

Planning Peer Challenge – Action Plan

The following plan outlines the specific actions that will be taken to respond to the Peer Challenges recommendations. Reporting back on delivery against the actions will include the outcome/outputs of the action.

Overall monitoring of performance improvement will be through the new suite of key performance indicators detailed in Recommendation 9 and through delivery of the Joint Local Plan

Peer Challenge Recommendation	Comments/Actions completed	Proposed Action	Timescale	Lead Officer(s)
<p>1. Develop and embed the T18 model to respond more specifically to the context and challenges of the DM service. Specifically consider issues relating to how the T18 model can deal with the whole end to end processes of negotiating and determining proposals, to achieve better accountability, increased capacity and a greater customer focus.</p>	<p>1.1 The model is being developed and implemented within Development Management to reflect these recommendations.</p> <p>1.2 Under present trials L6 Senior Case Managers ('Junior planners') handle lower level householder apps from cradle to grave. The majority of other cases will be managed by Case Managers (CM) – ie they will push the application through the process and ensure that dates are met, consultations gathered, applicants/neighbours kept informed of progress etc. The Specialist will be accountable and responsible for the decision having assessed the application. Accountability will be clear; we will effectively have a CM managing the application and a Specialist determining the application.</p>	<p>A1. Extend trial to all CM/Specialists dealing with planning applications.</p>	<p>September 2016</p>	<p>Drew Powell Kate Hamp</p>

	<p>1.3 The Community of Practice Lead will be responsible for ensuring that the DM process is delivered efficiently and lawfully.</p> <p>1.4 The weekly list for Parish and Town Councils has now been amended to identify the relevant Case Manager and Specialist (if relevant).</p> <p>1.5 The need for an accountable officer to be contactable by agents, applicants, Parish's etc is fully recognised.</p>			
<p>2. Act on the findings of resource reviews, especially at the case manager level, so as to ensure that sufficient capacity to deliver an effective and customer facing DM service.</p> <p>This should include developing a strategy for dealing with applications more efficiently within the time limits without the need for excessive</p>	<p>2.1 Recent reports to West Devon Hub Committee (minute) and South Hams Executive (minute) detail the resources at Case Manager level already identified to support transition.</p> <p>2.2 There has been an initial focus on securing a marked improvement in determination performance (with extension of time agreements) in order to minimise the risk to the Councils from new performance measures proposed within the Housing and Planning Bill.</p> <p>2.3 See 1.4 and 1.5 above</p>	<p>A2. Review staffing levels during transition to ensure post transition levels will be sufficient to sustain performance</p> <p>A.3 As part of the new approach to performance management (see also 9.1) we will also be measuring determination performance in line with the relevant 8</p>	<p>February 2017</p> <p>August 2016</p>	<p>Drew Powell Kate Hamp</p> <p>Drew Powell</p>

<p>recourse to extension of time agreements, and also to ensure that applicants and the public have a single point of contact.</p>		<p>and 13 week statutory targets.</p>		
<p>3. Work with the IT partner to ensure that the recognised IT problems, especially in relation to the planning constraints and history, and the labelling of plans, are tackled as a matter of urgency. In doing this ensure that the web site is easy to use and learn from currently high performing customer focussed planning services.</p>	<p>3.1 Since the visit there have been major improvements in terms of functionality in relation to planning history and constraints. There remains issues with the stability and functionality of the website and it is accepted that further development/improvement is necessary.</p>	<p>A.4 Review present action plan to develop the website in line with best practice and to facilitate self-serve and channel shift in line with operating model principles.</p>	<p>September 2016</p>	<p>Mike Ward</p>
<p>4. Urgently reinstate regular local agent's forums.</p>	<p>4.1 The frequency of forums has reduced during transition but the need for an active dialogue is fully recognised by officers.</p>	<p>A.5 A joint Developer/Agent forum will take place w/c 22 August 2016 at the Watermark Centre in Ivybridge.</p>	<p>August 2016</p>	<p>Pat Whymer</p>

		<p>A.6 Training on how agents can self-serve using new software will be given at future forums.</p> <p>A.7 Specialists and Senior Case Managers will attend the Forums to facilitate and build closer working relationships</p>		
<p>5. Facilitate engagement with Town and Parish Council representatives to develop appropriate protocols to ensure that the concerns of these stakeholders are fully taken into account, and that feedback is given to them where a recommendation that differs to their views is reached.</p>	<p>5.1 The current consultation on the Joint Local Plan has specifically targeted workshops with all town and parish councils. Responses from town and parish councils will be addressed and responded to as the Joint Local Plan progresses. Further engagement will be planned and set out in the Joint Local Plan Engagement Strategy.</p>	<p>A.8 Consult Town and Parish Councils and establish direct liaison during current and future consultation phases.</p> <p>A.9 Provide clear summary of Town and Parish Council comments and an explanation of any divergence from their comments in the officer report. A copy of the report to be provided to T/P</p>	<p>In line with JLP programme</p> <p>October 2016</p>	<p>Tom Jones Lesley Crocker</p> <p>Pat Whymer</p>

<p>Also engage with the town and parish councils on expectations around support for neighbourhood plans.</p>	<p>5.2 Councils have dedicated staff resource focussed on Neighbourhood Plans and targeted support package. Current JLP consultation raises following for consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the emerging Networks in West Devon and South Hams. Entering into a Neighbourhood Plan Agreement with each group to clearly establish the intended purpose of the Plan, the relationship to the Joint Local Plan and roles & responsibilities of those involved. 	<p>Councils with the decision notice</p>	<p>November 2016</p>	<p>Pat Whymer</p>
		<p>A.10 Offer direct planning training sessions T/P Councils either individually or by cluster</p>		
		<p>A.11 Establish liaison arrangements in JLP Engagement Strategy</p>		
		<p>A.12 Update Neighbourhood Plan Protocol to incorporate updated support package and clarify support level to NP networks and individual NP groups.</p>	<p>October 2016</p>	<p>Tom Jones</p>
<p>6. Ensure timely processes and mechanisms for adoption of a Local Development Scheme</p>	<p>6.1 Local Development Scheme is under current review by the Joint Local Plan (JLP) Member Steering Group.</p>	<p>A.13 Maintain as standing item for JLP Member Steering</p>	<p>In line with JLP programme</p>	<p>Tom Jones</p>

<p>(LDS) as part of the rapid progression of the South West Devon Joint Local Plan to adoption.</p>	<p>6.2 Currently under watching brief to take into account any impacts on work programme in response to economic uncertainties</p> <p>6.3 Adoption of LDS already delegated to senior officers in consultation with lead members – allowing for speedy adoption once timing is clarified.</p>	<p>Group and issue as soon as reasonable.</p>		
<p>7. Keep the communities, planning agents and stakeholders regularly informed of and involved in the South West Devon Joint Local Plan’s progress recognising the benefits of maintaining an expeditious timeline for adoption</p>	<p>7.1 Current and future consultations to be undertaken in line with Engagement Strategy adopted by all three Local Planning Authorities (SH, WD, Plymouth). This includes involvement of all stakeholders.</p>	<p>A.14 Implement JLP Engagement Strategy. Review and update as necessary.</p>	<p>In line with JLP Programme</p>	<p>Lesley Crocker</p>
<p>8. Engender strong leadership of the Planning Committees through regular training and appropriate updates on planning policy (including on the 5 year land supply</p>	<p>8.1 All Members receive training on Planning matters as part of their induction. Additional training is undertaken in advance of becoming a DM/P&L Committee Member, and offered to other Members subject to availability.</p>	<p>A.15 Review and, where necessary, develop and implement a new training programme for planning committee members with wider</p>	<p>March 2017</p>	<p>Pat Whymer Darryl White</p>

<p>for housing). General planning training should be made available to help non-planning committee members to be more effective local community leaders.</p>	<p>8.2 The Planning Advisory Service were engaged to deliver Member training during 2015/16.</p>	<p>membership invited and supported.</p>		
<p>9. Report a suite of performance indicators directly to the Planning Committees and where necessary Cabinet and Hub, including productivity and performance of Planning Committee itself. KPIs including quality, value and customer focus and land supply, should be reported via a performance dashboard to demonstrate the Service's contribution to wider corporate objectives.</p>	<p>9.1 A range of KPIs have been reported through to different Committees in the past, most recently through O&S (Internal) at WD and O&S at SH.</p>	<p>A.16 A suite of KPIs, covering the suggested areas, will be developed and reported to Development Management/Planning and Licensing Committee on a monthly basis. The KPI's will provide trends over time and be supported by narrative by exception.</p>	<p>September 2016</p>	<p>Drew Powell</p>

<p>10. Ensure there are adequate resources to focus on economic growth and affordable housing. This should include reviewing the approach of viability assessments paid for by planning applicants, and developing a pool of knowledge about comparables including values and build rates across the relevant market areas.</p>	<p>10.1 It is considered that there is suitable in-house resource to manage affordable housing issues although there will be the need to engage external support on occasions.</p> <p>10.2 A Member working group has now been set up with responsibility for economic growth. The outcomes arising from this group will determine future resource provision.</p> <p>10.3 An initial assessment of how viability assessments are commissioned has been undertaken and harmonisation of approach between the two councils is being considered.</p> <p>10.4 An identified gap in in-house knowledge with regard to viability has been addressed during the recruitment of a Specialist into the Assets Community of Practice – an example of utilising transferable skills across the organisation in line with the key principles of the new operating model.</p>	<p>A.17 A review of our approach to viability and how we can ensure consistency and efficiency – in terms of cost and timeliness – will be undertaken</p>	<p>December 2016</p>	<p>Alex Rehaag</p>
<p>11. Review in 12 months' time the operation of the Schemes of Delegation to examine whether even greater harmonisation would be beneficial.</p>		<p>A.18 A review of the Scheme of Delegation will be undertaken in conjunction with the Chairs of Committee</p>	<p>July 2017</p>	<p>Pat Whymer</p>

<p>12. Further evaluate the risks at this time of moving to a Local Authority Controlled Company.</p>	<p>12.1 Since publication of the Report, the councils have received the Price Waterhouse Cooper Report evaluating the risks. Proposals are presently being reported to Members through Hub and Executive.</p>	<p>Pending decision by Members</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p>13. Ensure sufficient focus, capacity and consistency in delivering a high quality pre application service to provide greater certainty to customers and allow more time for helping shape development to meet community needs. Enhanced pre application engagement should also include delivering informal pre planning briefings to members of the Committees on significant major developments.</p>	<p>13.1 There has been a reduction in performance with regard to turn around times for pre-applications during transition. This has resulted in a reduction in volume.</p> <p>13.2 SHDC negotiated and agreed its first Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) in June 2016. PPA's offer a mutually beneficial way for applicants and the councils to secure timely development.</p>	<p>A.19 Review pre-application process and charges.</p> <p>A.20 Develop a Planning Performance Agreement protocol to include standard agreement template and charging policy.</p> <p>A.21 Develop a protocol to ensure early engagement of Members on major developments.</p>	<p>October 2016</p> <p>November 2016</p> <p>November 2016</p>	<p>Pat Whymer</p> <p>Tom Jones</p> <p>Pat Whymer</p>
<p>14. Review Committee site visit protocols to ensure</p>		<p>A.22 Undertake a review of site visit protocols in</p>	<p>September 2016</p>	<p>Pat Whymer</p>

<p>planning decision making is as efficient as possible.</p>		<p>conjunction with relevant Committees</p>		
<p>15. Review the Council's governance and decision-making processes related to the planning function.</p>	<p>15.1 This recommendation was added to the Action Plan at the request of the Planning and Licensing Committee meeting held on 26 July 2016.</p>	<p>A. 23 That the Political Structures Working Group be tasked with giving consideration to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changing the name of the Planning and Licensing Committee to the Development Management Committee; and - establishing a separate stand-alone Licensing Committee. <p>With the Group then making its recommendations to the Council.</p>	<p>Annual Council meeting in May 2017</p>	<p>Pat Whymer / Darryl White</p>