

# APPENDIX 2

Decision making		Actions Required	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Updates
RDM1	<p><b>There is an urgent need for a reset in the relationships and interaction between councillors and officers.</b></p> <p>This is essential to improve collaborative working between officers and members that will improve the quality of decision-making. All the mechanisms and processes are in place to enable this but are not being used as widely and effectively as they could be. This should be led and given the highest priority by senior managers and political leaders with buy-in from all political groups as well as the planning team.</p>	<p>Run a workshop for all Councillors and Planning Officers that will facilitate collaborative working by reviewing working through a planning application from beginning to end so that all can understand the full process and requirements.</p>	<p>CX/SLT/ADPL&amp;CS/ Planning Services Managers/ Group Leaders</p>	<p>End March 2026 (proposal)</p> <p>May / June (Workshop)</p>	<p>Officers have met with Planning Consultant to discuss them developing a workshop for Members and Officers that will ensure that all involved fully understand the key elements relating to planning applications this will include an overview of the planning application process from end to end.</p>
RDM2	<p><b>Recommendation: Strengthen and formalise councillor planning training</b></p> <p>The council should establish a comprehensive and structured programme of planning training for both planning committee members and ward councillors, designed to strengthen defensible decision-making, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure decisions are made within a clear legal and governance framework. The training should be mandatory for committee members.</p> <p>This programme should include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Defensible decision-making training for planning committee members</b>, based on the PAS <i>Defensible Decision-Making</i> resource and, where appropriate, the use of relevant case</li> </ul>	<p>Develop a training programme for Planning Committee Members, Substitutes and Planning Officers.</p> <p>Develop a training package for ward Members to fully understand the role that they can play in the planning process.</p>	<p>Exec Director / ADPL&amp;CS/Planning Services Managers /Legal Democratic Services/Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee</p>	<p>End March (Meeting with PAS)</p> <p>May/June Proposal to Planning Committee at start of new municipal year)</p> <p>Planning Training Programme to run</p>	<p>Joint planning training is already booked for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May, and (joint planning refresher training) is booked for the 18th of May.</p> <p>The Executive Director has met with the AD legal, Democratic and Procurement Services to review the current training provision and is meeting with the Planning advisory Service to review fully the current training programme for both Members, Members and Officers and Officers.</p>

# APPENDIX 2

	<p>studies. The purpose of this training is to ensure committee members are fully aware of their statutory role and responsibilities, to reinforce the principles of sound, evidence-based decision-making, and to reduce the risk of challenge. It is recommended that this element of the training is delivered by a suitably experienced external consultant to provide independence and specialist expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>An ongoing programme of training for planning committee members focused on emerging national and local planning issues</b>, developed alongside the council's existing annual training offer. This should include briefings on new and evolving forms of development (for example, grey belt development and battery storage) and reinforce understanding of how key policy concepts, including the application of the '<i>tilted balance</i><sup>1</sup>', should be applied in decision-making.</li> <li>• <b>A dedicated programme of planning training for ward councillors</b>, aimed at improving understanding of how councillors can appropriately influence planning decision-making, the limits and parameters of that influence, and the wider council context within which planning decisions are taken. This training should cover the legal framework governing planning decisions, the importance of decisions being robustly evidenced, and ensure</li> </ul>			<p>through out 26/27</p>	
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# APPENDIX 2

	councillors are fully cognisant of the council's code of conduct and constitution as they apply to planning matters. The programme should also include an overview of the role of planning enforcement and how it interacts with planning decision-making.				
RDM3	<p><b>To continue exploring ways of working more effectively with Worcestershire County Council (especially highways).</b></p> <p>The need to cultivate better joint working and engender a more effective role within the decision-making process is recognised by the council. The Bromsgrove chief executive is encouraged to continue to engage with their counterpart at Worcestershire County Council and establish clear expectations and deliverables. This may be achieved via and memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding highway matters, developed by the planning service with the support of the executive director and chief executive.</p>	Explore closer working relationships with WCC and Development Management and Strategic Planning and Conservation, possibly via MOU (Overlap with RLP4)	CEO/Exec Director/ADPL&CS/ Planning Managers/Legal Services	End May 2026	<p>An MOU has been drafted which was shared with the LPCPWG for comments at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>The CEO has regular meetings with the CEO of WCC regarding a range of matters and the MOU will be shared with him more specifically once the MoU is finalised.</p>
RDM4	<p><b>To undertake a review of the processes and performance monitoring associated with planning enforcement.</b> This should be undertaken with a specific emphasis on improving the interaction between the investigating officers and the planning officers responsible for undertaking planning assessments, as well as on how this work is prioritised. In terms of performance, a key objective of planning enforcement is to resolve as many breaches as possible without serving a notice, and that should be seen as a positive outcome and not a negative one. Performance data and 'numbers of</p>	Review planning enforcement processes and monitoring with emphasis on communications and appropriate performance reporting.	WRS//Development Management/Legal/ Corporate Policy and Performance		The ADPL&CS and Planning Services Manager will meet with WRS, Legal Services, and Corporate Policy and Performance to review the performance management and monitoring of Planning Enforcement and look at how communications with Councillors can be improved. This will be presented in the new municipal year.

# APPENDIX 2

	<p>notices served' is not the best indicator of performance – reporting on cases opened and resolved would be a better indicator.</p>				<p>The Planning Services Manager and the WRS lead for enforcement have met and identified that additional resource is required to speed up the planning service review of enforcement cases. This has been addressed in the short term and additional resource will be put in place in the new financial year. This resource would also assist with the processing of planning applications.</p>
RDM5	<p><b>To undertake a review of officer presentations to the planning committee.</b> This is to ensure that officer presentations are proportionate and provide a greater focus on identifying what are the key issues to assist committee member's consideration.</p>	<p>Consider other Council's presentation style.</p>	<p>Development Management/Democratic Services/Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee</p>	<p>April 2026</p>	<p>The Planning Services Manager responsible for the BDC Planning Committee has considered the style of presentations and Planning Officers will be changing the way that they deliver their presentations, to concentrate on key issues that Members need to consider. These changes will be discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair of the planning committee.</p>
		<p>Prepare guidance for officers to ensure key issues are made clear.</p>	<p>Development Management/Democratic Services/Chair</p>	<p>April 2026</p>	<p>The last slide of all officer presentations will identify the key issues that Members need to debate.</p>

# APPENDIX 2

			and Vice Chair of Planning Committee		
RDM6	<p><b>Review the quality of streaming of planning committee meetings and the timescale for retention of recordings.</b> This needs to be aimed at identifying ways of improving the viewing experience, taking note of best practice elsewhere. Previous legal advice around the retention of recordings should be revisited to ensure that the recordings are retained until they cease to perform any useful purpose.</p>	Explore and apply best practice to improve viewing experience.	Legal/Democratic and Property	Complete  June 2026	<p>The MTFP contains a capital budget for improved equipment for streaming council meetings.</p> <p>Purchase and installation of new equipment</p>
		Set clear timelines for retention of recordings	Information Management/Legal Services	May / June 2026	Legal Services are reviewing the length of time that recordings can be kept and the rational for this in line with the information commissioner's guidance. This will then be presented to the constitutional review group.
RDM7	<p><b>To provide greater encouragement for councillors to contribute to pre-application work and to explore how interaction between councillors and officers outside of the planning committee more generally can be improved.</b> This should involve reviewing the operation of existing procedures to understand why they are not leading to greater interaction, and how further opportunities can be encouraged. This should be supplemented</p>	Review pre-application protocol.	ADPL&CS / Development Management Manager supported by SLT	May / June 2026	A review of the pre application protocol will be presented in the new municipal year.

# APPENDIX 2

	by reinforcement by senior officers and political party leaders of the importance and benefits arising from greater officer-councillor engagement in planning matters more generally.	Meet with Members to discuss how interactions with officers could be improved.	Exec Director/ADPL&CS/ Planning Services Manager	March 2026  During 26/27	This will form part of the workshop (RDM1) and the training programme (RDM2)
RDM8	<b>To undertake a review of the planning committee site visit process to encourage better attendance.</b> This should explore and seek to resolve the issue of poor attendance, including reviewing the timing and number of accompanied site visits undertaken.	Review with Planning Committee Members the timing of the site visits and which type of applications qualify	Development Management supported by Legal Services and the Chair/Vice-Chair of Planning Committee	May/June 2026	The CEO has written to all Group Leaders asking that they encourage their members on the planning committee to attend these meetings.  The Planning Services Manager will be reviewing the site visits and will present in the new municipal year.

	Local Plan Review	Actions Required	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Updates
RLP1	<b>Build political consensus.</b> Reflect upon the challenges arising from the draft development strategy consultation approach and identify lessons learned. Facilitate an impartially chaired cross-party workshop of all councillors/and or the strategic planning steering group (SPSG) to address concerns about process, rebuild consensus, and	Procure external support to run cross party workshop	Exec Director/ Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	End March 2026	Meeting held with a Planning Consultant on 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb to agree them developing a proposal for the Cross-Party Local Plan workshop and training/ support that will involve both Members and officers
		Arrange date and scope for	SLT/ADPL&CS/ Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	May / June 2026	The Planning consultant is drawing up proposals for this

# APPENDIX 2

	develop understanding of risks relating to the 'tilted balance' (see recommendation RDM2 above). This will empower elected members to communicate a strong positive vision for the district's future and consider 'macro' district-wide benefits rather than just 'micro' ward impacts.	Local Plan workshop			workshop; this is expected in mid-March
RLP2	<p><b>Review the operation and terms of reference for the strategic planning reference group (SPSG)</b> to improve governance arrangements and support a genuine cross-party local plan member working group. A review should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defined membership proportionate to group sizes (not open attendance).</li> <li>• Requirement for continuity of attendance (named councillors with named deputies).</li> <li>• Clear terms of reference including collective responsibility for recommendations and</li> </ul>	Seek agreement from members to introduce new Local Plan Cross Party Working Group (LPCPWG)	CX/Legal Dem services	Complete	Local Plan Cross-Party Working Group (LPCPWG) has been established with a defined membership proportionate to group sizes with immediate effect (3 Conservative, 2 Liberal Democrat, 2 Labour and 2 Independent).
		Produce new structure and Terms of reference for new LPCPWG	Legal/Dem services/Planning	March 2026	ToR have been prepared for members to discuss.
		Procure/develop training	Exec Director/ADPL&CS/ Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	End March 2026	A barrister has been retained and attended the meeting of the LPCPWG on 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb and 5 March 2026 and presented the legal position and answered Members questions.

# APPENDIX 2

	<p>efficient administrative arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority to make recommendations to cabinet/full council.</li> <li>• Regular meetings with effective and efficient administrative arrangements. which minimise demands on planning policy officers.</li> <li>• Impartial chairing by the council leader or assistant director rather than portfolio holder to emphasise the corporate priority.</li> <li>• End/avoid separate political group briefings and ensure all members receive the same information simultaneously.</li> </ul>				Meeting held with Planning Consultant on 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb to discuss them developing a proposal for training for the LPCPWG Members, For discussion by the Cross-Party Group
		Schedule meetings and training	Planning and Dem Services	April/May/June 2026	These will be agreed following the discussions with the Planning Advisory Service
RLP3	<b>Develop the strategic spatial vision and complete evidence base.</b> Urgently complete an up-to-date green belt assessment and establish an agreed spatial vision and approach to guide development of a preferred spatial strategy. Commission spatial master planning work and utilise design coding to illustrate what development could	Procure external support to facilitate workshop sessions on spatial vision (potential to have duplication with RLP1 Above)	SLT/ADPL&CS/Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	March 2026 Proposal  Apr/May 2026 Workshop	Meeting held with a Planning Consultant on 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb to agree them developing a proposal for workshop/s for the LPCPWG to develop a special vision.

# APPENDIX 2

	look like, moving beyond allocation boundaries to show placemaking, design quality, and community integration. Ensure employment, retail, community facilities, and green infrastructure receive equal prominence to housing .in future iterations of the draft plan. Organise councillor site visits to exemplar developments.	Design session using planning for real techniques	SLT/ ADPL&CS/ Planning Services Managers and Planning / consultants	June 2026	Meeting held with a Planning Consultant on 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb to agree them developing a proposal for planning for real with LPCPWG
		Present the draft design code to members	ADPL&CS/Planning Services Managers	June / July 2026	To follow the design training session above
RLP4	<p><b>Secure infrastructure delivery commitments as a priority.</b> Build on chief executive-to-chief executive engagement with Worcestershire County Council with clear expectations and deliverables. Create a formal memorandum of understanding for transport planning support with agreed timescales and escalation procedures. Work closely with the county council to jointly identify solutions and agree future plans to fund and deliver new and enhanced education provision to serve planned growth. Produce a robust infrastructure delivery plan (IDP) endorsed by all providers. Consider adoption of community infrastructure levy (CIL) and explore front-loading of developer contributions.</p>	Set clear expectation of what information is required from infrastructure providers	ADPL&CS/Planning Services Managers	April 2026	Mou to be agreed with WCC setting out clear infrastructure evidence required.t. Other infrastructure requirements to be agreed individually with providers as part of ongoing engagement element of plan making.
		Prepare paper on CIL for PMWG	Planning		Initial discussion on CIL development at CPLPWG 4 <sup>th</sup> March, further note to be prepared following initial discussion if required.
		Draft Memorandum of understating for WCC	Legal Services / Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	May 2026	<p>An MOU has been drafted which was shared and agreed with the LPCPWG at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>The CEO has regular meetings with the CEO of WCC regarding a range of matters and the MOU</p>

# APPENDIX 2

					will be shared with him more specifically once the MoU is finalised.
RLP5	<p><b>Strengthen Programme Management and Resources.</b> Develop a comprehensive project plan aligned to <a href="#">the new planning system</a> Gateway requirements, showing all tasks, critical path dependencies, resource allocation, and realistic contingency. Undertake capacity assessment of the planning policy team and secure additional resources (e.g. Assistant Directors have been proactively asked and reminded to submit budget bids, including bids for additional capacity) where needed. Implement regular progress monitoring and actively maintain risk register. If May 2028 target proves to be unachievable through detailed planning, revise and republish the local development scheme (LDS) with realistic timescales.</p>	Develop detailed Local Plan project plan.	ADPL&CS / Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager / Business Improvement Team	April 2026	The LP project Plan will be presented to the April meeting of the LPCPWG
RLP6	<p><b>Continue active senior leadership support.</b> Use the corporate risk register to reinforce and recommunicate that the local plan is a key corporate risk. There should be regular progress reporting to the</p>	Develop the Local Plan entry on the corporate Risk register	Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	Complete	<p>New corporate risk added to the Risk Register.</p> <p>This will be reviewed updated on a 1/4ly basis or if new risks emerge</p>

# APPENDIX 2

	senior leadership team from the assistant director and the strategic planning manager. Chief executive and executive director should keep a dialogue going with planning policy officers and attend key meetings where appropriate to provide their support where required. Reinforce clear protocols for engagement and councillor-officer interaction and ensure group leaders take responsibility for councillor's following them and continue to provide wellbeing support for planning officers.	Local Plan Standing item on CLT/SLT and additional longer form meetings to discuss	CX support	Complete	Monthly update is now given at the SLT Assurance/Governance Meeting
		As part of the new LPCPWG Terms of reference established reporting lines for member on local plan issues	Legal Services / Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager	March 2026	ToR discussed at LPCPWG on 4 <sup>th</sup> March
RLP7	<b>Introduce a training and support programme for councillors.</b> Establish training for all councillors on the role and importance of the local plan to reduce future risk and enable more effective and collaborative approaches to plan progression in the future. Councillors require sufficient training and strong political group leadership to support them to fulfil their roles appropriately for the long-term benefit of the electorate and the district as a whole. In short, members need to be supported to make politically very difficult decisions.	As per RLP/2/3	Exec Director / ADPL&CS/Planning Services Managers /Legal Democratic Services	End March 2026	Meeting held with a Planning Consultant on 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb to agree them developing a proposal for training/ support that will involve both Members and officers