

**STRATEGIC PLANNING,
SUSTAINABILITY AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

6 FEBRUARY 2018

Planning Services Improvement Project (PSIP)

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| Final Decision-Maker | Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee |
| Lead Head of Service/Lead Director | William Cornall, Director of Regeneration & Place |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | William Cornall, Director of Regeneration & Place |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | All |

Executive Summary

The Planning Review was closed by this Committee on 13 November 2017. The next stage is PSIP, which is the implementation of the selected recommendations.

This report and appendix sets out the ideas generated by the Member / Officer working party that was assembled to assess and refine the IESE recommendations made in their Planning Review, relating specifically to Members and Committee.

The appendix also confirms which of the operational recommendations (i.e. those not relating to Members and Committee) are being pursued, as well simplifying the terminology used by IESE, as required.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To note the 27 recommendations from IESE that do not relate to Members and Committee, specifically those that Officers are taking forward.
2. To adopt the IESE recommendations 2,3,5 (A-F as developed and proposed by the working group) and 7, all relating to Members and Committee.

Timetable

| Meeting | Date |
|---|-----------------|
| Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee | 6 February 2018 |
| Council (delete as appropriate) | N/A |
| Add more committees as appropriate, depending on where your report is going | N/A |

Planning Services Improvement Project (PSIP)

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The Planning Review report from IESE was reported to this committee on 13 November 2017. The IESE report contained a total of 34 recommendations grouped under the following headings;

- Demand Analysis (3 no.)
- Process Mapping and Activity Analysis (5 no.)
- Stakeholders and Customers (9 no.)
- Staff and Managers (3 no.)
- Members and Committee (7 no.)
- Measures and Finance (6 no.)
- Culture and Behaviours (1 no.)

1.2 Upon reviewing the 34 recommendations this Committee opted to form a working group to assess and refine the 7 recommendations relating to Members and Committee. This working group was formed of;

- The Chair and Vice Chair of SPS&T.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee.
- Cllr Munford.
- Officers: William Cornall, Director of Regeneration & Place; Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development and James Bailey, Development Manager.

1.3 Of these 7 recommendations relating to Members and Committee (**Appendix 1**), 3 aren't favoured to be taken forward, but 4 are (albeit to a greater or lesser degree). The working group focussed its discussion around 3 of the recommendations it was minded to take forward, relating to; Member induction and training (in relation to Planning Committee), the Parish "Call In" process, and the operation of the Planning Committee.

1.4 In respect of the recommendation around the operation of Planning Committee (recommendation 5), the working group developed 6 (A-F) suggested improvements for consideration by SPS&T to accept, amend or reject.

1.5 The discussion at the working group also focussed on the fact that the Planning Committee tended to be overly long and the need for adjourned meetings was frequent (8), as demonstrated by the table below;

| No. | Date of Meeting | Meeting Type | Length of Meeting |
|-----|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 12/01/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 50 |
| 2 | 02/02/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 42 |
| 3 | 23/02/2017 | Planning | 1 hour 10 |
| 4 | 16/03/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 55 |
| 5 | 06/04/2017 | Planning | 1 hour |

| | | | |
|----|------------|-----------|------------|
| 6 | 27/04/2017 | Planning | 3 hours 10 |
| 7 | 25/05/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 55 |
| 8 | 15/06/2017 | Planning | 1 hour 57 |
| 9 | 06/07/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 45 |
| 10 | 27/07/2017 | Planning | 2 hours 40 |
| 11 | 17/08/2017 | Planning | 3 hours 25 |
| 12 | 07/09/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 36 |
| 13 | 28/09/2017 | Planning | 3 hours 26 |
| 14 | 19/10/2017 | Planning | 3 hours 45 |
| 15 | 09/11/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 50 |
| 16 | 30/11/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 40 |
| 17 | 19/12/2017 | Planning | 4 hours 35 |
| 1 | 09/02/2017 | Adjourned | 2 hours 20 |
| 2 | 01/06/2017 | Adjourned | 2 hours |
| 3 | 13/07/2017 | Adjourned | 1 hour 40 |
| 4 | 24/08/2017 | Adjourned | 4 hours 50 |
| 5 | 14/09/2017 | Adjourned | 3 hours 35 |
| 6 | 05/10/2017 | Adjourned | 4 hours 10 |
| 7 | 16/11/2017 | Adjourned | 4 hours 47 |
| 8 | 07/12/2017 | Adjourned | 1 hour 30 |

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|---|------------|
| Average length of planning committee meeting | 3 hours 41 |
| Average length of adjourned committee meeting | 2 hours 50 |

1.6 In respect of the 27 remaining recommendations (**Appendix 2**) that did not relate to Members and Committee, Officers have (or intend) to implement 23 of them, and have rejected just 1, and consider 3 to be not applicable. This is all captured in the appendix to include some commentary to simplify the terminology used by IESE. These 27 recommendations are merely for noting by SPS&T, not decision, as they are operational.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To note the 27 recommendations from IESE that do not relate to Members and Committee, specifically those that Officers are taking forward.
- 2.2 To adopt the IESE recommendations 2,3,5 (A-F as developed and proposed by the working group) and 7, all relating to Members and Committee.
- 2.3 To reject the IESE recommendations inclusive of 5A-G as developed and proposed by the working group.
- 2.4 A combination of 2.2 and 2.3.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The preferred options are 2.1 and 2.2.
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4. RISK

4.1 The work undertaken by IESE identified opportunity areas in respect of Members and Committee, most of which would release additional officer capacity within the Planning Service that could subsequently be redeployed to service priorities. Therefore, there is a compelling argument for change. Furthermore, given the changes proposed, they could all be implemented on a trial basis, in that they could all be easily reversed at no cost were they not successful.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 This report and the activities undertaken by the working group have all been at the request of this Committee, on 13 November 2017.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 To make the required changes to the Council constitution, and where recommendations cannot be adequately captured within this, provide further written guidance to all Members of the Planning Committee, but specifically the Chair and Vice Chair at the commencement of each municipal year.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Impact on Corporate Priorities | The optimum running of the Planning Committee is instrumental to achieving one of the Council's top three priorities, a Home for Everyone. | [Head of Service or Manager] |
| Risk Management | Already covered in risk section. | [Head of Service or Manager] |
| Financial | Any additional costs incurred from the implementation of this review will be funded from existing budgets. | Paul Holland, Senior Finance Manager (Client) |
| Staffing | Planning staff have been actively involved in shaping the recommendations. | [Head of Service] |
| Legal | Some of the recommendations within the scope of this report | Cheryl Parks, Lawyer |

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| | will require changes to the Council's constitution. Operational changes not covered by this report also impact the MKLS team and discussion in regard to these would be welcomed. | (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services |
| Privacy and Data Protection | N/A | Cheryl Parks, Lawyer (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services |
| Equalities | It is pertinent that the equalities impact is given due consideration for a number of review recommendations. An EqIA should be carried out as part of the implementation of any resulting change to policy proposed. | Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer |
| Crime and Disorder | N/A | [Head of Service or Manager] |
| Procurement | N/A | [Head of Service & Section 151 Officer] |

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Recommendations relating to Members and Committee
- Appendix 2: MBC acceptance or rejection of IESE Planning Review Recommendations – Nov 2017

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.