

Appendix A

NUMBER	PROPOSAL	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING REIMAGINED GROUP	PURPOSE	TIMESCALE	Update
1	Pre-application	Review fees and charges proposed for Pre-App Service	Improve the quality of applications coming into the Authority, make applications more efficient and to ensure appropriate charge is levied for each type of development	Completed by the end of 2020	Revised pre-app fees proposal completed. Over 2022, we will need to develop a single pre-app fee structure for Somerset to go live April 2023. A standard form is still required but work on this paused as this is a product on Local Government Reform.
2	Validation	Validation guide approved at DX. Following feedback a review is to be completed to ensure balance is correct between getting the application right first time and not making the process over burdensome for applicants due to requests for additional documents/plans	Speed up the validation process and reduce failure demand/dissatisfaction with the service	Ongoing; complete review to be conducted by the end of February 2021	Review completed. Speed of validation has also improved and the process simplified for smaller applications
3	Consultation	Produce a training video for new PC/TC / Members to watch, outlining the planning process and their role in the process as a consultee.	Improve understanding of the planning process and reduce the requests for additional time for the consultation process	Feb 2021	Training carried out with Members. Flow chart of the scheme of delegation designed and shared. Planning update was shared with PC/TC in their newsletter on the planning process
4		All consultation paperwork to be sent digitally to PC's and TC's	Save Case Officer time and reduce environmental impact	Commencing November 2020	Completed

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5		Address issue that PC/TC feel they are not given 21 days to respond to the consultation documents	Ensure the process is transparent and encourage response within the time frame of 21 days	In November 2020	Completed
6		Review the order documents appear on the planning portal	To make feedback to consultation easier and speed up responses	In November 2020	Completed-Unable to change documents order on the portal
7	Negotiation	Strategy to be agreed at DX	Provide clear framework for officers and customers. Reduce the time spent negotiating an application, speed up decision making.	Jan DX 2020	Completed
8	Planning Committees	Applications marked as two-star go straight to regulation committee	To reduce the need of applications to being considered twice and manage the expectations of the public.	November 2020 (Lead Specialist to speak to Area Chairs)	Completed
9	Planning reports	Produce standardised reports for applications	Make report writing a quicker process for the officer, and provide consistency across the service making it easy for readers to follow.	By Christmas 2020 (Lead Specialist to discuss with Area/Regulation Chairs)	Checklist report format reviewed. Due to Local Government Reform there is a need to standardise report structures across the Somerset LPA's
10	Scheme of delegation	Revise the scheme of delegation. To remove the need for householder application to go to Area Committee	Speed up the processing of householder applications and reduce the time spent at Area Committee's for officers	Jan DX 2021	Completed- Approved by Council January 2021

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11	Planning Enforcement	Provide an update to all Members on the Enforcement process	Give Members the confidences and the tools to assist PC/TC's etc reporting an enforcement issue	By Christmas 2020 (will include update on progress of dealing with existing cases)	Completed in January 2022, delayed due to resourcing and significant increased demand for the service
12		Members to promote process, once confidence is given that cases will be actioned	To increase understanding about the service and ensure reports of possible breaches are provided through the correct online channel	From February 2021	The new process has been implemented. We now have additional resource. All reports over 3 months old have now been initially reviewed and this is continues to improve.
13	Conservation	Review policy to allow buildings to be improved sympathetically to meet modern needs, whilst engaging with conservation groups.	To ensure SSDC has a modern approach to this evolving issue working closely with conservation groups so it does not delay planning application being determined	By March 2021	Revised target date of April 2022
14	Training and Communication	Built Environment Lead Specialist to set up regular meetings with the Area Chairs and Regulation Chair to ensure up to date on legislation	Improve the consistency of decision making at Area Committee's and reduce the number of applications referred to Regulation Committee.	To commence in November 2020	Completed

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15		Provide more technical updating and training to all Members on the planning process	Ensure decisions are being made using the Planning Framework give consistency across the Committees.	To commence in November 2020 (to be dealt with as part of the meetings between the Lead Specialist and Area/Regulation Chairs)	Completed
16		Produce a clear procedure for calling in a decision to AC	Reduce the number of decision called in, ensure Committee time is focused on the more important planning matters and provide consistency across the AC system	By January 2021	Completed
17		Raise the issue of the inconsistency of the Planning Inspectors at a national level	To provide formal feedback on the variance in decision making by PINS	In October 2020	Completed