

July 2010 Position Statement and Action Plan from October 2009 Spatial Planning Peer Review

Key Recommendation	Officer Comments	Suggested Actions	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Challenge
<p>The recommendations of the peer review team are set out under the headings of the benchmark for the 'ideal' authority. The peer review team recommends that the Council:</p> <p>Achieving outcomes</p> <p>i. Considers this report with a view to making the planning service one which is overtly supportive of and key to delivery of the council's objectives</p>	<p>Officer agree</p>	<p>Remind officers of the importance in the role of Planning Services in the delivery of Council objectives to include reminder from HoS that Planning policy prep. and the D.C. process are key tools for implementing the Council Plan and Sustainability Community Strategy</p> <p>Alterations to format of Planning Committee reports so that, where applicable, the proposal is presented in the context of the Council Plan or Sustainable Community strategy (SCS)</p> <p>Ensure synergies between SCS vision and objectives and those of</p>	<p>Ruth Bamford</p>	<p>HoS to meet with Director</p>	

		emerging planning policy		of Policy, Performance and Partnerships quarterly		
		Planning service to be actively engaged in early stages of SCS evidence collection and preparation.				
ii.	Formally lifts the housing moratorium based on the RSS Phase Two Revision figures and the recent experience of successful planning appeals and Ombudsman report findings against the council	Officers agreed and this has already been achieved via Report to LDF working Party, delivered on the 15 th April 2010	N/A	Mike Dunphy	N/A	N/A
iii.	Develops a policy position for the development of larger sites on the edge of Bromsgrove Areas of Development Restraint (ADR), which would permit a mix of housing including affordable housing and other uses located in the most sustainable locations [The Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) has been engaged by the council, since the peer review, to assist on strategic site allocations.]	The revocation of the RSS has created huge uncertainty in the planning system, particularly with regard to housing targets and the current policy position on ADRs. Officers currently continuing with work to justify site allocations in preparation for the imposition of a new planning system.	Ensure Council engages fully in consultation processes of new planning legislation. Publish policy position for ADRs in Draft Core Strategy.	Mike Dunphy Mike Dunphy	TBC November 2010	To influence the content of the new planning system To ensure development of the ADRs benefits the district as much as possible
iv.	Produce a masterplan for designated ADR sites to encourage quality design and development on more sustainable sites	Indicative masterplans already prepared by developers; further advice to be sought from key stakeholders.	Consult urban designer on the content of the indicative masterplans, and if necessary commission independent master plan to be prepared.	Mike Dunphy	Draft Core Strategy 2 to be published in November for consultation	Ensure new developments are high quality and sustainable but also deliverable. New residential development needs to be delivered in order to begin to address

					the imbalance in the housing market	
v.	Develops Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for planning obligations and affordable housing that clearly states council intentions for these areas	Affordable housing SPD prepared and consulted on although not adopted due to the consultation responses questioning the legitimacy of the SPD	Seek legal advice on the adoption of the affordable housing SPD and the creation of a planning obligations SPD ahead of core Strategy. Supplement existing local plan policies.	Ruth Bamford Mike Dunphy	July 2010	To find a way to create new policy quickly to fill gaps and update old planning policies.
vi.	Undertakes an assessment, with Redditch, of the resources needed for both councils to work together to develop their Core Strategies for simultaneous submission	Initial work with RBC undertaken, however unclear at this stage if emerging planning system will require close working on planning policy with RBC	Through the Joint HoS both Councils will monitor the appropriateness of working together on planning policy preparation.	Ruth Bamford	Ongoing	To ensure the Core Strategy is found sound and approved by the Planning Inspectorate
Integration and collaboration						
vii.	Ensures the emerging Core Strategy incorporates a vision describing Bromsgrove and its role within the region	Core Strategy already contains a vision although not specific to region. Abolishment of regional planning likely to diminish importance of stating regional position.	Redraft Core Strategy vision, and ensure all Core Strategy policies clearly deliver this vision	Mike Dunphy	November 2010	To ensure the Core Strategy is found sound and approved by the Planning Inspectorate
viii.	Considers engagement with Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council at strategic director level given the importance of the Longbridge and Bromsgrove town centre/railway station development for the council [Such engagement has commenced since the peer review.]	Engagement already implemented	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Leading and engaging the community						
ix.	Monitors the usage of the website and survey users to obtain feedback on the website 'useability' to inform future development	When Peer review visited (Oct 2009), changes had <u>just</u> been undertaken to website to reflect County-wide approach.	<p>Planning and regeneration service to review structure and content of Webpages</p> <p>Work with Communications dept, ICT to set up user survey.</p> <p>Use website to advertise department more – explain our regulatory function and promote our achievements. (S106)</p>	Helena Plant Dale Birch Mike Dunphy	<p>Meeting in Quarter 2.</p> <p>Survey in Quarter 3.</p>	Survey annually
x.	Continues to monitor the Customer First priority. A good start has been made but for the planning service it is at an early stage. This should be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Executive Director.	Since the peer review, Development Control has undertaken a customer satisfaction survey, and Strategic planning have completed their customer first action plan.	<p>Implement Customer First Action Plan.</p> <p>Piggy back Agents' Forum idea in order to learn agents' views as customers.</p> <p>Improve qualitative rather than quantitative measures for customers.</p> <p>Explore training opportunities that may be available corporately for Customer actions in Regulatory environment may be available Corporately.</p>	Helena Plant	<p>Customer First Action Plan Q2. Hold Agents' forum end Q2.</p> <p>Liaise with Chairman and seek support from Legal Services</p> <p>Explore alternative measures of success</p>	Seek to hold Agents' Forum quarterly
xi.	Reviews the current member / office working arrangements so that members are able to	Officers agree that there is a need for good systems of working arrangements with	Introduce pre-app protocol to enable Members to be involved.	Helena Plant	Report to CMT and Cabinet Q3.	

<p>discharge their community leadership role, informed by professional officer advice</p>	<p>Members. Furthermore officers could review information that is available to Members and identify possible gaps and advise members of information availability</p>	<p>Maintain monthly meetings of HoS Portfolio holder and Leader</p> <p>Officers to review information that is available to Members and identify possible gaps and advise members of information availability</p>	<p>Ruth Bamford</p>		
<p>Management</p> <p>xii. Produces a project plan (that is a revised Local Development Scheme - LDS) for the work needed to complete the Core Strategy by June/July 2010.</p>	<p>New LDS submitted prior to change of government, GOWM have confirmed timetable is acceptable</p>	<p>Prepare Core Strategy in line with published LDS</p>	<p>Mike Dunphy</p>	<p>Draft to be published November 2010</p>	<p>To ensure the Core Strategy is found sound and approved by the Planning Inspectorate</p>
<p>xiii. Develops planning resource capacity. These could include: moving to development management* and encouraging the resource flow from development control to policy planning and vice versa; and combining resources with Redditch, from secondments to joint investment in specialist resources e.g. urban design, planning obligation (S106) negotiations, joint planning arrangements and joint policies.</p> <p>[*Development management (DM) constitutes the assessing and determining of applications more</p>	<p>Consideration of DM approach is included as Key Deliverable in Business Plan.</p> <p>Work associated with this KD will underpin this benchmark.</p>	<p>Implement KD in service plan re. development management</p> <p>Under current working arrangements for both Councils, HoS should encourage resource plan.</p>	<p>Ruth Bamford</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

	strategically and moves away from a 'plan-led system'. DM is a change in planning culture - away from reactive control of development to a more positive and proactive role for planning.]					
xiv.	Addresses the practice within the council of attaching blame to the planning service. This practice needs to be carefully opened up by senior managers, with HR and possibly with external support, to fully understand the issues, how they came about and the actions needed to address these.	New HoS has not experienced planning service being blamed although has included actions to ensure it does not happen.	Maintain monthly meetings of HoS Portfolio holder and Leader Introduce Members' involvement in pre-applications discussions Planning reports altered to include SCS and corporate plan issues where applicable Encourage early informal Member rapport with case officers / managers about planning applications	Ruth Bamford		
Innovation, learning and excellence						
xv.	Should ensure maximum gain from S106 negotiations from developers in the future development of ADRs. This could be assisted by considering the appointment of a specialist negotiating officer (perhaps shared with Redditch) or of buying in this expertise when required.	Legal Advice sought on ability to prepare planning obligations SPD. Planning officers have attended negotiation skills training.	To have appropriate planning policy in place to receive S106 obligations Investigate appointment of specialist negotiator for significant planning applications	Ruth Bamford Mike Dunphy Mike Dunphy Helena Plant Dale Birch	Subject to legal advice As required	To ensure viable development takes place in difficult financial circumstances which contributes fully to the aims of the Council
xvi.	The Chief Executive, Executive	This is well promoted by	Promote pre committee	By officer	ASAP	To have good

<p>Director and Leader of Council actively encourage Members to attend the one hour time slot provided before Planning Committee for Members to discuss planning issues with officers</p>	<p>officers – need Members to understand the role of the pre-Committee meeting as an aid to focussed discussion.</p>	<p>site visits</p> <p>Actively encourage Chair to promote attendance before formal committee starts .</p> <p>Draw out examples from the meeting that could have been addressed at the pre-Committee meeting</p>	<p>leading site visits.</p> <p>Planning Chairman.</p> <p>Planning Chairman</p>		<p>attendance at this pre-meeting slot.</p>
<p>Shared knowledge and evidence</p> <p>xvii. Considers and develops opportunities for sharing the cost of joint studies with other local government partners in the region</p>	<p>Already happens to some extent (training shared with other LPA's) via groups such as DC Forum</p> <p>Joint Strategic Flood risk assessment commissioned for BDC and RBC</p> <p>BDC have worked closely with BCC on Longbridge APP for past 5 years sharing costs where necessary</p>	<p>When joint studies required – first consideration to be potential for sharing with local government partners</p>	<p>All to note.</p>	<p>When situation arises</p>	<p>To identify savings as a result.</p>
<p>xviii. Develop better ways to capture and transfer learning. This is so the council is able to identify good practice elsewhere, to understand how this is achieved and considers application in other service areas.</p>	<p>Officers do share knowledge informally in the office, but the process could be improved and formalised.</p>	<p>To provide a framework for understanding the characteristics of an excellent planning authority and to promote learning and implementation with officers and members</p>	<p>Ruth Bamford</p>		