

Appendix 2

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
1. Set a clear political narrative for the long term future of the borough stressing the need and importance of homes, jobs, infrastructure and locally generated income/grant. Develop a 'golden thread' linking this to key corporate policy documents including the local plan.				
(a) Prepare revised Council Plan that reflects the relationship between key strategies and setting out broad strategic policy objectives.		Dec 2014	MB / EMT	Time
(b) More active use of the Council's media and communications resources showcasing good work		Ongoing	PJ	Time
2. Develop a coherent strategy for investment and growth which recognises the key role that planning performs. Examine opportunities for the release or reuse of land assets with partners to stimulate growth and economic development				
(a) Strengthen the narrative and strategic context in the next Asset Management Strategy and Capital Strategy.		Jan 2015	Assets / Finance	Time
3. Develop an interim planning policy statement as part of local plan preparation process				
(a) Bring forward a report to Cabinet on this recommendation identifying the potential benefits and costs of such a proposal, including implications for the existing Local Plan timetable and the weight that such a statement could have in development management decisions	To Rule out at this stage this option either because no apparent benefit in pursuing it (because limited or no weight could be given to it in development management decisions), or because the diversion of resources that it would involve will set back further the timescale of the Local Plan	By 14 Jan 2015	HB and GRB	Time, & diversion of resources from Local Plan

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
(b) If proposal is agreed by Cabinet, report back with a timetable for the preparation of such a Statement, identifying required consultation and resource implications		By end March 2015	HB and GRB	Time
(c) Implement the decision of Cabinet		As per any agreed timetable	HB	Time and opportunity cost
4. Re-examine resource allocations, especially in planning policy and enforcement to ensure that these match priorities and needs. Switch or increase resources to match priorities including pump priming, partnering and planning performance agreements (PPAs).				
(a) Consider whether within Planning Policy a fixed 4 year term Senior Planning Officer post should be created and recruited to rather than the agreed but currently unfilled Planning Officer post (bringing Planning Policy team up to 4 – Business Manager, 2 Seniors and 1 officer) – perhaps on a shared basis with the City Council ?		By mid Nov 14 – report to EMT If agreed – go to market Dec 2014	GRB with HB	Additional salary and on-costs not covered in budget
(b) Review whether to either create a temporary post dedicated planning enforcement support officer or create, by other means additional capacity for planning officers to progress their enforcement workload	Carrying on with existing arrangements - a single planning enforcement officer, with planning officers providing input where required, and with Development Management Team Manager having oversight of work of planning enforcement officer	By end Nov 14 report to EMT If new post agreed go to market Dec 2014	GRB with EM	Additional salary and on-costs not covered in budget
(c) Explore idea of creating a premium or fast track service for development management – report to Cabinet		By end of March 2015	EM with GRB	Initial time and opportunity

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
				costs, setting up costs, but might bring in additional revenue
(d) Engage with Staffordshire One Place initiative (inter authority trading of services)		By end of Dec 2014	EM with GRB	Cost if purchasing services. Income if selling services
(e) Explore whether any scope to utilise SOTCC's planning enforcement services on a temporary basis		By Feb 2015	EM	Cost
(f) Consider whether to make an application for Neighbourhood Planning Grant, to provide additional resources to support potential Neighbourhood Development plans		Next opportunity to apply	HB	Time, but potential increased revenue to meet additional demands
(g) Investigate further cost recovery options including charging for return of invalid but processed applications, and review of pre- application charges as part of fees and charges review		By end Nov 2014	EM with GRB	Time, but potential increased revenue
(h) Process review to identify tasks that should no longer be undertaken		By end of Jan 2015	EM and SPOs in DM	Time but potential savings

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
(i) Reassess current targets in the 2014 Service Plan, seeking member views		By March 2015	GRB with portfolio holder	Time
(j) Consider potential use again of consultants to address short term DM staffing issues, requiring report to EMT		When required	GRB with EM	Time and £
(k) Resolve issue of authority to enter into Planning Performance Agreements and explore, in appropriate cases, whether use of PPA could bring in additional income		By end of Feb 2015	GRB with EM	Time and opportunity cost
5. Develop systematic links between financial planning and local plan development / monitoring to help focus on costs and income in relation to non-national domestic rate, council tax and new homes bonus				
(a) Review of information flow arrangements between Planning and Finance on projected completions, housing development trajectories		By end Jan 2015	Finance / Plng (SD)	Time, opportunity cost
(b) Include within review of decision reports structure specific section on finance considerations and weight to be given to them		By end Jan 2015	EM with GRB	Time
(c) Training for Planning Committee and officers on local finance considerations as a material consideration in the determination of applications		Within 14/15 training sessions	GRB	If delivered by external providers £. If delivered internally time and opportunity cost
(d) Publication of guidance on status and weight to be		By end of	EM with	

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
accorded to local finance considerations in planning decisions		Jan 2015	GRB	
(e) Council as a landowner engages fully in the Local Plan preparation process including the Call for Sites		Nov 2014 Cabinet	NSC	
6. Establish an informal pre planning briefing for members of the planning committee including a review of strategic planning group.				
(a) Review remit, membership (widened to include all members of the Planning Committee) and business of Strategic Planning Consultative Group, involving the Group and bring report to Cabinet for decision	Introduction of Planning Briefing meeting, having considered the probity and practical implications of such a proposal	By end of Dec 2014	NSC with GRB	Time
(b) Introduce Proactive presentation of items by officers at Planning Committee		With immediate effect	Presenting officers	Time – longer Cttee meetings
(c) Change frequency of planned Planning Committee from every 3 weeks to every 4 weeks, holding separate meetings where possible and required to deal with planning policy items – it will adversely affect performance unless other measures are taken, and responsiveness of Service to requests for quick committee consideration will be affected regardless. However purpose of reduced frequency to create headroom for service improvement is overwhelming consideration	No change in the frequency of planning committee meetings	From January 2015 onwards	J Cleary	Potentially some savings in meeting attendance costs but may be balanced out by costs of additional Policy Planning meetings

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
(d) Decide whether to reschedule at same time, onto a four weekly cycle CAWP, SPCG, & Development Team meetings		Before Jan 15 changes	J Cleary GRB and EM	Some saving in CAWP attendance costs
7. Set up effective mandatory councillor training programme that is bespoke to meeting local needs. Develop wider training programme for councillors and officers to be delivered jointly where ever possible focusing on improving understanding of respective roles and the need for effective engagement				
(a) Maintaining current provision of induction training to any member of the Planning Committee prior to their first meeting, with attendance not permissible unless received	Ending this induction training	Ongoing – as at present	GRB with EM	Time
(b) Continue to bring subject specific reports to the Planning committee – e.g. on the 5 year housing land supply issue, and on the results of evidence base gathering for the Joint Local Plan, but to a Committee meeting with no development content wherever possible, even if an additional meeting is required	Ceasing bringing such reports	Ongoing	Planning Service	Time, and potential additional committee attendance costs if additional meetings required
(c) Continue with feedback reports including on appeal and costs decisions and annual appeal performance reports to Planning Committee	Ceasing bringing such reports to the Planning Committee	Ongoing – as at present	RK	Time
(d) Set up and deliver 6 training programme in 2014/15 involving delivery of two off the peg training sessions delivered by TRA or similar (to both Planning Committee and Non-Planning Committee members)	No training	Programme agreed by Mid Nov 2014	GD on instns from Plg	£ - say 15K

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
and 4 bespoke sessions for Planning Committee members only delivered probably externally rather than in house – Report to Planning Committee informing members of this. Training to include specific training on planning policy issues and		Sessions Dec 2014 to March 2015		
(e) Arrange above out of hours training sessions, at a time when officers can also attend (early evening) with time off in lieu recompense, in order to provide local examples to add to external training input	Holding training sessions during the day which would exclude those members who are in employment	By mid Nov 2014	GRB	Opportunity cost, Time off in lieu
(f) Encourage members even more than is already done to take up conference, training and similar opportunities		By end of Nov 2014	GRB	Yes - £ depending upon take up
(g) Chair and Vice Chair to be sent on courses specific to that role		By end of Nov 2014	GRB	Yes, depending upon take up
(h) Remind members of Planning Committees' agreed policy that failure to attend 2/3 rd of training sessions means that they cannot then take part in decisions at Planning Committee - relying upon compliance with decision of Chair to exclude members from voting if they don't not achieve two thirds attendance or upon Group leaders to impose sanction of removal of non-attendees	Bring report to either Planning Committee or Council if necessary changing the Council's constitution to require members of the Planning Committee to undertake an agreed amount of training every year	By end of Nov 2014	GRB/ JClery	No
(i) Putting on wider training sessions for non- planning committee members on probity, member officer relations, etc		By end of April 2015	Member Services	Yes

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
8. Review the guidance and protocols in relation to section 106(s) to seek to frontload the system and reach decisions more quickly on major applications				
<i>Reviewing Section 106 procedures</i>				
(a) Review local validation requirements to consider whether more applications should require to be accompanied by 'Heads of terms', or whether draft agreements should be required	Making draft agreements rather than Heads of Terms a mandatory validation requirement	By end of Nov 2014	EM	No
(b) Ensure that the validation requirements of submission of Heads of terms (of any likely Section 106 agreement) are applied in a consistent, but also not disproportionate manner		Ongoing	EM	No
(c) Renewed focus on clarity of instructions to Legal and completion of all sections of 'instructions to legal' memo		By end of Nov 2014	NB	No
(d) Confirmation of receipt of instructions to legal to be sent in all cases to Planning		By end of Nov 2014	SMT and JM	No
(e) Informing SCC where party to the agreement of the terms of the resolution of the Planning Committee immediately post Cttee		By end of Nov 2014	Case offcrs	time
(f) Introduce officer check in Planning that prior instructions to Legal Services has been undertaken in all possible cases		By end of Nov 2014	EM/ GRB	No
(g) Introduce early check procedure of instructions received		By end of Nov 2014	LH	No
(h) Introduce Service Level agreement between Legal and Planning setting standards for response times to instructions/ request s for clarification		By end of Dec 2014	GRB/ MB	No
(i) Planning Service to provide instructions and comments on drafts to legal, including where other departments involved		With immediate effect	NB and other planning	No

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
			officers	
(j) Resume monthly S106 meetings		Already underway	EM and LH	Time
(k) Consideration to be given to use of external solicitors where Legal services do not have capacity to act upon instructions		By end of Oct 2014	LH and MB	Yes – significant
<i>Reaching decisions more quickly on Major applications</i>				
(l) Support officers in DM to stop doing validation on Major applications (because of the degree of judgement required)		By mid Nov 14	EM, RK and NB	
(m) DM Team leader and SPOs to start doing validation of Majors		By Mid Nov 14	EM, RK and NB	
(n) Invite Education Authority to become part of the Council's Development Team		By end Dec 14	EM	
(o) Inviting other key consultees to enter into a Service Level Agreement, as already in place between the BC and the Highway Authority		By April 15	EM	time
(p) Project Management approach to Major developments		By April 15	EM and GRB	Already adopted in some cases
	Introducing site visits for ALL Majors in advance of application being considered by Committee			costs
(q) Draft conditions to be prepared within 2 weeks of Committee in all cases and to be subject to consultation with developer		By Jan 15	Case Offrs	time
9. Re-examine the scheme of delegation to allow the Planning Committee to focus on major applications				
(a) Review Scheme of delegation with particular	Removing probity safeguards	Report to	GRB/	No, and

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
reference to telecom apparatus, consultations by other authorities, historic building grant applications		Jan 15 Planning Ctte and then to the 25 th Feb 15 Council meeting	MB/Chair and Vice Chair of Plg	could be savings
(b) Review of public speaking arrangements, guillotine on late representations, site visit protocol and withdrawal of call in procedures		Report to Planning by end of Jan15	GRB with Chair and Vice Chair	Time to undertake, - likely long term cost implications unknown but not significant
(c) Review of Planning Committee Members Protocol, seeking approval of the Planning Committee		Report to Planning by end of Jan15	GRB with MB	Time to undertake – no long term resource implications expected
10. Review the decision to suspend work on community infrastructure levy				
(a) Seek external legal advice on the issue of pooling post April 2015		By end of Nov	GRB and HB	Cost of external legal advice
(b) Bring report to Cabinet at earliest opportunity		By Jan 15	GRB and HB	Opportunity cost of not being able

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
				to resource infrastructure. Opportunity cost of diversion of staff resources away from Local Plan preparation
11. Undertake systematic review of the effectiveness of the service's methods of communication and access focussing on councillors, parish councils and service users				
(a) Review decision to remove direct dial facility for DM staff (introduced as part of move towards support based triage system)		By end Feb 15	GRB	Yes
(b) Depending on above reintroduce Direct Dial perhaps with number available only to members (and agents ?)		By end Feb 15	GRB	Probably not
(c) Ensure all staff working @home have access to phone	Prevent home working, and end privilege of extended flexitime for DM staff	By end Dec 14	Mark B	Yes
(d) Review current appointment based system and consider alternatives		By end Feb 15	GRB with EM	Probably not
(e) Review use of Customer Service agents as front end of the planning service		By end Feb 15	EMT	Yes, if pursued
(f) Customer Service training for all planning staff		By end Mar 15	EM	Yes, but could be done inhouse ?
(g) Review Delegated and Committee reports, particularly		By end Dec	GRB	Additional

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
for effectiveness and use of Plain English – remembering who reports are for		14	with EM	preparation time
(h) Include officer details on adverts/weekly lists/consultation letters/emails		Immediate	JP and JC	No cost
(i) Statement of Community Involvement, review		Oct 2014 went Cabinet	GRB, HB and EM	Already underway-potential staff resources released if proposals agreed
	Stop drive towards Self service			
(j) Continue support for Parish council training/ attendance at parish/town council forum as recently undertaken		Ongoing	GRB	Time
(k) Programme of annual visits by Head of Planning, Development Management Manager and Planning Policy Manager to Parish and Town Councils		Start Jan 15	EM, HB and GRB	Time
(l) Offer to established clerks opportunity to visit Planning service (as already done for new clerks)		Start May 15	GRB	Time
(m) Improve DM office layout and make it clearer who is who for visitors		Part Done	EM	Nil
(n) Encouraging members to meet officers in reception in more suitable setting		With immediate effect	All	Nil
(o) Renewed focus on labelling of documents on website		With immediate effect	Support	Time
(p) Publication of guide to Planning website		By end of	JP	Time

PLANNING REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS				
PROPOSED ACTION	ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT BEING PURSUED	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resource allocation
		Nov 15		
(q) 6 month central monitoring of correspondence from Parish Councils		Starting Jan 15	JP	Time
(r) Review approach to customer satisfaction surveys		By end May 15	GRB	Time

V:\Action Plan\Planning Peer Challenge Action Planv10.doc