

Audit Wales Recommendations and Key Actions

The table below now contains all seventeen recommendations from the Audit Wales report that was provided in draft to Carmarthenshire County Council on June 14th – the final version was received on July 13th 2021. Below is the latest update that was provided to Pre-Cabinet on November 29th 2021

Work has commenced on ensuring actions are put in place and being delivered to address all recommendations as articulated by Audit Wales.

Strategic impact					
R1 - Align its planning service to its corporate ambitions to ensure:					
R1.1 - It can respond effectively to deal with its regeneration ambitions and can deliver them at pace;					
R1.2 - That the planning service is effectively contributing to and collaborating with other services to deliver on the corporate agenda.					
R2 - Review the role and outcomes it expects from its planning service as part of its strategic groups, to ensure the service is effectively integrated and delivering the required outcomes.					
Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R1.1 & R1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a dedicated team of Development Management staff to focus on 'Major Projects' that support the county's economic recovery plan outputs and aspirations. 	07/06/21	02/08/2021	Complete	Jason Jones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Corporate Major Projects Group comprising council officers representing the range of services involved in development proposals, e.g. Planning, Regeneration, Highways & Legal (but not limited to). Priority focus to be afforded to projects that deliver jobs and growth in support of the Council's economic recovery plan. This will be led by the Head of Regeneration. 	24/05/21	05/07/21	Complete	Jason Jones

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol to be developed covering applications for major development projects (schemes above 10 residential units or 1,000 m² of commercial development) – setting out how we will engage with applicants / developers, with clarity and commitment on the process(es) we will adopt to provide a quality and efficient planning process. Protocol will include, and clearly articulate, the programme activities, timescales and responsibilities that will support CCC’s protocol and commitment to determine major applications. 	12/07/21	27/08/21	Complete	Jason Jones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration to be given to whether a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) should be entered into with applicants for major development projects. PPA would set out set out the scope and timetable for pre-application engagement and subsequent submission and determination of the planning application. Possible useful project management tool that would be bespoke to each development, requiring commitment from both parties – applicant and LPA. 	28/07	17/09/21	On-Going	Jason Jones

Progress Report June 24th 2021

- Expressions of Interest were sent out on June 7th with a closing date of June 21st. First officer will commence on July 1st whilst a further two officers will commence on August 2nd 2021.
- Gary Glenister commenced on July 1st

- Officers have been identified that will attend this Corporate Major Projects Group. First meeting will be on w/c July 5th

Progress Report July 25th 2021

- Gary Glenister and Stuart Walters have met as the Major Projects Group, to review the list of major planning applications. Projects have been prioritised based upon greatest economic impact (Number of jobs created), quick win applications with only minor issues left to resolve.
- Meetings have been convened with internal consultees such as highways, ecology and legal to explore solutions as to how we can collectively work together to process the applications efficiently. Dialogue is also ongoing with external consultees, agents and applicants to move applications forward to determination.
- Prospero a private sector planning agency are assisting and of the 133 applications are currently processing 23 of the major project application.
- The current position on the major applications is as follows:
 - 133 total number of applications
 - 22 approved to date
 - 3 refusals
 - 3 Withdrawals
 - 105 yet to be determined
- Protocol for major developments commenced and envisage completion of draft proposal August 21.

Progress Report September 20th 2021

As of 14th September the update on major projects is as follows. The original major planning application schedule presented in July is as follows: 133 applications to be determined, 49 have been approved, 9 have been refused, 5 withdrawn and 9 cancelled.

This schedule has been reviewed to focus upon the more strategic applications and those with greatest economic impact. As such the revised major projects list now focuses on applications that have:

- Housing Developments of 10 residential units or more
- Housing Developments of 0.5ha where the number of units is not known
- Commercial Development where 1000 sqm or more is created.

- Sites of 1ha or more
- Development creating 5 or more jobs.

The current update on the major planning applications based upon the above definition is as follows:

- Total Number of applications being determined – 61, of which to date;
- 7 Applications have been approved
- 3 Applications have been refused
- 2 pre-application submissions have been completed.

A total of 49 major applications are left to determined, made up of:

- 47 Applications
- 1 Pre-Application
- 1 EIA Screening

- In addition, a protocol for major developments has been drafted for consideration and final sign off.

Progress Report October 18th 2021

Since the last update on the 14th September 2021, where there were 49 major applications left to be determined, a total of 12 have been determined (as of 14th October), made up as follows:

- 7 Planning Applications Approved
- 2 Planning Applications Refused
- 2 Pre Application Responses
- 1 EIA Screening Opinion

Since 14th September the following 8 have been submitted and added to the list.

- 5 Planning Applications
- 2 Pre-Application
- 1 NMA to a Major

As of the 14th October, 45 major applications were left to be determined, made up of:

- 44 Planning Applications
- 1 Pre Application

The draft planning protocol has been presented and endorsed by RDT with a request that the protocol be reviewed by our legal division prior to being presented to CMT for final consideration on the 28th October.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Major Planning Protocol discussed at CMT on October 28th - Legal advice is that this is an operational document and does not require Cabinet member approval. Document has been shared with Cabinet Member Cllr M Stephens for information.
- Since the last update a total of 13 have been determined up to the 19th November made up as follows:
 - 9 Major Planning Applications
 - 1 Discharge of Condition
 - 1 Non Material Amendment
 - 2 Pre Application
- Since 14th October the following 11 applications have been submitted and added to the list
 - 3 Major Planning Applications
 - 3 Pre Application
 - 1 Non Material Amendment
 - 4 Discharge of Conditions
- As of 19th of November, 43 applications are left to be determined, made up of :
 - 38 Major Planning Applications
 - 3 Discharge of Conditions
 - 2 Pre Application

R2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the relevant strategic groups that already exist to ensure Planning Services are fully integrated within their Terms of Reference. 	01/07/21	03/09/21	Complete	Ian R Llewelyn
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure outcomes expected from the Planning Service in delivering the outcomes of these Strategic Groups is clearly documented and agreed. 	06/09/21	29/10/21	Complete	Ian R Llewelyn
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Progress Report September 20th 2021

- List of strategic groups collated, and planning membership identified – undertaking a review of planning attendees to ensure appropriate representation.
- All attendees to be reminded of their responsibility to share information, deliver on actions arising and link in with others as appropriate.

Progress Report October 18th 2021

- Groups where Planning attendance had ended have been identified with membership restored.
- Action ‘Ensure outcomes expected from the Planning Service in delivering the outcomes of these Strategic Groups is clearly documented and agreed.’ extended to October 29th

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Outcomes of the Strategic Groups to ensure clear actions where planning input is required and clear actions around expectations.
- ToR include membership with identified nominated officers – planning attendees to provide clear feedback through SMT to the relevant managers and where appropriate to contact key officers to resolve actions identified.
- Standing item to be introduced on SMT to ensure actions and information is appropriately shared and for agreed approaches to be discussed and actioned where applicable.
- SMT commit to ensuring information is disseminated to their teams as required.
- Planning membership of groups to be discussed at SMT to ensure appropriate representation at the group.
- **Recommendation 2 is Complete – this is now an on-going service operational matter.**

Service delivery – development management

R3 - Develop a plan and timeline to deal with its planning application backlog, in particular the historic backlog.

R4 - Review its planning data collection arrangements to ensure they are being done correctly and reported accurately.

R5 - Address the financial risks associated with the continued overspend in its planning service and the potential fee reimbursement associated with non-determination of applications.

Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-Locate key staff involved in determination of planning applications that are within Planning Services within the same office accommodation. 	07/06/21	21/06/21	Completed	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish process for data cleansing of planning applications. 	14/06/21	02/08/21	On-Going	Jon Owen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish active backlog per team/per officer 	24/05/21	10/06/21	Complete	Jon Owen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce robust performance and case management processes. 	21/06/21	03/09/21	On-Going	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review capacity to address backlog & develop specialist roles. 	18/05/21	03/09/21	On-Going	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current workload provided to consultants Prospero to assist with planning application backlog and ensure continuous monitoring of workload. 	09/06/21	31/10/21	Complete	Hugh Towns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review short term opportunities to streamline the processing and recording of Development management process. 	07/06/21	03/09/21	Complete	Hugh Towns

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Planning Hwb to act as a single point of contact for Development Management and Enforcement. 	06/06/21	21/06/21	Complete	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Scheme of Delegation and Planning Protocol and seek approval at CRWG/Full Council. 	27/05/21	10/11/21	On-Going	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review officer attendance at Planning Committee. 	04/06/21	11/06/21	Completed	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review support provided to Chair of Planning Committee during the meetings 	22/06/21	13/07/21	Completed	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ALL internal consultees that play a part within the determination of a Planning Application. All consultees to be contacted and meeting arranged to discuss priorities. 	08/06/21	18/06/21	Completed	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an agreed procedure for use of Extension of Time Letter and ensure Arcus is utilised for this purpose. 	28/06/21	01/07/21	Completed	Hugh Towns

Progress Report June 24th 2021

- 10 DM staff & 4 enforcement staff will co-locate in 3 Spilman Street 3rd floor. Risk Assessment and Safe Working Practise being completed by H&S.
- Process has been established and DM officers asked to commence work on their individual case loads.
- Information obtained from Arcus Global and each officer has their own spreadsheet.
- Meeting held with Prospero and significant improvements identified that would allow Prospero to perform more effectively in addressing the authorities backlog.

- Hugh Towns has been assigned to closely manage this workload and the performance of Prospero and report back to Intervention Board. Meeting every week with Prospero.
- Prospero Contract to be extended for another 3 months - £35100, This provides us with 6 additional days per week until October 1st 2021
- Process Mapping has commenced of the Planning Application process internally.
- This Planning Hwb approach will allow us to have 'ONE VIEW' of all correspondence coming into the Planning Service – majority is for the attention of the Development Management Team & Enforcement. All DMO & Enforcement telephone calls will be transferred to the Planning Hwb
- Planning Hwb Staff will co-locate with Planning Staff to gather intelligence and support staff.
- Reviewed staff attendance at Planning Committee from 01/01/21 to 01/06/21 and compared to attendance 01/01/19 to 01/06/19. Significant increase in 2021.
- 32 internal consultees identified from across the Authority – all play a crucial role in determining planning applications.
- Email has been sent out by the Chief Executive to all Consultees informing them of the importance of responding within 21 days to Planning Applications.
- Process available within Arcus to monitor application and use of EOT letters.
- Introduce a standardised approach to EOT for all DMO's and ensure consistent monitoring.

Progress Report July 25th 2021

- Prospero have been allocated additional applications.
- All applications sent to Prospero have now been prioritised – P1, P2 or P3
 - Priority 1 applications are the recent applications which were either Roberts when he left, Eilian's whilst on paternity and some of Gary's when he moved to major projects
 - Priority 2 applications are the ones on the original list they were sent which they have started work on and it would have been counter productive to stop on these
 - Priority 3 are applications on their original list that they had not really looked at.
- Prospero had some training from Emily so that they could validate applications on ARCUS.
- Prospero were waiting for some guidance from CCC in relation to quite a number of applications. That guidance has now been provided and applications can be moved forward
- Prospero were not aware of the S106 process – now rectified
- Prospero had identified a number of applications as invalid but nothing had been done to cancel the applications – now done
- We were getting an average of 10 applications a month processed by Prospero in the first 7 months – 10 have been processed in the first 2 weeks of July. I expect that rate to increase as the consultation period on the new applications they have expires.

- We are looking to split DMO's into 2 'pods' which we have called Aman/Gwendraeth and Tywi/Taf with 4 officers and a Senior in each 'pod'. Prospero will not be allocated new work unless we are under huge pressure and will work on the 167 cases that they still have.

Progress Report September 20th 2021

- Prospero contract has been extended until 31 December 2021 – number of applications with Prospero down from 167 on 25th July to 78 on 17th September 2021
- Two 'pod' approach has been implemented and efforts are being made to avoid officers being allocated applications when they are on leave
- DMO's do not now need SDMO authorisation for certain types of application – this removes identified duplication of effort between DMO and SDMO essentially reviewing the same applications which are of a minor and uncontentious nature.
- We are reviewing consultation thresholds with ecology and highways to ensure we are only consulting on matters where the consultees can add value.
- Applications dating from pre-June 2015 have been identified and 'finally disposed of' where there has been no recent contact from the applicant/agent. We are working through applications over 5 years old to identify why no decision has been made and to identify a way forward.
- Action 'Introduce robust performance and case management processes.' Target date for completion is being extended 31/10/21 to ensure all relevant processes can be properly reviewed across the whole spectrum of services within Planning that contribute towards determining planning applications,
- Action 'Review capacity to address backlog & develop specialist roles.' - with staff changes it is necessary to extend the Target Date to 31/10/21 for completion of this work.
- Action 'Review Scheme of Delegation and Planning Protocol and seek approval at CRWG/Full Council' – this was discussed at CRWG on 16/09/21 and some minor amendments required before Full Council on October 13th – Target Date extended until 13/10/21

Progress Report October 18th 2021

- Planning committee – reminder to members of responsibilities under code of conduct to be provided as part of the legal officers opening script ahead of each meeting.
- Prospero are helping out with current applications as well as working on the historic cases due to the numbers of applications being received – average number of cases received per month in 2021 is 229 (projected 2,748 for the year) in 2020 the monthly average was 179 (2148 for the year).
- We are reviewing the Section 106 process with Legal to establish where efficiencies can be made.
- We are reviewing consultation thresholds with Natural Resources Wales to ensure we are only consulting on matters where they can add value.
- Action 'Review Scheme of Delegation and Planning Protocol and seek approval at CRWG/Full Council.' extended to November 10th to Full Council meeting.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Applications with Prospero stand at 46 down from 167 on 25th July 2021. No new cases currently being allocated to Prospero
- S106 review has been progressed and is almost finalised.
- Consultation thresholds with NRW established
- Additional resource now being released to deal with major projects.
- Scheme of Delegation waits to be tabled at Full Council for final approval.

R4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review validation of planning applications and ensure its in line with Procedure Order to ensure accurate capturing of data. 	01/07/21	03/09/21	Complete	Hugh Towns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a thorough review of all Data collection arrangements with regards to Planning Applications and ensure accuracy and reporting via Arcus Global 	01/07/21	30/11/21	Complete	Hugh Towns

Progress Report July 25th 2021

- Validation checklists have been created for 23 types of application. REG are adding these to I@W for each application for use by officers
- EIA Screening Checklist is also being added by REG to I@W to ensure we don't miss EIA developments
- Consultations were identified by a checklist on I@W – this has now been integrated into ARCUS
- Invalid Notices and Invalid letter/emails have been added to ARCUS and officers provided with guidance which to use for each type of application
- Officers instructed to use Invalid Notices/Letters as it starts the clock for us to be able to return the application if no response within 21 days We have undertaken a mini TIC review into validation and identified some issues to tackle and a few quick wins
- We are working on a Publicity and Consultation Protocol to ensure we are more consistent in how we undertake publicity and consultation.

Progress Report September 20th 2021

- Importance of using validation checklist has been stressed. Use to be reviewed by carrying out spot-checks in I@W.
- Action 'Review validation of planning applications and ensure its in line with Procedure Order to ensure accurate capturing of data.' target date has been extended to 31/10/21 - TIC review process recommenced in September – suspended during August
- Publicity element of the Publicity and Consultation Protocol has been completed. Consultation element has been drafted but requires further input

- Section 106 Protocol to be developed – initial meeting of DMO/SDMO’s took place on 6th September
- Number of outstanding applications stands at 667 on 16th September – 84 impacted by Phosphates, 123 with Legal Services. Phosphate applications being RAG rated to identify whether some applications can be processed.
- Consideration being given to Built Heritage Officers being the case officer for LBC applications as they have the delegated powers
- Data cleansing undertaken on Built Heritage workload – 62 applications (16th September) currently awaiting a response.
- Agricultural Notification procedure has been reviewed and amended
- Guidance notes in relation to applicants duties in terms of biodiversity have been drafted. Once finalised the notes will be provided to applicants with their acknowledgement letter.

Progress Report 18th October 2021

- Spot checks have established that validation checklists are being used by officers. No invalid notice appeals received in Q2.
- Section 106 Protocol – meeting with Legal Officers arranged for 21st October 2021
- Number of outstanding applications stands at 653 (13th October) - of which 294 are current cases within time limits and 359 are backlog cases
- Cases potentially impacted by phosphates now stands at 81
- Action ‘Conduct a thorough review of all Data collection arrangements with regards to Planning Applications and ensure accuracy and reporting via Arcus Global’ extended to November 30th. Process reviews continuing with Information Management Team.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Overall number of outstanding applications stands at 612 (22.11.21) of which the backlog element is 323
- Number of applications awaiting validation stands at 15 (22.11.21)
- Cases potentially impacted by phosphates now stands at 72. Phosphates is the only issue on 50 of those cases.
- Process review of Information Management Team is almost completed
- **Recommendation 4 is Complete** – data collection arrangements will be constantly monitored together with data held on Arcus

R5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a thorough review into all spends within the Planning Service and review all current income streams. 	12/07/21	01/11/21	Complete	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and agree an options paper for mitigating the potential fee reimbursement with non determination of applications. 	03/09/21	01/11/21	Complete	Noelwyn Daniel

Progress Report July 25th 2021

- Latest budget monitoring meeting is forecasting an overall underspend within the Planning Service for 21/22

Progress Report October 18th 2021

- Latest budget monitoring for Planning Services continues to be an overall underspend for 21/22
- Action 'Conduct a thorough review into all spends within the Planning Service and review all current income streams.' extended to November 1st
- Action 'Prepare and agree an options paper for mitigating the potential fee reimbursement with non determination of applications.' extended to November 1st.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Latest budget monitoring for Planning Services continues to be an overall underspend for 21/22
- The risk of the reimbursement of non determination of applications continues to decline as the backlog of overdue applications reduces. Working through these is believed to be the best approach as during the last 6 months we have only re-imbursed 3 applications which has cost £7,980
- Continued improved performance is the best approach to mitigating this risk and therefore no options paper will be produced and action has been closed.
- **Recommendation 5 is Complete with all spends continuing to be reviewed on an on-going basis and is part of the formal budget monitoring process**

Service delivery – Planning Enforcement

R6 - Develop a plan and timeline to deal with its planning enforcement backlog, in particular the historic backlog.

R7 - Review the resources and capacity within its planning enforcement service to address the accruing caseload.

R8 - Ensure that other related Council services are able to accommodate any increases in planning enforcement action.

R9 - Ensure that any changes to its enforcement policy are assessed for impact and consulted on, to ensure all consequences are considered.

Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
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R6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify numbers of applications in each priority and agree time-line and resources for reviewing/closing/progressing cases. 	14/06/21	30/11/21	On-Going	Sue Watts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proformas/templates to be developed to support above. 	14/06/21	18/06/21	Completed	Sue Watts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree case sign off/closure processes with EBM 	14/06/21	01/07/21	Completed	Sue Watts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review backlog/caseload of individual officers and re-allocate where appropriate 	14/06/21	03/09/21	On-Going	Sue Watts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Planning input into backlog progress discussion 	14/06/21	03/09/21	Complete	Sue Watts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BSU to coordinte the functions of licensing and housing. 	14/06/21	18/06/21	Complete	Sue Watts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Progress against above actions and determine a realistic timeline to clear historic backlog 	06/09/21	01/10/21	Complete	Sue Watts

Progress Report June 24th 2021

- Officers are completing 'infringement' forms on the high priority cases and the more controversial. They have been asked to look at 20 each week.
- The team have completed approximately 80 infringement cases with less than half that have been closed; the remainder requires further work/enforcement action. The site visits, communication and correspondence/notices are taking a considerable amount of time. Officers have been asked to monitor the time taken to collate and issue the notices in order to ascertain whether there is an admin role that could be utilised to save officers time.
- Reallocation of non case work of Coordinator to administration support officer in order to prioritise officers time to help clear the backlog of other officers
- Will be carried out as part of the Enforcement Policy/Statement to be approved as per recommendation in WAO recommendation. This will include prioritising cases.

- BSU to co-ordinate the functions of housing and licencing and carried out by a designated support officer.

Progress Update July 25th 2021

- Prosecution templates have been prepared and discussed with Legal. This includes an 'aide memoir' of information required for a prosecution file and a decision form that must be completed by the officer and Manager prior to submitting to Legal. This will ensure that all information is ready for legal to proceed thereby ensuring consistency and efficiency.
- In order to ensure consistency, arrangements are being made for the Enforcement officers and those in Built Heritage and Mineral teams for training/refresher sessions on contents of notices and disclosure to ensure that they are inclusive of all teams and less likely for challenge.
- Executive Board portfolio Member is kept up to date with process and dates in calendar to attend infringement meeting

Progress Update September 20th 2021

- Further work undertaken to analyse nature of backlog - this identified a number of areas that need to be addressed within the Case Closure Protocol.
- All high risk cases are being reviewed to check status/strategy and project plans to be developed to progress top 10 risk cases with potential costs of dealing with each case and timescales.
- Case Closure Protocol has been approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning Enforcement on 17th September 2021 – this is subject to a 5 day call but could be operational by September 28th if there is no call-in.
- Action 'Identify numbers of applications in each priority and agree time-line and resources for reviewing/closing/progressing cases.' target date to be extended and linked to the case closure protocol.
- Action 'Review backlog/caseload of individual officers and re-allocate where appropriate' - it has been decided that this action will remain as on-going as part of operational matters but closed for the purpose of this progress report.
- Action 'Review Planning input into backlog progress discussion' - target date for this has been extended to 30/11/21 due to work required and re-prioritisation.

Progress Update October 18th 2021

- Work is on-going to review high/medium risk cases. Infringement forms are being used to determine a course of action for these cases and the adoption of a Case Closure protocol will support a decision to close cases where further action is not considered appropriate in line with protocol.
- Following approval of Case Closure Protocol by the Cabinet Member in September, officers are now reviewing all historical 'anonymous' cases. 55 additional cases have been closed as a result of this work. Additional resources now deployed within the team will provide capacity to review further cases and it is hoped to move to historical cases reported by elected members within the next month.
- Engaged the services of a Barrister via Legal Services for 4 days over the next month to assist with our most complex enforcement cases.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Work on-going to review historic cases in line with Case Closure Protocol and a further 66 cases were closed in October and to date 62 in November. Backlog at 26/11/21 now stands at 733.
- Discussions on-going in relation to resourcing the approach to the top 10 high risk cases. Barrister opinion to be sought on these cases prior to action plan with costed options being submitted to CMT/Cabinet early in the new year.

R7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deploy an experienced officer to support the Intervention Board to lead improvement in Planning Enforcement.	18/05/21	07/06/21	Completed	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and Increase capacity within the Planning Enforcement team to address accruing caseload and backlog.	07/06/21	30/11/21	Completed	Sue Watts

Progress Update June 24th 2021

- Sue Watts has been deployed from Public Protection. She will lead the Planning Enforcement Team and manage the staff in the absence of their Manager.

Progress Update July 25th 2021

- Recruit 2 x Planning enforcement officers for 12mths.
- Continue to explore additional capacity options from other service areas within the Environment Department.

Progress Update September 20th 2020

- Initial recruitment exercise for the 2x temporary Planning Enforcement Officers posts was unsuccessful. The Posts will be re-advertised in September backed by a recruitment drive (social media etc). In the interim we have been able to identify two agency staff who should be able to start w/c September 27th to begin work on enforcement cases.
- Additional support capacity will be provided by Enforcement staff from Ainsley Williams's team to commence September 27th – this will be 2 officers for 2/3 days per week.
- Additional capacity had been sourced from the Design team in order to support and progress some of the more contentious cases.

- The funding for the vacant Built Heritage Enforcement Officer Post has been increased from 0.6 to 1 FTE. The post will be advertised in September and be advertised in specialist press to attract experienced officers.
- We have approached the former Head of Planning from Cardiff County Council who will be in a position to provide support with putting project plans in place to address the Top 12 most high risk and high profile cases. Discussion are on-going with no decision taken yet – this will be decided by the Intervention Assurance Board.

Progress Update October 18th 2021

- Two additional staff employed via agency whilst recruitment to two secondments is undertaken.
- Additional support has also been provided via the Council’s Environmental Enforcement Team.
- Discussions are on-going in relation to the approach to managing the top 10 risk/priority cases.
- Action ‘Review and Increase capacity within the Planning Enforcement team to address accruing caseload and backlog.’ extended as we are going back out to advertise the two secondment posts.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Appointments now made to the 2 secondment posts.
- Growth Bid submitted to make the 2 secondment posts permanent
- Built Heritage Enforcement Officer appointed.
- Additional capacity has been sourced to address top 10 Enforcement cases.
- **Recommendation 7 Complete**

R8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process map the full Impact Assessment on Council Services due to Planning Enforcement action and identify areas for streamlining and greater collaboration. 	06/09/21	30/10/21	On-Going	Sue Watts
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Progress Update September 20th 2021

- Increased enforcement could have various outcomes including an increased in planning applications (demand of DM team), legal Action (demand on Legal Section), requirement for costings of more contentious cases (Design and Property). Further work on the backlog of cases is required prior to carrying out an impact assessment.

Progress Update October 18th 2021

- Discussions will take place with relevant Council services as part of the consultation stage for the proposed Planning Enforcement Statement and this will seek to identify the potential impact on these services.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Sessions to be held with internal stakeholders to help evaluate the impact of the draft Enforcement Statement.

R9	• Revise Enforcement Policy and seek approval at Executive Board ensuring completion of Integrated Impact Assessment.	06/09/21	26/11/21	On-going	Sue Watts
	• Develop a Planning Enforcement Charter and seek approval at Executive Board ensuring completion of Integrated Impact Assessment.	06/09/21	26/11/21	Not Started	Sue Watts

Progress Update September 20th 2021

- New Planning Enforcement Statement has been drafted and will be consulted upon at the Members seminar on September 27th. It will then go for Public Consultation before returning and going through the political process for approval at Cabinet.
- Consultation plan developed to engage views of all stakeholders
- Discussions continuing with corporate colleagues re completion of Integrated Impact Assessment

Progress Update October 18th 2021

- The new Planning Enforcement Statement will now be submitted to CMT on the 28th October and Pre Cabinet on the 15th November prior to a public consultation exercise.
- The Statement will then proceed through the political process in the new year of 2022.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Amendments to be made Enforcement Statement following feedback from Cabinet on the 15th December
- Enforcement Statement to be considered by Environment and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd December prior to submission to Cabinet Member Portfolio meeting in January 2022.

Risk management

R10 - Review its corporate risk register to ensure that the planning risks, related to development management and planning enforcement are comprehensively defined and have clear mitigating actions.

R11 - Assure itself that its corporate arrangements for risk management are effective¹.

Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure the Corporate Risk Register accurately reflects the significant risks presented by Development Management and Planning Enforcement to the delivery of the Authorities Priorities and the associated financial risk.	02/08/21	24/09/21	Complete	Noelwyn Daniel
Progress Update July 25th 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated Corporate Risk Register to be presented to Governance & Audit Committee on December 17th once approved at CMT & PEB Progress Update October 18th 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none">The updated Corporate Risk Register including all new risks associated with the Planning Service was approved at CMT and was discussed at the Governance & Audit Committee meeting on October 13th 2021Recommendation 10 is now complete – ensuring the Corporate Risk Register is regularly reviewed and updated will continue as part of 'business as usual'.					
R11	We will review the corporate arrangements for risk management to ensure they are effective and assess progress made on the recommendations made by the Audit Wales report 'Review of Risk Management Arrangement' in July 2019.	01/11/21	01/01/22	On-Going	Jon Owen

<p>Progress Update September 20th 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Intervention Assurance Board have asked TIC to conduct the review which will commence on November 1st. Work will be undertaken to agree a Terms of Reference for this review with Head of Revenue and Financial Compliance. Target date for completion of this review has therefore been amended to 01/01/22 together with the start date to 01/11/21 <p>Progress Update October 18th 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft TOR is being discussed with the Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance and will be reviewed and agreed at the Intervention Assurance Board on October 27th 2021 <p>Progress Report November 26th 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review in progress and interviews being held with Directors/Heads of Service /3rd tier managers and elected members. Draft report to be completed by end of December. 					
<p>Responding to review findings</p> <p>R12 - The Council should ensure that in responding to findings of all reviews into the effectiveness of its planning service that it:</p> <p>R12.1 - Prioritises the actions; R12.2 - Regularly evaluates the impact of the changes that it is making; and R12.3 - Regularly reports progress to senior officers and Members to ensure transparent and timely oversight and monitoring, and that any corrective action is taken.</p>					
Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate all recommendations proposed by the Independent Review into Planning Services in Autumn 2019 and determine which are superseded by the recommendations made by 	06/09/21	30/09/21	Complete	Noelwyn Daniel

	<p>Audit Wales. Due to the passage of time evaluate recommendations and decide whether they remain valid and need to be included and monitored within this Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all Recommendations made by TIC over the last 5 years and amalgamate those recommendations if appropriate within this Action Plan. 	06/09/21	30/09/21	Complete	Jon Owen
<p>Progress Update September 20th 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcement progress update to be reported to TIC Board in September 2021. <p>Progress Update October 18th 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation 12 is complete – regular reporting arrangements are now in place and this is ‘business as usual’. Monitoring reports go to CMT, Pre-Cabinet, Scrutiny and Governance & Audit Committee. Progress is also discussed at Planning SMT and shared with all staff within the Division. 					
<p>Performance management</p> <p>R13 - Ensure that the data available under the new planning performance management system (Arcus) is designed, maximised, and presented for analysis at relevant meetings.</p> <p>R14- Ensure that it presents a consolidated range of planning performance information to senior officers and Members to provide them with a fuller picture of service performance. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R14.1 - performance data; R14.2 - financial data; R14.3 - complaints information; and R14.4 - risk management information. <p>R15 better benchmark, collaborate and share learning with other Local Planning Authorities to maximise opportunities to identify and implement good practice.</p>					

Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish management dashboards for key areas of the Planning Service. 	24/05/21	01/07/21	Complete	Jon Owen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree format for presenting these performance management dashboards and identify all relevant meetings. Links in with R2 	02/08/21	03/09/21	Complete	Noelwyn Daniel
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Planning Service monitoring framework for Planning Committee. 	02/08/21	03/09/21	Complete	Ian R Llewelyn

Progress Update June 24th 2021

- Management Dashboard have been produced containing significant performance data.

Progress Update September 20th 2021

- Core indicators to form the monitoring framework for Quarterly reporting to Planning Committee. Initial monitoring outcomes scheduled for CMT 29th September 2021 ahead of reporting to Planning Committee 14th October. To form a quarterly standing item at future meetings.
- Planning Appeal outcomes, performance and costs awarded against the LPA to form a future quarterly item commencing in October.
- Planning Appeals determined during the previous month to be a standing item at Planning Committee commencing 16th September.
- Chair of Planning Committee briefed on the broadening future reports presented to committee to incl performance, policy changes and corporate updates.
- Action 'Agree format for presenting these performance management dashboards and identify all relevant meetings. Links in with R2' target date to be extended to 23/10/21 to ensure consistency in dashboards presented.

Progress Update October 18th 2021

- Planning Performance Core Indicators reported to CMT 29th September 2021 ahead of report to Planning Committee on the 26th October. Subsequent standing quarterly item.

- **Recommendation 13 is complete** – we will however continuously evolve and improve on the presentation and format of what we present at relevant meetings. This is now ‘business as usual’

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Quarter 1 - Planning Performance Core Indicators reported to Planning Committee (PC) on the 26th October with Q2 scheduled to be reported to PC on the 23rd November 2021.

R14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revised Corporate Performance Monitoring framework is being established. This will ensure a comprehensive picture of performance will be available for all services via a single dashboard which incorporates to begin with performance data, financial data, complaints and Member enquiries together with risk management information. 	01/07/21	29/10/21	On-Going	Gwyneth Ayers
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Progress Update July 25th 2021

- Draft Corporate Performance Monitoring framework in place and will be going to CMT in September 2021

Progress Report September 20th 2021

- Above draft report is now scheduled in November 2021

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- The Performance Monitoring Framework was presented and agreed at CMT on November 11th and is being presented for discussion to Pre-Cabinet on November 29th.
- Qtr2 Performance Monitoring was presented to CMT on November 18th in a way that ensures a comprehensive picture of performance was made available for discussion relating to the Corporate Strategy. This included Key Actions, Performance Indicators, Risk Management, Internal Audit, Finance and complaints data. This approach will be developed and enhanced for all Service areas including Planning for 2022/23 reporting year.

R15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a robust and consistent approach to benchmarking the planning service and seek to maximise all avenues to identify and then implement good practise. 	06/09/21	29/10/21	On-Going	Ian R Llewelyn
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Progress Update September 20th 2021

- Data collection through national performance measures collected across authorities – use as a consistent standard benchmarking measures and establish annual reporting - CMT, Scrutiny and Planning Committee.
- Link in with the City Deal through the Land Use Regional co-ordinating role to share good practice - Planning co-ordinating post currently undergoing recruitment.
- Develop regional links and shared approaches through the establishment of the CJC's and relevant topic subgroup - working group established and now meeting on a bi-monthly basis.

Progress Update October 18th 2021

- Link in with the City Deal through the Land Use Regional co-ordinating role to share good practice - Planning co-ordinating post appointed with commencement on 1st November.
- Regional topic working group developing governance framework and identifying resource requirements to deliver regional planning role.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Link in with the City Deal through the Land Use Regional co-ordinating role to share good practice with the Planning co-ordinating post having commenced their role.
- Service performance indicators and the quarterly assessment of performance to be measured against national benchmarking targets – included as part of reports presented to SMT quarterly monitoring performance across the service.
- Membership of Regional National Groups where best practice is regularly discussed and shared these include – Planning Officer Society for Wales (POSW), All Wales and regional Planning Policy Groups, regional Development Management Group, POSW Minerals and Waste Group, South-west Wales Strategic Development Plan Group, SAC Rivers Planning Group, Phosphate Additionality Group, Welsh Planning and Biodiversity Forum etc.
- Good Practice a standing item on SMT with managers taking ownership of the responsibility to share.
- Best practice staff workshops and briefing sessions (held in abeyance during the response to the Audit Wales Report) to recommence with a focus on teams identifying areas of discussion with the programme agreed through SMT.

Service user perspective

R16 - The Council should better consider and apply the perspective of its service users in designing and delivering its planning services to continuously improve the service in a sustainable way. This should include:

R16.1 - Understanding the current position regarding trends in complaints and customer feedback, and taking action to address any issues;

R16.2 - Setting out clear standards that service users can expect;

R16.3- Improving engagement and ongoing communication with customers.
 R16.4 - Establishing an improved mechanism for gathering, evaluating, and applying customer feedback.

Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R16.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The setup of the Planning Hwb will act as a single point of contact for all service users. Analyse the intelligence gathered by the Planning Hwb and develop an action plan and implement sustainable improvements 	21/06/21	30/10/21	On-Going	Noelwyn Daniel
R16.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Planning Customer Charter setting out clearly the standards and timescales service users can expect. 	06/09/21	30/11/21	On-Going	Ian R Llewelyn
R16.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Planning Services content online and improve availability of online forms. 	07/06/21	01/11/21	On-Going	Deina Hockenhill
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an on-going engagement programme with customers including agents & developers/ 	02/08/21	30/11/21	On-Going	Deina Hockenhill
R16.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See action against R16.1 				

Progress Report Update June 24th

- For R16.1 please reference R3
- Work has commenced to review the online forms and content of the website. Media & Marketing are leading this piece of work.

Progress Report Update September 20th

- R16.3 - "Check if you need planning permission" page is currently the only real live page so that we can channel all enquiries and understand what information our customers are looking to find. Planning enforcement is ready to go live but the team need to finalise the 2nd stage form. Our aim is to introduce a milestone template to many sections of the site which will be beneficial for our customers as they search or apply for any specific details etc. This work is ongoing

- Quarterly e-newsletter will be sent to all developers and agents from the autumn onward. This will include useful links and support. From October onwards a minimum of 2 social posts on the work of our planning service will be promoted on the corporate social channels. Various letter templates have already been re-written with the customer in mind. Further letters will be modified during the next couple of months.
- Phosphates information is now live on the website and a request more information have been made available to our customers. Some have already signed up and engaging with these will begin early Autumn as information is received from the service.
- R16.2 - Draft planning customer charter to link to the work on the wider Corporate Charter to be reported in due course. Content to be reflective but to drill down into service specific commitments. Exploring the potential for customer engagement to inform some of its commitments.

Progress Report Update October 18th 2021

- Planning Customer Charter pending progress on the corporate customer charter – reflects the need for integration between them.
 - Planning Hwb has collated good intelligence to date with specific details of source queries and nature of enquiry. This has provided a priority action plan for website updates. One to ones with the officers has also enabled the team to address improvements within the current web content and therefore improved customer experience. The Hwb has received and dealt with 2,899 queries since its implementation this includes 184 DSU enquiries.
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- **Progress Report Update October 18th 2021**
 - The website has ample information, we are currently reviewing pages to ensure the language is clear and that the customer journey is as straightforward as possible. Our aim is that all correspondence and communication is consistent to avoid any confusion, and this may lead to us including simple video content to explain certain processes. To date we have amended 5 different letter/email templates and amended more than 5 key sections of the website.
 - The website is required to link to 3 different portals 'Arcus', info@work and the WG planning application Wales. To avoid confusion, we must stop referencing to this as the planning portal.
 - Using Arcus instead of info@work as our primary document management system.
 - Make changes to the public register section of arcus on the website to ensure the search and application reference pages more user friendly - enabling the user to locate application files more easily.
 - Await confirmation from Arcus on additional functionality within the system that we're not currently using for example having a PDF editor that would allow planning officers to edit and add scales to plans.
 - Arrange additional training and create a training programme for all staff to fully understand the system.
 - The planning pages of the corporate website now also has a pop-up function which allows us to highlight any changes to any planning policies. For example, the TAN 15 Policy change from 1 Dec.
 - Extending/Changing your home – this is a new page which has an eform 'check if you need planning?' for any existing property enquiries only.
 - Report a Breach (Planning) New Enforcement Page is now live, with 2nd stage to follow.

- We will introduce to the website the milestone markers for certain processes so that customers who come back and forth will know where they are within the process.
- We aim to create new content to highlight why have an architect / agent and what's involved in the planning process. We feel this will address failure demand and better understanding of the process. Complete by January 2022
- Major projects will be uploaded to the website in an accessible format as soon as possible and a refresh of the current content will be done to ensure no reference to the old way of working.

- More than 50 FAQs have now been loaded onto the website and these are updated and added to on a regular basis. These are the FAQs that staff, planning Hwb and customer service use to ensure consistency in our engagement, messaging and responses.
- Member seminar and agent meeting have been conducted and further meetings will be arranged as part of the engagement programme
- Corporate consultation will support planning enforcement with their public consultation. Aim to get this out early Jan 2022. A specific programme on how this will be communicated will also be put in place.
- We will set up specific focus groups to analyse the effectiveness of the customer journey on certain web pages such as making changes to your home, submitting a planning application, and what's involved in a planning process. Complete Feb 2022
- Develop an engagement feedback form for all successful applicants to complete to rate the service and monitor ways in how we improve moving forward. Would need to see how this would work with agents.
- Develop a message that can be sent to persistent callers so that a clear and consistent message is sent to close off certain enquiries.
- A press release, Leader's statement and a member's bulletin update has been prepared to clarify and respond to the planning audit review. We had eight press enquiries – six of these we provided the Leader's statement. The other two were from Wales Online and were follow-up enquiries to which we responded with an updated statement reflecting the progress made since receiving the audit reports.
- Actions 'Establish a Planning Customer Charter setting out clearly the standards and timescales service users can expect.' / Review Planning Services content online and improve availability of online forms. / Establish an on-going engagement programme with customers including agents & developers are all extended to November 30th 2021 due to volume of work required in these areas.

Progress Report November 26th 2021

- Action on establishing a Planning Customer Charter linked directly to improvements in communication and web content (R16.3) and is an expression of clarity around what the customer can expect of the Planning Service and what the service should expect from its customers.
- The following key elements have been or are in the process of being implemented.
 - ❖ Major projects/applications protocol was reported to CMT 28th October 2021.
 - ❖ Consultation Protocol was reported to CMT 23rd September
 - ❖ Enforcement Statement reported to Pre-Cabinet on the 15th November.

- Note the customer charter is not a single document but an expression of the Planning Services commitment to the customer expressed through the online content and the above protocols etc.

Well-Being of Future Generations

R17 The Council should take the opportunity in any changes to the planning service to consider how it might act more closely in accordance with the sustainable development principles in contributing to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives.

Ref No	Action	Start Date	Target Date for Completion	Status	Responsible Officer
R17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will carry out a full Integrated Impact Assessment and ascertain opportunities to fully embed all sustainable development principles of the Well-Being of Future Generations to ensure any changes contribute fully to the Council's Well-Being objectives. 	01/09/21	01/11/21	On-Going	Noelwyn Daniel

Progress Update September 20th 2021

- The Planning Services Business Plan for 2021/22 is being revised for presenting to the Communities Scrutiny members in October.
- Work will commence on developing the Divisional business plan for 2022/23 in October and look to utilise the new approach to Integrated Impact Assessments which will take into full account of the sustainable development principles. It will also review the contribution to the Council's Well-Being objectives.

