

Planning Peer Challenge: Implementation Plan

Update Report: 26 June 2023

Workstream	Progress to Date	Revised Estimated Date for Completion
<p>A:</p> <p>Review the operation of Planning Regulatory Committee</p>	<p>The scheme of delegation was considered via the subsequent Informal Planning Task Group, which was established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Group found that the existing scheme struck the appropriate balance between ensuring timely planning application decision-making (in accordance with national timescales), and the necessary consideration of strategic major planning applications at Committee level. A reduction of the number of items at Committee, as suggested by the Peer Review, was therefore not considered appropriate.</p> <p>Member training for Planning Regulatory Committee has been provided since the local elections. The forward training programme has also been agreed and will provide more subject-specific training during the next 12 months.</p> <p>Other elements of this workstream are ongoing.</p>	<p>Tasks in this workstream were due for completion between April and September 2023. This is still a realistic timeframe.</p>
<p>B:</p> <p>Review the operation of the Local Plan Review Group (LPRG) prior to further (new) policy production</p>	<p>Membership arrangements of LPRG have been reviewed (working with the new Chair and Democratic Services) and a new list of members has been agreed.</p> <p>The Forward Plan of meetings (and future scope of the Group) will be discussed at the next Local Plan Review LPRG meeting.</p>	<p>Original date for completion was May 2023. Further work is needed (post-election) to complete all tasks, and consequently the revised timescale is September 2023.</p>
<p>C:</p> <p>Align corporate priorities with the priorities of the Planning and Place (now Planning and Climate Change) Service</p>	<p>This workstream has not yet commenced. The timescale for completion (Sept/Oct 2023) was agreed to allow the restructure of the senior leadership team to be completed.</p>	<p>Tasks in this workstream were due for completion between September and October 2023. This is still a realistic timeframe.</p>

<p>D:</p> <p>Undertake the (already scoped) review of the planning enforcement service.</p>	<p>This workstream has commenced. The first focus has been on reviewing historic enforcement cases, which has helped to address some of the backlog of enforcement investigations.</p> <p>The review of the Planning Enforcement Charter has also started. This will help inform some of the other tasks, including empowerment and case handover.</p> <p>Digitisation work, including new smart-templated letters and consideration of digital shift is being overseen by the Planning Systems Manager.</p> <p>Recruitment to the vacant Graduate role has not yet commenced, but this would bolster capacity.</p>	<p>Tasks in the workstream are anticipated to be completed by September 2023.</p> <p>Some of the technical changes might take longer than this (i.e. November 2023).</p> <p>The recruitment to the vacant post depends upon an exceptional case for recruitment being provided, and suitable candidates applying.</p>
<p>E:</p> <p>Seek greater liaison with developers, inward investors and/or partners.</p>	<p>This has partially started (the monitoring of the new pre-application service has been a good start).</p> <p>Other tasks in this workstream have not commenced but are envisaged to be completed within the identified timeframe.</p>	<p>Timeframe for completion of all tasks by September 2023 is still achievable.</p>
<p>F:</p> <p>Make the planning system more accessible to external users and improve communication</p>	<p>This workstream has not yet commenced.</p> <p>There are other workstreams that need to be completed first to inform how to address Workstream F.</p>	<p>The anticipated timeframe of September-October 2023 is likely to require amendment to November-December 2023.</p>
<p>G:</p> <p>Review processes and priorities to ensure best use of officer time commensurate with agreed service priorities.</p>	<p>This workstream has commenced and the review of delegated reports and the statutory consultee list is ongoing as part of a first strand of work.</p>	<p>The anticipated task timeframes vary from September 2023 to April 2024, and this is still achievable.</p>

<p>H:</p> <p>Explore corporate opportunities to create improved delivery vehicle for strategic and other major sites</p>	<p>This workstream requires review given the recent changes to the Council's Senior Leadership Team (and subsequent changes to some service areas).</p>	<p>The timeframe varies from June 2023 to December 2023. The latter is still achievable.</p>
<p>I:</p> <p>Work alongside Lancashire County Council and other strategic partner to explore delivery challenges in South Lancaster</p>	<p>Advanced. The recent County Council Cabinet decision regarding the South Lancaster Growth Catalyst and the Housing Infrastructure Fund follows weeks of discussion between the strategic partners.</p> <p>The City Council are evaluating the local plan-making implications and will be preparing a report to Cabinet for September 2023.</p>	<p>No end date was previously set given the uncertainty of this project.</p>
<p>J:</p> <p>Review wider developer contribution position across the district as part of the plan-making process</p>	<p>Advanced. The local planning authority met with the Planning Advisory Service to review the mechanisms and processes regarding developer contributions. Lancashire County Council Highways also attended the meeting. The outcome report is awaited, and this will inform further work.</p>	<p>Final completion deadline of December 2023 is achievable.</p>