



Best Value Review of Planning Services
Report

November 2003

Best Value Review of Planning Services

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Part 1 Background and Overall Issues

The Best Value Review of Planning Services is part of the IW Council's review programme for 2002/03. It began in November 2002 and was aimed at the whole Planning Service which consists of the following areas:

- Development Control
- County Archaeology Service
- Building Control
- AONB
- Planning Policy
- Countryside

The review was undertaken as a result of identified performance issues in the Development Control section, the need for a service review following the appointment of a Head of Service, and the public perception that 'Planning' was failing, as expressed by elected members and some stakeholders. It was also highlighted in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) as an area for improvement.

The review was carried out between November 2002 and September 2003 culminating in the consideration of the improvement plan by its stakeholders and the IWC Executive in November 2003.

The Improvement Plan – (part 3 of this report), will be incorporated into the Planning Services departmental plans, and these will be reviewed and monitored by Members and Officers of the Council through their lifetime, to help ensure that the improvements are implemented successfully.

The review was conducted by members of the Council's Best Value Team and a project officer from the Planning service, by means of two main steering / contact groups. The first group consisted of elected members and a Unison Representative, and this Appraisal Group was instrumental in agreeing the overall scope of the review and steering the review. The second group, the Project Team consisted of officers from the service together with the lead Member and the Best Value Team and project officer. Customer consultation was undertaken by the Best Value team members and sought to involve all parties interested in the Planning process, both internal and external. Documentation relating to the processes undertaken during the review can be examined in the Appendices at the end of the main report.

The Issues

The Improvement Plan necessarily concentrates on the areas where the review has found potential for improvement, which will lead to a more customer focussed, understandable, and well managed, service. The service already has a dedicated staff and elected members, who all work hard to provide the local community with a good Planning service under increasing pressure. The number of planning applications has increased from 2,100pa to 2,600pa (an increase of 23% over the last two years). In addition, there has been increased public awareness and consultation due to more openness shown by the Planning Service (eg public speaking at Development Control Committee). There is a commitment to change, and this was shown by the willingness of all concerned to participate in the review and open themselves to new ideas and challenges.

The service already has a good record of partnership working, it is improving in terms of performance indicators, (despite increased workload), and has recently undergone an Investors in People assessment with positive results. There is a change of culture taking place which will enable the service to move forward and face the challenges of the future, and therefore the recommendations that follow should be seen in a positive light which will further improve the service for all customers, elected members, and staff alike.

The main issues which were identified in the review were :

- The service as a whole and its individual components was not fully understood by all stakeholders, nor did the service offer clear easily accessible customer focussed charters and protocols. As a result the expectations of users of the service did not match the actual service being provided, leading to a lack of trust and confidence.
- There were performance problems particularly in respect of Development Control turn around figures on Major Planning applications and to a lesser extent with other applications.
- Public consultation had identified inconsistency as an issue both in terms of the decision making process, and pre-application advice.
- That although generally member / officer relationships were positive, some member / officer relationships were not as good as they could be, and probity was an issue questioned by external stakeholders of the Planning service.
- Planning was not regarded as a 'seamless' service by stakeholders, and internally there were issues relating to the relationship of sections to one another.
- The aims and goals of the Enforcement section needed to be clarified for elected members and the general public, and a closer working relationship with the Building Control section developed.
- The service was not seen to be furthering Corporate goals through the use of Section106 Agreements.

- The Development Control Committee was not as focussed and professional as it should be, and there were hearing and visual problems for the public in the Council Chamber.
- There was a lack of clarity, which was possibly linked to the service being too inward looking and reactive, rather than pro-actively taking issues and information out to the public.

Part 2 Identified Improvements

The Vision

The vision for Planning is to provide an excellent service, via the Local Development Framework, which ensures that the future sustainable use of land on the Island is based around community needs. The service provided will be fast and efficient, and will be one which keeps the public involved and well informed.

In overall terms the Service will have four main targets for short, medium and long term service provision :

- Will meet the Government Standard for major applications by March 2004.
- Will meet the government's requirements for e-service delivery by March 2005.
- Will have a Local Development Framework in place by December 2006.
- Meet all of the criteria in the Excellence Matrix of the Planning Officers Society by the end of 2007.

Priorities within the improvement plan will therefore be the speed of processing applications (including the development team approach), the development of better information for Members and the general public, and improved focus on customer service improvements including access to the service electronically.

Aims and Objectives

Part II of the plan incorporates the main themes of the Audit Commission's paper on improving Planning services which sets out five key aims for such improvement as follows :

Focussing on what matters to local people
Assuring the quality of development
Enhancing Customer Care
Reducing the delay in Development Control
Reinforcing management systems to assure quality

The improvements below have been organised under these headings, along with a section of specific service improvements, which have been identified as a result of the review. In line with the improved management culture of the service, each of the following improvements will be monitored.

The improvement plan (Part 3 of this report), details all of the tasks to be undertaken and allocates agreed timescales and adequate resource to complete the objectives listed. The items listed under "what we will do" refer to specific tasks which can be monitored in Part 3. Those task numbers are shown within [] brackets. Items have been prioritised and allocated target dates for completion. Part IV outlines the main sources of information which informed the items identified for improvement. Part V outlines the National and Regional context in which the service has to operate.

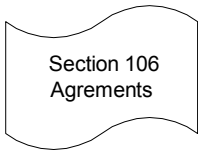
Improvements Index

The following index may be used when viewing this document in Microsoft Word. By clicking on the name of the improvement, eg Section 106 Agreements, you can go to that section directly. The blue arrow on the Windows toolbar will return you to the index.

1. [Section 106 Agreements](#)
2. [Local Development Framework](#)
3. [Enforcement](#)
4. [Tree Protection](#)
5. [On going consultation](#)
6. [Pre-application advice](#)
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18. [Conservation and design](#)
19. [AONB](#)
20. [Archaeology](#)
21. [Building Control](#)
22. [Countryside](#)
23. [Financial Implications](#)

Focussing on what matters to local people

1.



Evidence from the review showed that the IW Council is not consistent in its approach to Section 106 Agreements with applicants, and does not make the best use of them in line with policy to “Improve Island Life”.

What we want to achieve :

To greatly increase the Island’s gain from Section 106 Agreements in line with Corporate objectives.

What we will do :

Part 3 Item No.

Train officers and Members on awareness	[1]
Develop and implement a strategy for obtaining corporate gain from Sec.106 Agreements which includes a protocol & PI’s	[6]
Establish a system for monthly updates of Sec.106 Agreements	[7]
Agree financial monitoring processes for income from Sec.106 Agreements	[8]
Produce supplementary planning guidance on specific sites linking to Sec106 agreements	[44]
Ensure clear reporting mechanisms to committee regarding Sec106 agreements	[9]
Produce a standard template for legal agreements	[10]
Improve the use and co-ordination with legal services	[11]

2.



The Local Development Framework (LDF), as a replacement for the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), has been identified as one of the issues which will have a major impact on the Isle of Wight , and on the Planning Service for several reasons.

- First it will play a crucial role in the way in which the Planning Service enables large areas of the Community Plan and Corporate aspirations to be implemented.
- Second, it will affect the way policy decisions are made and implemented.
- Third it will impact upon the quality of decision making at Development Control level, whereby clear and concise policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will speed up decision making, and contribute to the submission of higher standards of application. The LDF will be directly linked to the service’s Planning Delivery Grant allocation in future years

The production of the LDF will provide an opportunity to strengthen the links between the Planning service and other service areas, such as Tourism, Economic Development, and Housing. The LDF will also enable linkages to corporate priorities and foster community engagement.

What we want to achieve?

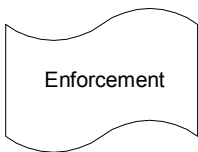
A corporate approach, producing a more responsive policy framework for the future of the Island.

What we will do :

Part 3 Item No.

Allocate sufficient staff resource and budget to produce the plan	[14]
Develop a project plan identifying the key stages and key consultees	[13]
Develop links and undertake early consultation between other service areas and the community as part of the LDF process, which not only feed into the development of the framework, but form the basis of continued dialogue and interaction once the framework has been approved and adopted .	[15]
Prepare draft core document for LDF in conjunction with key stakeholders	[16]
Produce a Local Development Framework by 2006	[18]

3.



Enforcement was identified as an area where there was no clear policy for the section to work to. Members stated that there needed to be a clearer message sent out that unauthorised development would be tackled firmly and consistently by the Council. There was a need to ensure the section had clear information available for customers, both in paper and electronic form. Other issues identified were the potential role for the Building Control Section to contribute to the Enforcement role especially in terms of site inspections, and the need for a protocol or service level agreement between the section and Legal Services who provide technical support. Too much Enforcement time is taken inspecting all conditional approvals.

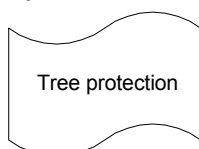
What do we want to achieve?

Rigorously pursue breaches of Planning law & increase public awareness.
Enable a clearer understanding of the section's role by all stakeholders.
Better linkages between the Enforcement section, the Building Control Section & the Legal Services section, leading to greater efficiency, and a more seamless service.
A more focussed section leading to a quicker more effective service.

What we will do:**Part 3 Item No.**

Develop an Enforcement Policy which will incorporate current Government guidance	[19]
Identify priorities for the section	[20]
Produce clear guidelines for stakeholders & a customer charter which adopts the recommendations of the nationally agreed Enforcement Concordat	[21]
Develop stronger links with the Building Control section to enable mutual working	[22]
Inspect conditional approval sites on a 'risk' basis only	[23]
Delegate the authority to officers to authorise the serving of Enforcement Notices	[24]
Ensure performance against local PI's is monitored and reported to committee	[25]
Improve the use and co-ordination with legal services	[11]

4.



Some 80% of Tree Protection Orders(TPOs) currently in force have been assessed as inadequate, and many are unenforceable. As well as a potential liability for compensation arising from incomplete information about protection being available to landowners, there is considerable pressure from Members and the public to show that

- a) we are committed to enforcing the protection we currently maintain, and
- b) we are properly able to make and implement new TPOs when necessary. Although there have been considerable improvements and investment in the service much remains to be done, and poor public image will take some time to put right.

What we want to achieve:

The provision and promotion of an effective tree protection section service

What we will do:**Part 3 Item No.**

Streamline the processes to enable new TPOs to be set up more quickly	[26]
Re-examine the TPO review, already approved by members, with a view to finding alternative resources for implementation	[27]
Recruit a TPO Review Officer	[28]
Employ expert tree contractors to facilitate prosecution and enforcement	[31]
Provide an efficient tree advice service	[28]
Standardise procedures for enforcement of TPO breaches	[31]
Agree an SLA with Legal Services	[11]

5.



Planning Services has had a somewhat limited and inconsistent approach to consultation and public involvement. It has carried out statutory consultation well, such as on planning applications and on the UDP, but in some areas does little proactive work beyond that.

What we want to achieve:

To develop a more proactive approach to major stakeholder involvement. For Members, Town and Parish Councils, special interest groups and the general public to be effectively involved in both the development of the service and the decision making process.

What we will do:

Part 3 Item No.

- | | |
|--|------|
| Develop user groups with whom we will consult on a regular basis, including a Planning Services Advisory Group, Agents forum, & Architects panel | [36] |
| Establish a regular meetings with Town & Parish Councils to discuss their involvement | [35] |

Assuring the quality of development

6.



There is a recognised need for the service to be more customer focussed, being clear and consistent in its advice and guidance.

What do we want to achieve? :

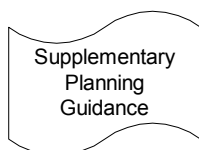
Enable applicants to understand the service, giving them clear information which will improve the service to the customer, the speed of processing of applications, lead to higher quality submissions, and better understanding of processes, and thus achieve quality outcomes.

What we will do :

Part 3 Item No.

Ensure applicants are aware of Sec106 requirements	[10]
Design & implement a protocol & checklist for Development Control (DC) & Building Control (BC) officers on pre-application advice.	[37]
Ensure all advice given by officers is recorded for future reference	[38]
Establish a Development Team as a single point of contact for major applications, involving all relevant parties, both internal and external	[39]
Integrate with the Great Access to Great Services system (GAGS)	[74]
Upgrade the web site information with Frequently Asked Questions & application /general guidance	[77]
Establish a Customer Care Team as a first point of contact for all customers	[83]
Design and implement a Customer Care Charter for the service	[87]

7.



There is currently a shortage of written guidance for developers and DC staff enabling detailed interpretation of existing policies

What do we want to achieve

Better information for developers and DC staff to enable worthwhile pre-application negotiation.

What we will do**Part 3 Item No.**

Identify priority issues / areas where Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is necessary	[41]
Allocate resource / budget to the production of SPG's	[43]
Prepare SPG's	[46]

8.



Members, both individually, and through the Development Control Committee (DCC), play a crucial role in the Planning process. It is vital that they are seen to be knowledgeable, informed, and impartial, and that they carry out their quasi judicial role on the DCC in a professional manner. This is not always seen to be the case. Furthermore, it is important that the DCC is easily accessible, open, and understandable.

Member and officer relationships within the service need to be more positive and productive with everyone aiming towards the same goal of a transparent, easily accessible, high quality service.

What we want to achieve :

That the public can see, hear, and understand what happens at DCC

That the public have trust and confidence in the process

Members and officers in all areas of the service understand and respect each others roles, and work together in a consistent way.

Members have a mechanism by which they can influence which projects are undertaken and follow the progress of those projects.

What we will do :**Part 3 Item No.**

Carry out improvements to the physical facilities where DCC is held	[48]
Investigate alternate venues for DCC	[51]
Amend the existing Code of Conduct in the Constitution	[56]
Review DCC report format	[61]
Member surgery at Seaclose	[62]
Ensure that each section has a prioritised list of projects which is available to members	[63]
Continue member training programme	[64]
Prepare quarterly report to all members on effectiveness of training	[65]
Revise the scheme of delegation	[66]

9.



Better quality of outcomes was identified as a goal by stakeholders, members and staff . Quality of outcome can be seen when high quality decisions are the norm, enabling such aspects as good design and sustainability to be attained

What we want to achieve

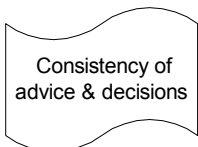
A service which is known for its ability to deliver quality decisions which benefit the community.

What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Promote good quality design within the community by instigating an annual design award scheme	[67]
Designate an elected member as Design Champion	[68]
Train staff and Elected members in design / sustainability issues	[69]
Revisit decisions, assess them, & thereby amend policies and procedures	[70]
Promote better quality applications via the Agents & Architects Group	[71]
Establish Conservation and Design team	[72]
Provide better quality pre-application advice	[37]
Produce SPG's	[41]
Via the Enforcement section, monitor compliance with agreed plans	[19]

10.



Consistency of advice and decisions has been identified as an area where the service can improve and thereby enhance stakeholders perception of the service.

What we want to achieve

A service, which is recognised as being fair, impartial, and consistent.

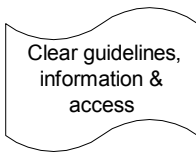
What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Train officers and members in all of the areas in which they give advice or make decisions	[64]
Revise scheme of delegation to establish objective criteria for reporting applications to committee.	[66]
Revisit decisions to ensure they are consistent & question where they are not	[70]
Make full use of the GAGS / Customer Relations Management (CRM) system	[74]
Ensure all advice given by officers is recorded for future reference	[38]

Enhancing Customer care

11.



Knowledge and understanding of the whole range of Planning Services is not good on the Island. There are perceptions that parts of it are inwardly focused, and not transparent. Some of the information supplied is very good, but some is inconsistent, difficult to understand, and not always widely available. Access to the service (other than for Archaeology) is limited to the one site at Seaclose, but is recognised as being good. There are occasional problems at peak times, with limited access to certain officers.

What we want to achieve:

A better understanding by Members, Town and Parish Councils and the general public, of the various roles of Planning Services, and how they are carried out.
An increase in trust in the overall process. Improved access to better information about planning. A customer focussed service.

What we will do:

Part 3 Item No.

Provide a wide range of information about what services are provided and why, how to apply for those services, and how to influence any decision making	[77]
Provide information in plain English, easily available on the web and as leaflets and guides, and available in a range of formats and languages.	[77]
Improve the Planning services input into the Council's Web site	[77]
Improve access by proactively targeting areas such as the Library service	[77]
Produce a Customer Charter for the service laying-out what the public can expect from each section, and what we would want from them.	[87]
Continue training for Members and Town & Parish Councils	[73]
In conjunction with the Great Access to Great Services project, expand the availability of access to the Service.	[74]
Establish Customer Care Team as first point of contact	[83]
Form User Groups	[36]
Instigate an understandable complaints procedure, and monitor	[94]
Develop guidance for business	[95]
Refurbish reception area	[96]
Examine the need for site notices on all Planning applications	[102]

12.



Access to the service is difficult, because it is not a seamless service. As has been stated under Clear Guidelines and Access there is a need to develop a customer orientated approach to the service and the development of the Seamless service will enable the integration of all service areas to form a more coherent service from the customers point of view.

What we want to achieve

Provide improved customer access to the service as a whole, presented as a single service, and not a collection of technical disciplines which just happen to be under one roof .

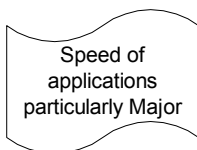
What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Establish Customer Care Team to provide first point of contact	[83]
Establish joint working between all sections	[104]–
	[110]
Examine the feasibility of an in-house ground stability advice team	[108]
Establish a Development Team	[39]

Reducing delay in Development Control

13.



The Council was cited last year for its failure to achieve satisfactory speed of determination on major applications. A standard of 50% of major applications to be determined within 13 weeks has been set for the year April 2003 to 2004. The current level of performance so far this year is 69%, a sizeable increase from the 42.5% achieved in 2002/03.

What we want to achieve:

Meet the Government's National Performance Indicator (PI) target for major applications during 2004/05 of 60%.

Higher levels of customer service

A more efficient service

What we will do :

Part 3 Item No.

Obtain Corporate buy-in to the Development Team approach	[40]
Set up a Development Team	[39]
Ensure project management training is undertaken by key members of the Development Team.	[39]
Set up monitoring procedure for major applications	[39]
Develop Service Level Agreements(SLA) with internal and external consultees	[39]
Ensure the successes of the development team are made know to the public	[40]
Agree a template for legal agreements	[10]
Improve the use and co-ordination with legal services	[11]
Provide more robust pre application advice	[37]
Draw up SPG for development sites.	[41]
Provide better information re Council's expectations of developers.	[71]
Rearrange the DC team structure.	[111]
Recruit additional DC staff	[112]
Re-engineer work processes	[113]

Reinforce management systems to assure quality

14.



Planning Services has found difficulty in recruiting and retaining professional planning staff, leading to a poorer quality service for stakeholders and the inability to meet Government targets.

What we want to achieve:

The recruitment and retention of sufficient suitably qualified and experienced staff to enable the provision of a 1st class service, and make the Isle of Wight Planning service an attractive career option.

What we will do:

Part 3 Item No.

Ensure appropriate staff training and development is undertaken, including the promotion of corporate and community engagement	[114]
Carry out exit interviews and staff for feedback on service improvement.	[115]
Encourage flexible working arrangements.	[116]
Develop a 'golden handshake' graduate scheme for IWC Planning Service.	[117]
Make use of consultants where beneficial	[119]
Consider ways of ensuring pay and conditions are competitive with other authorities, including performance related pay.	[120]
Take advantage of the Corporate Human Resources Strategy	[120]
Involve and communicate with staff on all potential developments	[120]
Regularly review staffing levels to align with the service plan	[121]
Enhance training for managers & staff through Personal Performance Reviews (PPR), as a part of retaining IIP status.	[130]
Continue with other work on Investors In People	[130]

15.



Overall the Planning service has the potential to develop further its performance management culture.

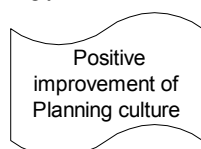
What we want to achieve:

Higher levels of performance through establishing a culture of performance management.

What we will do:**Part 3 Item No.**

Produce a performance management plan, with the development of local PI's	[122]
Measure progress of improvement and adjust business plan accordingly	[123]
Use the Best Value Improvement Plan as the basis for the Service Plan	[125]
Allocate resources to priority areas	[125]
Play an active part in New Unitaries Benchmarking group, and other groups, and monitor best practice	[126]
Undertake gap analysis on the POS Excellence Matrix	[127]
Ensure information used is consistent and accurate	[128]

16.



The service is perceived as being too inward looking and re-active and not sufficiently customer focussed. It does not take a leading corporate role. It also needs to celebrate it's successes.

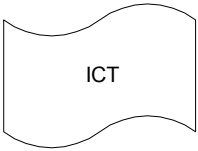
What we want to achieve:

An active and leading role in external and internal cross cutting projects.
 Effective communication with stakeholders.
 Improve staff ability and commitment to change the culture, and to celebrate it's success. A closer liaison with the local media

What we will do**Part 3 Item No.**

Provide helpful customer orientated advice.	[37]
Set up a Development Team approach for developers to engage in new project ideas.	[39]
Develop Project Management as a management skill	[39]
Ensure the public has access to Planning matters through GAGS	[74]
Develop a Customer Charter	[87]
Develop strategies for serial complainants	[94]
Retain Investors In People (IIP) status	[130]
As part of the continuing IIP process, develop strategies for celebrating success.	[130]
Ensure staff involvement and support in all service development.	[130]
Review consultation protocols with major stakeholders.	[131]
Implement an effective consultation system with all its major stakeholders	[132]
Develop a media strategy	[133]

17.



Information Communication Technology (ICT) and its effective use is essential to the existing and the developing service. It was seen by both members and officers as fundamental to service improvement and the future of the Planning Service.

What we want to achieve

To develop a strategy for ICT within the Planning Service which not only ensures quality service delivery, but which enables the ICT Department to provide timely support and assistance, in line with the Corporate aims and objectives and central governments targets for electronic service delivery.

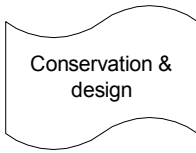
What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| Produce and adopt an ICT strategy for the service. | [134] |
| Incorporate Document Imaging process within service | [138] |
| Examine use of Customer Relations Management systems | [139] |

Section specific improvements

18.



A new Conservation & Design section is to be established in the Policy team, and it is important that it develops its new role, as well as retaining strong links with the Development Control team

What we want to achieve

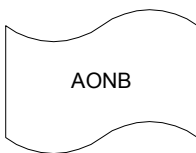
A more proactive, focussed, and better understood Conservation & Design Service.

What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Establish the Conservation and Design team	[72]
Agree a protocol with all relevant sections for early consultation on applications likely to involve Conservation or design matters	[140]
Establish a set of Performance Indicators, and monitor	[141]
Develop and adopt Conservation Area Appraisals	[143]
Appraise the need for new conservation areas	[144]
Produce a buildings at risk register & associated grant / loan scheme	[145]
	[147]
Produce a list of buildings of interest	[146]
Establish and participate in regeneration schemes	[148]
Set up a design award scheme	[67]
Produce SPG	[47]

19.



The AONB Unit is the staff arm of the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership (IW AONB Partnership) and is hosted by the Isle of Wight Council within the Planning Policy Section. The AONB Unit is preparing the new Statutory AONB Management Plan with the broader Isle of Wight AONB Partnership on behalf of the Local Authority in line with new legislation.

What we want to achieve

Recognition of the raised protection and profile of the AONB in light of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 by all, in particular those with a new 'duty of regard' towards its conservation and enhancement.

Clarification of the role of the AONB Unit within the planning process, and its wider responsibilities, for elected members, officers, and the public.

What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

The production and adoption of an AONB Management Plan	[149]
The review of the Plan within 5 years of publication	[150]
The partnership delivery of the Management Plan's associated Action Plan	[151]
Encouragement and monitoring of the fulfilment of the new 'duty of regard' for AONB conferred on all public bodies	[152]
Identification of AONB condition and AONB performance monitoring techniques and mechanisms.	[153]

20.



The County Archaeology Service plays an important role in the protection of the historic environment through the local planning process. At present there is no specialist planning archaeologist post dedicated to the provision of this advice. The Island does not have an up to date County Research Framework to provide the strategic context for all decisions about archaeological resource, and the Council has no Historic Environment Strategy with which it can inform its elected members, officers, and other stakeholders.

What we want to achieve

The role of the Service within the Development Control process and its wider responsibilities must be clarified for elected members, officers and the public.

The operational and strategic mechanisms should be put into place to improve the Service's contribution to the management of the historic environment.

What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Define the role and procedures of the service in the planning process	[154]
Determine performance indicators and monitor these	[155]
Produce an Historic Environment Strategy to inform elected members, officers and other stakeholders	[156]
Produce a County Research Framework which will provide strategic guidance on all decisions about the archaeological resource	[157]
Investigate funding sources for a planning archaeologist	[158]

21.



What we want to achieve

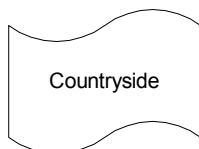
Continuous service improvement and a wider understanding of the services role.

What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Agree input into the Development Control & Enforcement process	[105]- [108]
Produce a Policy statement for the section	[159]
Develop performance indicators for the section & monitor, including indicators designed to measure market share	[160]
Set up a BC user group	[161]
Review all processes and refine them	[162]
Develop a marketing strategy for the BC service & promotion of BC	[163]
Appoint an additional BC officer	[164]

22.



The role of the section needs to be clarified for the public and elected members.

What we want to achieve

The provision and promotion of an effective and integrated Countryside Service

What we will do

Part 3 Item No.

Develop local performance indicators for the section, and monitor	[165]
Draw up a Countryside Strategy	[166]
Develop links with the Education Department	[169]
Input into an Open Space Strategy for the Island	[170]
Develop a procedure for meeting the new statutory obligations for managing SSSI's owned by the Council	[171]
Promote community based work	[172]
Define the role of the section in relation to the Planning process, and the procedures for input into that process.	[173]
Develop Bio-diversity action plan	[174]

Financial Implications

Improvement	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Recruit a qualified Tree Officer	25	27	29
Recruit additional professional staff for Development Control	65	69	74
Appoint additional Building Control Officer	25	27	29
Identify and allocate sufficient staff/resources for the implementation of the Local Development Framework project plan	70	60	227
<p>Note : A bid for the above Service Plan items for 2004/5 has been made via the Council's normal budget allocation process. Assuming this bid is successful, the remainder of the cost of service improvements shown below, would have to be met from Planning Delivery Grant over the next two / three years. On current performance levels, indications are that the grant for next year would be sufficient, and assuming improvements to the service take place as planned it is likely that the same case would apply in 2005/2006.</p> <p>If the bid for an increase to the services base budget is unsuccessful, or the Planning Delivery Grant fails to meet anticipated levels, then the Improvement Plan would be insufficiently resourced and could not proceed in it's present form.</p>			
Establish Customer Care Team in the Planning Service, providing the first point of contact for customers of all Planning Services:-	15	15	15
Early consultation with key stakeholders and the Community on the Core LDF Document and policy issues based on the Community Strategy	30	67	0
Streamline admin part of TPO process	18	20	22
Progress recommendations in TPO review	82	82	82
Establish and monitor an Agents and Architects forum to cover planning issues.	0.25	0.25	0.25
Improve Vision of public gallery of Council Chamber	5	0	0

Improvement	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Establish an annual design award scheme	3	3	3
Arrange training for staff and elected members in design / sustainability issues	2.5	0	2.5
Train officers and members in all areas that they give advice or make decisions	17	17	17
Ensure all advice given by Officers is recorded	5	0	0
Provide a further programme of training for Town and Parish Councils.	2	0	2
GAGS Implementation plan	0.50	0	0
Publish Updated Customer Charter	5	0	0
Redesign and refurbish reception area at Seaclose	35	0	0
Examine the feasibility of providing an in-house ground stability advice service, including a business case.	15	15	15
Introduce Graduate Planner posts.	3	3	3
Ensure representation at POS, HIPOG, and NUB benchmarking meetings	1	1	1
Implement an ICT plan for Planning based on the ICT Strategy.	20	20	20
Incorporate Document Imaging Process within Planning Services	17	18	19
Develop a loan scheme for buildings at risk	20	20	20
Develop a strategy for managing / maintaining SSSI's	10	10	10
Total	£491,250	£474,250	£590,750