

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILPLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE10 February 2021Report by Director of EnvironmentPLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2020**INTRODUCTION**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about the Council's Planning Performance Framework and the Scottish Government Feedback report.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. It is recommended that the committee notes the Planning Performance Framework and the Scottish Government's feedback on it.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Every planning authority in Scotland is required to produce a '**Planning Performance Framework**' (PPF) annually for submission to the Scottish Government. Every Council uses a similar format including the reporting of comparable performance statistics. As well as statistics, the document summarises positive actions undertaken during the year and improvement actions planned for the following year. The Scottish Government then undertake an assessment of the Framework and provides feedback and 'ratings' on how it has performed against various markers.

**REPORT**

4. The whole PPF (dated July 2020 and covering the 2019/20 period) is available online at [www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/planning-performance](http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/planning-performance). It is split into a number of sections, the structure of which is set by the Government. The main body of the PPF (chapter 1) discusses what the Council has done throughout the year to deliver a high-quality planning service, and is set out under four headings:

- 1.1 Quality Outcomes
- 1.2 Quality of service and engagement
- 1.3 Governance
- 1.4 Culture of continuous improvement

5. Sections 1.1 and 1.2 in particular shows the range of services that are provided, the procedures and guidance that are in place and the volume of customer contacts that the Service deals with. Chapter 1 includes case studies of developments that took place through the year, including Council House Building (page 11), Community Benefits (page 12), Greenlaw Business Centre (page 13), Forecasting the Future of Educational Infrastructure Needs (page 21) and ESRI Mapping Software (page 27).

6. Chapters 4 & 5 contain performance statistics. Performance in dealing with local developments (over 99% of all applications), improved from the previous year and was better than the national average (8.9 weeks as compared to the Scottish average of 9.1 weeks). However in a number of individual categories performance was poorer than the previous year. The Covid-19 restrictions at the end of the 2019/20 year (affecting most of March) had some impact in slowing performance figures as the team acquired the necessary equipment and procedures for working 'agile' out of the office e.g. there were a few weeks when correspondence (including neighbour notifications) couldn't be sent out and many weeks (including March) when site visits could not be undertaken).

7. The Scottish Government have given feedback on our PPF. They use 15 markers, and for each marker we are rated green, amber or red based on the evidence provided within the PPF. The feedback report is contained in Appendix 1. We received 8 green, 3 amber and 2 red ratings. Looking at each of the non-green markers:

- Marker 1 – decision making timescales – red rating – we feel that the red rating is rather harsh. We accept that timescales some categories have reduced, however our timescale for all local applications (over 99% of applications processed) improved on last year and was better than the national average; and our performance for 'householder applications' (85% of all applications) also improved on last year. We therefore think that an amber rating would have been more reasonable here.
- Marker 4 – legal agreements – red rating – we are aware that timescales have been quite slow for issuing planning applications where legal agreements are involved. However most if not all of these delays have been as a result of delays at the applicant's side and are not the fault of the Council. We have a policy in place which aims to conclude legal agreements as quickly as possible and we may need to look to implement that more strictly; and where appropriate reconsider applications (with possible refusal of permissions) when legal agreements cannot be concluded within a reasonable timescale.
- Marker 6 – continuous improvement – amber rating – this reflects the poorer performance in some categories discussed against Marker 1 and the Local Development Plan delays discussed in Marker 8.
- Marker 8 – development plan scheme – amber rating – this reflects some delays earlier in the process in publishing the proposed Local Development Plan 2. However, the plan is currently at 'examination' with the outcome expected this spring. It is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted this summer/autumn.
- Marker 14 – stalled sites/legacy cases – amber rating – similar to Marker 4 above this reflects a handful of sites where decisions have been delayed, largely due to legal agreement or consultation response delays.

8. The 8 green ratings illustrates that the Scottish Government recognise good work being done within the Planning Service.

## **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

9. None

## **CONSULTATION**

10. None

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

11. This report has no partnership working implications.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

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

## **CONCLUSIONS**

13. The Planning Performance Framework (PPF) is a significant document which shows the wide range of customer service that the Council is delivering. The Scottish Government continue to promote *continuous improvement* and *modernisation* and it is considered that the PPF clearly demonstrates the Council's commitment to, and achievement of these aims.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

14. It is recommended that the Committee notes the Planning Performance Framework and the Scottish Government's feedback on it.

Director of Environment

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**APPENDIX 1****PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2019-20**

Name of planning authority: East Renfrewshire Council
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The High Level Group on Performance agreed a set of performance markers. We have assessed your report against those markers to give an indication of priority areas for improvement action. The high level group will monitor and evaluate how the key markers have been reported and the value which they have added.

The Red, Amber, Green ratings are based on the evidence provided within the PPF reports. Where no information or insufficient evidence has been provided, a 'red' marking has been allocated.

No.	Performance Marker	RAG rating	Comments
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	Red	<p><b>Major Applications</b> The one major development you determined took 34.7 weeks to determine which is a week slower than the national average of 33.5 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p><b>Local (Non-Householder) Applications</b> Your timescales of 14.3 weeks are slower than the previous year and are slower than the Scottish average of 10.9 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p><b>Householder Applications</b> Your timescales of 8.0 weeks are faster than the previous year but are slower than the Scottish average of 7.3 weeks. RAG = Amber</p> <p><b>Overall RAG = Red</b></p>
2	<p>Processing agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and</li> <li>availability publicised on website</li> </ul>	Green	<p>You offer processing agreements for all major developments with consideration given to significant local developments. RAG = Green</p> <p>Processing agreement information is available through your website. RAG = Green</p> <p><b>Overall RAG = Green</b></p>
3	<p>Early collaboration with applicants and consultees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and</li> <li>clear and proportionate requests for supporting information</li> </ul>	Green	<p>You provide a range of approaches to providing pre-application advice from walk in customers, telephone calls or formal written enquiries. You encourage applicants to discuss their applications prior to submission and for formal approaches this can include an indication of acceptability of a proposal within council policies. RAG = Green</p> <p>You have a 10 day turnaround time for dealing with requests to ensure officers have sufficient time to provide clear and consistent advice on the principle of development and the detailed aspects of the proposal including the need for developer contributions. RAG = Green</p> <p><b>Overall RAG = Green</b></p>

4	<b>Legal agreements:</b> conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period)	Red	Your average timescales of 40.9 weeks for determining applications with legal agreements are slower than last year and the Scottish average.  The protocol mentioned in last year's report has not had the intended impact of reducing timescales for legal agreements.
5	<b>Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years</b>	Green	Your enforcement charter was 1 month old at the end of the reporting year.
6	<b>Continuous improvement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and</li> <li>• progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report</li> </ul>	Amber	Your LDP is up-to-date and your enforcement charter was renewed this year. Clear timescales exist for adopting the next LDP and you have made progress on your stalled sites. Decision making timescales with legal agreements are faster however there have been increases in timescales for both non-householder and householder applications. <b>RAG = Amber</b>  You have fully completed 3 out of 4 of your improvement commitments. You identified 4 commitments for the coming year which should improve your service delivery. <b>RAG = Green</b>  <b>Overall RAG = Amber</b>
7	<b>Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption</b>	Green	Your LDP was 4 years and 9 months old at the end of the reporting period.
8	<b>Development plan scheme – next LDP:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and</li> <li>• project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale</li> </ul>	Amber	Your next LDP is not on track for adoption within the five year cycle. <b>RAG = Red</b>  Your Plan was due to be submitted for examination over Summer 2020. <b>RAG = Green</b>  <b>Overall RAG = Amber</b>
9	<b>Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</b>	N/A	
10	<b>Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</b> <i>*including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</i>	N/A	
11	<b>Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications.</b>	Green	You have produced a number of supplementary guidance documents to support your LDP on a number of topics including masterplans for three sites in Maidenhill, Barrhead North and South. You also have SPG on Affordable Housing and Developer Contributions.
12	<b>Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice).</b>	Green	You provide evidence of single contact arrangements, a customer service charter and of working across different disciplines to improve outputs for stakeholders. Other examples include your Major Developments team which brings together professionals from across the council. You have also demonstrated how you are contributing to your Councils Local Outcome Improvement plan.

13	<b>Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities</b>	Green	You benchmark with neighbouring councils through the West of Scotland Benchmarking Group. As well as meeting the email list acts as a forum for asking questions and sharing expertise. You also participate in various HOPS sub-committees and events.
14	<b>Stalled sites / legacy cases:</b> conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Amber	You have cleared 4 cases during the reporting year, with 5 cases still awaiting conclusion. You have provided an explanation for why these cases have not yet been determined and that officers keep these under review.
15	<b>Developer contributions:</b> clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and</li> <li>• in pre-application discussions</li> </ul>	Green	Your planning obligations protocol sets out expectations for developer contributions. RAG = Green  Your pre-application discussions involve addressing client expectations for developer contributions. RAG = Green  Overall RAG = Green

## EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Performance against Key Markers R = Red Marker A = Amber Marker Blank = Green Marker

Marker	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
1 Decision making timescales	A				A		R	R
2 Processing agreements	R							
3 Early collaboration	A							
4 Legal agreements	A					A		R
5 Enforcement charter								
6 Continuous improvement	A			A		A	A	A
7 Local development plan								
8 Development plan scheme							A	A
9 Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A
10 Stakeholders engaged early (pre-MIR)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A
11 Regular and proportionate advice to support applications	R	A						
12 Corporate working across services								
13 Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge								
14 Stalled sites/legacy cases	A	A					A	A
15 Developer contributions	A	A	A					

## Overall Markings (total numbers for red, amber and green)

	Red	Amber	Green
2012-13	2	6	5
2013-14	0	3	10
2014-15	0	1	11
2015-16	0	1	11
2016-17	0	1	14
2017-18	0	2	11
2018-19	1	3	9
2019-20	2	3	8

## Decision Making Timescales (weeks)

	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	2019-20 Scottish Average
Major Development	39.9	16.7	19.6	17.5	45.0	32.6	-	34.7	33.5
Local (Non-Householder) Development	14.2	9.2	9.0	10.9	10.1	10.5	12.4	14.3	10.9
Householder Development	6.7	6.6	6.4	6.2	6.5	7.5	9.3	8.0	7.3