

## **Planning Peer Review – Improvement Action Plan update**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In January 2012 a planning peer review was carried out by the Planning Advisory Service, PAS. The review was carried out on a voluntary basis with no additional costs incurred by the authority.
- 1.2 The aim of the peer review was to help the planning service, including development control, planning policy and regeneration, to consider which aspects of the Council's planning functions work well and where improvements could be made.
- 1.3 An action plan incorporating the recommendations and actions required to address areas of improvement was developed and is shown in **Appendix 2**.
- 1.4 This report presents an updated position of the improvement action plan for member consideration.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To note the updated improvement action plan.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Improvement action planning forms part of the Council's agreed performance framework. In addition the purpose of action planning is to look at where and how improvements to service provision can be made. This process therefore supports one of the Council's priorities, to have 'Good-quality services that meet local needs'.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 In September 2011 a Performance Surgery was held to review the performance of the following two measures...
  - P&FM 04 (NI 157b) - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' application types.
  - P&FM 05 (NI 157c) - Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' application types.

- 4.2 The performance surgery, attended by the Cabinet Portfolio holder and Scrutiny Chair, aimed to establish the reasons behind the performance and identify ways in which it could be improved.
- 4.3 One of the improvement proposals arising from the Surgery was to consider taking part in a peer review. This was arranged, for free, through the Local Government Association and delivered by the Planning Advisory Service, PAS, over three days in January 2012.
- 4.4 The scope of the review was to focus on...
- Mainly Development Control functions.
  - The delegation and constitutional arrangements and the reporting requirements of Planning and other committees.
  - The Council's overall strategic direction and approach to delivering services.
- 4.5 An improvement action plan was drafted to address the recommendations from the peer review. The action plan is shown in Appendix 2. The key areas that the action plan focussed on are:
- Preparing and implementing a Development Management Approach
  - Improvements to Planning processes
  - Delivering the Core Strategy
  - Engagement, consultation and feedback
- 4.6 Members of Planning Control Committee and the Planning, Housing and Leisure Scrutiny Board reviewed and endorsed the content of the action plan. The action plan was also considered by COG with their main recommendation of setting up a Steering Group consisting of strategic officers.
- 4.7 The improvement action plan has been aligned with the Planning and Property Services (P&PS) Department's 2013/14 business plan and monitored for progress on a quarterly basis. Appropriate actions have also been incorporated into the Regeneration Department's business plan.
- 4.8 Since the peer review the P&PS Department's business plan for 2013/14 shifted the focus from the speed of processing planning applications to being more of a balance between the speed and quality of service delivered. Several new local performance measures have been added to the business plan and are monitored on a quarterly basis.
- 4.9 The service has also developed performance measures it uses to monitor its performance to include measures which focus on the quality of planning applications and building designs proposed for development within the City. This has had the desired effect of drawing together more closely all three services involved in the planning function - Development Control, Planning Policy and Regeneration.
- 4.10 The action plan will continue to be monitored closely and a further update will be brought to the Planning, Housing and Leisure Scrutiny Board in six months.

<b>OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED</b>
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5.1 None.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

<b>Legal officer</b> <b>Financial officer</b> <b>Human Resources officer</b> <b>Service Director(s)</b> <b>Other(s)</b>	Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable Christine Durrant, Director of Planning and Property Services Paul Clarke, Head of Planning
<b>For more information contact:</b> <b>Background papers:</b> <b>List of appendices:</b>	Sharon Hancock 01332 643454 email: <a href="mailto:sharon.hancock@derby.gov.uk">sharon.hancock@derby.gov.uk</a> None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Improvement action plan

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial and Value for Money**

- 1.1 The proposals seek to streamline the planning processes, applying a corporate development management approach to economic regeneration. There is no cost in doing these essential activities in a smarter way.

**Legal**

- 2.1 None.

**Personnel**

- 3.1 None.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 None.

**Health and Safety**

- 5.1 None.

**Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.1 None.

**Asset Management**

- 7.1 None.

**Risk Management**

- 8.1 Risks will be considered as part of the improvement planning process.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 9.1 The Peer Review and the action plan arising from it help to support the Council Plan priority of 'Good-quality services that meet local needs'.

## Action Plan – Planning Peer Review (Update December 2013)

Ref	Action	Deadline	Lead		Involve/ Consult	Risks	Progress	Rec Link
			Department	Officer				
1	Establish a Development Management Steering Group to assist in drafting a Development Management, DM, Framework and Protocol.	In place	Planning and Property Services (P&PS) Regeneration	Christine Durrant  Richard Williams			Completed - Strategic Steering Group and operational Officer Steering Group established. Monthly meetings diarised and protocol agreed	Rec 1 Rec 2 Rec 5
2	Draft a DM Framework and Protocol* and seek approval for the adoption of the approach.  *Protocol to include key elements of how officers proceed with planning enquiries, how information should be shared, how to achieve a seamless approach across all those involved in planning applications/decisions – see end of table for more details	January 2013	Development Management Steering Group	Christine Durrant	COG Cabinet Member Planning Control Committee Scrutiny		Completed - This is already part of the process and happens. The team charge for pre-apps as much as possible	Rec 1 Rec 2 Rec 5
3	Promote and raise awareness of the DM approach (Framework and Protocol).	March 2013	Development Management Steering Group	Paul Clarke			Completed – Protocol agreed and regular meetings undertaken where approach has been discussed and adopted (see Ref 1&2)	Rec 1 Rec 2 Rec 5

## Appendix 2

Ref	Action	Deadline	Lead		Involve/ Consult	Risks	Progress	Rec Link
			Department	Officer				
4a	Integrate the DM approach into 2013/14 business plans for Regeneration and Planning and Facilities Management. (Plans should contain the same Derby Plan indicators – showing where teams lead and support).	March 2013	P&PS  Regeneration	Christine Durrant  Richard Williams			Integrated into Planning and Property Services 2013/14 Business Plan.	Rec 3
4b	Review strategic delivery plans in place to support the Derby Plan to ensure they are comprehensive and robust (such as Economic Strategy and City Centre Regeneration Framework).	In place	Performance and improvement / City and Neighbourhood Partnerships	Heather Greenan	Derby Renaissance Board Performance & Commissioning	Delivery plans may not be in place to support delivery of Derby Plan outcomes and indicators	Completed (July 2012)	Rec 3
5	Review the appropriateness of planning performance measures to represent all aspects of service provision (for example, quality, customer focus and employee development).	March 2013	Development Management	Paul Clarke		Dependant on Building for Life	On track - Revised performance measures now included in Business Plan and currently on track	Rec 3
6	Identify training requirements as part of the business planning process for staff and identify ways in which skills and expertise can be maximised through for example shadowing, on job experience.	March 2013	P&PS  Regeneration	Christine Durrant  Richard Williams			On track – Workforce development plan included in 2013/14 Business Plan. Also training needs identified and included in MIPs.	Performance Surgery

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			Department	Officer				
7	Integrate DM approach to all Members training inductions/ briefings on a regular basis to consider the wider role of planning and highlight how key strategies link together (Derby Plan, Economic and Core Strategy).	May 2013	Democratic Services	Phil O'Brien			On-track – Annual Member training takes place after elections with a Planning Member training day involving Legal team	Rec 11
8	Review constitutional arrangements for Development Control (including CAAC), to allow more timely decision making and better customer service, and consult on recommendations.	May 2013	Development Management Steering Group	Paul Clarke	Member Panel Planning, Housing and Leisure Scrutiny Board Full Council		Constitutional arrangements have not been reviewed but PPA's in place and where Planning Committee or CAAC may delay application DCC now ask for extension.	Rec 4
9	Revise the current Briefing Note procedure with a view to reducing the number produced.	In place	Development Management	Paul Clarke			Completed – Agreement received to only produce if officers feel appropriate	Performance Surgery

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			Department	Officer				
10	Review the options for implementing an Architects Comparison Scheme. (shows the success rates of architects in submitting planning applications first time, without errors or amendments needed)	March 2013	Development Management	Paul Clarke	COG Member Panel PCC		This was reviewed but not implemented. Annual Newsletter is issued to customers which details performance. Also website updated and includes self-help advice and guidance	Performance Surgery
11	Undertake benchmarking, particularly on cost recovery, to gain a better understanding of issues and peers approaches.	March 2013	Development Management	Paul Clarke			Cost recovery exercise was undertaken several years ago. New exercise will be undertaken during 2014/15	Rec 7
12	Complete preparation of the Core Strategy, to publication stage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>philosophy that 'Derby is open for business'</li> <li>links to key objectives including the Derby Plan, Climate Change , Economic Strategy and the City Centre Regeneration Framework</li> <li>Land usage and availability, development issues, types of business/development that may be appropriate in various areas.</li> </ul>	June 2013	Spatial Planning and Climate Change	Paul Clarke	Cabinet PHL Board		On track –Core Strategy out to consultation. Public enquiry held in the summer.	Rec 6

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Ref	Action	Deadline	Lead		Involve/ Consult	Risks	Progress	Rec Link
			Department	Officer				
13	Promote the Preferred Growth Strategy, during the consultation period, through Derby Renaissance Board, Marketing Derby, HMA event	December 2012	Spatial Planning and Climate Change	Paul Clarke	Key stakeholders		On track – currently in the middle of the consultation period	Rec 6
14	Hold meetings, at least every six months, with the leaders of the three political groups to keep them informed of progress on the Core Strategy	In place	Spatial Planning and Climate Change	Paul Clarke	Political groups		On track – Meetings with Members are taking place and report has recently been taken to Planning, Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Board	Rec 11
15	Liaise with other authorities to establish ways in which they gather feedback from agents and developers and consider options for Derby	On-going	P&PS	Paul Clarke			On-going. The team have an established network with other authorities and a visit to Bournemouth has been arranged	Rec 8
16	Consider options for developing an all-purpose planning agents and developers forum to obtain feedback on the planning process	June 2013	P&PS	Christine Durrant			On-track – There are regular feedback mechanisms for agents including the Annual Newsletter	Rec 8
17	Identify what the Council will need to do in relation to planning issues and the arrangements for Neighbourhood forums with the passing of the Localism Act and update this action plan with the proposals	Complete - April 2012	P&PS	Paul Clarke			On track – A Neighbourhood Planning guide has been produced	Rec 9

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			Department	Officer				
18	Review, as and when, partnership working arrangements as part of any future overall strategic debates	On-going	P&PS	Christine Durrant			On track – this forms part of business as usual for the team.  Currently writing response regarding HS2 and liaising with the LEP leader on issues surrounding the DN2 programme	Rec 10