



Planning Performance Framework

2021-22

Foreword



by **Councillor Clare Maitland**
Chair of the Planning Committee

As the recently elected chair of the Planning Committee, I am delighted to introduce East Ayrshire Council's eleventh Planning Performance Framework. This report summarises our performance during 2021/22 across the key areas of service delivery, showcases our achievements via case studies and demonstrates how the Service has responded to the performance feedback received from the Scottish Government in 2020/21.

The new operating model that had to be put in place in 2020/21 as a result of Covid-19 was well documented in last year's report. Having responded so positively at that time, the last year has been one of consolidation for the Service, with some tentative steps being taken forward as restrictions have gradually eased and wider society has opened up once more.

The last year also saw a management restructuring taking place within the Council which has impacted directly upon the work of the Planning Service. The creation of a new Economic Growth Service resulted in the Development Planning function moving across to the new service, whilst the Development Management function moved into Governance Services.

It would be remiss of me not to commend the great efforts of the Planning Service, working in partnership with Council colleagues and external agencies, to restore our former opencast coal complexes, as this long and complex programme draws to a conclusion. The closure of these sites in 2013 had a profound impact on many of our communities, and it is to the credit of everyone involved that these sites have now been returned to an environmentally acceptable condition.

Progress on our key development and regeneration sites has continued this year. The completion of HALO Kilmarnock marks a significant milestone for the Ayrshire Growth Deal, representing as it does the first of the major projects to complete. This ground breaking net-zero carbon project not only regenerates a huge site on the edge of Kilmarnock town centre, but it positions the town at the forefront of renewable and sustainable development.

Our work in East Ayrshire continues to be recognised on a national level and the Development Planning & Regeneration Team were pleased to make the finals of the RTPi Awards for Planning Excellence in 2021 in the place-making category. The awards celebrate outstanding projects, people and plans that demonstrate the power of planning and that help to transform environments, economies and communities. This accolade was deserved recognition for the quality of the Minerals Local Development Plan.

In what remains a difficult time, the report which follows provides details of some worthy achievements and demonstrates the talented staff pool at our disposal, which will help East Ayrshire to realise its full development potential in the years ahead.

Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	National Headline Indicators	5
3	Official Statistics	8
4	Workforce Information	10
5	Planning Committee information	13
6	Service Improvement... ..	14
7	Service Plan.....	37
8	Case Studies	38
	CS1 – Restoration of Opencast Coaling sites	39
	CS2 – Development and Delivery of the Minerals LDP	45
	CS3 – Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)	49
	CS4 – Climate Change Strategy	51
	CS5 – Greener Recovery and Key Agencies	55
	CS6 – Galloway and South Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere	58
	CS7 – Homes for Heroes	62
	CS8 – South Kyle Windfarm Working Group	65

1 Introduction

This Planning Performance Framework demonstrates the achievements and performance of the Council's Planning Service during 2021/22. The eleventh report of its kind, it looks back at performance during 2021/22, and ahead, focussing on service improvements we intend to make over the next 12 months. It will combine data which shows how we are performing against our key metrics, and commentary which explains what we have achieved during the year, where the main challenges lie and what we will do moving forward.

East Ayrshire covers a large area that extends from Kilmarnock, Stewarton and Darvel in the north to Loch Doon and the edge of the Galloway Forest Park in the South. Spanning some 490 square miles and with a total population of 121,600, the area offers a diverse mix of urban and rural communities, with areas of outstanding natural beauty, historic towns and excellent connections to the Central Belt and south of Scotland.

The East Ayrshire Community Plan is the sovereign strategic planning document for the delivery of public services in East Ayrshire. Its three themes (and, in particular, the Economy and Skills Delivery Plan) provide the framework in which our core planning functions are delivered. The Planning Service continues to make an important contribution to delivery of this Plan, which focusses on areas include Place-making, Net Zero projects and high quality developments.

The last year also saw the Council adopt a new five year Strategic Plan which builds on the Council's transformation and recovery and renewal work and ensures, going forward, that transformation will be embedded in service delivery. Our Service will be a key player in the delivery of this new Plan in areas ranging from town centre regeneration to sport and leisure facilities and transport and infrastructure.

In terms of Development Planning, the last year has seen a significant amount of work undertaken in the preparation of LDP2, which culminated in the approval at Council of the Proposed Local Development Plan in March 2022. This was the second key stage in the production of the LDP, after the Main Issues Report, and it will be followed by an examination process in the second half of 2022.

Our Development Management function has played an important enabling role which has resulted in many high-quality developments and will also be prominent as our flagship Ayrshire Growth Deal projects begin to emerge from the ground.

In this year's Case Studies, we take a look at the important restoration works which have taken place over the last decade, following the closure of the area's opencast coal sites. Among others, we also look at the evolution of the Local Development Plan in more detail, and shine a light on the development of the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

This PPF has been subject to peer review by East Lothian Council, our partner authority for the 2021-2022 PPF submission, as recommended by the Scottish Government. East Ayrshire Council would like to thank East Lothian Council for their help in this process.

2 National Headline Indicators

Development Planning	2021-22	2020-21
Local and Strategic Development Planning:		
Age of local/strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period <i>Requirement: less than 5 years</i>	5 years and 0 months (LDP) 2 years and 3 months (Minerals LDP)	4 years and 0 months (LDP) 1 year and 3 months (Minerals LDP)
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5 th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	No (see note 1 below) Yes (Minerals LDP)	No (see note 1 below). Yes (Minerals LDP)
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	Yes (see note 2 below)	No
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year?	Yes	Yes (see commentary below)
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
Established housing land supply	4990 units	5111 units
5-year effective housing land supply programming	2472 units	2301 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	3487 units	3470 units
5-year housing supply target	2136 units*	2670 units
5-year effective housing land supply (to one decimal place)	4.9 years*	4.3 years
Housing approvals	693 units	279 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	1761 units	1656 units
Marketable employment land supply	201.3 ha	201.85ha (see note 2)
Employment land take-up during reporting year	0.55 ha	2.345ha

**Based on the East Ayrshire 2017 LDP 2015-2025 time period (from publication of P-LDP), i.e. conformity to supply target during four financial years of that period that remain (2021-2025).*

Commentary

Note 1 – Proposed Plan is anticipated to be submitted to Examination in Quarter 4, 2022 with adoption in 2023.

Note 2 – Submission to Scottish Ministers has moved to Q3/4, 2022 from Q2, 2022, largely due to the delay of publication of Draft NPF4.

Development Plan Scheme – Consultation and Engagement

The Main Issues Report for LDP2 was approved by the Council's Executive Committee and subsequently released for public consultation for a period of eight weeks between 1 June and 31 July 2020. At the Council meeting of 31 March 2022, the Proposed LDP2 was approved for consultation purposes. Consultation commenced on 23 May 2022 and continued until 22 July 2022.

Once LDP2 is adopted in late 2023, it will replace LDP1 (adopted 2017) and Minerals LDP (adopted 2020).

The LDP Member-Officer Working Group (MOWG) has met 30 times since its establishment in April 2019. It has been a significant commitment for elected members on the group and for the officers involved across the Council. Various revisions and additions have been made as a result of this working group, ensuring corporate oversight of the Plan and cross-party political oversight by elected members. In addition, ward seminars were carried out for Elected Members across December 2021 and January 2022.

The Policy Team have also worked closely with colleagues in Education, NHS Ayrshire & Arran, the Health & Social Care Partnership and Facilities & Property Management to ensure that the implications of our site allocations on education and medical services are well understood. In addition, the Council's Legal Services have assisted with matters related to the complex issue of developer contributions.

Development Management	2021-22	2020-21
Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice on decision issued	20% 111	23% 113
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	50% 2	33.3% 2
Decision Making		
Application approval rate	92.9%	95.2%
Delegation rate	96.1%	95.5%
Validation	21.2%	25.6%
Decision-making Timescales		
Major Developments	102.3 weeks	73.2 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	14.5 weeks	14.1 weeks
Householder developments	8.0 weeks	9.1 weeks
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	19	14
Number remaining	14	17

Enforcement activity	2021-22	2020-21
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed Requirement: review every 2 years	Reviewed 31st March 2022	Reviewed 31st March 2021
Complaints lodged and investigated	162	169
Breaches identified – no further action taken	137	164
Cases closed	243	58
Notices served	12	5
Direct Action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

Commentary

We continue to offer a pre-application service to prospective applicants and this results in useful dialogue to allow early engagement and direction with noted benefits when the application is submitted. The uptake of this in terms of the number of formal pre-application enquiries remains similar to the previous reporting year although as a proportion of overall application numbers this has fallen slightly. We continue to encourage the use of this system through our website and during early contact with prospective applicants.

Improvement to decision making timescales continues to be challenging. Some success is notable, with a reduction in the timescales for householder applications, but an overall increase seen in other areas. Some further commentary on this is made at section 3 below. Whilst we continue to try to reduce such timescales and to put in place active case management of more complex cases through processing agreements, various challenges, including chiefly around recruitment and retention of experienced planning officers, has impacted on performance during this reporting period.

Legacy cases continue to be progressed and cleared in line with previous commitments to reduce overall numbers and it is pleasing to note that an increased number of legacy applications have been determined and fewer overall remain in comparison to the last reporting period.

Effective management of development within East Ayrshire is important to the wellbeing and economic growth of the area; to that end it is important to have a transparent and effective enforcement process for the Planning Service. In addition to the work detailed above, significant resources are given over to the compliance monitoring of major projects such as Opencast Coal, Quarries and Wind farms (see case study 1 – restoration of opencast coal complexes and 8 – South Kyle wind farm working group). It is particularly noted that, in line with a previous service commitment to reduce legacy enforcement cases, a very large number of cases have been reviewed and closed.

3 Official Statistics

Scottish Government Official Statistics

Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Timescales	2021-22		2020-21	
Overall				
Major developments	4	102.3 weeks	4	73.2 weeks
Local developments (non-householder)	219	14.5 weeks	187	14.1 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	135	7.4 weeks	52.4%	7.2 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	84	25.9 weeks	47.6%	21.6 weeks
Householder developments	199	8.0 weeks	139	9.1 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	181	7.6 weeks	72.7%	7.3 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	18	12.1 weeks	27.3%	13.6 weeks
Housing Developments				
Major	1	87.9 weeks	3	94.1 weeks
Local housing developments	76	17.4 weeks	51	16.3 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	56.6%	7.5 weeks	33.3%	7.6 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	43.4%	30.2 weeks	66.7%	20.6 weeks
Business and Industry				
Major	-	-	1	10.6 weeks
Local business and industry developments	52	10.8 weeks	55	12 weeks
• Local: less than 2 months	65.4%	7.8 weeks	65.5%	7.3 weeks
• Local: more than 2 months	34.6%	16.5 weeks	34.5%	21.0 weeks
EIA Developments	3	25.5 weeks	0	-
Other Consents				
• Listed bldg. + cons. area consents	35	8.4 weeks	34	13.1 weeks
• Advertisements	16	11.0 weeks	11	11.4 weeks
• Hazardous substances consents	0	-	0	-
• Other consents and certificates	10	7.6 weeks	7	5.9 weeks
• Total	61	9.0 weeks	52	11.8 weeks
Planning/legal agreements				
• Major: average time	2	102.3 weeks	1	220.9 weeks
• Local: average time	2	224.6 weeks	2	101.6 weeks

Appeals and Reviews					
		Original decision upheld			
Decision Making Type	Total number of decisions	2021-22		2020-21	
	No.	No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	9	4	44.4%	7	77.8%
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	2	2	100.0%	1	100.0%

Commentary

The statistics show a general upturn in the numbers of applications received across most application types. Some improvement in performance is noted despite the increased application numbers although in some areas performance has reduced, but again against a background of handling a greater number of applications than the last reporting period. In relation to Major developments, the increased figure results from clearing two legacy cases, one of which was a significant brownfield regeneration priority for the Council and the other a major housing site which was the oldest legacy case remaining with the Council, dating from 2016. The remaining two Major developments were subject to processing agreement which were concluded within agreed timescales and do not form part of the average handling timescales. As such, this increased figure results from clearing of two legacy cases, both of unique characteristics/background and should be viewed in that knowledge.

As explained above, the reporting period has been particularly challenging in respect of recruitment to vacant posts and the internal management restructuring of the planning service which impacts on the service provided. It is acknowledged that further work is required to reduce timescales and to that effect ongoing efforts to recruit into vacant posts will continue and a forthcoming service review will establish a permanent internal structure to be put in place, replacing the interim arrangements that have been in place during this reporting period.

The appeal process provides important checks and balances on the decisions made by the Planning Authority either at a delegated Officer Level or by the Planning Committee. In this period 36 planning applications or other consents were refused and 11 of those were appealed. This remains a small proportion of overall decisions and the total percentage of decisions upheld on appeal remains within a reasonable range, recognising that there will be yearly fluctuations.

4 Workforce Information

Workforce information is a snapshot of the staffing position on 31 March 2022.

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

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount	FTE
Development Management	7	7
Development Planning	5	4.5
Enforcement	0	0
Specialists	0	0
Other (including staff not RTPI eligible)	0	0
Total	12	11.5

Staff Age Profile	Development Management	Development Planning	Total Headcount
Under 30	1	2	3
30-39	7	6	13
40-49	5	3	8
50 and over	16	5	21
Total	29 (Note 2)	16	45

Context

The last year has witnessed some significant changes to the structure and profile of our workforce. Most notably, the previous Head of Planning retired and this post was filled on a temporary basis by the Operations Manager with subsequent backfilling of posts by the Team Leader and Senior Planner.

A review of the Council's management structure took place in early 2021, and was approved by Council on 24 June 2021. As a result, it was agreed that the Head of Planning and Economic Development would be redesignated the Head of Economic Growth, reporting directly to the Deputy Chief Executive (Communities and Economy). Development Planning was one of a number of functions which was moved into the newly created Economic Growth Service.

Council also agreed to split the existing Planning and Economic Development portfolio, with the Chief Governance Officer assuming responsibility for regulatory functions, including

Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Development Management and Building Standards.

The new structure took effect from September 2021. From a Planning perspective, the main impact has been the splitting of the Development Management and Development Planning functions into two separate departments, with separate heads of service. The interim Operations manager post, which is responsible for the development management and building standards function, now reports to the Chief Governance Officer. The current interim operations manager has a substantive team leader post and that vacant team leader post has temporarily been filled by a senior planner with a resultant vacant senior planning officer post created.

A number of vacancies have been created by retirements and promotions, some of which have been recruited on a temporary basis.

As a result of the developments described above, 2021/22 has been a year of transition, the impacts of which (as well as the ongoing impacts of Covid-19) have been felt across the Service. There are a number of vacancies within Development Management (3 senior planning officers, a graduate planning officer and a part-time e-planning systems administrator). Additionally, a planning officer was on maternity leave for nearly all of 2021 and early 2022. Recruitment into these posts has been particularly challenging with one senior planner, a planner, a graduate planner and a temporary planner successfully recruited during the year (the latter has subsequently left the Service and has not yet been replaced). The remaining vacant posts have been advertised, sometimes numerous times, and some progress is being made however these challenges in recruitment are considered to reflect the difficult wider job marketplace for public sector planning staff at this time. Adding to these difficulties in staffing numbers, short term illness (COVID and non COVID-related) saw some staff members absent for many weeks at a time during the past year. In early 2022, a further 2 planning officers have left the service (1 having retired).

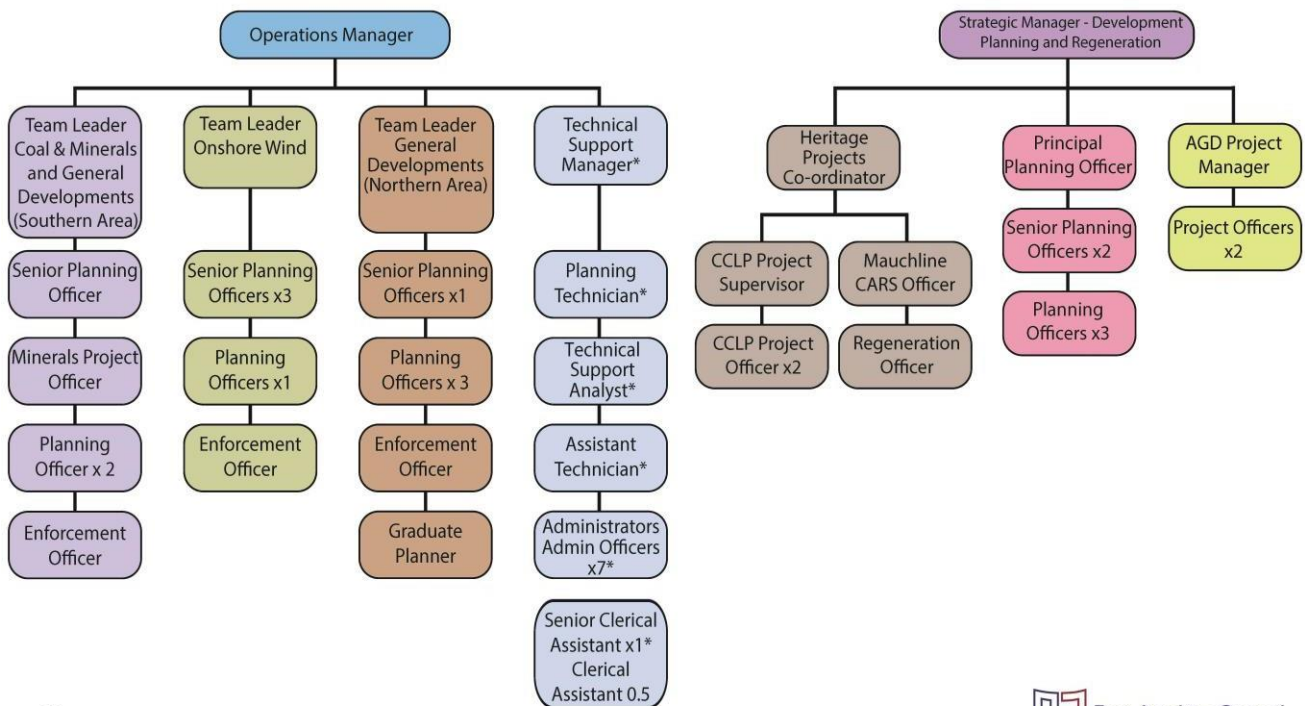
In acknowledging this challenging recruitment environment, efforts have been made to make these roles as attractive as possible to candidates. We have built on the Council's recently created flexible working policy, describing most posts as 'mobile', meaning that going forward, real flexibility will continue to be afforded for working from home. This reflects the views of the majority of colleagues in the Planning Authority following Covid imposed changes to our working practices and we hope this not only makes the Authority attractive to prospective applicants, but that it also seeks to retain our existing staff resource, our strongest asset.

Efforts will continue to fill the vacant posts and ensure that, moving forward, the Service is resourced fully, with the required mix of skills and experience.

Note 1 – Development Planning and Development Management functions split across two different managers with no single head of service for the Planning function.

Note 2 – This is the total number of staff, includes a number of part time staff and is therefore not a FTE total of staff within Development Management. The structure chart below highlights the maximum complement of staffing on structure albeit a number of posts are currently vacant or being filled on a part time basis. Also structure chart notes technical support staff have a wider remit than Planning support.

Development Management & Development Planning & Regeneration Staff Structure



Note:

* Technical Support staff also support Development Planning and Regeneration

** Admin Officers also support Building Standards

5 Planning Committee Information

Committee & Site Visits	Number per year
Full council meetings	9
Planning committees	14
Area committees	0
Committee site visits	3
Local Review Body	10
LRB site visits	7

Commentary

The Planning Committee has provided a robust forum for debate relating to Planning Applications required under the Scheme of Delegation to be considered by Councillors. From April 2020, Planning Committees have taken place online due to the Covid 19 pandemic which has allowed committee business to continue largely uninterrupted. However, since the relaxation of Covid guidelines, committees have successfully used a hybrid system with physical presence in Council chambers as well as online. Under the Council's guidelines for planning committee, objectors and the applicant are usually able to participate in the decision making process. That process was suspended in accordance with the Scottish Government's temporary Coronavirus legislation; however, that process has now resumed.



6 Service Improvement

No	Performance Marker	PPF10 rating	Comments By Scottish Government on 2020-21	2021/2022 Review
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	Red	<p>Major Applications Your average timescale of 73.2 weeks is slower than the previous year and the Scottish average of 41.3 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications Your average timescale of 14.1 weeks is slower than the previous year and the Scottish average of 12.4 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Householder Applications Your average timescale of 9.1 weeks is slower than the previous year and the Scottish average of 8.1 weeks. RAG = Red</p> <p>Overall RAG = Red</p>	<p>1.1 Recruitment to vacant posts to achieve full staffing levels to reduce decision making timescales - Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence – as explained at the context under Section 4 above, the planning service has undergone structural change during this reporting period with the development management and development planning and regeneration managers reporting to separate heads of service. Retirement at head of service level has resulted in temporary appointments within Development Management with resultant vacancies at senior planner level. This has combined with historic vacancies to create a number of vacant posts during this reporting period including 3 senior planning officers, a graduate planning officer and a half post e-planning systems administrator. The Council has, and continues, to actively seek to fill posts recognising that this is essential to be able to deliver the service standards we seek. No moratorium on filling vacancies exists and all vacant posts have been advertised with varying degrees of success through MyJobScotland. During the 2021-22 period one senior planner, one planning officer, a graduate planner and a temporary maternity cover planner were recruited to Development Management although the latter post holder left after a short period and it was determined that further recruitment to that post would not be sensible pending the return of the officer on maternity leave. (2021/22 Service improvement plan action 4).</p> <p>1.2 - Review team structures within Development Management to rebalance workloads following drawdown of legacy open cast coal restoration – Complete</p> <p>Evidence – See revised structure chart above reflecting the dual responsibilities assigned to the open cast/southern area team leader reflecting the gradual drawdown of opencast restoration</p>

			<p>work. Case study 1 below provides further background to this work. The change was implemented in October 2021 and approximately one third of the total general applications workload is now managed by the hybrid minerals and general applications team. That process splits the burden of work from the one previous general applications team leader, reducing the potential bottleneck effect of all such applications coming through that post. (2021/22 Service improvement Plan action 6).</p> <p>1.3 Complete transition to a digital based service model – Complete</p> <p>Evidence - Full digital working now available with a number of further changes and refinements during the reporting period. This includes (i). work to reflect certificate of lawful use or development applications being split, changes made in the planning portal administration to allow correct suffix assignation to enable to correctly identify application types for PPF submissions; (ii). Development Management Enforcement License now available for Enterprise with further work to roll this out in active use; (iii). Reintroduction of admin charges post COVID for hard copy submissions to encourage online submission Charging Matrix (east-ayrshire.gov.uk); (iv). Testing and undertaking work on our document management system to successfully accommodate the increased file sizes allowed for submission via the planning portal. This has helped achieve 98% of all applications being submitted online for the 2021-22 period. (2021/22 Service improvement Plan action 10).</p> <p>1.4 Review of validation procedures – ongoing</p> <p>Evidence - Some minor improvements have been made to the process of handling of applications at validation stage to reduce double handling by streamlining the order relevant staff undertake sections of their work. Major review has been postponed pending the Service Review to take place this year which, amongst other elements, will look at validation process to achieve improvement in timescales. (2021/22 Service</p>
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			<p>improvement Plan action 7). In particular, the review will consider our internal process from first receipt of an application to an application becoming valid, considering which staff are best placed to undertake this and using a single staff contact point during validation rather than the pooling of work approach currently used. Regardless of this change in our process, validation standards will continue to utilise HoPS national validation standards.</p> <p>1.5 Continued recovery and renewal of our services following the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions – Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence: the statistics from Scottish Government at section 3 generally show a similar overall trend to the previous year with improvement shown against some development types such as householder applications and with slight decrease in performance against others such as local development (non householder). These changes are though set against a background of additional workload, evident from these statistics, where a greater number of applications have been processed than the previous year. As such whilst it is accepted that the statistics do not show marked improvement, there are encouraging signs that the economy continues to recover and that progress is being made by the Planning Authority in our decision making whilst set against the very significant and challenging recruitment circumstances.</p> <p>A hybrid working situation now exists following relaxation of Covid rules allowing greater access to the office. This has enabled a return to some face to face meetings and to provide and allow implementation of a better and more structured training environment for newer staff members recruited during the pandemic, including graduate trainees (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 12).</p> <p>Practically all services have been moved online with guidance specific to COVID, periodically updated to reflect changing</p>
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				<p>national guidance, set out on our website Planning and the environment · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>(2021/22 Service improvement Plan action 11).</p> <p>1.6 Introduction of IDOX Planning and Building Standards mobile apps to assist with site inspections on mobile devices – ongoing</p> <p>Evidence - In the last PPF it was noted that this work was ongoing but that full rollout had not been implemented due to IT effort being concentrated on business continuity during the pandemic. These delays have had knock on effects to the programme of work as new updates are now required to the apps and also to the Cloud Connector Framework to support this. It is anticipated that this work will move forward in 2022-23 subject to sufficient technical expertise being made available on a corporate basis to support this although this has not been taken forward as a specific service improvement action for 2022/23 due to the uncertainty in delivery. (2021/22 Service improvement Plan action 18).</p>
2	<p>Processing agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	Green	<p>Processing agreements are offered for major and complex local applications.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>You promote the availability of processing on your website.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>	<p>2.1 Promotion of Processing Agreements for all complex local and major developments at each pre-application meeting – Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence - Planning Processing Agreements · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk) and Planning Pre Application Guidance Leaflet (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Processing agreements continue to be offered for all major and complex local applications including as part of our formal pre-application process and this is promoted on our website and in guidance specific to our pre-application process.</p>
3	<p>Early collaboration with applicants and consultees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability and promotion of pre-application 	Green	<p>An electronic process for applicants and updated guidance is available on your website. The proportion of applications subject to pre-application advice increased slightly to 25%.</p>	<p>3.1 Electronic Pre application process with charging matrix for major and non-householder developments continues to be promoted via the Council website - Implemented and ongoing.</p>

	<p>discussions for all prospective applications; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 		<p>RAG = Green</p> <p>New pre-application process ensures that applicants are aware of the information required to support an application. Supplemented by information on Council website.</p> <p>RAG = Green Overall RAG = Green</p>	<p>Evidence - Pre-application advice - East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>This service continues to be actively promoted by the Council and whilst the proportion of applications subject to pre application advice fell slightly, the numbers of occasions of formal pre-application advice remained largely the same as the previous year.</p>
4	<p>Legal agreements: 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)</p>	Amber	<p>Your average timescales for determining applications with legal agreements are slower than last year and the Scottish average. A further 4 applications were determined using processing agreements with half of those being determined within the agreed timescale.</p> <p>Reducing average timescales for applications with legal agreements is one of the Council's service improvement commitments. Your report notes that efforts have been hindered by the effects of COVID, but that within the reporting period the Council has introduced a quarterly reporting system, which is intended to alert the planning committee to applications with legal agreements that extend beyond the 6 month conclusion target.</p>	<p>4.1 Continue to report quarterly to planning committee on progress with applications subject to legal agreements with a view to reducing average timescales for determining such applications and to reconsider stalled applications – Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence - Progress of Planning Applications - 20 August 2021 - progress of planning applications - 20 august 2021.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>And update on planning applications with legal agreements and legacy planning applications.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Few applications are subject to legal agreement as evidenced by the statistics. As such average times can be greatly skewed by one application and significant yearly fluctuations are likely to occur dependent on the nature of the agreement being negotiated and the myriad reasons why delay occurs including, quite frequently, by the applicant or other signatories to such an agreement.</p> <p>To minimise delays and bring greater public scrutiny to such applications, a quarterly reporting system was introduced just prior to this reporting period and this has continued on a quarterly basis during this reporting period which now provides more than one year of overview of applications that remain pending decision subject to the successful conclusion of a legal agreement. This quarterly reporting system to our planning committee sets out all applications with legal agreements that extend beyond the 6 month conclusion target. This report brings</p>

				<p>added focus and scrutiny to such applications and ensures that continual monitoring and evaluation is undertaken of each case thereby ensuring that decisions on how to proceed with these applications are kept under review. Importantly this allows a bespoke approach to be taken, based on the facts of each case, to determine whether those applications that extend beyond the 6 month target period should be returned to planning committee. During the reporting period no applications were required to be returned to committee or be reconsidered however some applications were recommended for reconsideration should no progress have been made by the following reporting period. This has helped to leverage more focus and active management by the applicant's legal representatives and those where relevant landowners are also involved. This strikes the correct balance for East Ayrshire Council as we are mindful that significant economic investment sits behind most applications that are subject to a legal agreement and as such our assessment of unreasonable delay requires to balance speed of conclusion of a legal agreement with the wider benefits of working to a resolution with the parties.</p>
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	Your enforcement charter was renewed in March 2021	<p>5.1 Annual review of Enforcement Charter – Complete (March 2022).</p> <p>Evidence - DM Enforcement Charter (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>5.2 The reduction of all legacy planning enforcement cases – Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence - National Performance Figures on enforcement cases set out above demonstrate that significant effort has been made by the Council's enforcement officers during this reporting period to clear legacy enforcement cases, demonstrated by the large jump in cases closed.</p>

				<p>5.3 Review of the compliance monitoring structure to accommodate provision for appropriate compliance monitoring of all Major development applications – Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence - DM Enforcement Charter (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>And Compliance Monitoring Update - 18 February 2022 - compliance monitoring update - 18 february 2022.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The Council's enforcement charter commits the Council to compliance monitoring of major development projects as we see fit, depending on the scale and nature of the particular development. We present a quarterly compliance monitoring update of major environmental developments to the Council's planning committee which covers most large scale development in East Ayrshire. There is scope in this process to expand the compliance monitoring reporting of other Major developments and this is a service improvement action to be implemented in 2022/23 to align with forthcoming legislative requirements as set out at Section 44: Enforcement charters: statement on major developments of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. (2021/22 Service improvement Plan action 5).</p>
6	<p>Continuous improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and • progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	Amber	<p>Your decision-making timescales for major, local and householder applications were all slower than last year and the national average. Your LDP and enforcement charter are both up to date and you have clear timescales for their renewal. The number of legacy cases you have has decreased slightly.</p> <p>RAG = Amber</p> <p>You have completed 29 out of 42 service commitments with the remainder ongoing. In next year's commitments, there is clear evidence of a considered approach to continuous improvement.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p>	<p>6.1 Continue with Actions above to recover from COVID issues, provide pre application advice, strive to minimise and manage legacy cases, assess and determine all new applications within the statutory period, review and update the Enforcement Charter – As noted and ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence – Various actions and improvements set out throughout this service improvement table including full electronic process in place, we continue to provide and encourage pre application discussion, legacy cases continue to be pushed down as evidenced by official statistics, some improvement in determining new applications within the statutory period and the review and update of the Enforcement Charter was completed, per 5.1 above.</p>

			<p>Overall RAG = Amber</p> <p>6.2 Progress the markers set out in the Service Plan 2021/2022 - Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence – as per the table above and below, all markers progressed to completion, remain ongoing or are no longer being pursued following detailed investigation.</p> <p>6.3 Improve decision-making timescales for all major, householder and non-householder applications. - Ongoing</p> <p>Evidence: Quarterly statistics from Scottish Government show improvement in some areas but slippage against others. Some explanation on this is set out in the commentary at sections 2 and 3 above. One of the key challenges overall has been staff retention and recruitment which was noted as a service improvement action from 2020/21 and will remain an action for 2022/23.</p> <p>6.4 Review team structures to provide a better and more targeted allocation of staff resource following drawdown of legacy open cast restoration – Complete</p> <p>Evidence: See structure chart above. Building on this, a more wide ranging service review is to be implemented during 2022/23 to consider all aspects of the Development Management service to seek improvement and best use of resources to target further improvement going forward. (2021/22 Service improvement Plan action 6).</p> <p>6.5 Development of Enterprise software to workflow tasks for property enquiries and of online forms for property enquiries/Planning Enquiries – Investigated but no longer being pursued.</p> <p>Evidence: These were service improvement commitments for 2021/22 and were investigated and pursued during the reporting period to determine if systems could be auto populated, saving administrative time. This involved Council colleagues in IT and customer services. The investigation found that using the</p>
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			<p>Council's Customer Service Platform to populate and generate standard enquiry forms, which it was hoped would automatically populate records in the Uniform system, would not achieve this in practice and additionally further financial costs would be borne by the Council to facilitate this. Whilst not being pursued, it has allowed for this process to be investigated and ruled out as not being likely to deliver any better service improvement than our current approach. (2021/22 Service improvement Plan actions 19 and 20).</p> <p>6.6 In terms of other service improvement commitments made last year, not mentioned elsewhere in the report, the projects team in development planning and regeneration has had a successful year.</p> <p>The development and implementation of the Mauchline CARS Action Plan (20-21 Action 2) is progressing well with a number of activities underway.</p> <p>Evidence - <u>Latest news about Mauchline CARS</u> - East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Good progress is also being made on the development of projects related to the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership project. (20-21 Action 3). A full update can be found here: <u>Blog - Coalfield Communities CCLP Newsletter 7 November 2021.pdf</u></p> <p>In terms of the completion of key actions to enable implementation of Ayrshire Growth Deal projects (20-21 Action 8), a number of updates are provided below.</p> <p>Ayrshire Growth Deal –Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Project. The RIBA Stage 3 report for the CoRE Centre of Excellence was submitted by the Design Team in February 2022. In March 2022, the innovative plans to create Scotland's first net zero carbon, energy self-efficient community in Cumnock took a massive leap forward, when the UK and Scottish</p>
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			<p>Governments both approved the Outline Business Case for the project.</p> <p>Evidence - CoRE project moves forward – Ayrshire Growth Deal website Link no longer available.</p> <p>Ayrshire Growth Deal – Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor (AMIC). In March 2021, the Council's Cabinet approved an allocation of £0.5m for AMIC to appoint specialist consultants and undertake studies/ surveys required to support the development of the Business Cases through 2021/22; with these costs being reimbursed to the Council upon approval of the business cases and authorisation to drawdown future funding.</p> <p>Work to develop the AMIC has progressed during 2021 but at a slower pace than anticipated due to challenges faced by the project team identifying a preferred development site. A preferred site has now been identified which now allows design work to commence.</p> <p>Ayrshire Growth Deal – Moorfield Industrial Estate (Phase 3). The Ayrshire Growth Deal that was signed on 19th November 2020 included the development of proposals to expand the existing Moorfield Industrial Estate in Kilmarnock; known as Moorfield Phase 3. This project includes the creation of additional serviced plots to support business growth in the area; accompanied by the construction of a range of high quality modern industrial units. The Council's own Architecture and Asset Planning Team, within Facilities and Property Management are taking a lead role on developing the Moorfield Phase 3 project. A number of initial workshops have taken place to date with key stakeholders in order to develop the strategic brief and design through to the necessary RIBA Plan of Work stages to coincide with the appropriate approval gateways.</p>
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				<p>Evidence - Capital Investment Update - Building a Future East Ayrshire Capital Investment Update - Building a Future East Ayrshire - Capital Investment Update - Building a Future East Ayrshire.pdf</p> <p>Another commitment was to progress RCGF funding bids to completion and develop new bids for 2022/23. (20-21 Action 9)</p> <p>As an example of progress on previous projects, the Council secured three RCGF allocations amounting to £2.75M towards the Kilmarnock Academy Legacy Project in partnership with Centrestage Communities Ltd (CCL). The project, comprising the largest Community Asset Transfer in Scotland, fits well with the Council's aspiration to transform its relationship with local communities and demonstrates a commitment to ensuring facilities are fully accessible. The construction works funded by RCGF are now complete. CCL started trading in August 2021 as the Ayrshire's Arts Academy, and their first production opened on 12 November 2021.</p> <p>Full details of progress of projects and 22/23 bids are available here: Regeneration Capital Grant Fund - Regeneration Capital Grant Fund.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p>
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Green	Your LDP was adopted in April 2017.	<p>7.1 Since the approval of the Development Plan Scheme 2021, a significant amount of work has been undertaken in the preparation of LDP2, and the Proposed Local Development Plan was considered by Council on 31 March 2022. The LDP is now more than 5 years old and its delay has been extended by draft NPF4 and the MATHLR exercise – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - LDP2 Development Plan Scheme 2022 Link no longer available.</p>
8	Development plan scheme – next LDP:	Amber	You have indicated that your LDP will not be adopted within the required 5 year timescale. Your updated	<p>8.1 Publication of new Development Plan Scheme in March 2022 – Complete.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 		<p>2021 DPS anticipates LDP2 will be adopted in April 2023. RAG = Amber</p> <p>You have re-profiled the delivery of your LDP to take account of the delays due to Covid-19 and the additional engagement with elected members. RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Amber</p>	<p>8.2 Continue to progress the Local Development Plan–Ongoing.</p> <p>A new Development Plan scheme was approved by Cabinet on 30th March 2022.</p> <p>Evidence: Development Plan Scheme 2022 – Link no longer available.</p> <p>The timetable for LDP2 has been reprofiled again to take account of the delay of draft NPF4 and the impact this had on preparation of the proposed plan. The evolving legislative context has been difficult for officers to manage, as there was no pre-warning or certainty of the date of publication of the draft NPF4. The eventual release of draft NPF4 in November 2021 meant that work undertaken to that point on PLDP2 had to be revisited and revised to ensure alignment between the two documents. Accordingly, although it had been hoped to bring the Proposed Plan to Council before the end of 2021, it was not possible to do so. The Proposed Plan has sought to include certain provisions from the forthcoming 2019 Planning Act and to mirror the provisions of draft NPF4 where possible. The Proposed Plan was approved by Council on 31 March 2022.</p> <p>Evidence - <u>Local development plan 2 - East Ayrshire Council</u> east-ayrshire.gov.uk</p> <p>The Council set out its concerns with NPF4 in its response to the consultation. (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 16).</p> <p>Evidence - <u>National Planning Framework 4 - Scotland 2045</u> Consultation Response - National Planning Framework 4 - Scotland 2045 Consultation Response.pdf east-ayrshire.gov.uk</p>
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				<p>The action programme for LDP1 was reviewed and approved by Cabinet on 2 June 2021. (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 14).</p> <p>Evidence - Local Development Plan - Action Programme Update.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p>
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year	Green	A member-officer working group for LDP2 has been implemented, and is the subject of case study 3 in the PPF report.	<p>9.1 Member-Officer Working Group meeting regularly and taking forward a number of activities in relation to LDP2 preparation - Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence – See case study 3.</p> <p>9.2 Approve policies for inclusion in the Proposed Plan – Complete.</p> <p>Evidence - pre-MIR stage was complete in advance of the PPF year. The LDP2 Member-officer working group met for the first time in April 2019 and has met on more than 30 occasions since. It has been a significant commitment for Elected Members on the group and for the officers involved across the Council. The MOWG reviewed all parts of the Main Issues Report and has overseen and discussed the content of representations made to the MIR as well as the entire content of PLDP2. Various revisions and additions have been made as a result of this working group, ensuring corporate oversight of the Plan and cross-party political oversight by Elected Members. In addition, Ward seminars were carried out for Elected Members across December 2021 and January 2022. These meetings provided an opportunity for Elected Member oversight of the Proposed Plan content by Ward and a number of changes were made to the Proposed Plan as a result of Elected Member comments.</p>
10	Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year *including industry, agencies and	Green	The report and updated DPS outlines your approach to early engagement with stakeholders.	<p>10.1 Continue pre-MIR consultation for LDP2 and engage with key stakeholders and local communities - Complete.</p> <p>Evidence - Pre-MIR stage was complete in advance of the PPF year.</p>

	Scottish Government			<p>The Council has spent substantial time engaging with cross sector stakeholders. For example, the Council has worked closely with the Key Agencies Group (KAG) of public bodies and a range of other stakeholders to establish constraints, seek the views of local people and develop solutions to meet the challenges faced by the town of Stewarton in respect of LDP2 allocations. A series of community workshops and seminars making use of the Place Standard Climate Lens and other tools were undertaken during the Plan preparation process to inform the Council's approach to the long-term management of development in the town.</p> <p>The Council also engaged with KAG on issues related to Kilmarnock town centre and South Central Kilmarnock.</p> <p>Engagement with SEPA in terms of the allocated site selection process for the Proposed LDP2 took place early, with flooding data to inform decision-making provided in November 2020. The data covered LDP1-allocated and proposed sites and was instrumental in the proposed deallocation of several flood-prone sites that had formed part of LDP1. SEPA was again consulted in July 2021 on the suitability of a range of sites that had been submitted after the publication of the Main Issues Report. The Council has also consulted Ayrshire Roads Alliance (Flooding) throughout the LDP2 preparation process.</p> <p>The Council has engaged with Scottish Water throughout the LDP2 preparation process and discussions have paid significant attention to the constraints faced in Stewarton and Mauchline in particular. The Council has been made aware of the requirement for Scottish Water growth projects and has been informed, in terms of Mauchline for example, of the potential that the development of newly allocated sites could help to address longstanding surface water issues in the town; this information informed the site selection process. Scottish Water was consulted on sites submitted for allocation during the initial LDP2 call for sites in 2017, prior to the publication of the Main Issues</p>
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				<p>Report and again in July 2021 on a range of sites submitted at and after Main Issues Report stage.</p> <p>NatureScot (initially SNH) has also been engaged throughout the plan preparation process and was approached for comment on sites at the same stage as Scottish Water was consulted. Landscape and biodiversity recommendations by NatureScot have been included within allocated site descriptions in the Proposed LDP2 to provide early information for prospective applicants.</p> <p>Evidence: Learning points: a blue-green strategy for Kilmarnock A&DS (ads.org.uk)</p> <p>Learning points: a blue-green strategy for Kilmarnock A&DS (ads.org.uk)</p> <p>https://www.ads.org.uk/resource/learning-points-blue-green-strategy-kilmarnock</p> <p>Key Agencies Group minutes: June 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</p> <p>https://www.gov.scot/publications/key-agencies-group-minutes-june-2021/</p> <p>Stewarton and the Local Development Plan 2 - East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/PlanningAndTheEnvironment/development-plans-and-policies/ldp2/stewarton/stewarton-development-framework.aspx</p>
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on information required to support applications.	Green	Report indicates that a range of policy documents have been reviewed and updated during the reporting period.	<p>11.1 Continue to prepare and adopt as statutory supplementary guidance placemaking maps for remaining settlements as per Schedule 9 of the LDP – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - Schedule 9 of the adopted East Ayrshire Local Development Plan (2017) sets out a list of Supplementary</p>

			<p>Guidance and non-statutory guidance which supports the EALDP and outlines production timescales. Placemaking maps form Statutory Guidance and will be prepared and prioritised in order to link with approved Community Action Plan programmes. Within the specified PPF timescales (April 2021 - March 2022), progress has been made on a number of placemaking plans within East Ayrshire. As set out in the <u>2022 Development Plan Scheme</u>, new Placemaking Maps and associated Action Programmes are underway for North West Kilmarlock, Kilmaurs, Auchinleck, Mauchline, and Darvel and Priestland, in different states of progress (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 11).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Auchinleck placemaking first consultation</u> • <u>Mauchline placemaking first consultation</u> • <u>Darvel and Priestland first consultation</u> • <u>North West Kilmarlock final consultation</u> <p>As part of the LDP2 Development Frameworks for Kilmarlock Town Centre and South Central Kilmarlock and Stewarton, Placemaking Maps are also being prepared for these places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Kilmarlock Town Centre and South Central Kilmarlock Development Framework and Placemaking Plan</u> • <u>Stewarton Development Framework, Shared Action Plan and Placemaking Plan</u> <p>11.2 Prepare supplementary guidance and non-statutory guidance to support the Minerals Plan as set out in Annex 2 of the Plan – Ongoing. (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 13).</p> <p>Evidence - statutory and non-statutory guidance that was ready for adoption last year after recess was successfully adopted thereafter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory supplementary guidance – <u>Financial Guarantees</u>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-statutory planning guidance – <u>Community benefits</u> Non-statutory planning guidance – <u>Peat, Excess Soils and Sewage Sludge</u> <p>Financial Guarantees Supplementary Guidance supporting policy RE5 of the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2017 in addition to policy MIN WP1 of the Minerals Local Development Plan was adopted:</p> <p>Minutes of Cabinet meeting 25th August 2021 – Minerals Local Development Plan – Supplementary Guidance (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p>
12	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)	Green	Several case studies, including the Ayrshire Food Hub, provide examples of how you have worked with other council services to the benefit of the applicant and community.	<p>12.1 Continue the cross service pre and post application advice for the multi-service review of capital programme and Housing Improvement scheme projects – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - Development Planning and Development Management Officers continue to attend the Council's monthly Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) Project Board meetings and regular Housing Asset Management Framework (HAMF) meetings. The SHIP Project Board meet to discuss progress with affordable housing proposals from concept to construction. The HAMF meetings discuss areas within East Ayrshire where intervention or re-development of existing Council housing stock might be required and new housing proposals.</p> <p>Pre-application meetings and e-mail dialogue takes place between the Planning Service, the Housing service and the housebuilder and architects implementing the SHIP programme. In terms of pre-application meetings with RSLs and private housebuilders, a Senior Planning Policy Officer attended these meetings to discuss the affordable housing element throughout 2020/21. Discussions have focused on whether on-site provision can be delivered and if so, to explore the design layout. If off-site provision is to be explored then discussions have focused on</p>

			<p>the detail of this and to ensure alignment with the LDP. All meetings have taken place virtually.</p> <p>12.2 Strengthen working relationships with Community Development as part of delivery of LDP2 – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - the LDP2 Member-officer working group met for the first time on 17 April 2019 and has met on more than 30 occasions since. It has been a significant commitment for the officers involved across the Council. The MOWG reviewed all parts of the Main Issues Report and thereafter has overseen and discussed the content of representations made to the MIR as well as the entire content of PLDP2. Various revisions and additions have been made as a result of this working group, ensuring corporate oversight of the Plan. Officers with remits related to community development form part of this group.</p> <p>Evidence - Local Development Plan 2 (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Information about local development plan 2 - East Ayrshire Council</p> <p>Work has also increased with the Education service and calculations for new pupils as a result of new homes and future planning.</p> <p>Review of Measures to Align Housing Developments with the School Estate Capacity.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Review of Measures to Align Housing Developments with the School Estate Capacity - Review of Measures to Align Housing Developments with the School Estate Capacity.pdf</p> <p>School Estate Management Plan 2020-2021 - school estate management plan 2020-2021.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p>
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				School Estate Management Plan 2020-2021 - school estate management plan 2020-2021.pdf
				<p>12.3 Joint pre application advice provided to prospective applicants, led by Development Management but with relevant advice and input from colleagues across a range of Council services including Development Planning, Ayrshire Roads Alliance and Environmental Health – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - Planning Pre Application Guidance Leaflet (east-ayrshire.gov.uk) (Page 4 references relevant internal stakeholders being involved in the pre- application process and their attendance at meetings).</p> <p>12.4 Encourage and participate in construction stage working groups for very large construction projects that link planning compliance monitoring elements with ongoing construction work and community opportunities.</p> <p>Evidence – see case study 8 (South Kyle windfarm) which has successfully tied together high level compliance monitoring and construction progress updates with opportunities to link into the Council's employability functions, with the applicant identifying employment opportunities and the Council helping to facilitate training and recruitment of local people into these roles.</p>
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	You provide evidence of sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities. This includes participation with HOPS and benchmarking groups.	<p>13.1 Implementation of best practice within the Development Management and Development Planning service through HOPS and Benchmarking Groups – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - Development planning engage in the Development Planning HOPS sub-committee.</p> <p>Development Management engage in the Development Management HOPS sub-committee.</p>

				<p>We engaged with a number of Councils when devising our developer contributions SG including Moray and Falkirk.</p> <p>We engaged with North Ayrshire Council in devising a Community Wealth Building policy.</p> <p>We have continued to work with North and South Ayrshire to further develop the indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 15).</p> <p>The Ayrshire authorities worked together on parts of the response to NPF4 related to RSS and the Ayrshire Growth Deal. (2021/22 Service Improvement Plan action 16).</p> <p>Evidence: National Planning Framework 4 - Scotland 2045 Consultation Response - National Planning Framework 4 - Scotland 2045 Consultation Response.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p>
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Amber	You have cleared 14 cases during the reporting year, with 17 cases still awaiting conclusion - a slight reduction on the number of cases you had last year.	<p>14.1 Continue to manage, progress and clear legacy cases – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence – Statistics noted above at section 3. As set out at 4.1 above, a quarterly reporting system focused on legacy applications and applications subject to legal agreements was introduced just prior to this reporting period and this has continued on a quarterly basis during this reporting period. This now provides more than one year of overview of applications which are termed as legacy cases. This reporting system allows the Planning Committee to have oversight of these applications and ensures continued focus takes places to prevent the application from becoming ‘stalled’. The statistics show that such cases continue to be cleared with a greater number determined in this reporting period than last and fewer legacy cases remaining than in the previous reporting period.</p> <p>Whilst we seek to continue to reduce legacy cases and certainly have no desire to allow applications to stall, the Council accepts that the elimination entirely of such applications isn’t practical</p>

				<p>due to the complex nature of some applications and the potential for economic impact from concluding applications solely to prevent a case being live for more than one year. The particular circumstances of each legacy application is reviewed through the quarterly reporting process with updates provided on progress during the quarter. Subject to active case management and, ideally, agreed timescales for determination through processing agreement, the progression to determination of a small number of applications beyond one year old will be acceptable to this Council. As evidenced by the statistics, this approach by the Planning Authority has been successful whilst still driving down overall legacy application numbers.</p> <p>progress of planning applications - 20 august 2021.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>and update on planning applications with legal agreements and legacy planning applications.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p>
15	<p>Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions 	Green	<p>Your plan sets out policy for developer contributions and you have produced supplementary guidance on developer contributions. This is due to be reviewed during the preparation of LDP2.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Your pre-application service includes an assessment of what developer contributions may be required.</p> <p>RAG = Green</p> <p>Overall RAG = Green</p>	<p>15.1 Review implementation of Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance as part of LDP2 – Ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence: issue 19 of the LDP2 Main Issues Report highlights the need for a review and update of the current Developer Contributions policy framework. The Council's preferred option is to ensure that contributions are fair and appropriate through different links to the Action Programme, School Roll Forecasts, relevant Scottish Government and NHS needs. It would bring under one framework a diverse range of requirements, simplifying the process for applicants and officers, allowing for flexibility in terms of development viability and introducing certainty to developers and case officers. The LDP2 MOWG will ensure corporate working on the requirement for developer contributions.</p> <p>Taking on board responses to the Main Issues Report received during the PPF year, the developer contributions framework will</p>

			<p>be developed over the coming year and will be incorporated into the LDP2 Proposed Plan.</p> <p>Main Issue 19 of the <u>LDP2 Main Issues Report</u>.</p> <p><u>LDP2 Developer Contributions SG (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> <p>Supplementary Guidance as part of LDP2 – a review of the developer contributions policy has been completed as well as the preparation of new supplementary guidance which provides more detailed policy guidance on the subject. The Proposed LDP2 has been prepared and Supplementary Guidance on developer contributions has now been prepared and published for consultation.</p> <p>The Proposed LDP2, which contains the developer contributions policy, was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 31 March 2022. The Proposed Plan was published for consultation on the 23 May and representations are currently being invited until the closing date of the 22 July.</p> <p>Cabinet also approved draft supplementary guidance on developer contributions on 1 June. The Guidance was published for consultation on 10 June and representations are currently being invited until the closing date on 22 July.</p> <p>In the preparation of the LDP2 policy and supplementary guidance, the Council engaged with colleagues at NHS Ayrshire and Arran, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership, the Ayrshire Roads Alliance, East Ayrshire Leisure, and the Council's Education Service. All colleagues contributed to the preparation of the policy and supplementary guidance by providing background information to inform the methodologies adopted to calculate contributions, projects costs or rates. In addition, they provided expertise and knowledge on matters that are addressed through the policy and guidance such as education, health and transport infrastructure.</p>
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			<p>Engagement also took place with other Local Authorities to explore different approaches to collecting developer contributions and to identify what has worked successfully to ensure a robust policy approach. The guidance promotes an 'infrastructure first' approach to development in line with Draft National Planning Framework 4 and the PLDP2, supporting the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are necessary to create liveable and sustainable places.</p> <p>The proposed policy was also discussed in detail at various Member-Officer Working Group meetings prior to approval.</p> <p>Evidence: Developer contributions ·</p> <p>LDP2 Supplementary and Non-Statutory Guidance - LDP2 Supplementary and Non-Statutory Guidance.pdf</p> <p>15.2 As set out at 3.1 above, electronic Pre application process which includes an assessment of what developer contributions may be required continues to be promoted via the Council website - Implemented and ongoing.</p> <p>Evidence - Planning Pre Application Guidance Leaflet (east-ayrshire.gov.uk) – (see page 4).</p>
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7 Service Plan 2022/2023

Things we will do this year	
1	Continued preparation of Local Development Plan 2, including consultation activity (May – July 2022), and submission to examination.
2	Develop and implement the Mauchline CARS Action Plan.
3	Continued development of the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership and related projects.
4	Maximise the staffing complement within the Service and ensure that unfilled vacancies are recruited.
5	Build on our existing compliance monitoring structure and quarterly reporting to planning committee for large scale infrastructure projects to accommodate forthcoming legislative requirements for all Major applications.
6	Completion of outstanding restoration works at former opencast coal mining complexes and monitor ongoing aftercare programmes.
7	Via the Key Agencies Group, progress activities designed to manage the impacts of climate change and flood risk in Kilmarnock.
8	Undertake a Service Review process for Development Management to encompass staffing and application processing including validation procedures to ensure that service is fit for purpose and achieving best value.
9	Complete key actions to enable implementation of Ayrshire Growth Deal projects
10	Progress existing RCGF funding bids to completion and develop new Stage 1 bids for 2023/24.
11	Build on and keep under review the digital-based service delivery model and embedding of flexible working practices.
12	Put in place opportunities for new apprenticeships within the Service via the Jobs and Training Fund.
13	Support the implementation of the Council's Climate Change Strategy.
14	Preparation of full Regional Spatial Strategy in conjunction with North and South Ayrshire Councils (pending further guidance from Scottish Government).
15	Continue with development of Placemaking Plans for Mauchline, Auchinleck, Darvel & Priestland and Kilmaurs.
16	In conjunction with the Economic Growth Service, prepare an over-arching IT Strategy for development and maintenance of IT systems to support the Service's objectives.
17	Replacement of laptops for Development Management and technical support to ensure that hardware and software remains fit for purpose and continues to support efficient electronic and remote working.
18	Upgrade of various electronic supporting systems including IDOX document management systems, updating IDOX data management system for GDPR and Public Access system (OPIS).

8 Case Studies

In this section, there are a number of case studies which demonstrate some of the key projects that were undertaken during 2021/22, and they provide a flavour of the variety and depth of activities undertaken by our service.

In terms of measuring our outcomes, these case studies demonstrate this by analysing the value our planning service adds to development in East Ayrshire. The Service is committed to continuous improvement and development, which ensures that we are able to respond and adapt to changing circumstances.

Case Study 1 looks at the restoration of our open-cast coal complexes as this programme nears its conclusion, and the important role played by the Planning Service.

Case Study 2 builds on case study 1 and examines the development and delivery of the Minerals Local Development Plan in the aftermath of the liquidation of two coal mining companies and the demise of the open cast industry.

Case Study 3 looks at the emergence of the new Local Development Plan 2, and the vital role of the Member-Officer Working Group, which exemplifies the spirit of collaboration that is the hallmark of our service.

2021 saw the publication of the Council's Climate Change Strategy, and the Planning Service will have an important role to play in this important policy agenda over the coming years. Case Study 4 looks at this in more detail.

Case Study 5 demonstrates the effective collaboration between the Council and the Key Agencies Group of public bodies as part of the preparation of LDP 2. These efforts have helped to crystallise regeneration efforts within Kilmarnock Town Centre.

The Galloway and South Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere Project is highlighted in Case Study 6. Tangible signs of the success of this project are beginning to emerge, with the village of Ochiltree being named as the fifth biosphere community and others set to follow.

On the centenary of the construction of the first houses delivered via the Addison Act, Case Study 7 looks at Homes for Heroes. The centenary was marked in ceremony via commemorative events and benches with forthcoming housing improvement works to be carried out at the Piersland Park estate.

The final case study examines the South Kyle Windfarm Working Group, which has worked closely with a developer and other agencies to maximise community benefits from this major development which will deliver lasting change within southern East Ayrshire.

Case Study 1 – Restoration of Opencast Coal Complexes

The completion of restoration works at opencast coal complexes in the southern part of East Ayrshire

Location and Dates:

There are a number of locations in East Ayrshire (Dunstonhill, Netherton, Ponesk, Powharnal, Skares, Spireslack, Dalfad, Glenbuck, Garleffan, Grievehill, Chalmerston/Pennyvenie, Duncanziemere, House of Water and Greenburn).

Restoration works commenced in 2013 and are now substantially completed.

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

- Quality of outcomes
- Governance

Key Markers

- Enforcement Charter
- Corporate working across services

Key Areas of Work

- Design/Environment
- Green space
- Masterplanning

Stakeholders Involved

- General Public
- Key Agencies
- Planning Committee
- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff

Overview:

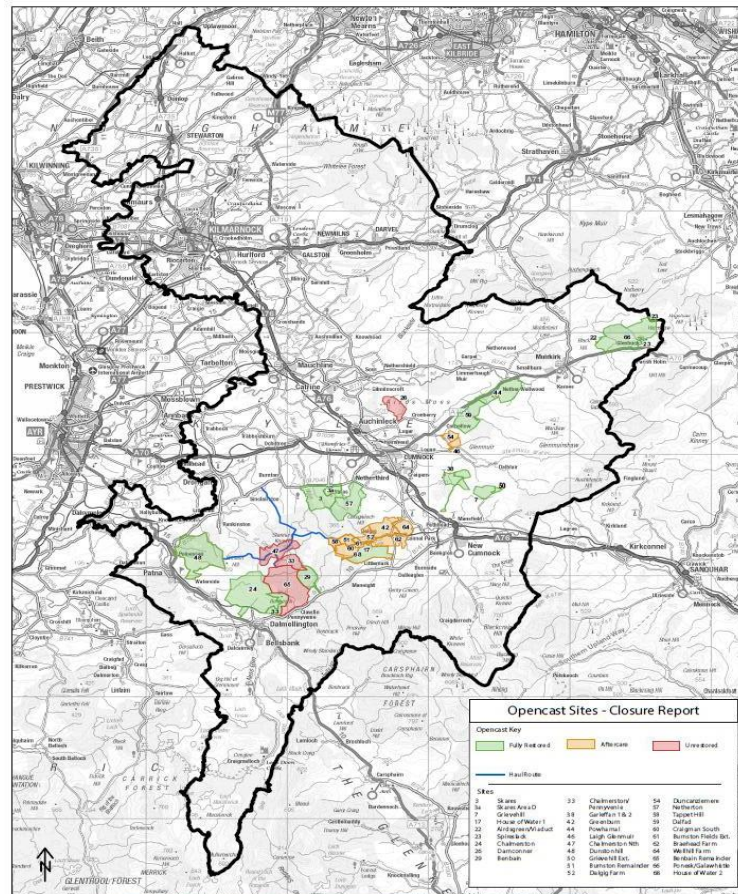
In April 2013, the Scottish Coal Company Limited (SCCL) was placed in liquidation. This announcement was followed one month later with the news that Aardvark TMC Limited had also been placed in liquidation. As two of the three major open cast operators, both companies had significant interests in the East Ayrshire coalfields at this time; SCCL operated five complexes comprising sites at Chalmerston, Dalmellington; Dunstonhill, Patna; House of Water, New Cumnock; Piperhill, Sinclairston; Dalfad/Powharnal; Cronberry and Ponesk/Spireslack, Muirkirk. Aardvark TMC Limited operated 8 sites, at Skares and Netherton, Duncanziemere and Laigh Glenmuir, Logan; Glenmucklock Conveyor, Grievehill, Garleffan and the overland conveyor between Laigh Glenmuir and Garleffan at New Cumnock.

The closure of these sites was to have profound and lasting implications in a number of areas; in economic terms, significant job losses mainly impacting upon our smaller and more isolated communities along with impacts on local businesses within the supply chain; in environmental terms, with the abandonment of sites owned by these operators and the abandonment of their statutory licences related to planning, health and safety and the environment; in financial terms, the engagement of legal counsel, the engagement of specialist mining engineering companies, the failure to put in place the appropriate levels of restoration bonds and the direct costs borne by the Council in respect of restoration activity.

An opencast coal mining Recovery Plan, 'Steps to Recovery' was approved by the Council at its meeting on 19 September 2013. This confirmed the full extent of disturbed and unrestored land across the nine former SCCL and Aardvark complexes as well as quantifying the notional cost of restoration to inform the process of calling up restoration bonds. The report comprised 38 recommendations across a wide range of activities, including economic development, environmental, planning, financial, legal, health and safety and risk management. The framework

underpinning Steps to Recovery established 3 key principles for site masterplanning, namely *Make Safe, Make Good and Make New*.

Recognising the scale of the problems being faced and the need to learn lessons, the Council commissioned an independent review of all processes and procedures around the management, determination, implementation, monitoring and review of the planning processes in relation to open cast coal operations within East Ayrshire. This independent review, which took place between July to November 2013 was led by Mr. Jim McKinnon, the Scottish Government's former Chief Planner. This report was considered by Council at its meeting on 28 January 2014.



The McKinnon report found a number of weaknesses, at the core of which were individual, management and communication failings, particularly in terms of the drawing up and monitoring of restoration guarantee bonds and the failure to put in place effective compliance monitoring practices. It contained a further 14 recommendations, which would become the focus of the Council's recovery efforts.

Responding to the recommendations, the Council put in place a strengthened Compliance Monitoring Framework for surface mine developments as well as applications/consents for quarries, landfill, onshore wind farms and other infrastructure projects. Since 2013, detailed reports advising of the range of compliance monitoring activity were presented on a quarterly and annual basis to the Planning Committee, a practice which remains in place and provides both transparency and scrutiny over all the environmental projects being developed within East Ayrshire.

In terms of financial guarantees, it was also agreed that these would be managed corporately, a process which would be led by the Depute Chief Executive and taking into account assessments

by independent mining engineers and environmental consultants, financial and legal, planning and economic development and additional external advice as required.

The immediate aftermath of the closures required the Council to prioritise activity and focus firstly on two key elements, namely:

- Operational opencast coal sites which addressed the employment of a local workforce and compliant operations, and
- The calling of bonds which would help facilitate the restoration of both operational and non-operational sites.

It was however recognised that due to the enormity of the task, many of the challenges being faced would not be achievable in the short term and that longer-term strategies would require to be developed, particularly in respect of site masterplanning and environmental restoration.

Over the years which followed, the Council worked with the Scottish Government's Coal Taskforce, landowners and other regulatory and voluntary bodies to find solutions on a site by site basis. An outcome of the Coal Task Force recovery plan was for the Scottish Government to create The Scottish Mines Restoration Trust (SMRT) and also the subsidiary company Mines Restoration Ltd (MRL) which was the operational body to deliver restoration on the sites. The Steps to Recovery Programme focussed its efforts on the design and implementation of an extensive restoration programme to repair and reprofile each of the former opencast sites to a naturalised landscape.

The commencement of restoration works at the Chalmerston-Pennyvenie site will mark a significant moment for the Council, as the last of the major Council-funded restoration projects. The Scottish Mines Restoration Trust (SMRT) have indicated that, subject to due process, the charity have completed all works relevant to their restoration remit across Scotland and will look to cease trading during 2022 when all legal and environmental obligations are concluded.

The progressive restoration and aftercare of the various opencast complexes programmes in East Ayrshire has been designed and carried out to return the sites to an environmentally acceptable condition, contributing to the wider regeneration and enhancement of East Ayrshire's landscape and environment. Drone footage demonstrating the detail of the works and the sheer scale of the restoration efforts at each of the open cast complexes can be viewed at [Open cast mines march 2022 - YouTube](#)

Measures taken to enhance the natural environment at the sites include the replacement of soils at backfilled and restored areas, the large scale importation of peat and compost, the long-term management of water voids and the planting of trees and gorse. Before and after photos of some of the restoration projects that have been undertaken are shown below.

Looking ahead, the longer-term aims are to encourage the development of alternative uses of these sites, including for tourism, leisure, forestry, biodiversity, nature conservation and agriculture to the benefit of local communities.

Goals:

- To respond to the multi-faceted challenges faced as a result of the liquidations which took place in 2013.
- To implement a major restoration programme at key sites across the southern area of East Ayrshire.
- To strengthen procedures in a range of areas, including compliance monitoring and corporate management of financial guarantees (restoration bonds).

Outcomes:

- Substantial completion of the restoration programme, subject to completion of a small number of projects and ongoing aftercare works.
- Fulfilling of the requirements set out in the Restoration Services Agreements and the Enforcement Notices.
- Sites returned to environmentally acceptable condition, contributing to the wider regeneration and enhancement of East Ayrshire's natural landscape and environment.



Powharnal tip and offices 2014 (above) and 2021 (below)





Dalfad void 2013 (above) and 2021 (below)



Grievahill void 2017 (above) and 2021 (below)



Name of key officer

Paul Outram, Minerals Project Officer
Mhairi Douglas, Team Leader, Development Management
David Mitchell, Head of Governance Services

Case Study 2 – Development and Delivery of the Minerals Local Development Plan

The development of the Minerals Local Development Plan and its early implementation, specifically, the securing and ongoing delivery of the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership. The Plan, with its focus on delivery, was named as a finalist at the UK RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence (2021)

Location and Dates:

Minerals Local Development Plan – adopted January 2020
 Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership – Stage 2 funding application successful March 2020
 Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership – Permission to Start August 2020
 Plan shortlisted as a finalist in the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence - February 2021
 RTPI Planning Excellence Award ceremony – April 2021

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

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

Key Markers

- | | |
|-------|--------------------------|
| • LDP | • Continuous Improvement |
|-------|--------------------------|

Key Areas of Work

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration • Environment • Community engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Plan & Supplementary Guidance |
|---|---|

Stakeholders Involved

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| • Authority Planning staff | • General public |
|----------------------------|------------------|

Overview:

The Minerals Local Development Plan was written in the context of the demise of the coal mining industry nationally, culminating in the liquidation of two major coaling companies in 2013, as described in detail in case study 1.

The need for a specific thematic Plan, dealing solely with minerals issues, was identified by the Council in 2013 as a key means of responding to the crisis in the industry and the resultant impact on East Ayrshire's landscape and communities. The MLDP was required to take on board legacy issues and put in place a positive policy framework both for (i) rural regeneration and placemaking and (ii) future extraction within East Ayrshire.

The preparation of the Minerals Local Development Plan, represented a new innovative approach to plan making within East Ayrshire, across a number of factors:

- In terms of **community engagement**, the development of the Plan surpassed statutory engagement requirements. An additional stage, the Draft Main Issues Report, was introduced at the start of the process, to ensure that from the very outset, the Plan was focussed on the matters that were important to local communities. Engagement was not easy, given the very recent history of economic and environmental problems. But by being open and transparent about the remit and the purpose of the Plan, trust was forged between planning staff and local communities. From the outset, it was clear that a key

aspiration of local communities was to reclaim some ownership of their landscape and to re-establish a local sense of place.



- Minerals planning is traditionally focussed on extraction. The Minerals Plan took a different, unique approach, focussing on **restoration, rural placemaking and green infrastructure**. It is also fully grounded in the need to decarbonise future energy requirements; it limits coal extraction and includes policies that protect East Ayrshire's carbon rich peatlands.
- A key element of the Minerals Plan is its focus on **implementation**. The aspirations and visionary element of the Plan, in terms of re-purposing the former coalfield landscape, was backed up by a clear strategy of securing and delivering a National Lottery Heritage Funded (NLHF) Landscape Partnership for the former coalfield area. Whilst the Plan acknowledges a Landscape Partnership does not have the scope to meet all the Plan's objectives, it did identify it as a vehicle to start to bring forward on the ground some key aspects of the Plan. A stage 2 bid for a £2.2 million NLHF project was submitted in December 2019, with significant input from planners within the Development Planning and Regeneration Team. When approving the application in March 2020, NHLF made clear the commitment within the statutory Minerals Plan to support the Landscape Partnership was a key influencer in the decision to approve the funding application.



In December 2020, the Council submitted an entry into the UK RTPI Excellence in Planning Awards under the Excellence in Plan Making category. The award application focussed on the adoption of the MLDP and its role in securing the Landscape Partnership lottery funding. In February 2021, the RPTI advised the Council that it had been shortlisted as a finalised, with an invite to the April awards ceremony. Whilst the Plan did not win an award, to be shortlisted is considered a significant achievement within a UK context, and demonstrates the significant value of the work undertaken to produce the Minerals Plan.



Goals:

To produce a development plan that provides a sound framework for assessing planning application, but does so much more as well; a plan that takes a positive approach to guiding rural regeneration and land restoration.

To establish a mechanism to deliver on the aims and visions of the Plan,

To drive project implementation, demonstrating that a plan led approach can successfully drive regeneration and development on the ground.

Outcomes:

The Minerals Local Development Plan was adopted in 2020. It provides a comprehensive framework for determining all minerals related planning applications.

The shortlisting of the Plan in the RTPI Excellence in Planning Awards (2021) demonstrates that both the work that went into producing the Plan and the Plan itself, are considered best practice amongst planning professionals.

The Plan provides a framework for the regeneration of the former coalfield area. The Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership, which was successfully embedded within the Plan, is now 2 years into its delivery phase. Tangible, on the ground benefits have already been delivered, including:

- 31 hectares of peatland restored and 2,500 dams installed to improved peatland management and reduce flood risk;
- 16 hectares of wildflower grassland have been restored;
- 4 hectares of community garden have been created; and
- Approximately 1km of new hedgerow habitat created

These outcomes will expand and multiple as the 22 projects under the CCLP umbrella are delivered over the coming 3 years.



Name of key officer

Karen Purves, Strategic Manager – Development Planning and Regeneration

Case Study 3 – Local Development Plan 2 (LDP 2)

Continuation of Member-Officer Working Group for LDP2 ensuring corporate and elected member oversight of and corporate and elected member input into the Proposed Plan. Additional elected member engagement.

Location and Dates:

Various MOWG meetings held online during 2021/22: 07/04/2021, 21/04/2021, 05/05/2021, 26/05/2021, 09/06/2021, 30/06/2021, 07/07/2021, 21/07/2021, 09/08/2021, 18/08/2021, 30/08/2021, 01/09/2021, 09/09/2021, 15/09/2021, 23/09/2021, 15/12/2021, 13/01/2022, 20/01/2022, 31/01/2022, 28/02/2022, 07/03/2022, 14/03/2022.

Ward meetings: December 2021 and January 2022.

Full Council 31/03/2022: [Local Development Plan 2 \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](http://east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

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

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Governance

Key Markers

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous improvement • Stakeholders engaged appropriately | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate working across services |
|--|---|

Key Areas of Work

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Plan & Supplementary Guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative working |
|---|---|

Stakeholders Involved

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority planning staff • Authority other staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected Members |
|---|---|

Overview:

At its meeting of 7 March 2018, Cabinet approved the formation of a Member-Officer Working Group (MOWG) to help drive forward the production of LDP2 and to ensure that the views of local communities were effectively communicated and taken on board during preparation of the various documents at key stages prior to adoption. The MOWG is constituted of a number of Elected Members as well as representatives from across the Council's Services to ensure corporate oversight of, and input to, the Plan making process. The MOWG met for the first time on 17 April 2019.

In the reporting year, the MOWG was well established and was continuing work towards the proposed plan. Regular meetings were held throughout the year and members and officers were cited on all parts of the plan with all land allocations and policies discussed and approved or amended within the group before proceeding to a Council meeting on 31 March 2021.

The MOWG has six elected members, helping to ensure a geographical and political spread. In addition to meeting with the elected members during the MOWG process, ward meetings were held with elected members in the Council's 9 wards during December 2021 and January 2022.

Outwith MOWG, the policy team have also worked closely with colleagues in Education, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, the Health and Social Care Partnership and Facilities and Property Management to ensure that the implications of our site allocations on education and medical services are well understood and catered for. In addition, the Council's Legal Services and other local authorities have assisted with matters related to the complex issue of developer contributions.



These processes resulted in a number of issues being raised which we were able to rectify or explore in advance of the Plan being presented to Council. This was extremely important as LDP2 is a plan being prepared under the transitional arrangements and had to meet the June 2022 deadline. Any decision to defer a decision on the Plan could have resulted in the Plan having to restart under the new processes introduced by the 2019 Act.

The group has also helped to foster better corporate relationships with people knowing who to contact about joint working, and raised the profile and understanding of development planning across the Council.

Goals:

- To ensure LDP2 aligns with the Community Plan and all actions therein.
- To ensure corporate oversight of the preparation of LDP2.
- To ensure continued elected member oversight of LDP2.
- To obtain contributions from other departments on areas of conflict and alignment.
- To ensure an infrastructure first approach to development.

Outcomes:

We have delivered best value by:

- contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in a variety of ways including by looking to economy, efficiency and effectiveness in our use of assets.
- working with partners to identify a clear set of priorities which respond to the needs of the local community.
- operating in a way that seeks continuous improvement by looking at best practice.

Name of key officers

Karen Purves, Strategic Manager – Development Planning & Regeneration

Case Study 4 – Climate Change Strategy

Partnership Working & Community Development

Location and Dates:

East Ayrshire. Approved by Council, 24 June 2021.

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

- Governance
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement

Key Markers:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Corporate working across services | • Cross-sector stakeholders |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|

Key Areas of Work:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| • Environment | • Process improvement |
|---------------|-----------------------|

Stakeholders Involved:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| • General public | • Authority Planning Staff
• Key agencies |
|------------------|--|

Overview:

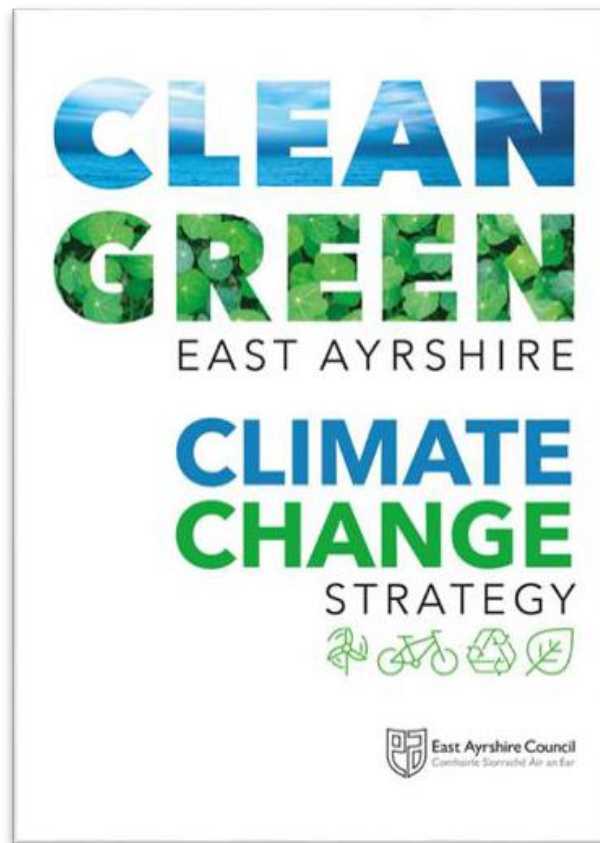
The Council's first draft Climate Change Strategy was approved by Council in June 2021. The Climate Change Strategy sets out the ambition and direction of travel for the Council over the next 10 years to support local, national and international action on climate change. The Strategy can be found on our website [Climate Change Strategy \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy). As climate change moves to the top of the policy agenda, our aim is to ensure that our climate change actions support our aspirations to deliver a fair, green, wellbeing recovery from the pandemic.

The Council also agreed to join the UK100 and committed to the aim of reducing the Council's carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030, and to working with our residents and businesses to bring our wider communities' emissions in line with Net Zero as soon as possible (and no later than 2045).

The Planning Service will have an important role to play in terms of enabling and facilitating the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy's four main themes (energy, waste, transport and natural environment), and the key examples of this are set out in the section which follows. This reflects the collaborative approach to delivery, with officers from a range of Council services and disciplines engaged in the implementation of the Strategy.

The approval of the Strategy, in a wider sense, is fully aligned with the East Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), and there are a range of actions and measures that support our climate change ambitions within the LOIP.

In creating this document, the Council recognised the importance of Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework, and in particular, its emphasis on the achievement of net zero emissions by 2045.



Goals:

The Strategy is being implemented via collaborative working practices both within the Council and in conjunction with our Community Planning partners. It identifies opportunities to work with our schools, businesses and communities to raise awareness and create a local movement which is focussed on reducing or offsetting our carbon emissions.

Arranged to coincide with COP26 in Glasgow, an extensive engagement programme took place during 2021/22. This involved employees, young people, communities and businesses. The cornerstone of this engagement activity was a Climate Change Survey, which received 342 completed responses during October and November 2021. The survey shared some behavioural changes that we can all make under each of the four themes to address climate change and it encouraged respondents to share their own suggestions.

The Council has established a framework, including a detailed set of actions, which reflects the wide range of activities taking place across our four key themes. Actions include but are not limited to:

- Continued review of our existing property estate, looking for shared service opportunities to reduce our footprint and subsequent emissions.
- Pilot Net Zero housing models, and continued decarbonisation of the Council's housing stock.
- Transition to a fully electric car and van fleet by 2026.
- Development of a new East Ayrshire Active Travel Plan to deliver a network of active travel routes across East Ayrshire.

- Work towards a 50% decrease in food waste generated by our communities by 2026.
- Development of a Biodiversity Strategy for East Ayrshire.



It is essential that planning supports our green economic recovery in the short term and enables strategic investment in the long-term. The work of the Planning Service supports the delivery of the East Ayrshire Climate Change Strategy in many and varied ways, including the following:

- Local Development Plan. The LDP currently includes three objectives related to carbon reduction and renewables: use of low and zero carbon technologies, wind energy development and support for renewable energy projects.
- Flood prevention: work is currently underway to produce the next six yearly cyclical Local Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-28 and this is reflected in the flood risk management policy which is also being developed. Through our planning policy, the Council also actively supports the development of environmentally friendly flood prevention measures including wetland, peatland or green infrastructure creation, flood prevention schemes and natural flood management techniques such as crop rotation, winter planting and reforestation.
- Opencast coal mining restoration programme: the brownfield restoration of our former coal mining sites continues, with ongoing tree planting and reforestation. As indicated elsewhere in this report, the prioritisation of these sites for new tree planting is enabling

the useful rehabilitation and reintegration of these sites into local economic and social life.

- Preparation of a Regional Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire to ensure that energy resources are used to their full potential and that energy projects (power, heat and transport) are developed and planned in a structured fashion.
- Enabling the development of Ayrshire Growth Deal projects, all of which have sustainability and climate change mitigation among their key objectives.

Outcomes:

The draft Climate Change Strategy was agreed at Council in mid-2021, and this was followed by an extensive period of consultation and engagement in late 2021 and early 2022.

Monitoring arrangements have been put in place. To raise the profile of climate change across East Ayrshire and champion our new Climate Change Strategy, a spokesperson has been appointed to lead on Climate Change. The Member-Officer Working Group continues to oversee the implementation of the Strategy, and all Committee reports now include a new section that outlines the impact of the proposals on our Net Zero ambitions.

Our new Local Development Plan will cut across each of the key themes (energy, waste, transport and natural environment) set out in the Council's Climate Change Strategy. There are a number of clear ways in which it will help to reduce our carbon emissions and contribute to the climate change targets set out in the Strategy. These include:

- Directing development to locations that reduce the need to travel and allowing for sustainable modes of travel. This is fundamental to the spatial strategy of the plan.
- Supporting renewable energy generation.
- Supporting the decarbonisation of how we heat our homes and buildings.
- Supporting the implementation of the CORE project as a key part of the spatial strategy.
- Encouraging the development of low and zero carbon buildings.
- Requiring a sustainable approach to waste management.
- Protecting our carbon-rich peatlands.

Whilst good progress has been made in recent years, as demonstrated by the reduction in our carbon footprint of 55% compared to the 1990 baseline, it is clear that this much more ambitious approach is a necessity if we are to make the step change required. Furthermore, the Council cannot solve this problem on its own and moving forward, community engagement will be a hallmark of our implementation of this strategy. This Strategy sets out the bold actions that will ensure a just transition and green recovery and help us to build a greener, fairer, and more environmentally sustainable society and local economy.

Name of key officer

Karen Purves, Principal Planning Officer

Case Study 5 – Greener Recovery and Key Agencies

Working with the Key agencies towards a greener recovery: interdisciplinary working.

Location and Dates:

Various meetings and workshops held in person and online during 2021/22. Including workshops on 22.02.22 and 17.08.21 (and preparatory and reflective meetings) related to Kilmarnock and a blue-green strategy for the town.

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

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

Key Markers

- Stakeholders engaged appropriately
- Corporate working across services

Key Areas of Work

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary Working • Process Improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Working • Data and Information |
|--|---|

Stakeholders Involved

- Key Agencies
- Corporate working

Overview:

The Council engaged statutory agencies early and throughout the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2 preparation process to ensure that decision-making was driven by accurate data and informed by a close working relationship. Collaboration commenced prior to the publication of the LDP2 Main Issues Report in May 2020 and thereafter took place at key stages of Plan preparation.

Key Agencies Group

Following on from a successful pilot project in June 2020, Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS) worked with the Key Agencies Group to launch the Green Recovery Offer. This seeks to work with local authorities “in developing and informing evidence-led approaches” to spatial policy and support a green recovery in line with the Place Principle.

The Council has collaborated with the Key Agencies Group (KAG) of public bodies as part of the Plan preparation process to establish a means by which the South Central area and town centre of Kilmarnock can be regenerated over time.

On South Central Kilmarnock and Kilmarnock town centre, the KAG undertook a series of meetings and workshops during the preparation of the Proposed LDP2. KAG-facilitated online community engagement on South Central Kilmarnock and the town centre took place on 22 February 2022. This engagement followed earlier discussion and meetings with the Council on those topics the previous year (August 2021).

Flooding is a major issue for Kilmarnock. It affects both the town centre and its areas of vacant and derelict land. Recent risk assessments cast doubt on the viability of sites previously allocated for development.

East Ayrshire Council is seeking to address both flooding issues and a place-based approach to regeneration in an imaginative way. So in 2021, Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS) gathered experts from the Key Agencies Group and the council for a workshop to explore good practice in blue-green infrastructure.

Our aim was to see how these ideas could be applied to the council regeneration strategy for Kilmarnock's town centre and south-central area. We explored:

- what an imaginative approach to flood risk management and blue-green infrastructure looks like.
- how this can bring benefits for placemaking and regeneration.

During the workshop, we shared good practice in developing blue-green infrastructure strategies at four key scales. These are the:

- national policy context
- strategic scale
- townscape scale
- site-specific scale



Key Agency Group &
East Ayrshire Council:
Kilmarnock Green Blue
Workshop Report
22.02.2022

Goals:

- planning a climate strategy that ensures the local community benefits from high-quality green spaces.
- taking a collaborative approach to place in the face of the climate emergency.
- to take a more holistic approach.
- to challenge current policy and look at best practice.
- overcoming perceived barriers.

Outcomes:

Engagement with key agencies has enabled the Council to undertake site selection for the Proposed LDP2 more effectively and has through giving accurate advice resulted in both the deallocation of several sites and the provision through allocated site descriptions in the Proposed LDP2 of site specific advice relating to flooding, water supplies, nature conservation and other matters. It is hoped that early inclusion of this information will streamline both the Examination process and the subsequent development of the sites themselves.

Work with the Key Agencies Group has contributed to draft development framework for Kilmarnock town centre/South Central Kilmarnock that seeks to address the long-term development challenges: [LDP2-Kilmarnock-Town-Centre-and-South-Central-Kilmarnock-Development-Framework.pdf](#)

We are continuing to work with landowners and the Key Agencies Group to support positive steps for flood resilience in Kilmarnock. Using the project as a case study, the lessons learned here will be applied further to other flood resilience strategies across Scotland.

Evidence: [Learning points: a blue-green strategy for Kilmarnock | A&DS \(ads.org.uk\)](#)

Name of key officers

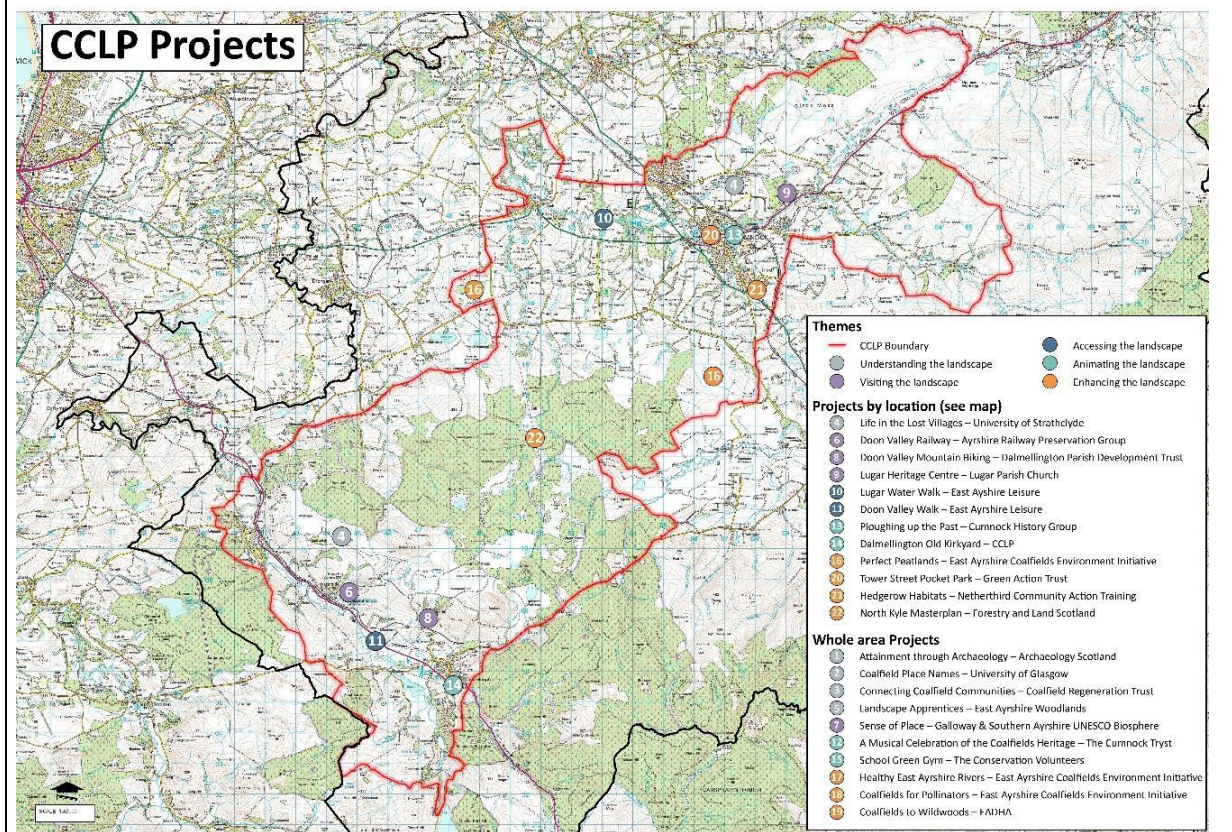
Karen Purves, Strategic Manager – Development Planning and Regeneration

Case Study 6 – Galloway and South Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere

A landscape scale approach to the conservation and sustainable development of the unique landscape of the Lugar and Doon valleys and the surrounding foothills. The partnership has identified the distinctive qualities of the area, understood the risks facing the landscape and is delivering a five-year programme of projects to better connect people and communities with the natural, cultural and built heritage of the area. The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere (GSAB) is a founding Board member and a delivery partner, delivering their Sense of Place project. At the same time, East Ayrshire Council is represented on the Biosphere Board, and the council's Development Planning and Regeneration Team give day-to-day officer support to the Biosphere Board and Management Team as and when required.

Location and Dates:

Southern part of East Ayrshire – see locations in map below:





The GSAB area overlaps with the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership (CCLP) area.

The Partnership runs from April 2020 to August 2025 and the Sense of Place runs for the full duration of the scheme. East Ayrshire Council is key partner within the Landscape Partnership; the 3 CCLP staff members are employed and line managed by the Council's Development Planning and Regeneration team.

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

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement

Key Markers:

- Corporate working across services
- Cross-sector stakeholders

Key Areas of Work:

- Community engagement
- Collaborative working

Stakeholders Involved:

- General public
- Authority Other Staff

Overview:

The work of the UNESCO Biosphere team is fully supported by the East Ayrshire Development Plan. The current Local Development Plan has a specific policy supporting the Biosphere (policy TOUR 5), whilst the emerging LDP2 continues this, with the Biosphere designation forming part of the spatial strategy, supported by a dedicated Biosphere policy (policy SS6). Similarly, the delivery of the Coalfield Communities Landscape Partnership is fully embedded within the Minerals Local Development Plan (2020) and the emerging Local

Development Plan 2 (Policy SS5). At a strategic level, both the Biosphere designation and the landscape partnership are considered important components of the Doon Valley masterplan, currently being developed, which will map out future tourism, recreation and environmental priorities for the Doon Valley.

'Discovering a Sense of Place', has, with the support of the CCLP increased awareness and understanding of the UNESCO Biosphere within East Ayrshire, helping communities to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the designation. The project supports local people in identifying and celebrating the qualities that make their part of the Biosphere unique and special, exploring the natural and cultural heritage in and around their towns and villages. Building on the Biosphere 'Sense of Place' toolkit has enabled communities to connect with what's special through a participatory workshop approach with follow on activities to further deepen that understanding.

As a result, people have been engaged and have a heightened sense of pride in their local area. The Sense of Place approach has opened up opportunities for communities to promote their locality for the enjoyment of both local people and visitors. Some locations are being supported in becoming 'Biosphere Communities' destinations within a UNESCO Biosphere, contributing to tourism aspirations and bringing with it new economic development opportunities. The Sense of Place approach has been used to support the Community Led Action Plan development and delivery process over a 4-year delivery framework.

The CCLP runs until August 2025. The Sense of Place programme is being rolled out to communities in the CCLP area. Sense of Place workshops are the first step towards a village or town becoming a Biosphere Community.

Following a Sense of Place workshop, Ochiltree officially became the 5th Biosphere community. Work has also started with the Netherthird Initiative for Community Empowerment Committee and a Sense of Place workshop is planned in the next year.

The CCLP also worked with the Biosphere and ARA (Ayrshire Roads Alliance) to renew village entrance signs to include the Biosphere designation and Gaelic translation of village name.

2 CCLP projects, Coalfields to Wild Woods and the Landscape Apprentices worked with the Biosphere to secure funding from UNESCO to deliver a 3 year project called Roots in Nature. Bringing these different partners together has provided an innovative community-based training approach to woodland creation and management that takes young people on a journey starting with propagating local provenant tree species that are good for biodiversity and good for addressing climate change.

Growing the seedlings on and planting them out to restore denuded former industrial landscapes and community greenspaces that enhance the wider landscape, to be used by socially and economically deprived local communities, benefiting their health and wellbeing. Excess trees are to be sold to local estates and NGO's wishing to re-establish native woodland within GSAB.

Despite Covid 19 restrictions that were in place over 2021-2022 the project managed to engage with a number of communities.

The partnership working between the Biosphere core team and the CCLP staff has been intrinsic to the ongoing success of the project. At the same time, both the Biosphere and the CCLP team are supported in their work by the Councils Development Planning and Regeneration team, which has helped to ensure a joined up approach, benefiting further the project overall.

Links:

Minerals Plan [East Ayrshire Minerals Local Development Plan · East Ayrshire Council \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](http://East Ayrshire Minerals Local Development Plan · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk))

East Local Development Plan (2017) – [Local development plan 2017 · East Ayrshire Council \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](http://Local development plan 2017 · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk))

East Ayrshire Local Development Plan 2: Proposed Plan – Information about local development plan 2 · East Ayrshire Council

GSAB www.gsabiosphere.org.uk

www.gsabiosphere.org.uk/explore-the-biosphere/biosphere-communities/ochiltree/

Goals:

The CCLP is one of a suite of other projects that aims to deliver some of the aspirations of the East Ayrshire Minerals Local Development Plan related to rejuvenating and regenerating the landscape of part of the former coalfield area.

The overall theme of the CCLP is to bring ‘Life in to the Landscape’. This is supported by the vision that: *‘Thriving Coalfield Communities will share in the benefits of a renewed and resilient landscape, welcoming visitors from afar to celebrate their unique heritage, promote stewardship of the land and create new opportunities to enjoy the landscape, shaped by understanding of the past and needs of the future.’*

The GSAB is working towards the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, assisting communities to meet these also.

Outcomes:

Among the projects achievements in 2020/21 include the following:

- Engagement with 2 Community Led Action Plan Areas.
- 1 Sense of Place workshops delivered.
- 1 Community designated a Biosphere Community.
- 5 project partners with increased awareness of the Biosphere.

Looking ahead, good progress continues to be made in a number of other important areas. Some of the highlights include:

- 8 Community Led Action Plan Areas engaged.
- 8 Sense of Place workshops delivered.
- 80 people engaged in workshops.
- 4 Biosphere Communities promoted as destinations.
- 4 Biosphere Community pages developed on GSAB website.
- 20 project partners with increased awareness of Biosphere.
- 1 volunteer engaged.
- 16 volunteer days contribute to support workshop facilitation.

Name of key officer

Colin MacDonald, Partnership Supervisor

Case Study 7 – Homes for Heroes

Actions to commemorate the centenary of the construction of the first Addison Act housing in East Ayrshire (Piersland Park estate, 1921), with the design and installation of benches and interpretation boards, planned housing improvement works and a day of festivities.

Location and Dates:

Piersland Park centenary celebration day, 29 June 2021.
Benches and interpretation boards installed, February 2022.

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

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Governance

Key Markers

- Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit.

Key Areas of Work

- | | |
|----------|------------------------|
| • Design | • Community engagement |
|----------|------------------------|

Stakeholders Involved

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| • General Public | • Authority Other Staff |
|------------------|-------------------------|

Overview:

2021 marked the centenary of the construction of the first Addison Act housing (the ‘Homes for Heroes’) in East Ayrshire, Piersland Park, intended to give better living conditions to a working class devastated by war and deprivation. Its design followed the Garden City principles and merited Conservation Area designation in 1985. In February 2021 a Conservation Area Appraisal ([Link no longer available](#)) and a Design Guidance ([Link no longer available](#)) were adopted to help preserve its historic significance and design features.

During 2021/22, a number of actions were planned and undertaken to promote the spatial quality and historic value of the area and help improve its built environment.

Centenary “Tea in the Park” festival and feedback opportunity

Development Planning and Regeneration partnered with Vibrant Communities to organise a “tea in the park” festival to raise awareness of the value of this estate and celebrate the centenary. The festival included an exhibition of historic photographs of the construction and early days of the estate, as well as refreshments and outdoor activities such as music from the era, arts and crafts workshops, and fitness and sport sessions. DP&R took this opportunity to set up a stall to gather comments from the residents on draft designs for proposed benches and interpretation boards, which then were analysed and fed into the final designs.



Installation of Benches and Interpretation Boards

In order to provide a more permanent and explicit commemoration of the centenary, it was proposed to install memorial benches and interpretation boards highlighting the history and merits of the Conservation Area. A range of preliminary designs for both board and benches were brought to the “Tea in the Park” event, which served as a prompt for discussion with the residents on their preferred characteristics. Based on this feedback, final designs were produced in laser-cut steel. The benches are also expected to enable further enjoyment of green spaces of merit within the estate, helping to underline its design beauty while providing a service to residents and visitors. Collaboration between DP&R, Vibrant Communities and Outdoor Services was key to bringing the project to fruition.



Demonstrator Housing Improvement Works

With the aim of showcasing how this centennial housing typology can be retrofitted to modern standards while preserving and improving their historic features, traditional refurbishments to Council-owned blocks within the Conservation Area are planned to be undertaken in 2023. Development Planning & Regeneration (DP&R) are working in partnership with Housing Asset Services, Facilities & Property Management and contractors, taking advantage of the housing improvement programme the Council is rolling out. DP&R is informing the partners on the recommended finishes based on the Design Guidance, with advice on specifications including roofing, rendering, doors and windows, rainwater goods, and external lighting.

The agreed improvement works include:

- roofs re-slatted with Welsh slate,
- walls re-rendered with wet dash,
- replacement composite doors,

- replacement composite sash full-pane windows,
- black aluminium rainwater goods, and
- unobtrusive external luminaires.

It is hoped that when these demonstrator projects are undertaken in 2023, they will serve as an example for private property owners in the area and in similar properties when they undertake their own repair works.

Goals:

To raise awareness of the historical and social importance of the Addison Act housing, the design merit of the Garden City principles applied here, and the Piersland Park estate in particular as a good example of both, helping remove any negative stigma associated with this type of housing.

To promote quality design within the Conservation Area, and showcase reinstatement of historic features.

To improve the built environment in the Conservation Area and facilitate enjoyment of it.

Outcomes:

Benches and interpretation boards have been installed in the most significant open spaces in the Conservation Area. These elements are already contributing to a higher standard of quality and further opportunities of enjoyment of the local built environment. . The information boards highlight to local residents the importance of their area in terms of local history, helping to instill a greater local pride in the area.

The model of iterative design with public engagement proved useful, and opened new ways of working that have since been applied to other projects such as the [Hurlford Street Design](#). This has been enabled by the improved relationships between departments, which have been furthered by this project.

Name of key officers

Karen Purves, Strategic Manager – Development Planning and Regeneration

Case Study 8 – South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group

The South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group emerged in the summer of 2020 and provides an opportunity to work collaboratively across Council services and more widely with the Developer, Vattenfall, and other local agencies to help maximise local community benefits to deliver immediate and longer-term benefits to the area.

Location and Dates:

East Ayrshire, focussed predominantly on local communities in the southern part of the district. Ongoing throughout the construction period of the South Kyle Wind Farm.

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

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement

Key Markers

- Corporate working across services

Key Areas of Work

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement • Inter-disciplinary working • Other (compliance monitoring) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development • Collaborative working |
|--|---|

Stakeholders Involved

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Planning and Economic Development, Education and ARA Staff |
|--|--|

Overview:

The South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group is a group which arose from a meeting between Vattenfall (the Developer of South Kyle Wind Farm) and East Ayrshire Council's then Chief Executive and Depute Chief Executive, the Operations Manager – Development Management and Building Standards, the Strategic Lead: Community Led Regeneration and the Community Council Development Officer. The meeting acted as an introduction to the South Kyle Wind Farm by the Developer, Vattenfall, who intended to set out their commitment to community development. Through discussions it was agreed that a working group would provide an opportunity to involve relevant people and agencies to help maximise the opportunities which could be delivered as a result of the wind farm development.

The Planning Service played an important role in identifying and bringing together relevant parties in the early phases as the Developer was preparing for the development of South Kyle Wind Farm.

The working group consists of the Council's Head of Economic Growth, staff from the Council's Economic Development (Business Support) Service, representatives from the Ayrshire Roads Alliance, Education Service, Vibrant Communities, the Project Officer for CoRE, Planning (Development Management) representatives and staff from the developer, Vattenfall.

The working group meets on a monthly basis, however to date, due to establishment of the group during the Covid pandemic, these meetings have so far only been conducted online with in-person meetings yet to take place.

The working group is an important step to ensuring the best possible outcomes can be achieved in terms of delivering and maximising community benefits from the South Kyle Wind Farm construction and operation. By bringing together the developer and council departments

in this forum, it allows for regular updates and discussions to be had to identify, not only local needs and aspirations, particularly in terms of economic development and prosperity (given the ongoing recovery from the Covid pandemic), but also upcoming opportunities for funding which could help deliver on the hopes and aspirations of the local communities.

The Planning Service is playing an important role in the ongoing compliance monitoring of the site to ensure commitments made by the developer, particularly regarding mitigation, are being delivered on site in the interests of environmental and ecological protection, and in the interests of amenity of local communities. In addition, attendance at the working group means any issues that arise can be raised with the developer for swift action. By having input from Development Management in the working group, it has helped to improve the awareness, knowledge and importance of the role that compliance monitoring plays in helping to ensure the development is delivered in a manner that puts safety and environmental and ecological matters to the forefront. It also enables wider discussions to be had around the construction of the project and any mitigation implemented on site.

This collaborative approach, ensures transparency during the construction period, but also provides a means of raising or feeding back on any issues which have been highlighted in an open and constructive forum, helping to resolve any issues. Discussing issues in a forum such as the working group also enables members to highlight opportunities, particularly when considering how to address any issues, which may not otherwise have been considered if such matters were only being discussed and dealt with by a limited number of people and/or with only a narrow field of interest / remit.

In addition to the onsite monitoring, the Planning Service is also supporting wider development projects such as the recent consent for the detailed Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Centre of Excellence in Cumnock. The updates on the progress of CoRE provided by the Project Officer in this forum have meant that Vattenfall have been well informed regarding the project, its ethos and its value, which has resulted in Vattenfall indicating an interest in being involved with CoRE in the future.

Goals:

The main objective of the South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group is to help support Community Wealth Building and deliver job opportunities, employability and economic development, including educational opportunities, and will be compatible with Ayrshire Growth Deal funding. In general terms, the working group and associated council services would work with the developer, Vattenfall, as follows:

- Compliance monitoring of the planning conditions of the South Kyle Wind Farm development;
- Supporting Community Wealth Building to create job opportunities and local employability;
- Provide business support and increased opportunities for the local supply chain;
- Increase educational opportunities for school children;
- Increase community benefit opportunities, and
- Increase local renewable opportunities.

Such activity will result in positive economic benefits for this area, securing investment and local job opportunities whilst also providing educational opportunities and training to deliver long-term benefits. The Working Group will help ensure those with the widest knowledge of the needs and opportunities within the area are highlighted and investment and funding available from the Developer can be directed to where it will deliver the greatest outcomes and long-term benefits. The growth of the renewable energy sector, including new and emerging technologies, will ensure longer-term benefits with the need to transition away from historic energy sources and delivery.

Outcomes:

The South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group has been active for two years now and the short-term, immediate outcomes are the local employment benefits and supply chain benefits which have occurred during the construction of South Kyle Wind Farm. The construction period remains ongoing and is progressing well with turbines currently in the process of being delivered and erected on site.

Vattenfall created a local supplier directory which sets out many potential local businesses added to the list (currently over 600 across Scotland), and more than 130 individuals have used South Kyle's local job brokering service. Vattenfall data to the close of 2021 identified that in the first year of onsite operations at the wind farm, more than 60% of staff working on site were from the Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway areas, equating to 380 individuals. The turbine foundations were complete a number of months ahead of schedule with the principal contractor, RJ McLeod, and a specialist foundation contractor, Foundation Solutions HV, based locally in Auchinleck driving the construction forward.



In addition to the employment benefits in the local area, training programmes are being delivered by the principal contractor in partnership with The Zone Initiative, which is a local voluntary organisation based in Dalmellington which aims to provide assistance to those looking for work and training to help build capacity and resilience in communities. Such training, alongside other skills development and work experience opportunities will help to provide local people with opportunities which may benefit them in the short term, but could act as a long-term benefit to better equip them for future work opportunities.

While access to schools has been limited due to the Covid pandemic over the last two years, the developer has produced a set of online resources for use within schools to help primary school-aged children learn and understand more about onshore wind energy and climate change.

Throughout the construction period of the development, compliance monitoring is providing an important component to ensure the site is delivered as committed to within the application submission, notably the environmental impact assessment report and further submissions approved as required by the deemed planning conditions, and that all necessary mitigation is delivered to address impacts associated with the development.

The monthly meeting of the working group has enabled some key aspects of compliance to be discussed within the group and directly with the Vattenfall Project Director for South Kyle Wind Farm. Those discussions include highlighting the need for improvements in peat and surface water management, littering across the site, issues identified with areas of post construction restoration, identification of minor deviations from the approved designs and emphasising the requirements for those to be agreed prior to commencement. The Project Director was able to raise all matters of concern with the appropriate member of their project team which led to improvements being made in all of those areas through additional mitigation and toolbox talks.

The working group has also provided the opportunity for cross-departmental contacts to be made more easily which proved useful during the processing of permits required for offsite road works and abnormal load transportation, resulting in smoother processing. The working group has also proved useful during the formulation of the methods of notification of the turbine deliveries within the local area. The use of local knowledge within the group has proven to be invaluable in relation to such matters.

Discussion has also taken place around the need for schools and educational establishments to be aware of the diverse employment opportunities within a wind farm development and that not all jobs are in construction roles. The need for specific roles such as environmental managers and ecologists has been discussed particularly in relation to training opportunities and further education given the increasing difficulties to recruit employees with the particular skills needed for such roles.

The development has been undertaken well and is generally compliant. Any matters raised through the compliance monitoring have not been significant enough to merit any formal enforcement action to date. Any matters that have been raised through this process being addressed by the developer in a timeous manner, or where this has not been possible, they have worked towards a resolution by taking additional mitigation measures and ensuring that all parties are aware of the progress towards resolution.



The South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group is also helping to attract and direct interest to other projects within the local area, such as the Community Renewable Energy Project (CoRE), which represent key projects within the district which are subject to Ayrshire Growth Deal funding.



Through the working group, the developer of South Kyle Wind Farm, Vattenfall, is also discussing how they might be a part of the Council's CoRE. This project will create a Centre of Excellence and supporting demonstrator projects which aim to overcome, through research and design, a range of technical challenges that currently prevents the harnessing of local but intermittent energy generation, and its storage and subsequent transmission onto the grid during periods of high demand. Current discussions are in the early stages but there is the potential to partner on a CoRE project or to trial / test new innovations. Vattenfall are currently considering potential for battery energy storage and hydrogen production which may provide a source of hydrogen for local uses. Although such discussions are in the early stages, it does highlight the potential for the longer-term collaboration which the working group can bring, beyond the immediate economic and employment benefits during the current construction period, to help contribute to and deliver wider, long-term local benefits which could tackle issues around local energy generation and use.

The South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group will also help input as Vattenfall progresses towards completion of the construction phase of the wind farm, where the transition will be made, bringing the construction period and associated working group to a close, with attention increasingly turning to the activities of the South Kyle Community Investment Fund Working Group. That group will seek to develop and deliver on local priorities to the areas around Carsphairn, Dalmellington, New Cumnock and Patna through the community benefit fund monies which the South Kyle Wind Farm development will deliver, with an estimated £38 million over the lifetime of the wind farm generated for local communities.

The above information shows that so far the South Kyle Wind Farm Working Group has helped to deliver on many of its goals thus far throughout the construction phase of the wind farm. This will have helped lay the foundations of community building and investment, as the wind farm is anticipated to become operational in 2023, and focus shifts more towards delivering for the local communities through the community benefit monies accruing and delivered with the support of the South Kyle Community Investment Fund Working Group.

Name of key officer
David McDowall, Head of Economic Growth Christine Morris, Planning Enforcement Officer

Issues Covered by Case Studies – Check list

Case Study Topics	Issue covered by case study	Case Study Topics	Issue covered by case study
Design	1, 7	Interdisciplinary Working	5, 8
Conservation		Collaborative Working	3, 5, 6, 8
Regeneration	2	Community Engagement	2, 6, 7
Environment	1, 2, 4	Placemaking	
Greenspace		Charrettes	
Town Centres		Place Standard	
Masterplanning	1	Performance Monitoring	
LDP & Supplementary Guidance	2, 3	Process Improvement	4, 5
Housing Supply		Project Management	
Affordable Housing		Skills Sharing	
Economic Development	8	Staff Training	
Enforcement	8	Online Systems	
Development Management Processes		Transport	
Planning Applications		Active Travel	
Other: Compliance Monitoring			



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