



2021

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

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Introduction

This is the tenth 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 associated teams within the Environment Department.

It looks principally at performance during the financial year April 2020 to March 2021; and then looks ahead at service improvements planned through to March 2022. It 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 covers an area of approximately 67 square miles (174km²) and exhibits a diverse range of environments. It is considered a desirable place to live and work with high quality residential areas and infrastructure, a network of important local urban greenspaces and excellent built and natural environment.

It is fair to say that 2020/21 has been a difficult year for the Council. The impact of the Covid 19 crisis, which really took hold in March 2020, has dominated the year. A summary of the implications of the crisis is included in the Covid Impact and Adaptations Case Study on page 12, so I shall not go into these in detail here. However in summary there were:

- technological difficulties, particularly at the start of the year as services and staff adapted to agile working and working from home;
- closure of offices and lack of access to necessary physical facilities;
- temporary halting and ongoing limitations to site visits;

- a build-up of planning applications, enquiries and enforcement cases; and
- staff shortages (unrelated to Covid).

Despite the above, the Council continued to deliver its planning service. The performance figures in terms of the speed of issuing planning decisions have generally dropped this year, but that is only one aspect of service. We continued to process essentially the same volume of applications as normal and in fact approved significantly more housing units than in a normal year. I am happy therefore that my team continued with significant commitment in very difficult circumstances to deliver the planning service and support the residents and economy of East Renfrewshire, and I would like to thank each one for their commitment to the Council this year.

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

Gillian McCarney
Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer)

Key Facts

Population



Since 2011, population has grown by 5.2% to 95,530 in 2019. Population is increasing and is expected to rise to 107,971 by 2043.

Both our youngest and oldest populations are increasing.

High life expectancy - males (81.3) and females (84.3).



Increasing pattern of more people settling in East Renfrewshire than are leaving. Net migration of 370.

Increasing ageing population. By 2043, 23.9% are projected to be aged 65 or over.



27.3% of residents in East Renfrewshire have a long-term health condition or disability.

Increasing demand on care services - People over 80 are the greatest users of hospital and community health services and social care.



Education



Schools are consistently amongst the highest performing in Scotland. Schools within the Eastwood area have increasingly high occupancy levels.

From 2011-19 the number of children under 5 increased by 2.2%; 5-9 year olds increased by 18%; and 10-14 year olds increased by 7.6%.

Economic



Only 18% of residents live and work in East Renfrewshire. The majority work in Glasgow (52%).

Approx. 51% of residents are in managerial, professional and technical professions.



4 Town centres - Expenditure leakage to larger centres a longstanding challenge.
23 Neighbourhood centres.

Rouken Glen Park: During the extensive 4 year restoration project (2012-2016) visitor numbers have increased from approx. 406,000 (2011) to 942,000 (2016). From April to March (2018-19) visitor numbers were 950,163.



Dams to Darnley: est. 90,000 visitors per annum.



Whitelee Windfarm: est. 100,000 visitors per annum.

Transport

Between 40-60% of all journeys in East Renfrewshire are under 5km (2014- 2017 Scottish Household Survey).



3 rail lines serving 9 stations.
89% of residents live within 400m of a bus stop and 46% within 800m of a train station.

High car ownership – 89% of households own at least 1 car.

Higher proportion of residents travel to work by car when compared to regional and Scottish averages: 64% ER compared to 56% Scottish/SPT area average.



Lower proportion of residents travel to work using active travel modes when compared to regional and Scottish averages: 4% ER compare to 9% SPT area and 11% Scotland.

42.5% of East Renfrewshire pupils usually walk or cycle to school and around a half are driven to school.



Environment



Rich and varied environment: 6 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 1 Local Nature Reserve, 5 conservation areas, 137 listed buildings and 2 gardens and designed landscapes.

429HAs of greenspace accounting for 15.25% of the urban area.

77.9% of residential properties are within 200m of greenspace.



Volume of waste recycled has increased since 2013 and approaching target of 60% by 2020.



The level of air pollution is low.

Housing

From 2011 to 2018, the number of households has risen by 4.5 per cent to 38,902.

Owner occupation is the dominant form of tenure - 82% of all housing stock.



Increasing single person households - 32 % in 2017 and by 2041 this is expected to grow to 39%.

House prices in the Eastwood area remain amongst the most expensive in Scotland.

Buoyant housing market with strong developer interest.



Increasing demand for private sector rental market in Eastwood area. Social Rented homes comprise 6% of all homes in Eastwood and 27% in Levern Valley. Rising number of private sector rental properties.

Qualitative Narrative & Case Studies

1



1.1 Quality of Outcomes

- (a) The **Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP1)** (June 2015) sets out a sustainable approach to new development within our area and promotes well designed places which are accessible and where facilities and services meet the needs of our residents.

Establishing **high standards of design** in new development is key to successful placemaking. We promote the principles set out in “designing streets”, deliver on the 6 qualities of a successful place as outlined in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and encourage the use of design statements to accompany new development. Our Local Development Plan policies promote the inclusion of green infrastructure and resource and energy efficiency within new development.

The Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) (2019) also has a strong focus on raising the quality and standards of design. The Proposed Plan prioritises the importance of design and placemaking in order to protect and enhance East Renfrewshire’s existing built and natural environment, cultural heritage, biodiversity and to make places more attractive, sustainable, safer and well connected through access to a range of active travel options and transport networks. The Proposed LDP2 was submitted to Scottish Ministers for Examination in August 2020. It is estimated the Examination will be concluded Summer 2021 with formal adoption later in the year.

Sixteen **Supplementary Planning Guidance** (SPGs) have been adopted alongside LDP1. These are published on our website and have been prepared and consulted upon with a wide range of stakeholders including key agencies, communities and the development industry.

These include three site-specific **masterplans** for Maidenhill, Barrhead South and Barrhead North which set out the Strategic Development Opportunities which are a core component of the development strategy promoted through LDP1. They also include **‘Affordable Housing’** and **‘Development Contributions’** which assist in providing detailed, clear, transparent and proportionate advice to developers and landowners on planning obligations early in the planning process.

We have one non-statutory Planning Guidance on ‘Waste Strategy for New Developments’.

We will be reviewing all Supplementary Guidance as part of the Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) with a particular focus on Placemaking and Design, Green Networks and Infrastructure, Development Contributions, Affordable Housing and Low and Zero Carbon Delivery.

Through East Renfrewshire Council’s Sustainable Procurement Strategy and Local Development Plan the Council sets out a commitment to seek **community benefits** from private sector partners. The overall aim is to maximise socio-economic and employability benefits from ERC contracts and private sector development in the local area. The priority of the Environment Department is to deliver community benefits



from major projects such as City Deal, capital investments and the significant residential developments allocated in the LDP.

ERC's community benefits policy is driven by both the economic development and sustainable procurement strategies and supporting community benefits processes were strengthened in 2020/21 with through the ERC Community Benefits Champions Group and the introduction of a Community Benefits Wish List. Further information in relation to this can be found at Section 1.2k and the Community Benefits Case Study.

- (b) We have contributed to the **Council's Local Outcome Improvement Plan** (the Fairer East Ren Plan) and the preparation of 4 Locality Plans in collaboration with our Community Planning Partners and the wider community and have undertaken various separate consultation events to inform future proposals within several areas. The locality plans are reflected in Policy M5 of the Proposed LDP2.

This work has helped to improve more accessible open spaces, opportunities for recreation, biodiversity and green corridors.

We actively encourage communities to take part in **placemaking projects** within their areas and the use of more effective community engagement methods including the Place Standard Tool, online consultation and drop in sessions have improved participation and diversity of response. Increasing involvement in the planning system

will provide communities and other groups with a central role in the creation of our future places.

Projects are developed and funded in partnership with a range of stakeholders and project costs are met via various sources including Council capital funding and development contributions and grant funding including Sustrans, SEPA, Scottish Government and Leader.

The Making Places Dunterlie project is a good example of collaborative working and has been publicised through the Council's website.

We have promoted **environmental and educational projects** and events which support sustainability, environmental education, health, well-being and community empowerment, including Dams to Darnley Country Park and the Whitelee Access Project.

Project staff and the Countryside Ranger Service provide a front line service and work in partnership with a number of local authorities, landowners and organisations.

We are developing other green network improvements across the Council area and are focused on a range of work which seeks to improve the quality, function and diversity of greenspace alongside opportunities for active travel and improved connectivity. This work seeks to enhance the local environment and encourage community participation in future proposals and environmental based activity.

The provision of green networks in new developments remains a core component of the Development strategy for Proposed LDP2.

- (c) **Town centres** remain an important element of economic activity within East Renfrewshire. Changing shopping habits, the effects of Coronavirus, business restrictions and social distancing measures continue to have an impact, leading to short term and potentially, longer term decline of activity in some areas and within some sectors. Working in partnership with our Business Improvement Districts (BID) in Giffnock, Clarkston and Barrhead, the Chamber of Commerce and other key stakeholders we continue to develop initiatives to promote town centre improvement and regeneration. .

At present, the focus of activity is on supporting our local businesses, getting town centres opened for business and making sure all our town centres are safe for local users, traders and visitors alike. East Renfrewshire has a number of established town centres, such as Giffnock and Barrhead, which are expected to remain resilient and the Council aims to ensure all town centres are supported and able to grow, diversify & develop through investment and initiatives. Our Shop Local campaign, which links to the Scotland's Towns Partnership National campaign, has been well received by shoppers and businesses. Building on this work, our new Place branding will promote East Renfrewshire has a great place to live, work, visit and invest.

Scottish Government's "Spaces for People

funding” will assist in implementing a number of temporary and longer term public realm interventions to assist in safe, physical distancing for essential journey’s and exercise within our town centres to ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone.

The allocation of £981k in Town Centre Funding (TCF) from Scottish Government presents the opportunity for significant investment. Our two Town Centre Regeneration officers who have been in post since March 2020 have been working with town centre recovery groups and within the community to develop place-based projects that will improve our local areas. Town centre audits have been refreshed and these have informed a Town and Neighbourhood Action Plan to prioritise future delivery and development work.

Amongst other projects, the TCF will enable the delivery of intelligent lighting in Barrhead, access and infrastructure improvements around The Avenue and improvements to Fairweather park; a strategic approach to winter lighting across all town and neighbourhood centres; planting and small-scale environmental interventions to enhance the visual attractiveness of Neilston and public realm and access improvements at Glasgow Road shops in Eaglesham

Planning and consultation for major investment and regeneration in Neilston is underway. Community engagement enabled through the Scottish Government’s “Making Places Fund” has built capacity in Dunterlie and established a wide range of ideas for the regeneration,

specifically focused around Dunterlie Park.

- (d) ERC is a participant in ‘**Glasgow City Region City Deal**’ which is delivering £44 million of major business and leisure infrastructure and improved transportation links over a 5-10 year period within East Renfrewshire. The City Deal programme aims to drive innovation and sustainable and inclusive economic growth, bringing new employment opportunities to East Renfrewshire.

During 2020 works were completed on the upgrade of Balgraystone Road in Barrhead. These works provide improved access to the Dams to Darnley Country Park and created an active travel route. Housing sites have been opened up for development and work has commenced on new social housing on one of the sites. The works also included some infrastructure required for the proposed train station at Barrhead South and St Luke’s High School car park was upgraded.

Work continues on plans for the train station at Barrhead South and ERC are working closely with Transport Scotland to deliver the project. The design work is also complete on a project to improve Aurs Road. These works comprise of some road straightening, the replacement of a weak bridge and the construction of an active travel route and a boardwalk. Scottish Water require to do some culvert works and this will be delivered in the ERC project. The works are due to start on site in 2022.

- (e) Significant **housing development** is underway across the Council area, with an increase in completion rates and strong developer interest. All 3 strategic development opportunities are well advanced and a number of other programmed sites have come forward. A number of significant planning permissions were issued this year, with a total of 792 housing consents (plus an 80 bed nursing home) issued in 2020/21, which is well above the usual rates. Whilst the speed of issuing decisions has dropped this year principally



due to the COVID-19 situation, the service has continued for function and the issuing of consent has progressed as a priority.

Relevant and proportionate development contributions have been secured from residential development sites towards the cost of providing or improving critical infrastructure and supporting services (via the Development Contributions SPG).

In 2020/21, a total of 34 new build affordable homes were delivered, via the Council's affordable housing policy for Registered Social Landlords on development sites in Neilston and Newton Mearns. 7 of these new build units were built to accessible standards (21% of those built).

In addition East Renfrewshire Council has ambitions to build over 200 new homes for social rent over the 5 year period of the current Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) (2020-25). To date 45 Council new build homes for social rent have been completed across 3 different site in Barrhead, delivering a range of house types including 1 bedroom flats (some specifically designed for our over 60s client group) and larger family homes to address identified housing needs and meet aspirations.

Construction of affordable housing continues in 2021/22 with sites well underway to deliver an additional 39 Council new build homes in Newton Mearns (the first in a generation); a further 47 Council new homes in Barrhead (delivering a mix of 1 - 4 bed homes across both sites); and further

RSL new build units are due to be delivered on a number of development sites across the area under the Council's affordable housing policy.

(f) 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 reported in every report of handling. It is assessed that 46% 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 1 for more information

(g) We have an up-to-date **enforcement charter** and are active in pursuing solutions to uses and development which detract from the local environment. In 2020/21 we created a new post and employed a new Development Compliance Officer. This officer works across Development Management and Building Standards to ensure a joined-up approach to investigating breaches of control across these two related services. This post will allow greater resources to be dedicated

to enforcement matters to the benefit of the environment of East Renfrewshire.

- (h) **Transport Response to COVID 19.** The Council has supported a dynamic approach to the development of plans and proposal to help residents respond and adapt to COVID-19. It includes actions to protect public health. It also considers longer term objectives, such as how we manage our transport network sustainably and how best support the revitalisation of our local economy by encouraging people to shop locally. Key funding was secured from Sustrans & Transport Scotland 'Spaces for People' programme to identify temporary measures that help residents practice physical distancing and to move around safely in public spaces during COVID-19 (see Case Study on A77). The key principles involved have included:
- Ensuring compliance with government guidance
 - Enablement of essential journeys to be made safely
 - Support for vulnerable people
 - Support for the local economy
 - Plan for both short and longer term



Case Study Title:

Covid Impact and Adaptations

Overview:

The Covid-19 lockdown implications started in March 2020 shortly before the start of the 2020/21 year. At that point, because of the risk of infection and the social distancing requirements, the Council offices, including the planning office at Spiersbridge were closed to staff and the public. Officers therefore were required to work from home. We had been in the process of introducing more 'agile' working (allowing people to work at any location including at home, at any Council office or elsewhere), so we were at best only partially prepared for the impact of lockdown.

The main impacts have been felt within the Development Management Team. Prior to March 2020, we had been working and trialling laptops and other 'tablets'. However there were a number of limitations:

- The technology was not available to all staff, covering all roles e.g. the planning officers roles were relatively 'agile' but the technical and support roles were not;
- Networks speeds outwith Council offices were sometimes very slow, so working was difficult;
- Some tasks needed office-based hardware e.g. printers, scanners, mail-out facilities e.g. for neighbour notifications; so some parts of the service were temporarily halted;
- It would be fair to say that some officers adapted better to agile working than others, depending on their IT skills and job roles;
- Site visits were not undertaken for a period, then reintroduced only on a limited basis. Site visits have still not been reintroduced for the Planning Applications Committee or Local Review Body;
- Difficulty initially accessing appropriate software for conference calls;
- Difficulty for some officers in particular with their home set up e.g. not having dedicated work space, initially not having adequate hardware/physical equipment e.g. larger screen, proper desk, office chair etc. (although these were subsequently provided following Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments – see below). There is also a continuing need/preference for appropriate hardware e.g. double/multiple large-screen monitor set-up that is only available in the office; and
- Difficulty some people had working from home with other family members e.g. children home-schooling in the same room, with resultant disruption to work and concentration.

A number of adaptations were implemented:

- Laptop/mobile technology including mobile phones were rolled out to all staff as appropriate;
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments were carried out of home/work environments, and where appropriate staff were provide with equipment e.g. separate monitors, office chairs, desks etc. to ensure that health and safety standards were met. Telephone helpline arrangements being altered to suit handling enquiries when customers were no longer able to visit the office;
- When appropriate, once some easing was allowed, the office at Spiersbridge opened certain hours during the week to allow tasks that needed to be done in the office. This started a few hours a week, then continued for the rest of the year opening mornings only. This allowed all necessary office tasks to be undertaken;
- Enforcement work was limited due to difficulties in undertaking site visits and workload pressures and the pre-application advice service was limited (see below).

Case Study Title:**Covid Impact and Adaptations (cont.)****Overview:**

Despite the above, there was a large loss of working capacity and productivity. There was a period when no neighbour notifications could be sent out, therefore no new planning applications could be registered. There was a period when applications and mail which came in by paper could not be scanned and entered in the case files. Productivity and timescales for dealing with planning applications therefore reduced, and this has resulted in much poorer performance figures this year in terms of speed of reaching decisions. To reduce pressure and stress on officers, part-way through the year, the telephone support service was reduced from five mornings to three mornings per week. We also limited the pre-application service that we offered, only continuing to offer it for developments that were proposing significant economic benefit to the area e.g. new house-building, or were for Council priority projects e.g. new nurseries.

This period also unfortunately coincided with a number of staff shortages e.g. the Principal Planning Officer post in the Development Management Team was vacant for a number of months and we also had a vacancy in a planning officer post. This exacerbated staffing issues and Development Management performance figures. We employed an agency worker for a number of months to assist in clearing the backlog of planning applications that built up, and that assisted to an extent, but further vacancies, work limitations and the continuing restrictions to the office continue to mean that planning application timescales have not returned to the previous performance levels.

Notwithstanding the above, we continued to handle virtually the same number of planning applications as we usually do (702 applications compared to 708 last year) and continued to issue planning decisions via delegated powers and the Planning Applications Committee. We might have expected, with Covid-19 lockdown in effect, that the volume of work/applications would have declined, but that was not the case. So we did get through essentially the same volume of work as last year, it was just that processing speeds were detrimentally affected. 792 housing units were approved during the year (more than any of the past 5 years and more than double the average over this period) showing that work continued at high volumes and consents continued to be issued, thus supporting employment and the economy.

The Development Plans Team adapted reasonably well to the Covid restrictions. The IT systems and hardware requirements are not so complex, so adaptation to agile working was easier. The travel and social-distancing restrictions however did delay and limit some development monitoring e.g. officers could not go out on site to monitor housing completions, business/industrial land take-up, vacant/derelict land monitoring etc. Work towards the examination of the Local Development Plan 2 progressed much to timescale.

A number of projects were implemented to assist with the Covid-19 situation, particularly with regards to safe and sustainable transport e.g. see separate Case Study on the A77 Pop-up Bike & Roll Corridor and comments in section 1.1(h).

Case Study Title:**A77 'Pop-up' Bike & Roll Corridor****Location and Dates:**

A77 Ayr Road & Fenwick Road

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Quality of service and engagement | • Quality of outcomes | • Quality of service and engagement |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|

Key Markers:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| • Corporate working across services | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|

Key areas of work:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Sustainable Transport | • COVID Recovery | • Community Engagement | • Collaborative Working |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|

Stakeholders involved:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|------------|
| • Authority Strategy Staff | • Authority Roads & Transportation Staff | • Authority Operations Staff | • Sustrans |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|------------|

Overview:

Development of protected temporary cycle lanes between Newton Mearns & Giffnock, supported with a reduced speed limit and mandatory cycle lane markings to enable more active travel and improve road safety.

Delivered via Sustrans / Transport Scotland 'Spaces for People' funding, proposals respond to community feedback to provide segregated cycle facilities along the A77 road corridor in order to support active journeys during COVID restrictions. Part of a series of local 'response measures' included within East Renfrewshire Council's Transport Response to COVID-19, measures utilise temporary materials to safeguard existing cycle facilities and support road space reallocation to support sustainable transport options. This in turn will support future strategic ambitions to deliver quality active travel infrastructure in the area.

Goals:**Key goals include:**

- help keep people safe and maintain physical distancing while walking, cycling and wheeling
- promote active and healthy lifestyles
- reduce pressure on public transport and unnecessary car journeys

Outcomes:

During COVID, East Renfrewshire Council had to consider innovative ways to engage community and stakeholders. This included the use of online platforms such as 'Storymaps' and Commonplace heatmaps and design feedback hubs. This led to the delivery of over 10km of dedicated cycle lanes along a primary transport corridor connecting communities with key locations and services. As well as supporting national and regional COVID Transport Transition plans, measures represent a collaborative approach across different council services. This includes trialing new or adjusted road layouts, understand key issues arising from the changes and how this informs future strategic and operational plans for the A77 road corridor. This includes impacts on residents and road users as well as key learnings regarding maintenance of any future active travel infrastructure for the area.

Key Officer:

John Shelton, Senior Strategy Officer (Roads & Transportation)



Case Study Title:**Placemaking: Levern Water Restoration****Location and Dates:**

Barrhead 2018 to 2022

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

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|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| • Quality of outcomes | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|

Key Markers:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| • Corporate working across services | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|

Key areas of work:

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derelict Land • Climate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centres • Biodiversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary working • Collaborative working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management • Community engagement |
|--|--|--|--|

Stakeholders involved:

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEPA • Scottish Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local School • Local community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrhead Housing Association | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustrans |
|--|---|--|--|

Overview:

A place based project to transform derelict land into green infrastructure that provides natural flood defence and new public greenspace. The project will transform 1 ha of derelict land with a diversion of the Levern Water improving flood resilience and creating riverside gardens and community food growing space. The project is a collaboration between East Renfrewshire Council and SEPA. The project board includes the local school and Sustrans. The project design has been developed in collaboration with Scottish Water and Barrhead Housing Association. The project is funded by Sustrans with additional funding from Sustrans

Goals:

The project will achieve the following objectives: remove 1 ha of derelict land and the accompanying blight on 38 adjoining homes, remove flooding on Church Road, provide quick and safe walking access between the Main Street and train station, facilitate new social housing by providing a high quality riverside setting, support the return of salmon to the upper reaches of the Levern, provide community food growing space, reverse negative perceptions of the area as a no go zone.

Outcomes:

In 2020/21 the project concluded the detailed design stage. This followed two years of development work, including public engagement, scoping and feasibility, hydrological modelling, ground investigation and outline design work. It is hoped to construct the project in 2022.

Key Officer:

Mark Brand (Strategy Officer)

Case Study Title:

Glasgow City Region City Deal: East Renfrewshire M77 Strategic Corridor - Greenlaw Business Centre

Location and Dates:

Greenlaw Business Centre, Newton Mearns. Construction started in 2018, with build completion March 2019 and fitting-out and occupation expected late 2021

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes

Key Markers:

- Early collaboration with applicants
- Corporate working across departments
- Developer contributions: clear expectations

Key areas of work:

- Economic Development
- Community benefits

Stakeholders involved:

- Glasgow City Region City Deal (principal funder)
- Local communities through educational engagement with schools and college students and apprenticeships/job creation
- Local residents as business owners/managers and existing/new employees
- Authority Staff ranging across planning/building control, roads, economic development, legal/procurement as well as economy & infrastructure.

Overview:

The construction of this new build business centre at a prominent and accessible location in Newton Mearns will provide modern quality office accommodation suitable for start-ups, growing businesses and third sector organisations locating to East Renfrewshire as well as enterprises already based in the area.

Goals:

The availability of additional business accommodation in the area will contribute to the development and diversification of East Renfrewshire's business and employment base. This is a key priority of the Local Development Plan. Greater availability and choice of modern local business space also facilitates options to reduce commuting, with environmental benefits, as well as promoting work-life balance. Both objectives are integral to the LDP and wider Council corporate strategies and plans.

The construction contract for the business centre was framed in light of the Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy and City Deal's goals to generate community benefits along with supply chain development, especially for small-medium sized enterprises (SMEs) based in the City Region.

Outcomes:

A new completed business centre in Newton Mearns providing 36 offices suites over 14,000sq.ft of lettable space. An operator has been appointed to manage the building and once Covid restriction allow, the office space will be marketed. The building car park is currently being used as a Mobile Testing Centre and the staff are using the building for welfare facilities.

It is projected that in time, around 100 jobs could be based at the centre. The main contractor for the build, Morrison Construction placed 100% of sub-contract work with companies located in Scotland, with 80% of these companies being categorised as SMEs. The build contract resulted in the creation of 3 new jobs and 4 apprenticeships. Morrison Construction's community benefits package included working with the Council and Clyde College to fully fund 2 pre-apprenticeship construction courses for students resident in the City Region, including East Renfrewshire.

Key Officer:

Alan Robertson, Project Manager, Economy & Infrastructure

Case Study Title:**East Renfrewshire Council Community Benefits****Location and Dates:**

Local Authority Wide

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| • Quality of outcomes | • Quality of service and engagement | • Culture of continuous improvement | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|

Key Markers:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| • Early collaboration with applicants | • Production of regular and proportionate advice | • Developer contributions: clear expectations | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|

Key areas of work:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development • Community Benefits • Interdisciplinary Working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Working • Community Engagement • Performance Monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Improvement • Skills Sharing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Training • Online Systems |
|---|---|---|--|

Stakeholders involved:

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public • Hard to reach groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local developers • Key agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FE and HE partners • Authority Planning Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Other Staff • Other (Please note) |
|--|--|--|--|

Overview:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and stakeholder engagement on an ongoing basis to inform the process and outcomes. • Participation in regional partnership working and acting as a regional pilot to develop a new wish list approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of the community benefits process between the economic development and procurement teams • Advice and support to provide clear guidance to private sector partners. • Monitoring and reporting activity to provide evidence of benefits achieved. |
|---|---|

Goals:

Through East Renfrewshire Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy and Local Development Plan the council sets out a commitment to seek community benefits from private sector partners. The overall aim is to maximise socio-economic, employability and environmental benefits from ERC contracts and private sector development in the local area. The Council offers a proactive and supportive approach with the private sector to provide early, strong and clear guidance on local social, economic and environmental priorities.

Outcomes:

During 2020/21 the ERC Community Benefits Champions Group met quarterly to steer the strategic direction of community benefits requests. This group includes representatives from procurement, employability, community services and education. The purpose of the group is to align community benefits requests fairly and accurately to meet the needs of the community. The group influenced the community benefits clauses to be included in procurement contracts relating to the capital programme and City Deal. For example, the Council Housing construction contract and the Aurs Road Realignment contract.

The community benefits lead is involved in a Glasgow City Deal Community Benefits working group that works to standardise community benefits policy and processes across the city region.

Case Study Title:**East Renfrewshire Council Community Benefits (cont.)****Outcomes:**

During 20/21 ERC developed a new community benefit wish list that allows communities to make requests for support from ERC suppliers through an online form on the ERC website. This approach is being used as a pilot for the City Region, the outcome may influence the development of a regional wish list. The community have engaged well with the wish list and have submitted 26 wishes, and the team will work with suppliers to support these in 2021/22.

Key Officer:

Lorna Wallace, Senior Development Officer – Place and Benefits Realisation

HERE IS HOME

Shop, explore, love East Ren

**EAST
RENFREWSHIRE**



Case Study Title:**Council House Building****Location and Dates:**

Various Locations throughout East Renfrewshire

Elements of a High Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| • Quality of outcomes | • Quality of service and engagement | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|

Key Markers:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| • Early collaboration with applicants | • Corporate working across services | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|

Key areas of work:

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design • Regeneration • Town Centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Develop Plan & Supplementary Guidance • Housing Supply • Affordable Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development • Interdisciplinary Working • Collaborative Working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement • Placemaking • Project Management |
|--|---|--|---|

Stakeholders involved:

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public • Hard to reach groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Developers • Key Agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Committee • Authority Planning Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Other Staff |
|--|--|--|---|

Overview:

East Renfrewshire Council is progressing with plans for its Council new build development programme to deliver in the region of 240 affordable homes for social rent over a 5 year period, which will assist in meeting a significant demand for this tenure throughout the local area.

Goals:

The aim is to provide high quality homes and create vibrant communities where residents chose to live, whilst improving the local environment and protecting the character of existing areas. Objectives: to provide new high quality homes that are fit for purpose; are a catalyst for creating new and consolidating existing local communities; are affordable and environmentally friendly; are providing choice; are secure; and are cost effective to manage and maintain.

Outcomes:

Tenants have begun moving into brand new council houses in the Maidenhill area of Newton Mearns as construction on the first phase of the development is completed. Built for East Renfrewshire Council by Taylor Wimpey West Scotland, these new affordable homes are the first new council houses to be built in Newton Mearns in a generation. The development, which received £2.3million funding from the Scottish Government, comprises of 12 one-bed cottage flats, eight two-bedroom cottage flats, two two-bedroom houses, 16 three-bedroom houses and one four-bed house. Following last year's COVID-19 lockdown, construction on site safely began in July and the team successfully completed these first builds on time, allowing tenants and families to begin moving into their new homes from mid-April 2021. It is expected that all homes will be handed over by the end of September 2021.

As well as providing these high quality affordable homes for social rent and contributions towards the provision of land and funding for the new Maidenhill Primary School, by the end of 2020, Taylor Wimpey paid over £930,000 in developer contributions for completions of new homes. Further contributions are due in May for the first quarter of this year. The Council and developer have already confirmed an additional 30 affordable homes for social rent, which are targeted for delivery by mid-2022, and discussions are also continuing for a further 13 properties for 2022/23.

Case Study Title:**Council House Building (cont.)****Outcomes:**

Sue Gray, who moved into her new home earlier this month, said: 'I feel very happy and appreciative of this new home I have moved into. It is lovely up here in Maidenhill and I feel settled already. There are many new homes around me and with the new school in place nearby, I look forward to the seeing the community and area develop over the coming months and years. It is comforting to feel safe here and I very much see this as my forever home.'

East Renfrewshire Council Housing and Maintenance Convener, Councillor Danny Devlin, who visited the site, said: 'I am absolutely delighted that through Taylor Wimpey we are able to provide people with such great flats and houses here. There is a strong community growing in Maidenhill, with a state of the art new school, so I know that these tenants will be very happy in their new homes. East Renfrewshire continues to be an extremely popular place to live and this is why we began our ambitious house build project back in 2018; the results of which continue to provide families and individuals with high-quality, affordable homes in our communities. This development reflects our aspirations and I would like to thank Taylor Wimpey for the work they have done.' This development comes following two years of ambitious house building in Barrhead by the Council, with further construction continuing across East Renfrewshire.

Key Officers:

Elaine McShane, Senior Development Officer; Karen Barrie, Principal Strategy Officer (AH&DC Lead)



1.2 Quality of Service and Engagement

- (a) We normally have an **open-office policy** from however during the COVID-19 situation this has not been possible. We have retained a telephone help-line and our planning mail-box in order to assist customers with their enquiries. Customer advisors are trained in introductory planning and building standards matters.

Staff can also be contacted by telephone and the contact phone number is on most web pages and all correspondence with the public to assist them in contacting the right person.

- (b) **Pre-application advice** on development proposals is available free of charge although the Council has approved a range of charges to be made in the future, which will be implemented in 2021/22. During 2020/21 we limited our intake of pre-application enquiries, only providing advice on applications which were considered to have a significant economic impact or were for priority projects such as housing development. The full service is planned to be reinstated when the new charging arrangements are implemented later in 2021. Nevertheless, we received 404 written pre-application enquiries. 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 62% as many pre-application enquiries as planning applications. Of the 651 planning applications, 196 had been the subject of a pre-application enquiry i.e. 30%. This indicates that we had

208 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.

We encourage applicants to discuss their proposals with the Council at an early stage before they make their planning application. This advice is given free of charge. This service allows potential developers the opportunity to find out which Council policies apply to their proposal. Officers may also advise on whether the proposal appears to meet or conflict with these policies. Pre-application advice (both for major and local developments) will normally, where appropriate, include comment on both the principle and detailed aspects of the proposal; will refer to any need for planning obligations and/or legal agreements and we will offer a processing agreement where appropriate (see below).

Where possible and appropriate, discussions on planning obligations will commence at an early stage in the planning process before an application is submitted (pre-application). The Supplementary Planning Guidance states that the policies on both affordable housing and development contributions should be factored into development appraisals prior to land deals and commercial decisions being taken. Once a member of staff deals with a formal pre-

application enquiry, they will follow the proposal through to the application and monitoring, giving consistency of contact and advice.

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. Despite the COVID-19 situation, planning application and pre-application enquiries kept at a similar level to previous years. With the limitations on working practices because of COVID-19 (including officers working from home, limited ICT capabilities, limited site visits), there was an effect on the volume and speed of responses that were able to be given and accordingly the achievement of response targets was poorer than in previous years.

We offer **processing agreements** for all major developments and will also consider them for some of the more significant local developments.

- (c) A range of **modern procedures** are now in place. In addition to extensive planning advice and information as text on the planning webpages, the following are published as additional guidance:
- Permitted development rights
 - Processing agreements policy and template
 - Supporting information requirements

- Decision making and appeals process
- The planning hierarchy
- Pre-application consultation for local communities
- Pre-application consultation for local applicants
- Comment on a planning application
- Standard planning conditions
- Protocol for dealing with planning obligations
- Decision making and appeals
- Your guide to Tree Preservation Orders
- Application for High Hedge Notice Form and Guidance
- Pre-application advice and negotiation procedures on planning applications
- Scale of Fees
- How to pay for your planning application

(d) A comprehensive **online planning information service** is available giving customers access to a wide range of planning information. Information on planning applications is available online for applications since year 2000.

The Council's website gives a full range of planning information, documents and forms, including all local planning documents. Under normal non-COVID-19 circumstances 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.

We publish online 'weekly lists' of planning applications received along with a list of 'current'

i.e. all un-decided extant planning applications.

Social media (facebook) has been used where appropriate to help share information with the public e.g. consultation on the Proposed LDP.

(e) We encourage **online application submissions** via 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 (or are unable to) submit online. The percentage of planning applications submitted online continued to rise to 95% in 2020/21 (up from 84% in 2019/20). Online electronic payments now stand at 85%, with electronic transfer (BACS & internal transfer) at 4.5% and card payment over the phone at 9.5%. These increased electronic processes bringing improved efficiencies.

(f) At the **planning application validation** stage, a senior officer checks the application 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 Officer/Senior 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.

(g) **Proportionate supporting information**

- 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. The guidance states "we shall only require these where they are absolutely necessary in order for us to assess the proposal". It covers, for instance where a Transport Statement will be expected rather than a full Transport Assessment. It also advises on thresholds for various documents such as Environmental Impact Assessments or Retail Impact Assessments. Applicants are encouraged to discuss these requirements with the Council in advance of their submission in order to ensure that submissions are focused and fit for purpose. This also helps to increase the percentage of planning applications that are valid upon receipt - which is regularly monitored in order to contribute to speeding up the planning process as a whole.

(h) The Council approved over 90% of applications in 2020/21, some subject to conditions, illustrating a positive approach to development. Through the monitoring of building warrants and completion certificates we see that the Development Management and Building Standards teams have facilitated the approval of over £105 million of development value in the area this year (up from £90 million last year). Over £35 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.

- (i) We have a **‘major development team’** which brings together professionals from across the Council. This gives developers easy and early access to planning and other Services, thus giving developers the opportunity at one meeting to get the views of a range of professionals. This assists in providing a co-ordinated response to proposals, together with advice on what documents are required to validate and support the application.

Responses to the developers are co-ordinated by a named planning case officer (for major developments it will always be a senior or principal officer) who oversees the project from the pre-application stage to decision and monitoring. This team may be convened for major or any other significant development e.g. sites that are LDP priorities or which raise new or unusual issues for the Council. This procedure, in conjunction with our processing agreements policy (see section 1.2b), allows planning applications to be project managed and provides a comprehensive and faster development management service.

- (j) We have a protocol for dealing with **planning obligations** which promotes the early drafting and speeding up of legal agreements. Discussions can commence at the pre-application stage, and this helps to ensure that there is no undue delays to the issuing of planning permission and can help facilitate a quicker start to development on

the ground. We set a high priority to our target of completion of legal agreements within 3 months of being minded to grant permission (subject to the appropriate legal agreement).

- (k) The Council has a **sustainable procurement policy** which covers both community benefits and sustainability. The priority of the Environment Department is to deliver community benefits from major projects such as City Deal, capital investments and the significant developments allocated in LDP1 and to create supplier development opportunities for local businesses.

The Council offers a proactive and supportive approach with the private sector to provide early, strong and clear guidance on **local social, economic and environmental priorities**.

Community benefits are sought for suitable contracts where both the value (over £50,000) and duration of the contract merit a benefit being pursued. In addition the Environment Department seeks community benefits from private developers operating in the area. A proactive and supportive approach is offered to the private sector to provide early, strong and clear guidance on local social, economic and environmental beneficiaries.

The Environment Department is involved in a Glasgow City Deal Community Benefits working group that works to standardise community benefits policy and processes across the city region. (see Section 1.1(a) and the Case Study on Community Benefits).

- (l) We have an adopted **Local Development Plan (LDP1)** and the associated Action Programme provides the basis for the successful delivery of LDP1 policies and proposals. A revised Action Programme has been prepared to support the Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)..

Meeting educational needs is a key issue for LDP2. The Proposed LDP2 has been informed by extensive collaborative work between the Strategy Team and the Education Department and has led to a full review of the school estate which has informed the LDP2 strategy up to 2031 and beyond and provides a strong evidence base for future LDPs. Further information can be found in the Collaborative Working - Forecasting of Future Educational Infrastructure Needs case study.

- (m) A detailed **Monitoring Statement** was prepared to support and inform LDP1. The Monitoring Statement forms an essential part of the evidence base for the LDP1 and monitors the most recent changes in the physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area. Regular monitoring is important in identifying the impact of changing circumstances on policy effectiveness. A refreshed Monitoring Statement was prepared to support the Main Issues Report (MIR) for Proposed LDP2 in November 2016 and has been used to inform it. The Housing Land Audit, Vacant and Derelict Land study and Business and Employment Land monitoring is also undertaken annually to inform the LDP.

- (n) The Council commenced a review of LDP1 in October 2016 with the publication of the **MIR** for consultation. The MIR set out the Council's preferred options and possible alternatives and has informed the Proposed LDP2.

The Proposed Plan has been prepared following extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders, including with key agencies such as Transport Scotland, the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Water, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, the Health Boards, Community Councils, other council departments such as education and the roads service, community groups and the wider public.

The extent of consultation undertaken is set out in the Report of Conformity with the Participation Statement and which clearly shows that the Council has met and in many cases significantly exceeded the minimum statutory consultation requirements. It is considered that there have been various opportunities and methods of communication, consultation and engagement for communities to shape the Plan and provide comment at the different stages of the plan making process. Examples of this include an 8 week consultation period for the Proposed Plan rather than the 6 week minimum; drop in sessions; social media; use of posters and events with primary and secondary school children.

- (o) The **State of the Environment Report** forms the foundation of strategic environmental assessments (SEA) undertaken for the LDP1, Proposed LDP2 and supporting documents together with wider strategy work. However, given the wide range in subjects it is also useful for strategic environmental assessments being undertaken by other sections of the Council. The State of the Environment Report provides environmental data focused on 9 subjects. Each subject has a range of objectives, aimed at providing a means to identify trends in data and ultimately assess whether there are any positive or negative environmental trends. This report is updated annually.

The SEA highlights any adverse impacts that land use change and development, brought about by the Policies and Proposals contained within LDP1, may have on the environment. The SEA process has helped to inform the LDP1 including the development strategy and the preferred housing sites. It has now been used to assess and inform the MIR and the Proposed LDP2. The SEA process also gives the public and interested parties increased opportunity to become aware of the environmental implications of the LDP, engage in the LDP process and influence the environment of their area.

- (p) Joint working on the **Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan (Clydeplan)** at officer and Member levels ensures coordinated and collective action and delivery on a wide range of topics across the region, including housing, economy, retail and green networks. Clydeplan was approved in July 2017. We will continue to work closely with our neighbouring authorities to ensure that opportunities for economic growth and the creation of sustainable patterns of development and infrastructure needs are planned for collaboratively across boundaries and to deliver inclusive growth that will be shared throughout all our communities.

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 will replace Strategic Development Plans (SDP) with Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). The current 8 Clydeplan Local Authorities have continued to work together to prepare the first indicative RSS. Unlike Clydeplan the RSS will not form part of the development plan. The existing Spatial Development Strategy of Clydeplan has informed the iRSS with refinement rather than fundamental change of approach to the strategy itself. East Renfrewshire Council will continue to play an active role in the preparation and alignment of a future RSS and Regional Economic Strategy for the Glasgow City region.

A Development Management forum comprising officers from the eight Glasgow and Clyde Valley local authorities is in place to provide a consistent approach to the assessment of strategic development proposals, to provide a collective understanding of the range of strategic applications for monitoring purposes and to provide an opportunity to discuss best practice examples.

- (q) We **monitor a range of development approvals** through the Local Development Plan, including greenbelt development and concentrates on 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. Monitoring at the end of year 2020/21 has been delayed by the restrictions imposed by Covid-19, and this has affected the availability of some of the statistics in Section 4 of this report. All monitoring will be undertaken in due course once circumstances allow.

In preparing the Proposed LDP2 the housing land requirements for each Local Authority across the Clydeplan region were reassessed to accord with the review of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP2). A revised Regional Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) provides housing

estimates up to 2029 for each Local Authority. From these estimates Housing Supply Targets (HSTs) have been prepared. These targets are also set out in the Council's LHS. The outcomes of this assessment replace the current housing targets set out in SDP1 and LDP1.

Monitoring of the housing land supply through the Housing Land Audit clearly demonstrates that there is a generous housing land supply to meet the Housing Land Requirement of Clydeplan by 2029; and there is a generous 5 year effective land supply in accordance with the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy and Clydeplan.

- (r) **Transparency and involvement** in the process are two key factors that have provided a foundation for the creation of a detailed and robust LDP. We seek to ensure all stakeholders and interested groups are fully engaged in the LDP and Action Programme preparation, which helps in ensuring that policies, proposals and actions are deliverable within timescale. We also aim to continually increase the range and number of stakeholders to capture different views, opinions and ideas. We have built up an extensive consultation database over many years. This comprehensive list of groups and organisations is set out in the Development Plan Scheme.

We have agreed partnership processes with internal services and departments to ensure that they have a full opportunity to inform LDP preparation and comment on planning applications within reasonable timescales.

Engagement and consultation is a key component of preparing the LDP. Stakeholders can get involved during various stages in the production of the LDP. Extensive public consultation was carried out as part of the preparation of LDP1. This approach has been carried forward to the Proposed LDP2. The result of the wide ranging and extensive consultation to the Main Issues Report was reported to Council in December 2017. The Proposed LDP2 was reported to Council in June 2020. Early consultation with key stakeholders took place for Proposed LDP2. A wide range of publicity and consultation methods were used to promote the Proposed LDP2 and gather views. The extent of consultation undertaken is set out in the Report of Conformity and which clearly shows that the Council has met and in many cases significantly exceeded the minimum statutory consultation requirements

The **Development Plan Scheme (DPS)** sets out a participation statement which outlines what is involved at each stage of preparing the LDP, and explains when and how stakeholders can engage in the process and influence the content of the LDP. Each consultation stage helps inform and influence how the Plan evolves and which proposals are taken forward. A variety of methods are used to gather views, with the internet, social media, displays, posters, leaflets, Citizen Space online portal, ESRI storymaps, and drop in sessions especially useful in raising awareness and generating a wide range of views and opinions.

The new **ESRI mapping system** has been upgraded to the most recent version. The ER Mapping Portal which hosts GIS Web Applications and Mapping data for the Strategy Section now also has the ability to host Reporting Dashboards which are starting to be created. The LDP2 has been published using a Story Map, which brought together the written statement and interactive maps showcasing the policies and proposals. Additional datasets and functionality are continually being added, allowing all stakeholders to view planning information on sites and areas in a much more user friendly and efficient way.

This shows the high level of public interest in planning matters in East Renfrewshire and illustrates the high work-loads for planning officers assisting interested members of the public and assessing their views. We encourage online submission of representations to planning applications and the LDP. The vast majority of planning application representations are received online and are available to view online. 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.

Planning Guidance, briefs and charters.

A **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.

(s) We enable **public participation in the planning application process**. In accordance with legislation, neighbours are notified when planning applications are made and certain applications are advertised in the local newspapers and on the 'Tell Me Scotland' website. Weekly lists of planning applications submitted are on our website and the online planning system allows searches of all current and recent applications. We publish guidance on our website advising the public of what are generally considered to be 'material planning considerations'. We take into account comments made by the public before a decision is reached on a proposal (or for applications going to the Planning Applications Committee—those received before the report is finalised); and comments are assessed in the 'Report of Handling'. In 2020/21 we received 561 representations on the 651 planning applications. 23% of applications had representations.

(t) We have strong working arrangements with the Council's **communications team** who help manage the promotion and social media aspects of the Proposed LDP2.

(u) 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.

(v) Our Planning **Customer Service Standards Charter** is published online to visibly demonstrate that we will deal with our customers quickly and politely. 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, Supplementary

(w) The Planning Service is administering the implementation of the **High Hedges Act**. Forms, notes and guidance are in place to assist the public in understanding the legislation. 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.

(x) We will continue to work closely with our **Community Planning Partners** to integrate spatial planning with community planning to deliver high quality urban and rural environments for all and make the connections between people, places and spaces. We want communities to be at the heart of our decision-making process and will seek to work to a shared set of priorities.

1.3 Governance

- (a) **The Structure of the Planning and Building Standards Service** was review during 2020/21. The Development Management team, the Local Development Plan team and the Building Standards team have been brought together under one Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer) and a Planning and Building Standards Manager. This change will improve service delivery and co-ordination of the different aspects of the Planning Service. The Head of Environment (Chief Planning officer) is also responsible for Roads and Transportation and the Council's City Deal projects. This brings all the elements of development under one Head of Service from LDP allocations, the planning application, building warrant and completion certificates processes to road construction consent process. This additional level of collaboration and co-ordination is producing benefits for the construction industry, housebuilding industry and for the Council's own Capital projects. In addition it will improve working relationships and consistency of service across the board.
- (b) **City Deal project governance** is managed with meetings between the Director of Environment, the Head of Service and the City Deal Manager every two weeks. They consider progress discuss any issues and plan the way forward. Project Managers are invited to the meetings as appropriate to discuss any specific project issues or risks.
- (c) The Council has adopted an efficient **scheme of delegation** which has a relatively high level of delegation (98% of decisions were delegated to officers in 2019/20).
- We keep our **'legacy' planning applications** (applications over a year old) under review. The number of 'legacy' applications remaining as at 31st March 2021 was 8 - see note (h) on page 44. This is higher than last year and has been a knock-on from the COVID-19 situation in that it has taken longer than normal to resolve complicated cases. 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 a Protocol for dealing with Planning Obligations on its website. This is 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 of on- going applications, and an expectation that legal agreements will be concluded within three months of the recommendation being made. We have still not concluded legal agreements as quickly as we would like, due largely to delays on the developers side.
- (d) The **Planning Applications Committee** (the same Members who also form the Local Review Body) is relatively small and is trained on planning matters. The Committee is supported by the Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer) and the Principal Planner, as well as other senior support staff e.g. Roads and Transportation, Environmental Health Officers as appropriate.
- The Committee meets once every four weeks to ensure that applications are dealt with expediently. The Local Review Body also meets every four weeks which ensures decisions are reached as quickly as possible. The LRB is supported by a Senior Planning Officer and a Legal Officer. This all demonstrates East Renfrewshire Council's commitment to a collective sense of urgency to enabling development within East Renfrewshire. The Committee also considers reports on appeal cases and decisions on a monthly basis which gives the Council and Councillors the opportunity to learn from appeal outcomes.
- (e) The **full Council** approves Local Development Plan documents which ensure that all members are committed and kept informed of these important planning matters.
- (f) We have a **Member Officer Working Group** which meets at key points in the Local Development Plan preparation process to discuss and agree the Plan strategy, proposals and policy

approach. This Group oversees all stages of LDP production allowing open discussion between Members (cross-party) and Officers, and guiding the strategic direction and the policy approach of the Plan. This approach helped to ensure full cross party support for the Adopted LDP1 was carried forward for Proposed LDP2

- (g) **Local Development Plan** project management is implemented through regular team and wider service meetings and Gantt chart project management. The Development Plan Scheme (DPS) is kept up to date. It sets out a timetable for producing the LDP and explains when and how stakeholders can engage in the process and influence the content of it.
- (h) **Electronic ways of working** have been fully embraced. Full and active participation in the national eplanning system gives the council efficiency savings. In 2020/21, 95% of all applications were submitted online (see further information in section 1.2(e)).

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.

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.

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.

- (i) A **“new ways of working”** (agile) programme has been implemented across the Department. Through this, agile working has been promoted and staff have been issued with laptops and mobile phones and tablets if required. This allows staff the option of working from a desk in the planning office, from a variety of Council offices or from home. This provides increased flexibility in working arrangements and gives efficiencies in travel arrangements. These arrangements have been particularly helpful as COVID-19 protection measures has meant that the planning office had to be closed and the teams were therefore in a position to continue to deliver the service. The implementation of this across-the-board did take some time to roll-out and settle down as the ICT equipment was provided to all staff over time, and officers became accustomed to working away from the office (largely at home). Communicating via Microsoft Teams has kept team members in contact with each other, but doesn't really wholly compensate for the lack of day-to-day contact in the office. This has continued throughout the

whole year.

Opportunities for **Flexible working** and alternative working patterns are in place and provide opportunities for staff to have a better work life balance.

- (j) The **needs of staff** are kept under review. The previous Performance Review and Development Scheme (PRD) has been replaced with “Quality Conversations” which removes the need for detailed evidence from both employees and managers and focusses on what has gone well, what could have gone better and what we want to achieve in the year ahead.

Individual staff training needs are assessed annually and participation in internal and external courses is encouraged. There is a training budget and 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. This ensures that staff are not just professionally competent, but are trained and work well as a team. It also ensures that best use is made of staff strengths and abilities.

A council-wide staff survey known as iMatters has been introduced and the outcome of this will be reported in next year's PPF. It was launched in April to give staff across the Council the

opportunity to have their say and give their views on their experience of working for the Council. The results of the survey is available to all staff on the intranet. In addition every team within Planning and Building Standards undertook an IMatters 'quality conversation' assessment of their team, produced an Action Plan that is kept up to date with actions and a responsible person for each action.

Risk management procedures are in place. Strategic and operational risk registers exist and are updated at 6 monthly intervals. Training on risk management is available for all managers and supervisors.

Succession planning arrangements are in place in line with the Council's succession planning policy.

Effective corporate absence management arrangements are in place and the absence levels of the planning teams were below the Departmental and Corporate figures. Comprehensive health & safety systems are in place (health & safety staff are embedded in the Environment Department), and audits are regularly undertaken.

- (l) **Specialist advice** is sought as appropriate through external organisations e.g. the West of Scotland Archaeological Service, Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership. There are strong co-ordinated working links within the Environment Department with close partnerships particularly with Housing, Economy and Infrastructure, Roads and Transportation, Property & Technical Services and with other Council Services including Education and the Health and Social Care Partnership. The collaborative work with Education has been critical to the strategic approach for the Proposed Local Development Plan 2. See Case Study on Collaborative Working- Forecasting of Future Educational Infrastructure Need.

We have regular meetings with outside organisations/partners, particularly through the Strategic Development Plan (Clydeplan). Key Agencies were actively involved in the preparation of the Local Development Plan and they were also included in early engagement for Proposed LDP2. This helps to address any initial concerns that they may have with policies or proposals, which in turn reduces the potential for future objections to the Plan.

- (m) The **Benchmarking Group** with participants from the following Councils: East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire & West Dunbartonshire has not met formally during 2020/21 but numerous subjects have been circulated for discussion and information during the course of the year with the group acting as a kind of 'forum' for quickly asking questions and obtaining advice on areas of uncertainty.

The Glasgow and Clyde Valley Local Development Plan Forum consists of the eight Clyde Valley authorities and includes the Strategic Development Plan (Clydeplan) Team. It meets every 6 months, its principle purpose being to share and exchange best practice in respect of LDP and SDP development and implementation. Each local authority takes it in turn to chair the meeting.

We also actively participate in Heads of Planning Scotland groups and sub-groups, as well as the online 'Knowledge Hub' all of which assist in sharing practice across the country.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, team meetings are held regularly to ensure that people keep in touch with their colleagues and know all that is going on in the Service and across the Council. Management information (including Covid-19 updates) is cascaded to staff and discussion of relevant information, including performance figures, health & safety, current planning applications, ongoing work load and Local Development Plan progress. This also facilitates the dissemination and effective implementation of corporate priorities.

- (n) **Departmental and service budgets** are considered within a three-yearly budget cycle to ensure effective long-term financial planning. Budgets are planned to coordinate without Community Plan priorities, thus being aligned to Council priorities.

Corporate arrangements are in place regarding ordering and procurement using appropriate online financial procurement systems. Managers have permissions to authorise all ordering and procurement requests. 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.

- (o) **External match funding** £981,000 has been successfully secured from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund for the implementation of a range of environmental and physical enhancement works. Examples throughout East Renfrewshire include: Installation of intelligent lighting with Internet of Things capability (Barrhead); Introduction of a strategic winter lighting approach that covers all main shopping centres in an inclusive way and Place-making improvements at Glasgow Road shops involving investment in the streetscape to improve pedestrian and cycle access (Eaglesham). £499,000 was also secured from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for the creation of the Cowan Park Enterprise and Community Hub. The creation

of an Enterprise & Community Hub through the regeneration of Cowan Park Gate Lodge property in Barrhead will provide a much needed home and additional space for a number of Social Enterprises, Community Groups and other third sector partners to operate and deliver a variety of services and initiatives from for the local area and wider community. The project will be delivered in partnership with local group Include Me 2, who support people who have a disability or additional support need.

- (p) A **Data Information forum** brought together colleagues from across the Council. This forum had a remit to share and exchange information and data, in the interests of efficiencies and best practice. It is likely that this forum will be rebranded and re-launched as the newly formed Business Intelligence team grows. Corporate Community Services also have a Data Group, and we will liaise closely with them on this.

The Esri GIS software allows us to share data via web mapping services and this is now rolled out. All Council staff will have access to mapping and spatial data in the intranet using the ER Mapping Portal. We are working with Corporate and Community Services to investigate publishing our Open Data.

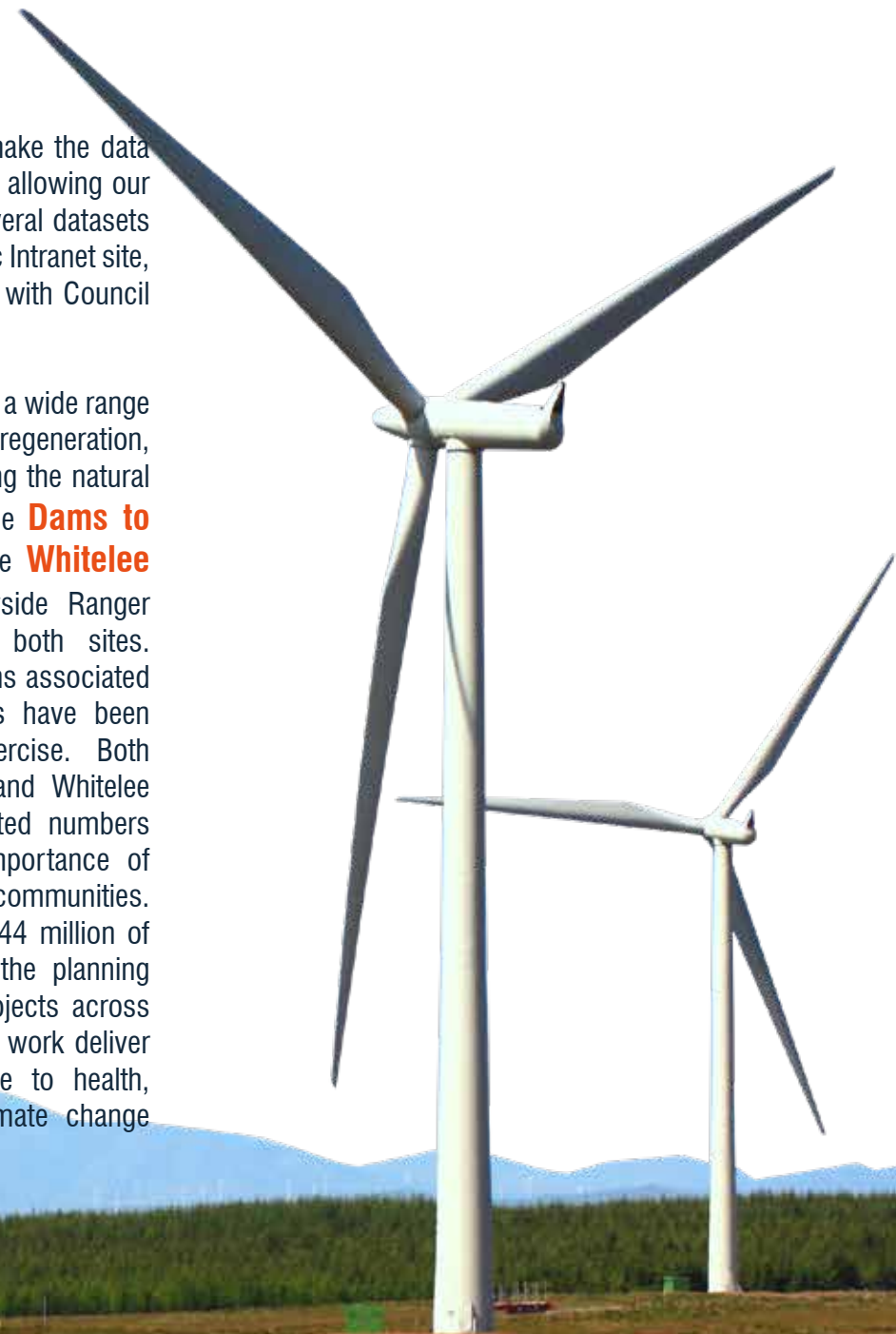
- (q) The **Corporate Address Gazetteer** (CAG) has been integrated with a number of internal and external systems and provides the address basis for Planning and Building Standards (UNiform), Environmental Health and Trading Standards (UNiform), Customer First (Lagan system), CHCP (carefirst system). It also maintains links to the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board. The CAG forms the basis of the Ordnance Survey's Address Base product which in turn is used by the emergency services. The CAG is a core asset with the UPRN providing the ability to interrogate data across departments. As the CAG is spatially enabled, datasets containing the CAGs Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) can be plotted on a map to identify spatial trends.

1.4 Culture of Continuous Improvement

- (a) The Strategy Team, Development Management, Economic Development and Economy & Infrastructure teams **jointly deliver planning and inclusive economic growth** within the framework of a Community Plan and Local Outcome Improvement Plan (Fairer East Ren Plan), the Council's own Outcome Delivery Plan, Environment Department Service Improvement Plan and Individual Service Improvement Plans. These have been produced annually over a number of years and improvement actions implemented and monitored on a six-monthly basis.
- (b) The Environment Department is involved in a **Glasgow City Deal Community Benefits working group** that works to standardise community benefits policy and processes across the city region. Cenefits has been used successfully by the ERC City Deal team and has now been rolled out to all members of the Glasgow City Deal Region (see case study on Community Benefits).
- (c) The implementation of **Esri** allows departments to share spatial data internally allowing sharing of data across the Council. We are liaising with the Council's Digital Customer experience team

about the next step, which is to make the data available on the Council's Website, allowing our customers to self-serve 24/7. Several datasets are already integrated into the Public Intranet site, and we hope the number of maps with Council data will increase.

- (d) The Service continues to undertake a wide range of non-statutory work including regeneration, managing, protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment including the **Dams to Darnley Country Park** and the **Whitelee Access Project**, with Countryside Ranger Services also operated across both sites. Throughout the period of restrictions associated with Covid 19 local greenspaces have been particularly important for daily exercise. Both Dams to Darnley Country Park and Whitelee Windfarm have seen unprecedented numbers of visitors and reinforced the importance of high quality greenspace to local communities. The Service also participates in £44 million of investment in City Deal through the planning and implementation of various projects across East Renfrewshire. These areas of work deliver multiple benefits which contribute to health, well being, placemaking and climate change adaptation.





Supporting Evidence

2



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.

Case Study Topics	Issues covered by case study	Case Study Topics	Issues covered by case study
Design	Yes	Interdisciplinary Working	Yes
Conservation		Collaborative Working	Yes
Regeneration	Yes	Community Engagement	Yes
Environment	Yes	Placemaking	Yes
Greenspace	Yes	Charrettes	
Town Centres	Yes	Place Standard	
Masterplanning		Performance Monitoring	
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	Yes	Process Improvement	Yes
Housing Supply	Yes	Project Management	Yes
Affordable Housing	Yes	Skills Sharing	Yes
Economic Development	Yes	Staff Training	Yes
Enforcement		Online Systems	Yes
Development Management Processes	Yes	Transport	Yes
Planning Applications	Yes	Active Travel	Yes
Other: Community Benefits	Yes		

2.1 Quality of Outcomes

Local Development Plan	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/ldp	
Supplementary Planning Guidance (including masterplans)	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/spg	
Development Plan Scheme	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/ldp2	
Conservation area information and appraisals	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/conservation-areas	
Environmental project information and annual events guides for the Dams to Darnley Country Park and the Whitelee Countryside Ranger Service	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/dams-to-darnley www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/whitelee	
City Deal information	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/city-deal	
Enforcement information including the Enforcement Charter	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/planning-control-breach	
Town Centres	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/town-centres	

2.2 Quality of Service and Engagement

A wide range of planning and building standards information (including advice on what needs planning permission; pre-application advice; how applications are processed and decided; and the appeals process)	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-standards	
Service standards and Customer Service Standards Charter	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/customer-care-standards	
Contact details are published on virtually every web page so that people know how and where to contact us should they have any questions		
The planning information service is online giving access to a wide range of planning application information and documents. It provides information on planning applications since year 2000, and documents for planning applications over the past 4 years.	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/search-planning-applications	
Weekly lists of registered and extant applications are also published online. This system also allows searches for Building Warrant information	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/search-planning-applications	
Certain Applications are advertised on the 'Tell Me Scotland' website	www.tellmesotland.gov.uk/notices/east-renfrewshire/	
Planning applications can be submitted online at the eplanning.scot website.	www.eplanning.scot/ePlanningClient/	
Payment of fees can be made on the Council's website	www.civicaepay.co.uk/EastRenfrewshire/Webpay_Public/Webpay/default.aspx?Fund=01	

2.2 Quality of Service and Engagement (cont.)

Information on Investing in East Renfrewshire is available on the Council's website, as is information on business resources	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/invest-in-east-renfrewshire www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/sustainable-business-advice	
Clydeplan and related information	www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/	
Housing Land Audit information	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/housing-land-audit	
Our formal complaints procedure	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/make-a-complaint	
Our latest Planning Performance Framework, which includes development management performance figures	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/planning-performance	



2.3 Governance

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	www.gov.scot/collections/planning-statistics/	
Monitoring of housing, business and other data is undertaken annually, much of which is submitted to the Clydeplan team for collation with information from other authorities	www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk/	
Our Scheme of Delegated Functions is available on the Council's website	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/Search-agendas	
Staff team meetings are held 4-weekly and minuted		
Formal 'Performance 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		
Outcome Delivery Plan is on the Council's website	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/programmes-and-plans	
Council-wide Performance and Statistics information is on the Council's website	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/performance	

2.3 Governance (cont.)

Monthly reviews and updates to budgets are undertaken		
Training records for risk management are kept		
Corporate procurement policies are in place		
Benchmarking meetings are noted. A summary of what has been discussed each year is included into the Planning Performance Framework		
Heads of Planning Scotland meetings are minuted and information on the group can be found on the HOPS website	https://hopscotland.org.uk/	

2.4 Culture of continuous improvement

Community Planning Partnership information is available on the Council's website	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/community-planning	
Community Plan, Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/community-planning-partnership	
Service Improvement Plans are updated annually and action plans updated six-monthly		
Government consultation responses are published online by the Scottish Government		

Service Improvements

3



3.1 Service improvements in the coming year

Actions programmed for 2021/22

1. The Proposed LDP2 was submitted to Scottish Ministers for Examination in August 2020. It is estimated that the Examination will be concluded Summer 2021 with formal adoption later in the year.
2. The following Supplementary Planning Guidance will be prepared to support existing and new policy areas emerging through Proposed Local Development Plan 2. Work is ongoing with the review of the 4 SPG documents identified below. It is anticipated that they will be launched for consultation later in the year following adoption of the LDP2. Progress on the 'Placemaking' and 'Low and Zero Carbon' documents has been delayed due to staff shortages although these remain key priorities.

SPG to be revised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable Housing Development Contributions Green Network Householder Design Guide 	New SPGs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placemaking and Design Low and Zero Carbon
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3. A developers forum will be established to enable the opportunity for better communication and understanding between developers and the Planning Service
4. Development of a Local Transport Strategy for East Renfrewshire. This will inform future plans and priorities on how people move around the area. This will support the LDP2 and Community Plan Strategies and align with regional and national policy objectives, including key outcomes contained within National Planning Framework 4.

3.2 Delivery of service improvement actions committed in previous year

Actions programmed for 2020/21	Comments at 2020/21 Year End
1. The Proposed Local Development Plan 2 will be progressed through Examination by Scottish Government Reporters to adoption	Partially Complete. The Council has fulfilled all necessary steps to submit all documentation to the Scottish Government Reporters on time. There have been some delays at the Reporters Unit in appointing Reporters due to Covid and also in undertaking site visits. However the outcome is anticipated by summer 2021.
2. The following Supplementary Planning Guidance will be prepared to support existing and new policy areas emerging through Proposed Local Development Plan 2. SPG to be revised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable Housing Development Contributions Green Network Householder Design Guide New: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placemaking and Design Low and Zero Carbon 	Partially Complete. Work has progressed on the SPGs but because of delays in the LDP Examination timescales, these SPGs have not progressed to consultation or adoption.
3.A developers forum will be established to enable the opportunity for better communication and understanding between them and the Planning Service	Not Complete. The developers forum did not take place in 2020/21 due largely to a combination of technical difficulties holding it remotely in the early part of the year, and staffing shortages in the latter part of the year. It is the intention to restart these in 2021/22
4. A Planning and Building Standards Manager's post will be established to reflect the merging of the two main Planning functions (development planning and development management) with the Building Standards function; in order to improve coordination in the running of the service.	Complete. This was implemented mid-2020 with the appointment of Graham Shankland as Planning and Building Standards Manager; Gillian McCarney taking on the role as Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer) and the three teams (Development Management, Strategy and Building Standards) being returned under that singular management structure.



National Headline Indicators

4



A. Development Planning

Key Outcomes	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) (years and months) at end of the reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	<i>LDP: 5 years and 9 months (see note a)</i> <i>SDP: 3 years and 8 months (see note b)</i>	<i>LDP 4 years and 9 months (see note a)</i> <i>SDP 2 year 8 months (see note b)</i>	LDP 3 years 9 months SDP 1 year 8 months	LDP 2 years 9 months SDP 8 months	LDP 1 year and 9 months SPD 4 years & 10 months	LDP 9 months SPD 3 years & 10 months	LDP 4 years and 1 month SDP 2 years a& 10 months
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	LDP - NO SDP - Yes	LDP - NO SDP - Yes	LDP - NO SDP - Yes	LDP - Yes SDP - Yes	LDP - Yes SDP - No	LDP - Yes SDP - Yes	LDP - Yes SDP - Yes
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	LDP - Yes SDP - No	LDP - Yes SDP - No	LDP - Yes SDP - No	LDP - Yes SDP - No	LDP - No SDP - No	LDP - N/A SDP - No	LDP - Yes SDP - No
Were development plan scheme engagement/ consultation commitments met during the year?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs							
Established housing land supply	Not available (see note c)	3486 units	4104 units	4223 units	4422 units	4827 units	4786 units
5-year effective housing land supply	Not available (see note c)	1562 units	1983 units	1798 units	1819 units	1957 units	1973 units
5-year housing supply target	Not available (see note c)	1130 units	1170 units	1170 units	117 units	1170 units	1250 units
Effective housing land supply	Not available (see note c)	6.9 years	8.5 years	7.7 years	7.8 years	8.4 years	7.9 years
Total technically unconstrained supply	Not available (see note c)	2652 units	3084 units	3447 units			
Housing approvals during the year	792 units (see note d)	63 units	276 units	154 units (+503 units PPP)	216 units	495 units	
Housing completions over the last 5 years	1598 units	1242 units	1359 units	1228 units	1089 units	1084 units	

A. Development Planning

Key Outcomes	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14
Marketable employment land supply	12.56ha	15.8ha	15.8 ha	13.64ha	17.03ha	30.02ha	26.68ha
Employment land take-up during reported year	0ha	0ha	0.63 ha	0ha	0.36ha	0ha	0ha

B. Development Management - Project Planning

Key Outcomes	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Number of applications subject to pre- application advice	196	210	238	225	245		
percentage of applications subject to pre- application advice	30%	30%	33%	36%	37.3%	30.2%	27.4%
number of major applications subject to processing agreement	0	0	1	0	1	1	3
percentage of major applications subject to processing agreement	-	-	100	-	50%		
Development Management - Decision-making							
application approval rate	90.9%	89.1	90.8%	91.7%	89.8%	92.6%	94.6%
delegation rate	98.2%	98.9	97.9%	97.3%	98.7%	97%	97.8%
percentage of applications valid upon first receipt	46%	55%	53%	53%	48%		
Decision-making timescales (average number of weeks to decision): (see note d)							
major developments	56.6 weeks	34.7 weeks	21.5	32.6 weeks	45 weeks	17.5 weeks	19.6 weeks
local developments (non-householder)	19.7 weeks	14.3 weeks	12.4 weeks	10.5 weeks	10.1 weeks	10.9 weeks	9 weeks
householder developments	11.9 weeks	8 weeks (see note f)	9.3 weeks	7.5 weeks	6.5 weeks	6.2 weeks	6.4 weeks
Legacy Cases							
Number cleared during reporting period	7 (see note e)	4	2	4	6	6	2
Number remaining	8 (see note e)	5 (see note g)	6	1	2	6	8

B. Development Management - Project Planning

Key Outcomes	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Enforcement							
time since enforcement charter reviewed (months)	12 months	1 month	8 months	1 month	1 year & 9 months	9 months	13 months
Requirement: review every 2 years							
Complaints lodged to the planning service							
Cases taken up (*)	0	0	3	27	35	41	28
Breaches identified (**)	139	76	86	96	131	86	62
Enforcement cases resolved	32	74	34	91	143	123	92
Notices served (***)	0	1	0	0	3	6	1
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(*) 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 Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

(**) All cases recorded where a breach occurred, irrespective of whether formal notification took place.

(***) 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.

Notes for Tables

- (a) Local Development Plan adopted 25th June 2015. Delays in progressing LDP2 are explained in Part 1.2 of the PPF and relate to detailed consideration of educational infrastructure issues
- (b) The Strategic Development Plan was approved in July 2017.
- (c) Not all 2020/21 figures were available at the time of submission of the Planning Performance Framework (PPF) to the Scottish Government. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, site visits were limited and therefore we were unable to complete the usual surveys of housing and employment land at the end of 2020/21 in time for the PPF reporting deadline. These surveys will be undertaken as soon as possible and figures included in the next PPF. We have included the 2019 5-year housing land supply calculations (table to right) for information meantime.
- (d) In 2020/21 we decided 651 planning applications and 51 other applications (total 702) – these figures are virtually the same as last year. A number of significant planning permissions were issued this year, with a total of 792 housing consents (plus an 80 bed nursing home) issued in 2020/21, which is well above the usual rates. Whilst the speed of issuing decisions has dropped this year principally due to the COVID-19 situation, the service has continued for function and the issuing of consent has progressed as a priority. This means that there were 62% as many pre-application enquiries as planning applications. Of the 651 planning applications, 196 had been the subject of a pre-application enquiry i.e. 30%. This indicates that we had 208 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.
- (e) There were 8 legacy cases outstanding without a decision for more than a year on 31st March 2021. Three of the cases relate to residential developments that are subject to the conclusion of legal agreements relating to affordable housing and development contributions and which have not been concluded in this period. In the other cases consultations, discussions and negotiations have been ongoing in order to try to achieve acceptable developments for the benefit of the community and it is considered preferable to try to move these to a mutually acceptable conclusion rather than rush a decision.

5 Year Housing Land Supply Calculations						
Period	A All Tenure Supply	B Requirement p/a	C Housing Supply Target (SDP2 Schedule 7)	D Difference (A-C)	Years Supply (A/B)	5 years land supply met
2019-24	1983	234	1170	+813	8.5	Yes
2020-25	1939	226	1130	+809	8.6	Yes
2021-26	1875	219	1095	+780	8.6	Yes
2022-27	1814	219	1095	+719	8.3	Yes
2023-28	1677	204	1020	+657	8.2	Yes
2024-29	1486	196	980	+506	7.6	Yes



Scottish Government Official Statistics

5



A. Decision-making timescales

Category	Total decisions 2014-15	Average timescale (weeks) 2014-15	Total decisions 2015-16	Average timescale (weeks) 2015-16	Total decisions 2016-17	Average timescale (weeks) 2016-17	Total decisions 2017-18	Average timescale (weeks) 2017-18	Total decisions 2018-19	Average timescale (weeks) 2018-19	Total decisions 2019-20	Average timescale (weeks) 2019-20	Total decisions 2020-21	Average timescale (weeks) 2020-21
Major developments	3	19.6	4	17.52	2	45	7	32.6	1	21.5	1	34.7	4	56.6
Local developments (non- householder)														
Less than 2 months	100 (72.5%)	6.3	71 (73.2%)	6.3	67 (61.5%)	6	51 (60%)	6.5	42 (40.4%)	6.6	38	7	17	6.5
More than 2 months	38 (27.5%)	16.3	26 (26.8%)	23.5	42 (38.5%)	16.6	34 (40%)	16.6	62 (59.6%)	16.3	54	19.4	65	23.2
Householder developments														
Less than 2 months	430 (91.9%)	6	480 (95.4%)	6	439 (86.8%)	5.9	337 (77.7%)	6.2	370 (67.9%)	6.3	411	7.1	211	6.5
More than 2 months	39 (8.1%)	11.4	23 (4.6%)	10.1	68 (13.4%)	10.6	108 (22.3%)	11.9	175 (32.1%)	15.6	135	10.8	287	16
Housing developments														
Major	2	21.9	1	38.1	2	45	5	32.9	1	21.5	1	34.7	3	59.7
Local: less than 2 months	27 (56.3%)	6.2	17 (65.4%)	6.2	16 (51.6%)	6.9	9 (42.9%)	6.6	8 (26.7%)	7.4	10	6.4	3	6.9
Local: more than 2 months	21 (43.8%)	17.3	9 (34.6%)	14.6	15 (48.4%)	14.2	12 (57.1%)	19.3	22 (73.3%)	15.7	20	23.9	21	26.9
Business and Industry														
Major	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Local: less than 2 months	7 (77.8%)	6.7	8 (88.9%)	6.8	11 (84.6%)	5.8	5 (71.4%)	6	4 (67.7%)	6.5	4	7.2	5	6.5
Local: more than 2 months	2 (22.2%)	11	1 (11.1%)	13.7	2 (10.4%)	10.4	2 (28.6%)	20.7	2 (33.3%)	11.1	1	10	5	11.6
EIA Developments	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	82.6	0	-
Other Consents*	74	5.9	71	5.9	67	5.6	44	9.7	52	7.6	54	13.1	67	12.2

Category	Total decisions 2014-15	Average timescale (weeks) 2014-15	Total decisions 2015-16	Average timescale (weeks) 2015-16	Total decisions 2016-17	Average timescale (weeks) 2016-17	Total decisions 2017-18	Average timescale (weeks) 2017-18	Total decisions 2018-19	Average timescale (weeks) 2018-19	Total decisions 2019-20	Average timescale (weeks) 2019-20	Total decisions 2020-21	Average timescale (weeks) 2020-21
Planning/ legal agreements **	3	41.7	4	20.2	7	24.4								
Major							5	32.9	0	0	1	34.7	1	36.6
Local							2	38.8	5	26.9	4	53.7	0	-

Notes

- * 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 & 8 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

The Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions had a big impact on handling planning applications and the speed of issuing decisions. The implications are discussed in more detail in the Case Study on Covid Impact and Adaptations on pages 12-13. We continued to handle virtually the same number of planning applications as we usually do (702 applications compared to 708 last year) and continued to issue planning decisions via delegated powers and the Planning Applications Committee. We might have expected, with Covid-19 lockdown in effect, that the volume of work/applications would have declined, but that was not the case. So we did get through essentially the same volume of work as last year, it was just that processing speeds were detrimentally affected. 792 housing units were approved during the year (more than any of the past 5 years and more than double the average over this period) showing that work continued at high volumes and consents continued to be issued, thus supporting employment and the economy.

B. Decision-making: local reviews and appeals (original decision upheld)

Category	2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020/21		Total number of decisions
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Local Reviews	6	75%	12	60%	12	55%	15	62.5%	15	41.7%	11	47.8%	6	50%	12
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	2	66%	5	71.4%	4	80%	2	40%	2	75%	2	66.7%	3	75%	4

Workforce Information

6



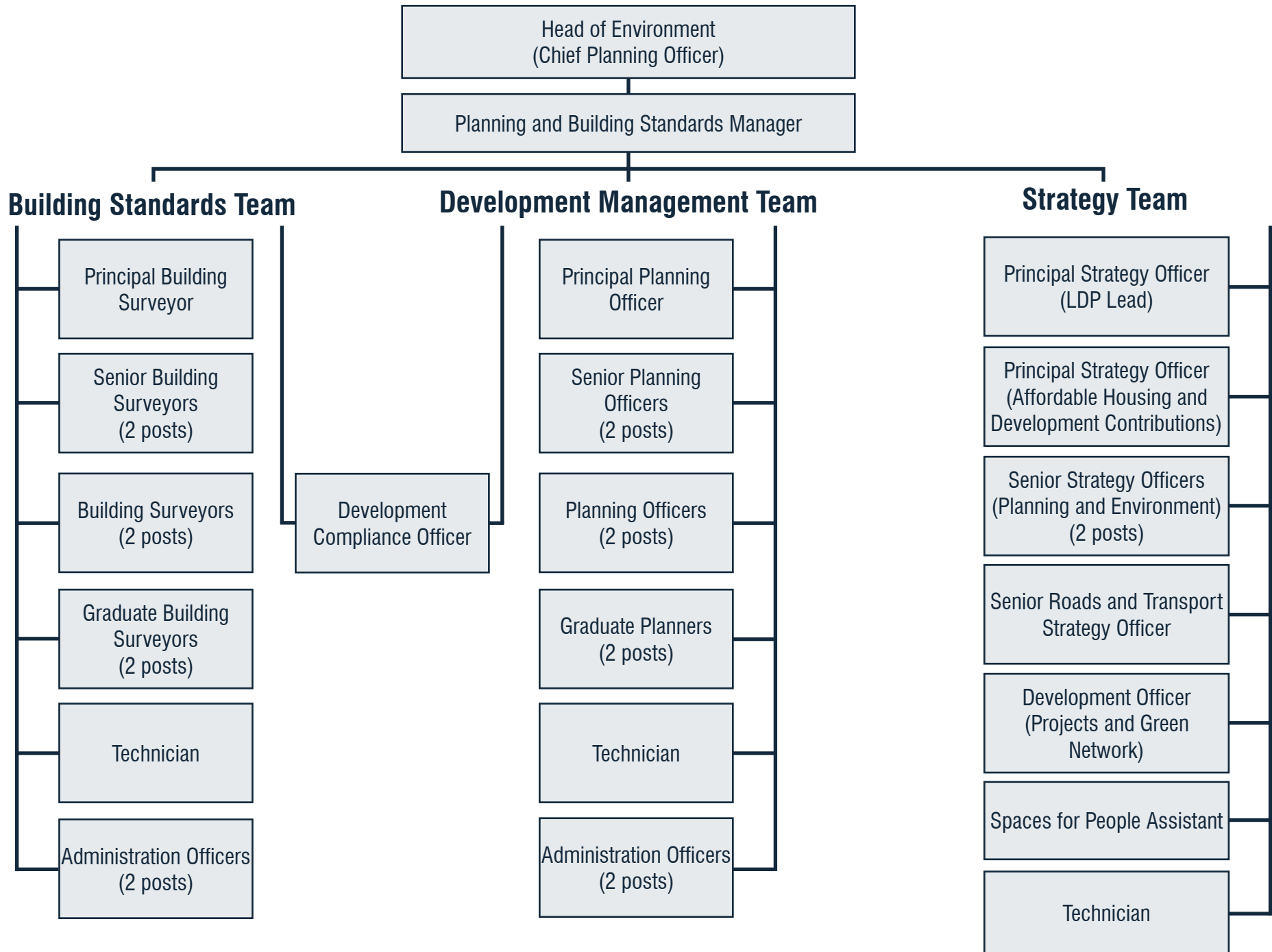
	Tier 1 <i>Chief Executive</i>	Tier 2 <i>Director</i>	Tier 3 <i>Head of Service</i>	Tier 4 <i>Manager</i>
Head of Planning Service			1	1

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	2
30-39	3
40-49	6
50 and over	8

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount
Chartered Staff	9

Notes

(a) All figures as at 31st March 2021





Planning Committee Information

7



Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full council meetings	0
Planning committees	6
Area committees	0
Committee site visits	6
Local Review Body	9
LRB site visits	0

Performance Markers

8



Performance Marker	See PPF Section
Driving Improved Performance	
1. Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	1.3 4 5A including commentary
2. Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website	1.2 (b) 1.2 (c)
3. Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications - availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications - clear and proportionate requests for supporting information	1.1 (e) 1.2 (b) 1.2 (c) 1.2 (d) 1.2 (f) 1.2 (g)
4. Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant'	1.2 (c) 1.2 (j)
5. Enforcement charter updated / re-published	1.1 (g)
6. Continuous improvement: - show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators - progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report	1.2 (n) 1.3 (m) 1.4 3.2 4
Promoting the Plan-led System	
7. LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	1.1 (a) 1.2 (l) 4
8. Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: - on course for adoption within 5-year cycle - project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	1.2 (l) 1.2 (r) 1.3 (g)
9. Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	1.2 (n) 1.3 (f)

Performance Marker	See PPF Section
10. Cross-sector stakeholders, including industry, agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation	1.1 (a) 1.2 (n) 1.2 (o) 1.2 (r) 1.2 (s) 1.2 (u)
11. Production of regular and proportionate policy advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications	1.1 (a) 1.2 (b) 1.2 (c) 1.2 (g) 1.2 (i)
Simplifying and Streamlining	
12. Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	1.1 (b) 1.1 (c) 1.1 (d) 1.2 (b) 1.2 (c) 1.2 (i) 1.2 (j) 1.2 (k)
13. Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	1.2 (p) 1.3 (m)
Delivering Development	
14. Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old	1.3 (c) 4 (notes)
15. Developer contributions: clear expectations - set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and - in pre-application discussions	1.2 (j)



Appendix 1

A1



Evidence of Improvement

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.

Examples across a range of such improvements include those given in the table opposite.

Added Value	2020/21
Improvements to the proposal were achieved at the pre-application stage.	13
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.	27
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.	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.	111
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.	3
Total added value instances	255
Applications with some form of added value	298
Number of application decisions in the period	651
Percentage of application with some form of added value	46%

Examples of Improvements

2020/0261/TP	Erection of two storey side extension with demolition of existing single storey rear extension; installation of rear dormer window
Decision	Approved subject to conditions 24 Sep 2020
Added Value	Improvements to the proposal were achieved at the pre-application stage. Conditions have been added that are necessary to control or enhance the development and to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Development Plan policies. 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.
Details	The scale of extension was reduced from the pre-application stage. The dormer window design was amended at the application stage. Conditions relating to materials and obscured glazing were included to ensure good design and protect neighbouring amenity.
2021/0041/TP	Proposed alterations to front and back garden comprising, a new vehicular access with associated off-street parking, the erection of boundary wall and a greenhouse to rear, alteration to boundary treatments and the erection of 1800mm timber fence and gate
Decision	Approved subject to conditions 16 Mar 2021
Added Value	Conditions added that are necessary to control or enhance the development and to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Development Plan policies.
Details	A condition was included relating to visibility splays to enable drivers of vehicles leaving the site to have a clear view over a length of road sufficient to allow safe exit.
2020/0409/TP	Replacement of the existing MBNL base station with the installation of a 17m pole with associated cabinets.
Decision	Approved subject to conditions 15 Sep 2020
Added Value	Conditions added that are necessary to control or enhance the development and to ensure the proposal complies with the Council's Local Development Plan policies.
Details	A condition was included relating to the road safety barrier to ensure road safety. A condition was included relating to the removal of the existing monopole to safeguard visual amenity of the area.