of the wider Barrhead North Strategic Development Opportunity (SDO) which seeks transformational change by

bringing vacant and derelict land back into productive use and is now being used as a template for future work within the Barrhead South SDO. In addition, the project strongly links with the wider Green Network SPG and provides and promotes access to green infrastructure and the wider natural environment.

The site had never been dismantled and six large settling tanks were visible amidst the vegetation that had gained a foothold in the concrete. Each circular tank measured 30 metres across and 1 metre deep. A rusted fence surrounded the site and the old access road was choked by years of fly tipping.

Funded by Big Lottery and Kew Gardens the transformation started in 2014 with the sowing of 16,000 wild flower plant plugs. Reared by the apprentices at Youth Enterprise Scotland's Green Academy, these wild flowers were transplanted to the Water Works during the "Big Plant" days in early summer. The results were rapid and stunning and by July the community enjoyed a burst of red poppies and colour which lasted through the warm summer days. With volunteers collecting valuable seeds, the 2015 display promises more spectacular displays.

View a video of the project (at 13 mins).

[http://www.communitychannel.org/video/mm5BO3L5gx4/brilliant\\_britain\\_brilliant\\_scotland\\_episode\\_3/](http://www.communitychannel.org/video/mm5BO3L5gx4/brilliant_britain_brilliant_scotland_episode_3/)



## APPENDIX 8 VALUE ADDED BY THE PLANNING SERVICE

The following gives an indication of applications which have been improved in some way (or where community impacts have been offset) by progress through the planning system. The following include matters that were not satisfactory at the pre-application stage, or would not have been satisfactorily resolved were it not for discussion and negotiation with planning officers through the planning process.

The following markers are still being developed by the Planning Service and the consistency of completing the marker in the computer system is still being fully integrated with other planning procedures. We do believe for instance that some markers are still being under-counted, for instance there were more 'affordable housing' and 'community benefit' contributions achieved than was actually counted above (although some of these will have been counted as part of a 'legal agreement').

Added Value 2014/15	2014/15
Improvements to the proposal were achieved at the pre-application stage.	68
Design, layout and/or external material improvements have been achieved during the processing of the application to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Plan policies.	120
Road, footway or parking improvements have been achieved during the processing of the application to ensure that the proposal does not have a detrimental impact on road users.	7
Protection of natural features, trees, habitats and/or flora or fauna have been achieved during the processing of the application to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Plan policies.	1
The provision for affordable housing has been achieved during the processing of the application in accordance with the Council's Local Plan policies.	1
The provision for community, environmental and/or economic benefit has been achieved during the processing of the application in accordance with the Council's Local Plan policies.	1
Conditions have been added that are necessary to control or enhance the development and to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Plan policies.	158
A legal agreement is required to secure essential aspects of the development and to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Plan policies.	5
The application has been submitted following an investigation/complaint.	14
<b>Total added value instances</b>	<b>375</b>
Applications with some form of added value	293
Number of application decisions in the period	683
<b>Percentage of application with some form of added value</b>	<b>42.9%</b>

Examples across a range of such improvements include the following:

2012/0625/TP Site Adjacent North Of Barcapel Avenue, Newton Mearns  
Improvements were made to the road layout in the interests of public safety; additional provision of open space; enlargements to garden sizes in accordance with policy; provision

of appropriate type and location of affordable housing; substantial development contributions including off site provision for multi-use games area (MUGA) and new footway; a new footpath connecting up to existing network; and additional perimeter tree planting to improve the amenity of the area.

2014/0416/TP Blue Acres Nursery, 416 Mearns Road, Newton Mearns

Additional car parking spaces were provided; improvements to the car parking layout and to the existing access which improves public safety.

2014/0496/TP St John Thornhill Home, Capelrig Road, Newton Mearns

A financial contribution towards the provision of offsite affordable housing was made; and changes to design of houses to improve the amenity of residents.

2015/0017/TP 7 Mearnscroft Road, Newton Mearns

The design of the extension was enhanced by setting it back from the front elevation of the house - in character with the area and in compliance with guidance.

2015/0093/TP 91 Ormonde Crescent, Netherlee

Changes to the scale and position of the proposed dormer window were approved - protecting the character of the house and in compliance with guidance.

## APPENDIX 9

### PROPORTIONATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS POLICIES

These matters are covered in planning policy in the Local Development Plan (LDP) and in two fully adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents. These provide detailed, clear and transparent policy and advice for developers and landowners early in the planning process.

The Council ensures that the policies and SPGs are applied in a fair and proportionate manner, making sure that we only seek contributions that are absolutely necessary and directly linked to the impact of the particular development in question, and not seeking any more than that. In addition we make sure that where developments cumulatively require new infrastructure provision, the developments involved only pay their proportionate share of the overall infrastructure costs.

The following comments are made in view of the findings by the LDP Examination Reporter (report received in January 2015).

#### Affordable Housing.

The Affordable Housing policy SG5 includes flexibility by allowing the appropriate contribution to be made on-site or by means of a commuted sum or off site in some circumstances. Reference is also made to “viability” as a key consideration when determining the suitable level of contributions. The Examination Reporter acknowledged that the affordable housing policy/guidance “allows flexibility and provides discretion for council staff to explore, negotiate and secure different and innovative solutions to affordable housing delivery (paragraph 1.1.8). Although the affordable housing contribution should normally be delivered on-site, in some cases offsite provision or payment of a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision may be appropriate (paragraph 2.1.5)”. The Reporter also found “that the council’s approach of requiring a “minimum” 25 percent contribution on developments of 4 or more dwellings throughout the local authority area to be both proportionate and realistic within the context of the flexibility referred to in both the policy and accompanying supplementary planning guidance” and concluded that “I am satisfied that the approach is reasonable and in line with Scottish Planning Policy”.

The SPG gives detailed guidance relating to the implementation of the Council’s affordable housing policy, and assists in the interpretation and implementation of the policy. In line with SPP and PAN 2/2010 it assists in ensuring that a range of housing choice exists in East Renfrewshire and in meeting identified affordable housing need in a sustainable way.

#### Development Contributions.

Development Contributions policy is covered in the LDP Strategic Policy 3. The Reporter concluded that she was “satisfied that ... (the policy) ... sets out a realistic and achievable framework to meet identified needs without threatening the viability of sites. Paragraph 3.16.3 of the proposed plan recognises that it will not be possible to deliver all essential infrastructure through development contributions and that other funding sources, including from public sources may be required.... The council’s supplementary planning guidance clearly states that the purpose of development contributions is not to inhibit development but to alleviate issues that may prevent a development going ahead.... The methods by which the costs of contributions are calculated and the exact levels of contributions are set out in

*the supplementary planning guidance, as recommended in Circular 3/2012*". She noted that the council proposes to monitor development contributions on a regular basis and to update its supplementary planning guidance. This will allow the council to adjust the level of contribution requirements to reflect changing developmental pressures, costs or the demands placed on services. She stated that she was satisfied that the council's intention to assess the need for development contributions for each development proposal individually and on its own merits is appropriate. She concluded that she did not consider that any additional modification to the proposed plan is required.

The SPG sets out the requirement for new developments, which individually or cumulatively generate a requirement for new or increased infrastructure or services, to deliver, or contribute towards, the provision of supporting services, facilities and enhancement of the environment. Every new development proposal is assessed in its own right to determine whether it individually or cumulatively generates a requirement for new or enhanced infrastructure or services. In applying the policy, consideration is given to the scale and kind of development proposed as well as the cumulative effect of development. All contributions that are sought are so closely related to the impact of the proposed development that it should not be permitted without them. East Renfrewshire's approach to development contributions is intended to facilitate and assist negotiations around contribution from development proposals, rather than prohibit or add barriers to development.

Both SPGs were fully reviewed and updated as part of the LDP process, were the subject of extensive public consultation during 2014. Both documents were submitted to Ministers, and were subsequently adopted in June 2015.

Examples of negotiated site-specific proportionate contributions:

- At the Maidenhill Masterplan area, where there are multiple developers involved, the Council are managing the provision of some of the essential shared infrastructure improvements, for instance shared junctions. A specific example is the traffic light improvements that are needed at Mearns Cross to cope with the additional traffic that will be generated by the development - the Council are managing this by ensuring that the first developer on site will implement the improvements, but that the costs will be shared appropriately between all of the developers. Also, with regards to contributions to education provision, very careful and site-specific calculations have been carried out to ensure that each developer only contributes appropriately relative to the number of pupils that their development will generate, and not to the full school cost.
- At the Netherplace Works Retirement Village, it would normally have been appropriate for a developer to contribute towards sports and education facilities, but given the sports facilities being provided on-site, and the fact that there will be no children resident on site, these contributions were not required.



### Contact information

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