

Planning Peer Review – Member & Officer Improvement Action Plan

Theme 1: Strengthen Leadership					
<i>(Recommendations 1, 2 & 3)</i>					
New Planning Process	Beneficiary	Aim	Measures	Lead	When
Establish vision for Planning Service	All	Reposition and restate the management of planning in the context and at the heart of the Corporate Plan and Local Plan	Planning Service vision Planning Service work aligned to corporate plan and strategic priorities.	PE	End March 2021
Strategic Lead Member role for Planning	Members	To take overall leadership on planning and development to give clear political leadership	Update reports to Full Council Improvement Board established to oversee delivery of Improvement Plan	Cllr SM	End Nov 2020
Provide Clear Political Steer on High Level Developments	Members	Ensure high level developments aligned to Corporate Plan and strategic priorities	High level developments agenda items at Leader and Group Member meetings	Cllr SM	Agenda items from January 2021
Strategic Lead Officer to be catalyst for Change	All	To take overall leadership for the delivery of the Planning Peer Review Action Plan	Progress report on Improvement Plan	TBC	Improvement Plan complete March 2022
Theme 2: Working With Partners					

(Recommendations 6, 7 & 9)

Parish and member notifications	Parishes and ward members	Improve input into the process through early flagging of locally important new and pre app schemes	Engagement Protocols Feedback from parish councils	NW	End March 2021
Agents forum	Officers, agents and developers	Communicate changes to the planning system and service and understand agents concerns to improve service provision	Quarterly Agents Forum	NW	Commence Forums February 2021
Reintroduce the Planning Matters updates	Parish councils and developers	Inform stakeholders about the development and implementation of the Local plan	Quarterly Updates	RP	Updated to commence January 2021
Parish Engagement	Parish	Increase knowledge of parishes, understand needs of parish council improve planning service	Half Yearly Training Sessions	DS	First training Session April 2021
Communication with Parish Council		Honour pre Covid 19 commitment to the Parish Councils for a meeting with the Chief Executive to enable them to air their views about planning	Key concerns voiced in meeting referenced in Improvement Plan	GC	End Feb 2021

Theme 3: Member Development

(Recommendations 5, 6 & 8)

Conduct training	Members	<p>Training on how to contribute effectively in meetings</p> <p>Improve strength of the chair and councillors understanding of their role in the process and member behaviours and standards in committees.</p>	Training held	GC	Training held by March 2021
Local Authority Visits	Members and officers	View other council's planning committees to learn lessons	On-Line committees reviewed and lessons learned identified	NW	First lessons learned identified March 2021
Structure of, date and timings of Planning Committee	Members	<p>Structure committee agendas and briefings</p> <p>Review committee meeting timetable</p> <p>Shorten meetings and increase focus and quality of debate and decisions</p> <p>Allow more time to deal with last minute information</p>	<p>Work Programme for Planning Committee</p> <p>Reduction in average time taken per application at Planning Committee</p>	GC	May 2021
Member workshops	Members and Officers	<p>Strengthen liaison between officers and members</p> <p>Create space for officers and members to discuss DM and policy issues</p>	Meetings programme	NW	First Member Workshop held January 2021

Member and Officer Training and Mentoring	Members and officers	Improve the effectiveness of planning committee as a decision making forum	Training Needs Analysis Member Development Programme Officer Continuous Professional Development Programme Average time taken for planning applications	GC	Training Needs Analysis completed by March 2021
Review of the 7-day call in process	Members and Officers	Improve the effectiveness of planning committee as a decision making forum	Analysis of proportion of applications going to committee benchmarked with similar authorities Revised approved call in process	DS	End June 2021
<p>Theme 4: Service Improvement</p> <p><i>(Recommendations 4, 6, 7, 9 & 10)</i></p>					
Produce Process Maps	Officers	To establish clear expectations and allow improved coordinated services	Process map provided to all Regular reviews of the process to achieve continuous improvement	DS	June 2021
Improve report quality	Officers	Management and monitoring of report standards to improve accuracy and completeness	Accuracy checks added to performance monitoring	GC	End March 2021
Regional Planning Meetings	Officers	Attend all regional planning meetings to learn and contribute to latest planning developments	Attendance at regional planning meetings	NW	From January 2021

Review Officer Scheme of Delegation	Members and officers	<p>Focus on sensitive applications</p> <p>Consider Planning Committee having a greater role in determining some of the more significant enforcement cases</p>	Revised Officer Scheme of Delegation	DS	End June 2021
Embrace and welcome collaborative learning and working	Officers	<p>Maximise networking opportunities with other Councils planning teams.</p> <p>Observe and learn from other councils on line planning committee meetings</p> <p>Ensure complaints are used as a learning exercise</p> <p>Conduct a thorough review of processes and systems</p>	<p>Networks established</p> <p>Examples of learning</p>	NW	End June 2021
Adopt a single team approach to planning	Officers	<p>Planning policy and development management work together to improve the service. Shared priorities which address the corporate priorities of the council e.g. staff in planning policy utilised in Development Control</p> <p>Increase input of Policy Team in order to improve accuracy of reports and improve conclusions</p>	<p>Unified planning service</p> <p>Greater resilience in priority areas</p> <p>Learning and Development of Planning Officers</p>	DS	End March 2021
Performance Review Meetings	Officers	Ensure regular performance information available and reported to each Planning Committee. Identify	Monthly performance review meetings comprising Head of	GC	First review meeting

		trends in performance and enable earlier identification of potential performance issues by planning to the next planning committee.	Planning, Strategic Manager & Director of Service Quarterly performance reporting to Planning Committee		February 2021
Clear transparent customer focus	Officers and Parishes	<p>Improve Self Service Options e.g. Direct customers to Planning Portal 'Interactive House'</p> <p>Ensure planning portal always up to date</p> <p>Publish timescales for planning applications and performance monitoring information</p> <p>Acknowledgement of all applications within 10 working days</p>	<p>Feedback from Parish Councils</p> <p>FAQ's on Council Website</p>	GC	End January 2021