

Policy Lead Report for Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee

1. INTRODUCTION

This report covers the period from 18th June 2016 to 12th January 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that members note the report.

3. DETAIL

3.1 Planning

3.1.1 Planning Performance Framework 2015/16

Our Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for 2015/16, which is the principal performance measure for Development Management and Development Policy within Planning and Regulatory Services, was submitted to the Scottish Government during 2016 and covered the period from April 2015 to March 2016. This was the 5th Annual PPF which our Planning Service has had to submit and it once again resulted in positive feedback from the Scottish Government in November 2016. Of the 15 Key Performance Markers used by the Scottish Government to assess performance of an authority, based on the evidence provided within their PPF reports Argyll and Bute are scored on 13 of those markers and this year 2015/16 scored Red = 0, Amber = 3 and Green = 10 for comparison the Figures for 2014/15 were Red = 0, Amber = 2 and Green = 11.

Previous comments from the Scottish Government have stated that the PPF clearly demonstrates an “open for business” approach, committed to working closely with others and commending the Council’s link between the LDP, action plans and single outcome agreement.

A detailed report on the PPF is due to be presented to the March meeting of the PPSL committee and the April meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure committee.

3.1.2 Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) Update

Since the approval of The Development Plan Scheme (DPS) for LDP2 at the Full Council Meeting on 21st January 2016 and since my last report the “Call for Sites” period of the DPS ended on 8th December 2016.

Section 20B of the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires each Planning Authority to prepare/review the DPS, at least annually, and when writing this report the updated DPS was due to be considered by the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee on 18th January 2017 seeking approval of the updated DPS for publication and submission to the Scottish Ministers.

The DPS sets out the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing the LDP, outlining what is likely to be involved at each stage. The DPS and LDP are linked to Scottish Government performance indicators.

In updating the DPS, there have been no significant changes required to the original DPS, as the LDP2 process is currently on target and the following actions have been undertaken by the Development Policy Team in the LDP2 process:-

- Published the DPS as agreed in January 2016
- Set up a contacts database of all those who require to or would like to be engaged in the LDP2 process
- Reviewed the existing housing land supply
- Gathered information from charrettes (3 completed with Oban and Dunoon anticipated to complete in 2017)
- Undertaken the "Call for Sites"
- Collated baseline materials
- Started Pre Main Issues Report engagement

During 2017 information gathered will be assessed and it is anticipated that the public consultation for the Main Issues Report will commence in September 2017. This is the first statutory consultation of the LDP2 process.

Details of the Development Plan Scheme and LDP2 process can be found at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp2>

3.1.3 Training and Development

The Training Development Programme of the PPSL committee has continued throughout 2016 and since my last report we have had a number of opportunities. We received a presentation on the LDP2 Call for Sites process. In October (after holding our monthly PPSL committee meeting in the new Helensburgh & Lomond Civic Centre) members were given a tour of the Civic Centre, had a walk round the CHORD works in the town centre, visited the Dunbritton housing development on the site of the old Hermitage Academy. These are developments which support the Council's Place Making Agenda.

This concluded the training development programme for 2016 and, in view of the local elections in May 2017, a new PPSL training development programme will be drawn up to meet the needs of the new committee.

3.1.4 Review of Scottish Planning System

On 26th October 2016 I attended a Planning Convenors meeting in Edinburgh, introduced by John McNairney, Chief Planner, Scottish Government, seeking the views of Planning Convenors on the report published in May 2016 "Empowering planning to deliver great places" by an independent panel reviewing the Scottish Planning System.

Many of the recommendations within the report were discussed and convenors were supportive in general to the recommendations but in particular to the recommendations around increased planning fees for major applications and discretionary charging.

The role of elected members and the importance for local democratic accountability, in relation to planning decisions, was also discussed, especially related to decisions reviewed by the reporter and subsequently overturned.

In July 2016 the Scottish Government had issued a response to the report supporting the six outcomes proposed by the review and taking forward ten key action points as a priority.

On the 10th January 2017 the Scottish Government launched a consultation on the future of the Scottish Planning System, which will enable a Planning Bill to be brought forward in the 2017/18 Parliamentary Session. The consultation will run until 4th April 2017 and can be found using the following link:

<http://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/a-consultation-on-the-future-of-planning>

3.1.5 Consultation on Raising Planning Fees

Following on from the Review of the Scottish Planning System on the 5th December 2016, the Scottish Government commenced a Consultation on Raising Planning Fees.

Planning fees are currently capped at £18,270, £20,055 and £30,240, depending on the category of development and the consultation is seeking views on raising the current fees maximum for major applications to a revised cap of £125,000 for most categories of development (£62,500 for applications for planning permission in principle), to better reflect the level of resources they demand.

Our planning department will be responding to the consultation, which is open until 27th February 2017, in due course. Should any elected member wish to respond to the consultation personally, the Scottish Government statement regarding the consultation can be found at the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/publications/2016/12/7646> and the consultation document can be completed online at the following link:

<http://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/consultation-on-raising-planning-fees>

3.1.6 Planning and Regulatory Services Performance Report - FQ2 Key successes

FQ2 Key successes reported for the period July to September 2016 within Planning and Regulatory Services include:-

- HMNB Clyde Strategic Delivery and Development Framework has commenced with senior council management, the Royal Navy and the Ministry of Defence agreeing areas of priority to work upon. This key partnership and communication framework will help with the delivery of the Royal Navy Submarine Centre of Specialisation.
- Building Standards has secured a further year as private verifier for Babcock International at Faslane and Coulpport and are currently in advanced discussion with The City of Edinburgh Council to undertake their extra building standards work

- 97% of all planning applications were approved during FQ2.
- Year to date planning applications and other related submissions are almost 7% higher than at the same period last year, 1050 compared with 985, with the increase being attributed to householder applications
- The supply of future homes was given a boost with planning permission in principle granted for 145 units, including 25% affordable homes at the Sawmill field site in Helensburgh.
- Planning approval was given for a new whisky distillery and visitor centre on Islay. Glasgow based blender and bottler, Hunter Laing and Company is making its first move into distilling with a planned £8 million investment in the new build facility. With capacity to produce 500,000 litres per year, the distillery will create at least 4 full time jobs as well as seasonal and indirect employment by 2019 and give a boost to the local economy with increased demand for barley from Islay farmers.
- Planning approval was granted to renovate and extend a vacant and prominent Cardross building which will create a new Co-op food store supporting approximately 10-15 full and part-time jobs
- Building Standards service went live on the Scottish Government's national planning portal www.eBuildingStandards.scot joining Development Management on this one-stop portal aimed at providing high quality online services www.eDevelopment.scot

3.1.7 Customer Service Excellence Award

The Building Standards Service successfully retained their Customer Service Excellence Award accreditation after some impressive feedback from their recent annual audit. Building Standards were the first service within the council to receive the Customer Service Excellence Award in 2013 and have been successful in retaining their accreditation ever since. Congratulations to our Building Standards Manager, Martin Matheson and his team for retaining this prestigious award.

3.1.8 Building Standards Performance

Building Standards performance for the last quarter was very good with the service responding to 95.7% of Building Warrant applications within 20 days, they responded to requests for Completion Certificates within 2.2 days, issued 92.9% of Building Warrants within 6 days, determined 99.3% of Completion Certificates within 3 days and 100% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

3.1.9 Building Warrant Fees Consultation

A consultation seeking views on increasing building warrant and other associated fees, designed to make the building standards system achieve full cost recovery and place it on a sustainable footing for the future, concluded on 9th January 2017 and we await the publication of the results of the consultation.

3.1.10 Employee Excellence Awards

The Development Policy Team achieved a bronze award, at the Employee Excellence Awards, for the Sustainable Design Awards Competition which was run over the course of 2015/16. Regulatory Services received a bronze award in the "Achieving Better Outcome" category relating to the new systems and

intelligence sharing arrangements they have developed with partner agencies to combat Serious and Organised Crime.

3.2 Regulatory Services

3.2.1 Extension of Avian Influenza Prevention Zone

On 6th December 2016 The Scottish Government declared an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone covering the whole of Scotland, as a precautionary measure, in response to the spread of H5N8 (Avian Influenza) in Europe.

They recently confirmed that the Prevention Zone is to be extended until 28th February 2017.

The Prevention Zone applies to all poultry and captive birds in Scotland and it requires Keepers to keep their birds indoors, or take appropriate practical steps to keep them separate from wild birds.

Large scale poultry keepers are being asked to take extra steps in terms of biosecurity and keeping domestic/farmed poultry separate from wild fowl. Small scale domestic poultry keepers should ensure that they review their controls and that the steps they have taken continue to meet National/Scottish Government/APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency) guidance.

Argyll and Bute does not have any very large poultry farms but there are a large number of premises which keep poultry for domestic purposes – many of which are unknown to our Animal Health and Welfare team.

The strategy to date in dealing with this issue has been appropriate, meeting the Scottish Governments expectations of local authorities. The actions detailed in the strategy, dated 8th December 2016, have been completed by posting information on the council website, contacting all the large poultry farms we are aware of in our area to ensure that they have effective controls in place and responding to all enquiries received from people with domestic poultry and concerned members of the public.

In light of the extension of the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone to the 28th February the strategy has been revisited and it has been concluded that the previous strategy remains appropriate with the following additions:

- Our website has been updated with details of the extension and links to the Scottish Government website
- A proactive media release has been issued with advice to the public and advising those with poultry to revise their current procedures and ensure that they continue to check the Scottish Government guidance on biosecurity measures, whilst ensuring the welfare of their poultry.
- Continue to respond to complaints or requests for advice, relating to the keeping of poultry and ensure that practical biosecurity measures are being followed.

The Councils Animal Health and Welfare team will continue to review the

situation and the strategy will be revised following any developments or Scottish Government correspondence.

3.2.2 Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland

The Council's Regulatory Services Manager, Alan Morrison has been elected Chair of the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland. As well as enhancing the profile of the Council this appointment provides an early insight into changing national agendas affecting environmental health and the wider regulatory services.

4.0 Conclusion

This is my final Policy Lead report before the May elections and I would like to conclude by thanking all the officers within Planning, Protective Services & Licensing, Committee Services staff and members of the PPSL committee for making my term of office an enjoyable and unforgettable experience.

Councillor David Kinniburgh
Policy Lead Planning & Regulatory Services

18th January 2017