

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILPLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE9 August 2017Report by Director of EnvironmentPLANNING CUSTOMER SURVEY AND PERFORMANCE 2016/17**INTRODUCTION**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of various aspects relating to planning customer feedback and development management performance.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. It is recommended that the committee notes the customer feedback and performance results outlined in this report.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The planning service monitors customer feedback and its performance on a regular basis using a range of measures. A summary of these results and measures are discussed below.

**REPORT****Customer feedback**

4. A telephone survey of planning customers is undertaken annually. This is a telephone survey with a range of applicants, agents and those who made representations on planning applications. The following presents a summary of the overall results of the Development Management Planning Customer Survey for 2016-17. Some charts of the results are contained in Appendix 1.

- a. 94% (up from 88%) were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the time taken to speak to someone on the telephone.
- b. 85% (up from 64%) were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the time taken to get a response to a written enquiry (four people were dissatisfied).
- c. 86% (up from 64%) had used our online planning services. Of those who didn't use it, 86% of them answered simply that they "prefer not to", while 14% said that they didn't have access to the internet.
- d. 78% (up from 58%) were either 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the quality of information that they received from the Council (8% (down from 18%) expressed dissatisfaction).
- e. 48% (up from 45%) were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with how well staff did their jobs (6% (down from 11%) expressed dissatisfaction).
- f. 82% (up from 58%) were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' overall with the service that they received from the Planning Service (6% (down from 13%) expressed dissatisfaction).

5. The survey statistics this year are all improved on last year. The results are encouraging with many complimentary comments given. For a service which inherently deals with conflict (someone wants a proposal to happen while often someone else doesn't) it is considered that the above results are very positive.

6. A number of constructive comments and criticisms were also made during the survey. We have considered the comments made by our customers and there are a number of areas where we will continue to try to improve our customer relations.

### **Development Management performance**

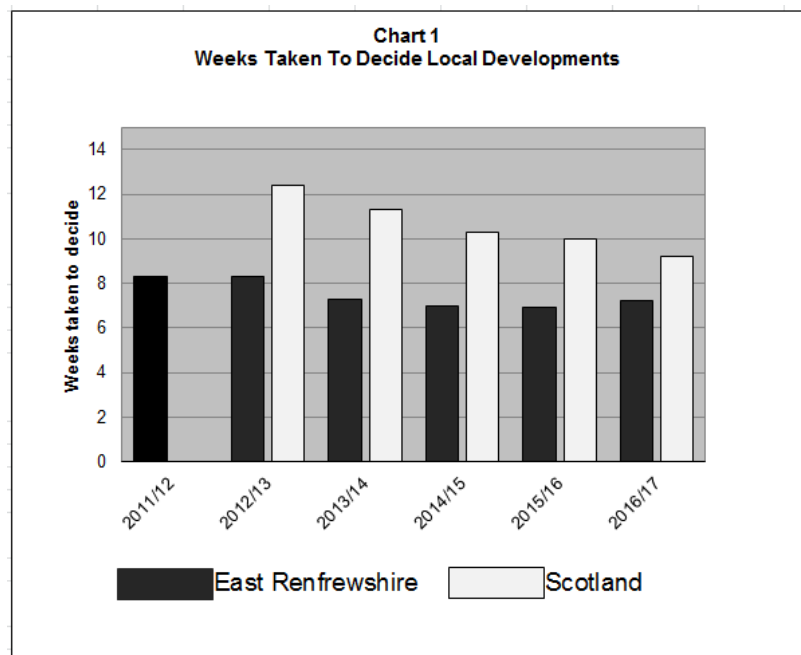
7. All planning authorities in Scotland are required to produce a Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for submission to the Scottish Government. Our new PPF dated July 2017 has now been submitted and it is available to read on the Council's website at [www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/service-standards](http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/service-standards). The purpose of the PPF is to present to the public a picture of the high standard of service that Planning Service delivers.

8. The PPF looks at the Council's performance over four main areas:- quality of outcomes; quality of service and engagement; governance; and culture of continuous improvement. It also includes a range of service improvement actions, performance statistics and examples of high quality developments that have been built.

9. For information, the 2016 PPF was submitted in July 2016. The Scottish Government assessed the PPF against 13 performance markers, which were each assessed using a Red – Amber – Green rating, depending on how well the performance marker was considered to be met. In 2016 we received 12 green and one amber rating.

10. The new 2017 PPF looks at a wide range of actions that have been implemented and demonstrates that the Planning Service is an open and forward-looking service, not just performing well in terms of performance statistics, but also delivering on good customer service and high quality development on the ground.

11. The main statistical measures of performance look at the speed of processing planning applications. The majority of our applications are for 'local' developments, and in 2016/17 we decided these local developments in an average of 7.2 weeks. The target for deciding such applications is 8 weeks and the national average is 9.2 weeks. In comparison with the other 33 planning authorities, that would place us in 5<sup>th</sup> place in Scotland in terms of this measure, which is in the top quartile.



12. For 'householder' developments, we decided these in an average of 6.5 weeks. The target for deciding such applications is also 8 weeks and the national average is 7.3 weeks. That would place us in 8<sup>th</sup> place in Scotland in terms of this measure, also in the top quartile. Not every measure however has improved this year. The Service dealt with unexpected periods of staff absence over the holiday period of summer 2016. This resulted in staff shortages within our small team over the period of a couple of months and then a backlog which took a further couple of months to catch up on. The Service has therefore done well to maintain the above top quartile performance despite these difficulties.

13. We are also seeing an increased number of planning applications received and paid for online. This brings efficiency savings for the Service. In 2016/17 we had nearly 60% of submissions online, with over 30% online payments. We are continuing to look at ways to increase this

### **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

14. The information in this Report indicates the continuing improvement in the efficiency of performance of the planning system.

### **CONSULTATION**

15. A range of customers were consulted in the compilation of the customer survey outlined above.

### **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

16. This report has no partnership working implications.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

17. There are no direct implications relating to the content of this report

### **CONCLUSIONS**

18. The information in this Report indicates the continuing improvement in the efficiency of performance of the planning system and the good levels of customer satisfaction.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

19. It is recommended that the Committee notes the customer feedback and performance results outlined in this Report.

Director of Environment

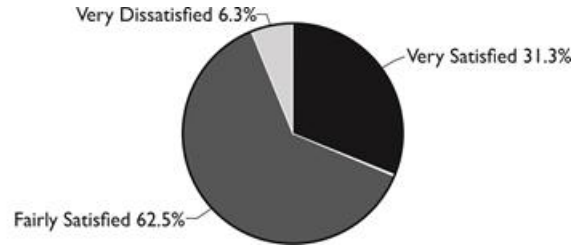
Report Author: Graham Shankland, Principal Planner  
0141 577 3341 e.mail: [graham.shankland@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:graham.shankland@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)

July 2017

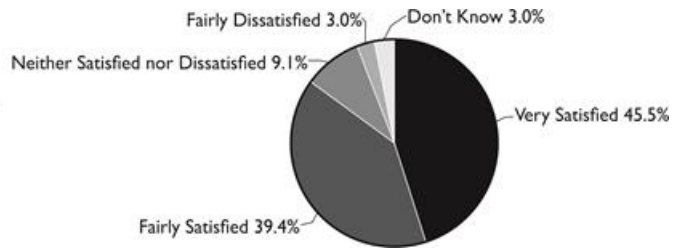
BLANK PAGE

**Customer Survey 2016-17 Summary of Findings – Charts**

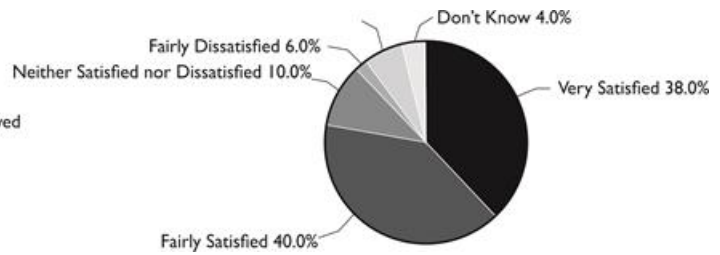
If the respondent contacted us in person or by telephone - please rate how satisfied you were with the time taken to speak to someone who could help you



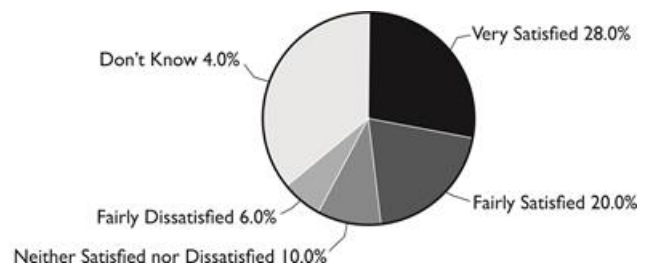
If the respondent contacted us by writing, email or via our website - please rate how satisfied you were with the time taken to get a reply from us



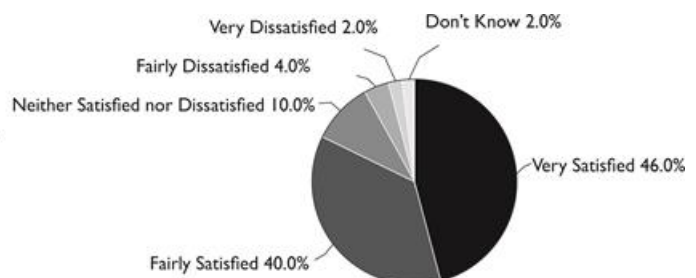
How satisfied were you with the quality of information you received from East Renfrewshire Planning service?



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



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



BLANK PAGE