

Organisational response

Report title: Planning Service Follow-up Review – Ceredigion County Council

Completion date: June 2023

Document reference: 3660A2023

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer (title)
R1	Progress the partially met and not met recommendations in our 2021 Planning Services report in order that they are fully addressed and culturally embedded within the Council.	<p>The Council established a Task and Finish Group (T&F group) to review actions and new recommendations raised in the report.</p> <p>The T&F Group was supported by officers from the Development Management team, the Planning Policy team, Legal & Governance Services and Democratic Services.</p> <p>The outstanding actions from the previous review in the main relate to training – which is being provided, monitoring which is being captured through the LDP Annual Monitoring Report and capacity for enforcement.</p> <p>Regarding enforcement the T&F group have discussed a variety of options, a business case is being prepared and discussions are ongoing with finance to secure additional resources. Relevant papers will be taken through the democratic processes as part of the budget setting for 25/26.</p>	July 2024	CLO Economy and Regeneration
R2	Develop and implement a formal arrangement to review and approve the material planning reasons provided by	The T&F group reviewed the current arrangements for considering requests for	July 2024 (expect implementation by end of year)	CLO Economy and Regeneration

	<p>local ward Members when calling a planning application into the Development Management Committee to ensure Members and staff are safeguarded and that the Committee focusses its time on more strategically important applications.</p>	<p>applications to be reported to the Development Management Committee (DMC).</p> <p>The review considered the number, type of applications and reasons given by Members for requesting applications are considered by the DMC and the subsequent nature of discussion at the DMC.</p> <p>The T&F Group was supported by officers from the Development Management team, the Planning Policy team, Legal & Governance Services and Democratic Services.</p> <p>The T&F group agreed a new protocol for member call in requests which is now undergoing scrutiny through the appropriate procedures.</p>		
R3	<p>Review the Site Inspection Panel practices and procedures to safeguard against any perception of pre-determination by a small group of Committee Members to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all Committee Members are invited to site visits; site visits are by exception, comply with Site Inspection Protocols and are used economically to ensure an efficient and proportionate use of resources; and 	<p>The T&F group reviewed the Site Inspection Panel (SIP) arrangements.</p> <p>The review considered the number and type of applications being referred to SIP, the nature of the visit and subsequent discussion at DMC.</p> <p>The T&F Group will be supported by officers from the Development Management team (DM), Legal & Governance Services (L&G) and Democratic Services (DS).</p> <p>The T&F group agreed Site Inspections (SI) are a useful tool, but recommended stricter</p>	July 2024 (expect implementation by end of year)	CLO Economy and Regeneration

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> site visits are identified in advance of Development Management Committee meetings in line with the Welsh Government Development Management Manual. 	<p>protocols on determining when to under take an SI and that all members would be expected to attend. The new protocol is undergoing scrutiny through the appropriate procedures.</p>		
R4	<p>Repurpose the way the Cooling Off Group works in practice so that it upholds its intended purpose as a learning and educational forum for Members to receive further information on local and national planning policies to support Development Management Committee decision-making. This will safeguard Members and officers against any perception of pre-determination by a small group of Committee Members.</p>	<p>The T&F group reviewed the current Cooling Off arrangement.</p> <p>The review considered the number and type of applications referred to the cooling off group, the effectiveness of Cooling Off Group meetings and subsequent decision making.</p> <p>The T&F Group was supported by officers from the Development Management team, the Planning Policy team, Legal & Governance Services and Democratic Services.</p> <p>The T&F group agreed that there was a need for a Cooling Off Process rather than a Member Cooling Off Group. A new protocol for Cooling off which is now undergoing scrutiny through the appropriate procedures.</p>	<p>July 2024 (expect implementation by end of year)</p>	<p>CLO Economy and Regeneration</p>