

East Renfrewshire Council

Planning Performance Framework

Produced September 2014



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Introduction

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

The purpose of the Framework is to demonstrate the achievements and performance of the Council's Planning Service and to explain the improvements to the service that are planned. It looks principally at the performance during the financial year April 2013 to March 2014; and then looks ahead at service improvements planned through to March 2015.

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

The Framework consists of a mixture of:

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

This year's Framework shows that the Planning Service is continuing to modernise and improve. The speed of performance in our handling of planning applications has continued to increase in most of the measures and we have implemented improvements to our Development Management service. We have produced a new Proposed Local Development Plan (and associated documents) within schedule and submitted these for examination to the Scottish Ministers. We have implemented a range of environmental and regeneration actions which will see an improved environment on the ground.

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

Gillian McCarney

Planning and Building Standards Manager

1. National Headline Indicators (NHIs)

Key outcomes	2013-2014	2012-2013
Development Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> age of local/strategic development plan(s) (full years) <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i> development plan scheme: on track? 	LDP 3 years SPD 2 years Yes	LDP 2 years SPD 1 year Yes
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective housing land: years supply effective housing land supply housing approvals effective employment land supply employment land take-up 	8.1 years (See Note 1 overleaf) 2119 units 1284 units 26.68ha 0ha	7.35 years 2049 units 1208 units 27.31ha 0.06ha
Development Management Project Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of applications subject to pre-application advice number of major applications subject to processing agreement or other project plan percentage planned timescales met Decision-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> application approval rate delegation rate 	23% (see note 2) 0 (see note 3) N/A	24.8% (see note 2) 0 (see note 3) N/A
Decision-making timescales Average number of weeks to decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> major developments local developments (non-householder) householder developments 	16.7 weeks 9.2 weeks 6.6 weeks	39.9 weeks 14.2 weeks 6.7 weeks
Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time since enforcement charter reviewed (months) <i>Requirement: review every 2 years</i> number of breaches identified / resolved 	1 month 81 breaches 105 enforcement cases resolved	1 month 68 breaches 58 enforcement cases resolved

National Headline Indicator Table Notes

Note 1

Figures taken from the Finalised 2013 Housing Land Audit

A Period	B SDP Requirement	C Remaining Supply	D Annual Requirement	E Surplus/ Deficit (C-B)	F Years Supply (C/D)	G 5 Years land supply met
2013-2018	1000	1529	200	+529	7.6	YES
2014-2019	1000	1569	200	+569	7.8	YES
2015-2020	1000	1618	200	+618	8.1	YES

Note 2

In 2013/14 we received 647 planning applications (compared to 604 last year i.e. a 7.1% increase).

We also registered 379 formal pre-application enquiries (6.1% up on last year). This means that there were 59% as many pre-application enquiries as planning applications. Of the 647 planning applications, 23% (148) had been the subject of a pre-application enquiry. This evidences that there were 231 formal pre-application enquiries not resulting in a planning application. Accordingly, considerable Planning Officer time is spent on planning work and advice that does not result in an application or receipt of a fee, but nonetheless provides a high quality public service and saves the public the time and cost associated with formal applications.

Note 3

The Council has now introduced a processing agreements policy. At the time of writing this report, 3 agreements have been concluded but none were in place during the (2013/14) year to which this report relates.

2. Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

2A. Open for business

- Our offices are open to customers from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.
- Customer advisors are on hand at the two main Council offices in Giffnock and Barrhead who can give initial planning information during the above hours. The customer advisors are trained in introductory planning and building standards matters.
- Specialist planning advice from planning service staff is available without appointment and free of charge at the planning office (Spiersbridge) from 8.45am to 16.55pm Monday to Thursday (to 15.55pm on Fridays). Customer feedback on the quality of the information that they receive has been generally positive (see appendix 2), comments included that staff: “did their job well”; were a “really good help”; and “keep up good service and very happy with online services”
- We decided 647 planning applications (an increase of 43 i.e. 7.1% from last year) and 87 other applications this year.
- Written pre-application advice on development proposals is available free of charge. We registered 379 written pre-application enquiries (6.1% up on last year). This was in addition to informal enquiries taken via phone calls or informal discussions with people in our reception area; neither of which are formally registered as pre-applications. This means that there were 59% as many pre-application enquiries as planning applications. Of the 647 planning applications, 148 had been the subject of a pre-application enquiry i.e. 23%. This indicates that we had 231 formal pre-application enquiries that did not result in a planning application and illustrates that considerable time is spent on planning work and advice that does not result in an application or receipt of a fee, but nonetheless provides a public service and saves time and costs with formal applications. The Council has a 10-day response target for pre-application enquiries (and this timescale is monitored). We ensure that all our planning officers dedicate adequate time to undertake this important function. We promote use of our pre-application service on our web site and the statistics demonstrate that this is well used in practice. Our responses normally include consideration of the principle and detailed aspects of proposals – as advised online.
- A comprehensive online planning information service is available giving customers access to a very wide range of planning information. Information on planning applications is available online for applications since year 2000. Customer feedback has been generally positive in this respect (see appendix 2), most people saying that it is “good” and “easy to use”
- The Council’s website gives a full range of planning information, documents and forms, including all local planning documents.
- 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.

- The Council has a relatively high approval rate of planning applications (96.5% of applications are approved, some subject to conditions), showing a positive approach to development.
- We have a 'major development team' and give the public and developers a single point of access to a planning case officer for the duration of the application, thus providing consistent service and advice (see section 2C below). This is particularly valuable for major developments and planning applications which support the delivery of Local Development Plan policies and priorities. This procedure, in conjunction with our new processing agreements policy (see section 2C), allows planning applications to be project managed and provides a comprehensive and faster development management service.
- We have fully integrated and co-located our 'Regeneration' staff with our Planning Service, and work with our 'Economic Development' team within the same Environment Directorate. This is in order to provide a holistic approach to economic development and positively encourage investment opportunities. These teams work collectively and proactively on Development Frameworks and Masterplans in support of the Development Plans and Development Management functions to provide an integrated service to the public and developers.
- We have up-to-date development plan, a Proposed Local Development Plan and a range of supplementary planning guidelines. The Local Development Plan (LDP) Action Programme is up-to-date demonstrating the successful delivery of LDP policies and proposals.
- Through the monitoring of building warrants and completion certificates we see that the Planning and Building Standards Service has facilitated the approval of more than £74 million of development in the area. Over £42 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.
- We have approved Development Contributions guidance which sets out proportionate and reasonable expectations for what contributions developers need to make to infrastructure (see section 2B below for more details).
- We have new guidance published to ensure that the information and documents that are required to accompany planning applications are necessary, proportionate and are clearly scoped to avoid unnecessary costs to the applicant and the Council (see section 2C below for more details). Our internal policies include a risk management approach to allocating and dealing with planning applications.
- Our Planning Customer Service Standards Charter is published online to visibly demonstrate that we will deal with our customers quickly, politely and in as plain English as possible.



2B. High quality development on the ground

- Our local plan is up-to-date (2011) thus giving developers an up-to-date policy and development management decision framework. The Strategic Development Plan has also successfully been through examination and was approved in May 2012.
- The Local Plan and the Local Development Plan promote high quality and sustainable building design, layout and places. We promote the principles set out in 'designing streets' and encourage the use of design statements to accompany new development. Policies promote the inclusion of green infrastructure and resource and energy efficiency.
- Our two fully adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) provide detailed and realistic guidance to facilitate development and ensure that proportionate advice is given to developers and that only justifiable and proportionate contributions are asked of them.

- Affordable Housing. This outlines the main policy provisions relating to the implementation of the Council's affordable housing policy and provides guidance and assist in the interpretation and implementation of the policy. It assists in ensuring that a range of housing choice exists in East Renfrewshire and in meeting identified affordable housing need in a sustainable way.

- Development Contributions. This sets out the legal and policy framework for the need for development contributions associated with new development where a proposed development would create new or exacerbate existing deficiencies in local physical or community infrastructure, facilities or the environment. It particularly helps in the consideration of the need for and level of development contributions towards community facilities; education provision; greenspace; access; public realm improvements and roads & transportation provision. It is designed to assist negotiations around contributions rather than prohibit or add barriers to development and to assist in negotiating fair and proportionate solutions to development problems.

Both SPGs have been subject to consultations with the public, developers and interested parties and both have been updated to reflect the most up-to-date policies and practice. The SPGs are promoted in discussions with developers.

- A further seven SPGs have been published and have been the subject of consultation in parallel with the LDP. These are published on our website and are promoted in discussions with developers.
- Our regeneration and development plan teams are active in leading and promoting the strategic development opportunities as contained in the Proposed Local Development Plan, including 'Malletsheugh/Maidenhill, Newton Mearns'; 'Barrhead North' and 'Barrhead South'. We have already completed three Development Frameworks for these areas and work is ongoing on Masterplans for each which will form Supplementary Planning Guidance. This work promotes a collaborative approach to achieving high quality and sustainable place-making development on the ground.
- Three more SPGs are in preparation (a 'Residential Design Guide' which will include the principles of 'designing streets'; an 'Infill Development Strategy' for Neilston; and a guide for the development of the Dams to Darnley Country Park). It is planned to undertake consultation on these SPGs in Autumn 2014 and adoption around the same time as the LDP is adopted (Spring 2015).

- We are active in producing planning briefs to promote high quality development. We currently have 17 planning briefs for a variety of sites across East Renfrewshire, all of which are available on our website.
- We operate a monitoring system to assess the level of ‘added-value’ that the planning process brings to the development. Every planning application is assessed by the case officer in terms of the improvements, added protections or added community value that have been introduced to the development by the application going through the planning process. These are included in every *report of handling*. It is assessed that over 40% 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.
- Conservation Area Appraisals have been produced and have been the subject of public consultation in association with the Proposed Local Development Plan. Two new Conservation Areas are proposed and these are subject to consideration at the Local Development Plan Examination. These will guide high quality development in these protected areas.
- We have a range of active environmental and educational projects and events which promote a sustainable environment, including Dams to Darnley Country Park and Whitelee Access Project.
- We are implementing a range of regeneration and town centre improvement initiatives through our regeneration team, including Barrhead Regeneration (through planning gain and the town centre resilience fund - see action programme item 16); the Neilston Town Team (see entry in section 2D and appendix 3); and Business Improvement Districts (at both Clarkston and our newest BID established at Giffnock).
- We have a separate but co-located Economic Development Service leading on a range of economic initiatives and giving support to business in the area.
- We have an up-to-date enforcement charter and are active in pursuing solutions to uses and development which detract from the local environment.
- Polnoon, located at the western edge of the conservation village of Eaglesham, involved a collaborative process between the Council, developers (Mactaggart & Mickel) and the Scottish Government to design the site for a new neighbourhood in accordance with the principles of Designing Streets and Designing Places. The development is a case study in the Scottish Government’s ‘Policy Statement for Scotland – designing streets’ which stated that “the Polnoon project sets a new standard for residential development across Scotland”. This development is underway and completions will be on-going for the next few years. This development is being used to inform our Residential Design Guide SPG and as a case study/good example for other developments in the area.
- Our planning community forum (see section 2C below) provides opportunities for community councils and community groups to obtain information and training on planning issues so that they can be more informed and involved in contributing their views.
- The Charrette process in Neilston which involved extensive public consultation will inform better development on the ground.



2C. Certainty

- We have a complete up-to-date development plan, with the local plan adopted in 2011 and the strategic development plan approved in 2012. Monitoring Statements are produced annually. Action Programmes are monitored every six months.
- We have a Proposed Local Development Plan (LDP). This was published in February 2013 along with associated documents including an Action Programme and Monitoring Statement. This presents the up-to-date planning thinking of the Council. The Plan is progressing to examination over Summer and Autumn 2014, with adoption anticipated in Spring 2015. The Plan is fully project-managed (see Section 2F below).
- Key agencies and a wide range of businesses and interested parties have been fully engaged in the LDP and Action Plan preparation ensuring that policies, proposals and actions are deliverable within the committed timescales.
- We have maintained a generous effective supply of housing land to meet our housing needs and in accordance with Scottish Government's requirements.
- An up-to-date local development plan (LDP) scheme is in place with LDP project management in operation through regular development plan team meetings using GANTT chart project scheduling.
- We have a cross-party Member–Officer Working Group set up to progress the Local Development Plan. This has been established since the inception of the Plan and has overseen all stages of its production. This allows open discussion between Members (cross-party) and Officers, and guides the strategic direction and the policy approach of the Plan. This approach helped to ensure full cross party support for the Proposed Local Development Plan when it was approved at Council in December 2013.
- Joint working on the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan (at officer and Member levels) ensures coordinated and collective action and delivery on a wide range of topics across the conurbation.
- We monitor a range of development approvals through the Strategic Development Plan, including greenbelt development which consists of departures from the development plan. This information is used to ensure that the policies are being successfully implemented; and helps to identify any shortcomings in the policies or in implementation/land supply commitments.
- We have supplementary planning guidance covering a wide range of topics, including Affordable Housing; Development Contributions; Management and Protection of the Built Heritage; Rural Development Guidance; Renewable Energy; Energy Efficient Design; Green Network and Environmental Management; Householder Design Guide; Daylight and Sunlight Design Guide. These provide valuable proportionate guidance and a degree of certainty to the development industry to complement the development plan. Further guidance will be prepared during 2014/15, including a 'Residential Design Guide' which will include the principles of 'designing streets', an 'Infill Development Strategy' for Neilston and a guide for the development of the Dams to Darnley Country Park. Masterplans are in preparation for Maidenhill/Malletsheugh, Barrhead North and South.
- Our Core Paths Plan has progressed to adoption, providing valuable information to developers and the public.
- We have a range of development briefs, prepared in consultation with developers and published on our website (currently 17 are published online).



- We have a 'major development team' which brings together professionals from across the Council. Potential developers of major developments have access to this team who will give a co-ordinated response to proposals and advise of what documents are needed to validate the application. Responses to the developers are co-ordinated through the planning case officer who oversees the project from pre-application to decision.
- We have brought together key professionals under one roof at Spiersbridge. Planning and Building Standards, Property and Technical Services, Regeneration and Economic Development and Roads and Transportation are all now co-located at the Spiersbridge Offices. This approach allows us to quickly pull together key personnel as necessary to offer advice and assistance to Developers/Agents regarding any development proposals. We have also recently employed a dedicated Departmental Solicitor who supports the work of the Planning Service.
- We have a welcoming approach to potential developers and get good feedback on this from our customers when surveys are undertaken (see customer survey feedback in section 2D below).
- At the planning application validation stage, a senior officer checks the validation to ensure that developers receive high level support. We offer all developers a single point of access to a planning case officer who will see a proposal through from pre-application, application, approval of conditions and follow-up. We have an internal risk management approach to allocating and dealing with planning applications. This involves the Principal Officers who allocate planning applications to case officers assessing the complexity of the application and then matching that to the skills and experience of the planning officer who will be allocated the case.
- 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.
- New guidance has been published ('Supporting Information Requirements') and put on to the website to ensure that the information and document that are required to accompany planning applications are necessary, proportionate and are clearly scoped to avoid unnecessary costs to the applicant and the Council. Applicants are encouraged to discuss these requirements with the Council in advance of their submission in order to ensure that submissions are focussed and fit for purpose. This should also help to increase the percentage of planning applications that are valid upon receipt, a statistic which is regularly monitored to in order to contribute to speeding up the planning process as a whole.
- During 2013/14 we have produced and implemented a Processing Agreement Policy. This policy was the subject of consultation internally with other council services, with the statutory consultees and with about 10 local development companies. We received a number of comments and the policy was amended before being implemented. It was disappointing to note that two of the statutory consultees (Scottish Water and Transport Scotland) were unsupportive of participating in processing agreements. We have now started to offer processing agreements for all major developments and the policy is published on our website. Whilst none were implemented during the period to which this report refers, at the time of writing 3 have been signed and others are in preparation/discussion, including one for a significant local development.



2D. Communications, engagement and customer service

- We hold regular forums with developers, agents, community groups and community councils to allow discussion and training on relevant and current planning issues. The developers forum is sometimes chaired by a member of the business community. At each of these meetings contributors have the opportunity to raise issues and questions. Levels of community engagement are reported corporately to the Council through the Outcome Delivery Plan.
- A customer survey is undertaken on an annual basis with a cross-section of customers of the development management team (applicants, agents and representees). The survey asks a number of questions, including their experiences of the time taken to speak to someone; the time taken to get a response; their experience of our online planning service; the quality of information that they received; how well staff did their jobs; and how satisfied they were with the overall with the service that they received. From the 2013/14 survey, 90% of those surveyed said that they were 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall service that they received from the planning service. Actions are agreed after each survey in order to further improve service delivery. Findings are reported to the Planning Applications Committee. A summary of findings are shown in Appendix 2.
- All information on the web site is reviewed regularly. New Briefing Notes have been posted covering 'How we process a planning application' and 'What is a material consideration' in order to help the public better understand the planning system. Up-to-date 'standard conditions' have also been posted online in order to give comprehensive information to developers. Social media (facebook) has been used where appropriate to help share information with the public e.g. the proposed local development plan.
- Our Proposed Local Development Plan (LDP) was out to consultation between February and May 2013. Over 900 representations were received. Significant public consultation methods were used, over and above the statutory provisions, including double the consultation time scale and public drop-in events. Hard-to-reach groups were targeted, for instance Planning Aid were employed to engage to run the *In My Back Yard* (IMBY) programme with school groups. This enhanced publicity followed from 'lessons learned' at the Main Issues Report stage. A 'Publicity and Consultation Strategy' was prepared jointly by the Planning and Corporate Communications teams and approved by the Council. A Report of Conformity and along with a Participation Statement was submitted to the LDP Enquiry Reporters.
- We have good working arrangements with our communications team and submit articles regularly for our ER Magazine which goes out four times each year to every household in East Renfrewshire. All recent editions have included information on the Proposed Local Development Plan. We also have a quarterly LDP newsletter which is widely circulated giving updates on the plan's progress. When the LDP was published we offered and held briefing meetings with reporters from the local newspapers to ensure that they were well informed with accurate and up-to-date information.
- At our LDP consultation events and those events relating to the development frameworks/masterplans, we always invite customer feedback by way of an events questionnaire. The responses are analysed and comments used to inform future improvements to consultation methods.
- Documents and web information is written in such a way as to be as 'plain-english' as possible.

- A streamlined complaints procedure was introduced for people who are unhappy with the service that they have received. A leaflet is available on the website and at our planning office. The number and substance of complaints is monitored on a six-monthly basis and, where appropriate, improvement actions are implemented. The monitoring results are reported to the Department's management team every six months.
- We have updated our service standards and produced a Planning Customer Service Standards Charter. These are publicly available and published on the web site.
- Our full range of planning and related application forms and guidance notes are available online and we monitor our validation rates. Differing forms are available for 'Householder' and 'Non-householder' developments, recognising the differing needs of customers. The forms and guidance notes have been updated during the course of the year to keep up-to-date with legislative and procedural changes (see 3rd bullet point above). All of our forms have the appropriate data protection statements.
- We encourage and monitor online planning application submission and the percentage submitted online continues to rise to 43.5% in 2013/14. We undertook additional promotion of eplanning when the ebuildingstandards system was introduced this year. We encourage online submission of representations to planning applications and the Local Development Plan and monitor the communication means that people use. 40% of representations on planning applications now come in via the online planning system. 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.
- The Council's website was assessed by SOCITM during 2013/14, including consideration of how easily the public can find planning decisions. The planning web pages were thoroughly reviewed and updated in advance of this assessment. The web site received a 4 star rating from SOCITM.
- We have long opening hours and our staff are easily approachable at the planning office and on the telephone (see section 2A). Officer contacts are on all correspondence with the public to assist them in contacting the right person.
- We have actively participated in (and financially contributed to) the Neilston Charrette project. This involved considerable public consultation, public meetings, workshops and other community engagement; followed by the preparation of a Charrette Report which outlines the projects and implementation schedule. This is currently being prepared into the Neilston Infill Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- The Planning Service is administering the implementation of the High Hedges Act. We have produced forms, notes and guidance to assist the public in understanding the legislation. In the lead-up to the implementation of the Act and since its enactment, we have dealt with a significant number of enquiries and spent considerable time speaking to the public on the phone and in person at the planning office. This is done without any additional finance or income to cover these costs. This provides a customer service and assists people in resolving amenity issues associated with high hedges. A knock-on implication is that it takes planning officers away from dealing with planning applications.
- We have introduced audio-visual equipment in the Council Chamber which means that all plans and documents relevant to a planning application or local review body case can be displayed. Elected Members therefore have access to all documents at all of their meetings and the public can follow discussions better.



2E. Efficient and effective decision-making

- The Council performs well against national and local performance indicators and in comparison with the other 33 planning authorities in Scotland – see figures and charts in Appendix 1. The figures show steady year upon year improvement:
 - 82.1% of all applications were decided within 2 months . The average time taken to deal with a planning application in East Renfrewshire was 7.3 weeks (improved from 8.3 weeks last year). The Scottish average was 11.7 weeks, which places ERC in 4th place in Scotland (up from 6th place last year).
 - 92.1 % of householder applications were decided within their 2 month decision target. The average time taken to deal with a householder application was 6.6 weeks (improved from 6.7 weeks last year), the Scottish average was 7.7 weeks, and for this measure ERC was 8th in Scotland.
 - There were 6 Local Review decisions, which were dealt with in an average time of 7.4 weeks (improved from 8.6 weeks last year). The Scottish average was 12.8 weeks. ERC was 4th in Scotland.

These figures mean that the Council is in the top quartile in each these measures across the country.

- The Council has adopted an efficient scheme of delegation which has a relatively high level of delegation (94.3% of decisions are delegated to officers compared to the Scottish average of 92.6%).
- We have reviewed our ‘legacy’ planning applications and have dealt with most of our older cases.
- The Planning Applications Committee is relatively small and is trained on planning matters. It is supported by the Planning and Building Standards Manager, as well as other senior support staff e.g. Roads Engineers, Environmental Health Officers as appropriate. The Committee meets once every four weeks to ensure that applications are dealt with expediently. When applications are dealt with by way of a pre-determination hearing, procedures are in place to ensure that the full-council is convened immediately afterwards, thus ensuring a quick and consistent decision. The Local Review Body also meets every four weeks which ensures decisions are reached as quickly as possible. This all demonstrates East Renfrewshire Council’ commitment to a collective sense of urgency to enabling development within East Renfrewshire.
- The Planning Applications Committee also annually considers reports on the performance of the planning service, customer surveys and receives reports on appeal cases and decisions on a monthly basis. This gives the Council and Councillors the opportunity to monitor performance and learn from customer feedback and appeal outcomes.
- The full-Council approves development plan documents which ensure that all members are committed and kept informed of these important planning matters.
- We have a Local Development Plan Member – Officer Working Group (see section 2C above) which meets on an ad-hoc basis, as-and-when required to discuss and agree the local development plan strategy and policy approach.

- Full and active participation in the national eplanning system gives the council efficiency savings. In 2013/14, 42.7% all planning applications were submitted electronically which shows a continuous year-upon-year rise. From time to time we contact agents who do not use the electronic systems to encourage them to do so. The majority of incoming and outgoing correspondence (including all of our consultations) is conducted by email (giving time and cost savings over traditional mail). The online public access system gives the public more efficient access to information. Electronic payments for applications have risen to 18.2%, which reduces overhead costs for the Council. Customer feedback rates this service highly, people saying that it is “good” and “easy to use” (see appendix 2).
- We have implemented the ebuildingstandards system, which allows the submission of building warrants and completion certificates online. This gives developers a complete online submission system for the whole development process, bringing significant efficiencies to the system and should lead to improved take-up across the board of electronic submission of applications and documents. When the system was launched, we publicised both the online planning and building standards services.
- 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. Geographic information system (GGP) allows comprehensive geographic and spatial analysis of information and mapping. Our Data Information Group shares this information and resource across the council.
- 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.
- Council procedures along with forms and guidance notes for the public are kept up-to-date with new and updated legislation.
- We have appointed a lawyer who is based in the Environment Department and who specialises in planning and environmental matters. This now gives us quicker and more comprehensive legal support. In particular it is expected that this will speed up the preparation of legal agreements and the issuing of planning decisions - which will facilitate development on the ground being commenced more quickly.
- We have thoroughly reviewed our ‘stalled’ planning applications – all of which are as a result of delays in concluding legal agreements. These cases are all being progressed with renewed urgency utilising the newly appointed lawyer (see bullet point above). We are developing a protocol for ensuring quick processing of planning obligations, which will include a commitment to review and reconsider all un-issued consents 4-6 months after the ‘minded to grant’ decision.
- During 2013/14 we have produced and implemented a Processing Agreement Policy – for more information see Section 2C above.
- Consultation arrangements with internal and external consultees are discussed in Section 2C above.



2F. Effective management structures

- Fortnightly departmental management meetings are held involving the managers of all services in the Environment Department. Each team in the planning and building standards service holds team meetings on a 4-weekly basis attended by the manager. This allows management information to be cascaded to staff and discussion of relevant information, including performance figures, health & safety and current planning applications and issues.
- Working arrangements across the Development Plans and Regeneration Team have been modernised during the course of the year in order to facilitate the delivery of planning and development priorities. A team consisting of planning, regeneration, economic development, estates, roads and legal services staff has been brought physically together at our Spiersbridge offices. The purpose of this is to facilitate the preparation of the Development Frameworks and Masterplans for Maidenhill/Malletsheugh, Barrhead South and Barrhead North; and to work with developers and service providers/agencies to ensure their delivery.
- The Local Development Plan project management is implemented through regular staff meetings and GANTT chart project scheduling. This has ensured that work projects are monitored and implemented within realistic timescales. Full team meetings were held fortnightly during the preparation of the Proposed Local Development Plan in response to particularly high workloads and pressures. The Development Plan Scheme is kept up to date. This advises the public of development plan and project preparation schedules and allows the Service to monitor their implementation.
- Up to date staff appraisals (Personal Review and Development Scheme - PRDs) are in place for 100% of staff within the Planning Service. Every member of staff has been trained in the scheme and has two formal meetings with their line-manager annually. Staff and their manager agree their (SMART) objectives for the year (linked to corporate and managerial priorities); consider their core competencies; and agree their development/training needs for the year.
- Individual staff training needs are assessed annually (see PRD above) and participation in internal and external courses is encouraged. The service has a training budget. The Council runs a wide range of training courses in its 'insider learning' programme, including online courses and time management. Individual planning training events are held when new legislation and procedures are introduced e.g. training was held when the new High Hedges procedures were introduced in 2014.
- Effective corporate absence management arrangements are in place. Absence statistics are monitored every quarter and show for 2013/14 that absence levels in the planning service were a quarter of the departmental (non-manual staff) average.
- Comprehensive health & safety systems are in place (health & safety staff are embedded in the Environment Department), and audits are regularly undertaken.
- Succession planning arrangements are in place in line with the Council's succession planning policy.

- There are strong co-ordinated working links within the Environment Department with close partnerships particularly with Economic Development, Regeneration, Roads and Property & Technical Services.
- We have regular meetings with outside organisations/partners, particularly through the Strategic Development Plan. There are also regular meetings on development planning matters for instance with Transport Scotland; and ‘tripartite meetings’ twice each year with SEPA, Scottish Water and our Roads Service.
- Flexible working and staff deployment arrangements in place allow staff to be shared and move between teams (including compressed hours of work) in order to utilise staff most effectively; allow staff personal development and good life/work balance. At present we have two members of staff working across the development management and development plans teams, preparing Supplementary Planning Guidance and site briefs, thus ensuring both good development management input to these and *continuing professional development* for staff. This demonstrates a flexible workforce able to respond to needs.
- Staff skills are assessed regularly through ‘*continuing professional development*’ and *PRD (see above)* to ensure that best use is made of these abilities. Skills and staff numbers are also assessed at the end of each PRD round to ensure that the Service has the right people to meet future needs.
- A pilot “new ways of working” (agile) programme is being developed across the Department. This will consider the extent to which new technology could assist with improved efficiency in assessment and decision making.
- We have recently started working with our colleagues in Renfrewshire Council to see if there are ways we can collaborate to improve service delivery and generate further efficiencies within Planning and Building Standards.
- We receive adequate appropriate specialist advice through external organisations e.g. the West of Scotland Archaeological Service.
- We have good working relationships with other agencies and businesses in the area, as illustrated for example through our joint Masterplans team (see second bullet point above) who also work closely with service providers. Our Developers Forum illustrates good working relationships with developers in the area.
- We undertake benchmarking with our neighbouring Councils with regular meetings, which are minuted. This work allows the sharing of good practice and evidences our continued efficiency in decision making.



2G. Financial management and local governance

- Departmental and service budgets are considered within a three-yearly budget cycle to ensure effective long-term financial planning.
- Budgets are planned to coordinate with our Single Outcome Agreement priorities, thus being aligned to Council priorities.
- The Planning and Building Standards Manager has responsibility for six revenue budgets which are monitored regularly and updated on a monthly basis by the manager. The manager and the finance business partner review the budgets monthly to ensure spend and income are on track. Additionally the Director of Environment along with his Heads of Service review their budgets on an on-going basis.
- Risk management procedures are in place. Strategic and operational risk registers exist and are updated at 6 monthly intervals. Training on risk management is given to all managers and supervisors.
- Corporate arrangements are in place regarding ordering and procurement using appropriate online financial procurement systems. Managers have authority to authorise all ordering and procurement requests. The Environment Department now has an embedded Procurement Officer.
- 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.
- Principal planners have attended financial/budget training to ensure that their budgeting skills are up-to-date.
- The Planning Service has been successful in securing external match funding for the implementation of a range of environmental and physical enhancement works.
- We are preparing to participate in the second phase of 'Costing the Planning Service' which is being coordinated by the Improvement Service. This will involve significant in-depth analysis of staff time, performance statistics and financial analysis. This should provide a baseline for a further assessment of ways to further improve the efficiency of the Service.
- A council-wide staff survey is conducted annually and the results are presented down to service-level. These results are analysed annually, staff are consulted on the findings and actions implemented to address any shortcomings or improvements to the working environment and procedures that can be made.

2H. Culture of continuous improvement

- The planning service is planned and delivered within the framework of a Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement, the Council's own Outcome Delivery Plan, an Environment Department Service Improvement Plan and Service Improvement Plans. These have been produced annually over a number of years and improvement actions implemented and monitored on a six-monthly basis.
- We participate in a 'benchmarking' group with five other authorities to compare work practices and learn from the others' experiences. Over the past year we have discussed and compared views and arrangements on subjects including: processing agreements, planning performance, staffing levels, high hedges regulations and procedures, committee procedures, review of quarry and landfill consents, restoration bonds, environmental impact screening opinions, archaeological support, right of way diversion orders, archiving of records, fixed penalty notices, local review body procedures, neighbour notification procedures, eplanning uptake, schemes of delegation and more. This has allowed us to improve our work practices by learning from best practice elsewhere and sharing our good practices with others.
- We actively participate in the Heads of Planning Group and their sub-group on Development Management, where work practices and training are shared across authorities.
- We have participated in the Scottish Government Working Group on Planning Information Online (we initiated the country-wide survey of planning information online).
- The Strategic Development Plan (SDP) topic groups and regional planning group and meet regularly to prepare the SDP and to share best practice and knowledge.
- We have a proactive participation record in responding to government consultations. We have a 'consultations' page on our website which lists (council, agency and government) documents that are out to consultation in order to encourage public participation.
- We produce updated guidance (including online) for the public when appropriate. This year this included our 'Processing Agreements Policy' and 'Supporting Information Requirements' guidance. We keep all of our forms and guidance notes up to date with new legislation and best practice.
- We actively seek to continually improve our development management planning performance results with discussions on means of improvement at monthly team meetings.
- We have improved our online information with improved public access points and improved online local development plan and documents.
- Planning decisions and appeal decisions are monitored in order to ensure continued effective decision-making. Appeals decisions are reported to the Planning Applications Committee. The Committee/LRB members are kept informed of significant changes to the planning system and procedural changes, and training is provided when appropriate.
- Staff personal development and training is a high priority, see section 2F. Elected Member training is co-ordinated at a council-level, but does include planning training both as part of induction and subsequently when the need arises.



3. Supporting evidence

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

A number of areas of evidence relate to more than one heading, but for brevity each has only been listed once below.

2A Open for business

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

2B High quality development on the ground

- Environmental project information and annual events guides for the [Dams to Darnley Country Park](#) and the [Whitelee Countryside Ranger Service](#) are available on the Council's website
- Information on the [Polnoon development](#) is available on the Scottish Government website
- [Conservation area information and appraisals](#) are available on the Council's website
- [Neilston Going Places](#) information is available online
- For policy documents, see below

2C Certainty

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

2D Communications, engagement and customer service

- Contact details (postal address, email address and phone numbers) are published on virtually every web page so that people know how and where to contact us should they have any questions
- Our Forums with [developers](#), agents & community groups are are minuted
- [Customer survey findings](#) are reported to the Planning Applications Committee and are available on the Council's website
- Our Customer [Service Standards Charter](#) is available online
- Local Development Plan [Publicity Strategy](#) is available on the Council's website; along with all Local Development Plan related documents and publicity materials (see above)
- Our latest [Planning Performance Framework](#), which includes development management performance figures, is available online.
- All of our [planning application forms](#) are available on the Council's website
- Our [formal complaints procedure](#) is available on the Council's website

2E Efficient and effective decision-making

- Planning application and pre-application statistics are gathered from the Council's UNIFORM casework system.
- Comparative Scotland-wide planning application statistics are published on the Scottish Government [Statistics Page](#) and Audit Scotland's [Performance Information](#)
- Monitoring of housing, business and other data is undertaken annually
- [Online planning system](#) available on the Council's website providing information on planning applications since year 2000, and documents for planning applications over the past 3 years
- Our [Scheme of Delegated Functions](#) is available on the Council's website and the [Planning Scheme of Delegation](#) is available on the Planning Applications Committee page
- [Planning Application Committee and Council agendas and minutes](#) are available on the Council's website
- Planning Applications can be submitted online via the [national eplanning website](#)
- [Payment of fees](#) can be made on the Council's website – we also have documents outlining what the fees are, and payment methods on our '[Planning documentation and forms](#)' page

2F Effective management structures

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

2G Financial management and local governance

- [Outcome Delivery Plan](#) is on the Council's website
- The Council Wide [Strategic End Year Performance Report 2012/13](#) is on the Council's website
- Monthly reviews and updates to budgets undertaken
- Training records for risk management kept
- Corporate procurement policies in place

2H Culture of continuous improvement

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

4A. Service improvements: 2014-15

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

Customers

1. We will implement our new processing agreements policy and offer the use of processing agreements for major planning applications.
2. We will back-scan our archive of planning files back to 2004 in order to increase public and staff access to information.
3. We will enable our online Enforcement Register (with copies of notices) in order to provide the public with access to more information.
4. We will assess our planning application validation standards in the light of national guidance that is anticipated to be published.
5. We will finalise our protocol for dealing with planning obligations, to ensure that there is no time delay in agreeing them and that procedures are in place to deal with any cases which do become stalled.

Outcomes

6. We will strive to improve our planning application performance rates.
7. We will assess the Local Development Plan Examination Report and move to adoption of the Plan with associated Supplementary Planning Guidance.
8. We will prepare and consult on three additional Supplementary Planning Guidance: the Neilston Infill Strategy; Residential Design Guide; and Dams to Darnley Country Park.
9. We will consider the outcome of the consultation on the Development Contributions SPG, summarise the comments and prepare a revised version for submission to Scottish Ministers.
10. We will prepare Masterplans for the *strategic development opportunities*, at Maidenhill/ Malletsheugh; Barrhead South and Barrhead North.
11. Barrhead Masterplans - we will market Council owned land at the Barrhead South and Barrhead North (Glasgow Road) sites in facilitation of the strategic development opportunities. We will also promote the development and delivery of site remediation at Shanks Park.
12. We shall increase the supply of affordable housing delivered through the planning system.
13. The Core Paths Plan will be implemented with the promotion of access across the Council area. In particular we will construct (a) a further section of the Levern walkway between Glasgow Road, Barrhead and Nitshill, Glasgow; and (b) a key footpath link connecting Whitecraigs Rugby Club to Balgray Reservoir within the Dams to Darnley Country Park.
14. We will promote future recreational and access opportunities within the Dams to Darnley Country Park. These will be implemented using City Deal funding and development contributions associated with the Strategic Development Opportunities as included within the Proposed Local development Plan.
15. We will promote future recreational and access opportunities within Whitelee Windfarm in line with the Whitelee Access Plan (2014-19).
16. We will continue to develop proposals to enhance the green network. Implementation will be funded through development contributions and external funding opportunities.
17. Barrhead - We aim to maximise the outcomes of the supermarket planning gain & town centre resilience fund in the town centre; market sites within the Glasgow Road Corridor; and continue to promote and facilitate the residential redevelopment of 'Shanks' through a 'Shanks/Glasgow Road' development strategy/masterplan. We also aim to set up a Barrhead Business Improvement District.

18. Town Centres - We will continue to develop and enhance the Clarkston and Giffnock Business Improvement Districts (BID). We aim to establish the Barrhead BID and aim to develop a pan-Renfrewshire BID with Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils.
19. City Deal projects – we will develop a number of City Deal infrastructure projects across East Renfrewshire.
20. Newton Mearns town centre masterplan – we will prepare and consult on a masterplan for Newton Mearns town centre.

People

21. The staff resources in the Development Management team will be assessed to ensure that staff are in place with appropriate experience and at appropriate grades to cope with the expected increase in workload and high number of major applications anticipated during 2014/15.
22. New guidance on the role of councillors in pre-application planning procedures will be produced and Member training will be implemented to ensure full understanding of it.

Efficiency

23. We will upgrade our Geographical Information System to the latest version. We will set up a structured training plan and provide training as necessary. We will identify datasets which require metadata and work on completing these to INSPIRE standards.

The above actions will be monitored through the year.

4B. Delivery of service improvement actions 2013-14

Actions programmed for 2013/14		Actions undertaken and comments as at September 2014
Customers	1. We will produce guidance on Processing Agreements and encourage developers to use Processing Agreements for major planning applications.	We have produced a Processing Agreements policy and offer it for all major developments. At the time of writing this report, two Processing Agreements have been signed.
	2. We will strive to increase the use of the eplanning service through additional publicity to coincide with the launching of the EBuildingStandards service.	Additional publicity was undertaken at the launch of the EBuildingStandards Service, and use of the system continues to steadily increase.
	3. We will back-scan our archive of planning files back to 2004 in order to increase public and staff access to information.	We have not progressed as fast as intended with our back-scanning due to administration staff shortages and the prioritisation of 'live' applications. The documents continue to be available in hard format so no lack of public access is experienced.
	4. We will expand the use of Quick Response (QR) codes on documents that we produce in order to give the public easier access to information on line.	QR Codes have been added to all neighbour notification letters.
	5. We will review our handling of Section 75 Legal Agreements with our Legal Services in order to speed up the conclusion of such cases.	We have appointed a Lawyer embedded into the environment department who specialises in environmental and planning matters. This gives dedicated support, for instance, to the preparation of legal agreements and will lead to the speeding up of the conclusion of these applications.
Outcomes	6. We will strive to improve our planning application performance rates.	Our performance rates have largely improved (see Appendix 1 below). Of the 21 measures in Section 5 which can be compared with last year, we have improved our performance against 17 of these. Of the four which were not improved, the two relating to the percentage of householder applications dealt with within two months were less than 1% different from last year. For the two relating to local business and industry applications, although the performance rate was down, it was on the basis of an increase of 83% in these types of applications. Overall we dealt with 7% more planning applications than last year, so the increased performance rate shows up all the more positively with the background of an increased workload and no extra staff.
	7. We will assess the representations made to our <i>Proposed Local Development Plan, Proposed Action Programme</i> and <i>Revised Environmental Report</i> . We shall prepare and consult on modifications to the Proposed Plan and shall prepare for its <i>Examination</i> .	Consultation on the Proposed Local Development Plan closed in May 2013 and all of the responses were assessed. Modifications were subsequently published and consulted on through to November 2013. The Local Development Plan has been submitted for Examination by Reporters. All of the necessary documentation and submissions, including <i>Schedule 4 Forms</i> have been made on time.

Actions programmed for 2013/14		Actions undertaken and comments as at September 2014
Outcomes	8. We will prepare Development Frameworks and Masterplans for the <i>strategic development opportunities</i> , which will be incorporated into Supplementary Planning Guidance as part of the Local Development Plan. We will also commence work on further Supplementary Planning Guidance, including a Residential Design Guide and the Neilston Infill Development Strategy. The preparation of the above may include work with Architecture and Design Scotland; and public consultation through <i>charrettes</i> .	<p>We have produced Development Frameworks for Maidenhill/Malletsheugh; Barrhead North and Barrhead South and these are published online. We are currently working on on Master Plans for these areas.</p> <p>Work has started on the Supplementary Planning Guidance <i>Residential Design Guide</i> and <i>Neilston Infill Development Strategy</i>.</p> <p>A Charrette was undertaken in Neilston through February-March 2014. This was undertaken through a through the joint working of a number of parties. See Appendix 3 for further details.</p>
	9. We shall increase the supply of affordable housing delivered through the planning system.	<p>24 new build affordable housing units (being a mix of social rented housing and low cost housing for sale) were completed and delivered through the planning system in 2013/14 increasing the overall supply, with additional units granted planning permission for future delivery. In addition a further 11 units were added to the affordable housing supply in 2013/14 outwith the planning system. The Council is on track to meet its cumulative Outcome Deliver Plan target of achieving 150 additional units over 5 years to 2017.</p>
	10. The Core Paths Plan will be implemented with the promotion of access across the Council area. In particular we will construct (a) a further section of the Lavern walkway between Glasgow Road, Barrhead and Nitshill, Glasgow; (b) a key footpath link connecting Whitecraigs Rugby Club to Balgray Reservoir within the Dams to Darnley Country Park; and (c) a mountain bike track at Whitelee Access Project.	<p>a. Detailed design and costing have been produced for the Lavern Path. The project is delayed by Scottish Water who plan to construct a major pipeline in the same vicinity as the path. The Water Works Gardens have created a new 300m section of path beside the Lavern.</p> <p>b. The footpath proposals have progressed through the planning stage and are now programmed to be implemented in 2014-15.</p> <p>c.. The mountain bike track is complete.</p>
	11. We will develop proposals to create a ' <i>growing space</i> ' within the former Scottish Water site at Glasgow Road, Barrhead.	<p>Water Works was awarded £130K form Kew Gardens in Nov 2013 and opened to the public in June 2014. Over 200 local people were involved with pupils from 3 schools and 5 local groups planting 16,000 wild flower plants.</p>
	12. We will apply for appropriate funding to enable opportunities within Dams to Darnley Country Park and other key recreational resources within East Renfrewshire.	<p>Funding opportunities are currently being investigated in conjunction with the promotion of Strategic Development Opportunities and emerging developer contributions. In particular, discussions are ongoing with Sportscotland in relation to funding for the creation of a water sports facility.</p> <p>Greenspace projects are currently being developed which will take advantage of emerging SRDP, WIAT and CSGN funding likely to become available during 2014.</p>

	Actions undertaken and comments as at September 2014
<p>13. We will use information from the feasibility strategy produced by Dunira Strategy to inform future potential opportunities within the Dams to Darnley Country Park.</p>	<p>Funding opportunities are currently being investigated in conjunction with the promotion of Strategic Development Opportunities and emerging developer contributions. In particular, discussions are ongoing with SportsScotland in relation to funding for the creation of a water sports facility.</p>
<p>14. Barrhead - We aim to maximise the outcomes of the supermarket planning gain & town centre resilience fund in the town centre; market sites within the Glasgow Road Corridor; and continue to promote and facilitate the residential redevelopment of 'Shanks' through a 'Shanks/Glasgow Road' development strategy/masterplan. We also aim to set up a Barrhead Business Improvement District.</p>	<p>Supermarket planning gain - We have secured £800,000 development contributions from Asda which is being invested in town centre public realm, access to town centre greenspace and town centre resilience fund</p> <p>Town centre resilience fund (TCRF) - This is part-funded by Council and part-funded by Asda development contributions. Following consultation with town centre retailers, TCRF has been used to promote businesses on banners, fund shopfront improvement grants and create on-street car parking to help capture passing trade</p> <p>Glasgow Road Corridor site marketing - A new access and roundabout to the former Nestle site and a masterplan is being developed. Regeneration Capital Funding and City Deal is being sought to provide more business space. The former Nestle site will be marketed in late 2014.</p> <p>The 'Shanks/Glasgow Road' area has been incorporated into the Barrhead North Development Framework which has been prepared and published.</p> <p>Barrhead Business Improvement District – This is now under development (see below)</p>
<p>15. Town Centres - We aim to develop and enhance the Clarkston Business Improvement District (BID), work with the newly constituted Giffnock BID and roll out the BID model to Barrhead where preliminary work will take place in 2013/14.</p>	<p>Clarkston BID. Heading towards re-ballot in 2015. The I love Clarkston BID continues to deliver exiting events, lauded place-branding/promotion, and focused business support. A recent highlight was the BID hosting the Queen's baton relay in July where huge crowds turned out.</p> <p>Giffnock BID. The Giffnock Village BID is a year in existence now well established, delivering events, place-branding, and a new loyalty card scheme. In September 2014 the BID will be hosting a classic car show at various locations throughout the town centre.</p> <p>Barrhead BID. A steering group is being established with a view of taking the BID business proposal to Ballot later in 2015. A database of businesses and rateable values has been collated.</p> <p>Pan-Renfrewshire Rural BID. We are working with Renfrewshire and Inverclyde to develop a pan-Renfrewshire Rural BID based on the boundary of the draft LEADER project.</p>

Outcomes

East Renfrewshire Planning Performance Framework 2014

Actions programmed for 2013/14		Actions undertaken and comments as at September 2014
People	16. The structure of the Development Plans and Regeneration team will be assessed to ensure that staff are in place with appropriate experience and at appropriate grades to fulfill expectations and ensure career progression.	Working arrangements across the Development Plans and Regeneration Team have been modernised during the course of the year in order to facilitate the delivery of planning and development priorities. A team consisting of planning, regeneration, economic development, estates, roads and legal services staff has been brought physically together at our Spiersbridge Way office.
	17. The Administration Team restructuring will be finalised.	This has been completed and the team is considered to be working efficiently.
Efficiency	18. Review the Scheme of Delegation to ensure it is up-to-date and in accord with recent legislative changes.	The Planning Scheme of Delegation was updated in September 2014. This brought it up-to-date including taking account of the Town and Country Planning (Schemes of Delegation and Local Review Procedures)(Scotland) Regulations 2013. A report was also prepared for the Cabinet meeting in April 2014 (which was subsequently approved) to update the Council-wide Scheme of Delegated Functions to delegate powers to officers to deal with High Hedges Notices in accord with new legislation.
	19. The Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG) integration programme will be further rolled out to the Council's Housing Service and Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP); and also to the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board (RVJB).	Discussions are currently being held with housing to get their data integrated. CHCP receive monthly updates and are using the CAG. The RVJB also receive monthly updates and we work together to resolve any missing records.
	20. We will upgrade our Geographical Information System (GIS) to the latest version. We will set up a structured training plan and provide training as necessary. We will identify datasets which require metadata and work on completing these to INSPIRE standards.	Work ongoing and still to be completed in conjunction with our GIS software supplier.

5. PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK OFFICIAL STATISTICS

A: Decision-making timescales

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

* 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 & 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: Our performance rates have largely improved. Of the 21 measures above which can be compared with last year, we have improved our performance against 17 of these (highlighted green). Of the four which were not improved (highlighted red), the two relating to the percentage of householder applications dealt with within two months were less than 1% different from last year. For the two relating to local business and industry applications, although the performance rate was down, it was on the basis of an increase of 83% in these types of applications. Overall we dealt with 7% more planning applications than last year, so the increased performance rate shows up all the more positively with the background of an increased workload and no extra staff.

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

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

C: Enforcement activity

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

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

D: Context

See commentary in relation to section A on the page above

6. WORKFORCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TABLE 6A

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Head of Service			1	

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

		Development Management	Development Plans	Enforcement	Other
Managers	No. Posts	2	2	-	2
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
Main grade posts	No. Posts	5.3	5.7	-	3
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
Technician	No. Posts	1.3	1	-	-
	Vacant	-	-	-	-
Office support/clerical	No. Posts	1.7	-	-	-
	Vacant	0.3	-	-	-
TOTAL		10.6	8.7	-	5

NOTES

- (a) As at 31st March 2014
- (b) The above figures equate to *full time equivalent* positions
- (c) All of the development management planners have a role in enforcement work.

TABLE 6B

Staffing profile	Number
Under 30	2
30-39	5
40-49	13
50 and Over	7

TABLE 6C

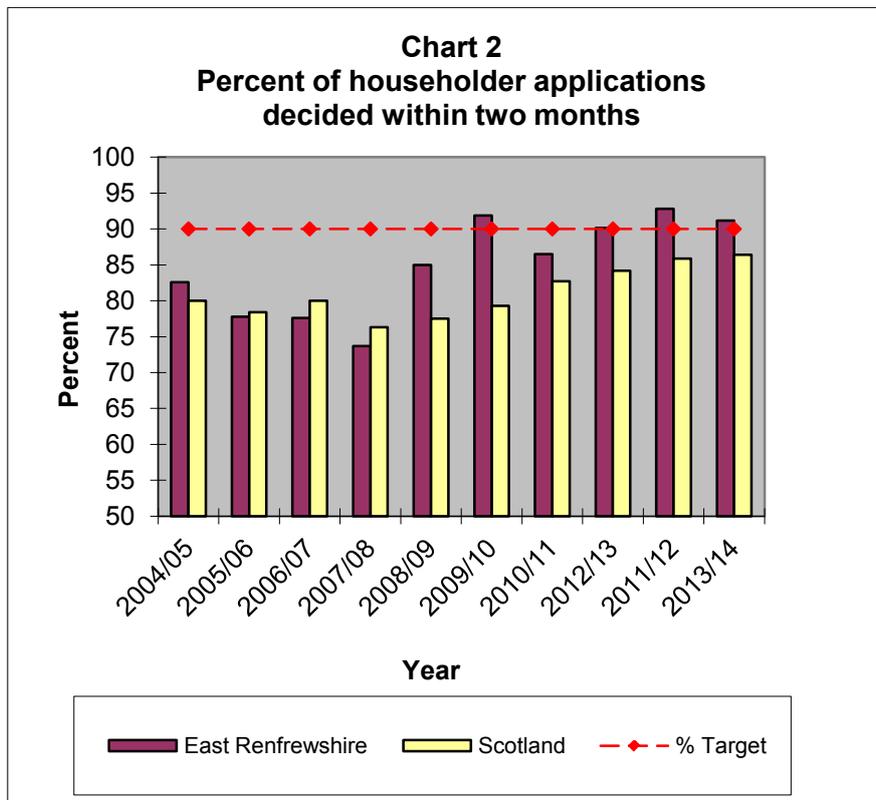
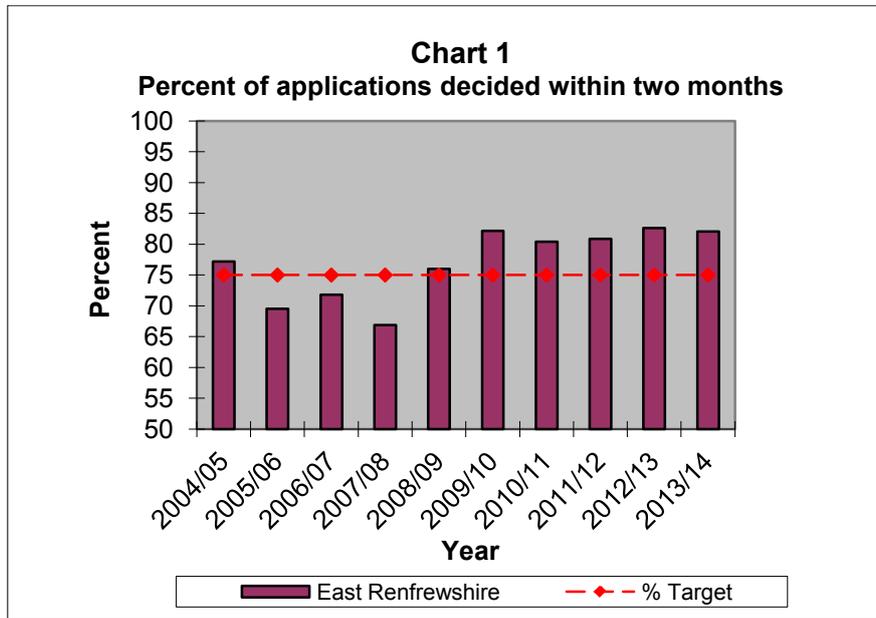
Committees & site visits	No. per year
Full Council Meetings	1
Planning Committees	10
Area Committees (where relevant)	n/a
Committee site visits	6
LRB	6
LRB site visits	1

TABLE 6D

	Total Net Budget 2014/15	Actual Expenditure 2013/14	Income 2013/14	Net Expenditure 2013/14
Development Management	£639,000	£895,000	£371,000	£524,000
Development Planning	£1,048,000	£1,384,000	£404,000	£980,000
Other	£10,000	£14,000	0	£14,000

NOTES

- (a) The Net Budgeted figures are the net expenditure budgets for the 2014/15 year as per East Renfrewshire Council's POBE return.
- (b) The actual expenditure, income and net actual expenditure figures are taken from draft Local Financial Return figures for East Renfrewshire Council.
- (c) Costs reported are for the whole services in each case, not just planning applications.



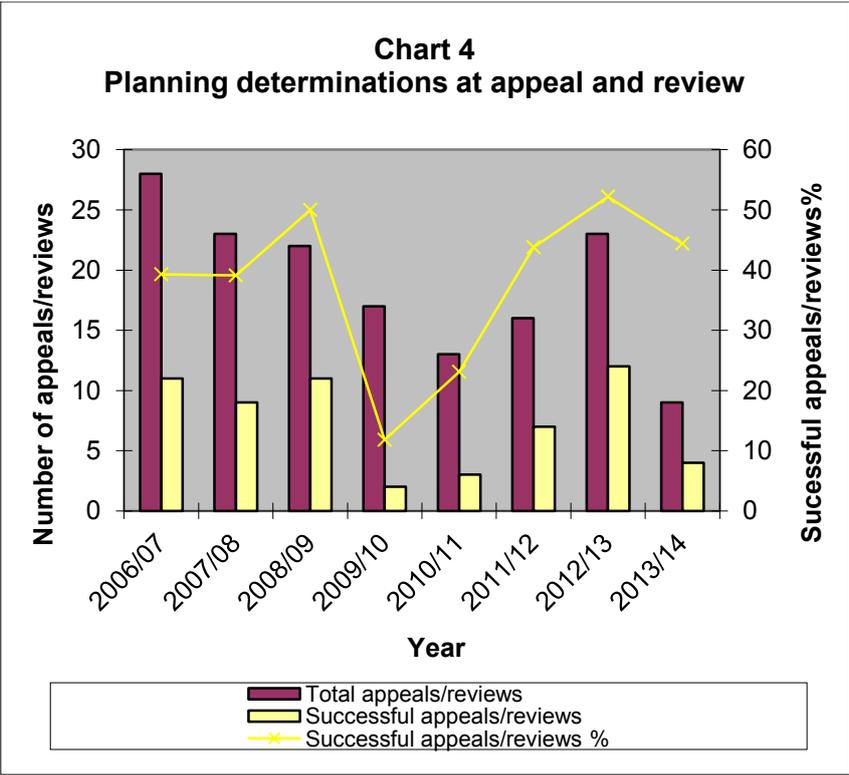
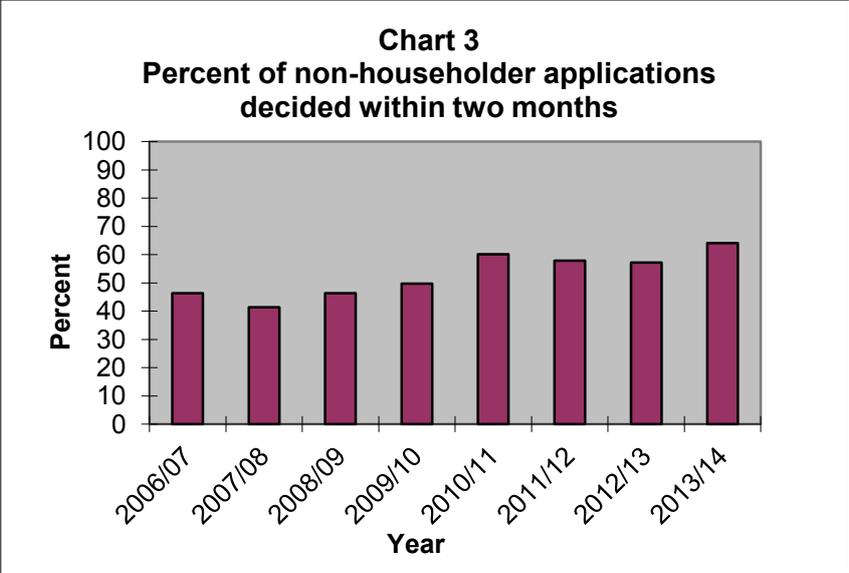
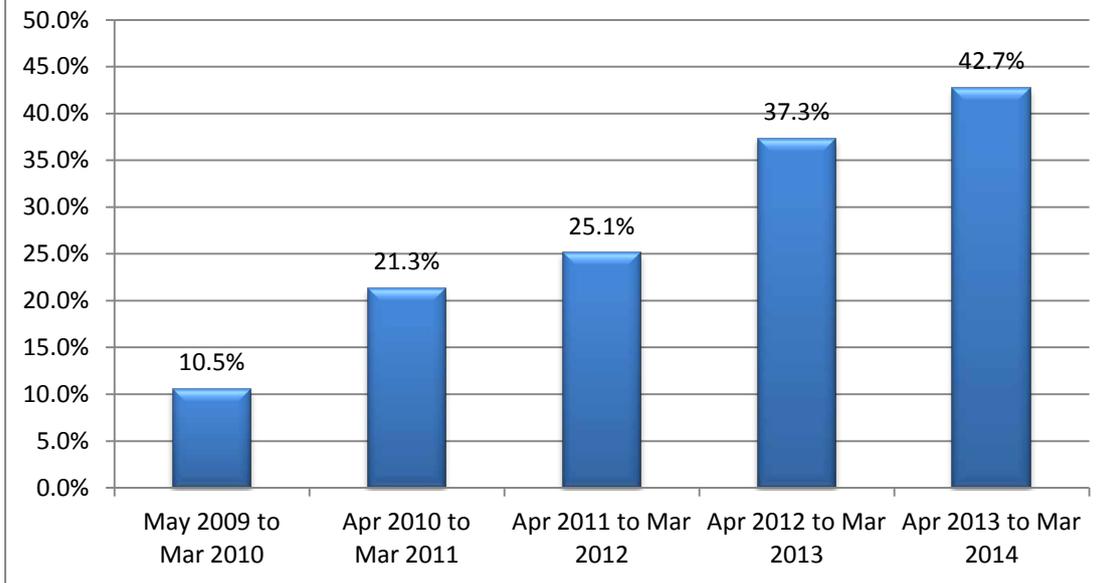


Chart 5
Submission of planning applications online



Appendix 2 Customer Survey 2013/14 Summary of Findings

The customers of the Development Management section of the Planning Service were surveyed in March 2014. Overall the results are generally positive and it is not considered that specific follow-up actions are necessary.

A summary of the results show:-

- 90% were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the time taken to speak to someone on the telephone (only one person said they were fairly dissatisfied, none were very dissatisfied) – this is up from 83% last year.
- 90% were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the time taken to get a response to a written enquiry (only one person was fairly dissatisfied, none were very dissatisfied) – this is down from 100% last year.
- 55% had used our online planning services. Of those who didn't use it, 86% of them answered simply that they "prefer not to", while two people said that they were unaware of the service.
- 90% were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the quality of information that they received from the Council (there were no dissatisfied expressions) – this is up from 83% last year.
- 77% were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with how well staff did their jobs (two people were dissatisfied) - this is down from 89% last year
- 90% were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' overall with the service that they received from the Planning Service (nobody expressed dissatisfaction) – this is up from 89% last year.

Summary of the comments that were made in response to the questions:-

Comments about the online services

Five people commented that it was good or easy to use; whilst one person said that it was not very good. Three people made specific comments or suggestions about how the services operate in practice (relating to the online submission of applications and the online submission of representations), most of which relate to the technical operation of the system which the Council cannot directly control.

What would you say about the quality of information that you received?

Two people said it was good and helpful. One person said that some of the information was wrong, inconsistent and not given in plain English. We are not aware of any information that is wrong and we do try to give information in as plain English as possible (given the complexities of the planning system) and to this end we publish online a number of 'briefing notes' which are written for public consumption.

Do you have any comments to make about the way staff did their jobs?.

A number of comments were made, both positive and negative. Someone said that they "*never seem to get someone who can give you an answer*"- but we have professional staff available to assist the public 35 hours a week. Someone commented that "*I don't think planning officers take public views into consideration*" – but that is not correct as all representations are assessed in *reports of handling*. One person said that "*Very basic errors were made. Out of 4 planning applications all were delayed due to mistakes by planning officers*" – we are not aware of the instances which are referred by this person so cannot investigate them in detail, but this does not seem to be a common experience.

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

As above, both positive and negative comments were made. Someone said that *“Planning officers should have power to tell malicious objectors to go away”* – but the Council has to take all representations seriously. Someone commented that the *“Online services were rubbish”* – but most feedback and statistics show that it is well used and largely welcomed by the customers. One person said that the *“Telephone service was not good”* – but we feel that we provide a very accessible and professional telephone service. Two people commented on timescales for receiving consents – but the statistics show that East Renfrewshire Council perform well in relation to timescales. Others comment that *“Staff were a really good help”* and *“Keep up the good service and very happy with online services”*.

Appendix 3

The *NEILSTON GOING PLACES* Charrette Report is now out.

A major public consultation project took place in Neilston between February and March 2014. The purpose of it was to take forward the Neilston Town Charter with the involvement of the local community.

A 'Charrette' project was set up which involved public meetings, themed workshops and a wide range of consultations with the public, community groups, traders and interested parties.

NEILSTON GOING PLACES summarises what took place and sets out all of the findings. It's a big read, but the report is truly comprehensive, covering issues such as community input, the cost of delivery and the wider planning implications. You can have a look at the full document at www.neilstontrust.co.uk where you can trace the whole process and see videos and accounts of the many ways in which people came forward to give their views. You can also pop into the Bank, Neilston Library or Glen Halls to read a printed copy of the report.

NEILSTON GOING PLACES



From a planning perspective, the findings of the Report including all the development proposals will inform a new **Neilston Infill Development Strategy** which will form Supplementary Planning Guidance as part of the Local Development Plan. This is currently in preparation and will go out to public consultation in due course.

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



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