The Planning Inspectorate
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Minutes

Title of meeting	PINS Board Meeting
Date	16 August **Time** 10:00
Venue	Brunel, Bristol
Chair	Sara Weller (**SW**) – Chairman
Present	Sarah Richards (**SR**) – Chief Executive
	Jayne Erskine (**JE**) – Non Executive Director
	David Holt (**DH**) – Non Executive Director
	Mark Southgate (**MS**) – Chief Operating Officer
	Jon Banks (**JB**) – Acting Director, Corporate Services
	Tony Thicket (**TT**) – Director, Wales
	Jayne Beeslee (**JBe**) – Acting Director, People and Change
In attendance	Richard Addison (**RA**) – Statistics Manager (items 4)
	Phil Hammond (**PH**) – Director, Casework (item 5)
	Tom Warth (**TW**) – Head of (item 5)
	Duane Oakes (**DO**) – Senior Statistics Manager (item 7)
	Bob O'Brien (**BOB**) – (item 8)
	Natasha Perrett (**NP**) – Board Secretary
Apologies	Susan Johnson (**SJ**) - Non Executive Director
	Simon Gallagher (**SG**) – Director of Planning, DCLG
Observer	Alex O'Doherty

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 11 February 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
8.	**Tony Thickett**	The Welsh Language Measure update should include how we address funding, either by recharging for the service or budgeting for the cost.	6.14	**By 2 November –** for 10 November PINS Board.

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 5 May 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
6.	Tom Warth	Identify the skill shortages and address these to prepare for new intakes of work.	6.2	**By 2 November –** for 10 November PINS Board.
7.	Tom Warth	Carry out more work around: • scenario planning and then use these for forward planning	6.3	**By 2 November –** for 10 November

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
		• include the impact on resourcing and income • the impact on the Business Plan • the impact of moving people		PINS Board.
8.	**Mark Southgate** & Rachael Pipkin	Discuss lead in times and resource challenges with DCLG colleagues for PINS on the areas of work which will change.	7.5	**Complete** - Discussed with Simon Gallagher (DCLG). Operational impact of current and potential policy changes are discussed at DCLG Planning Reform Programme Board (MS attends) and policy leads are engaging with PINS colleagues on operational impact.
9.	**Tom Warth** & Mark Southgate	Develop a risk map which covers financial risk and people/ reputational risk.	7.7	**By 2 November** – for 10 November PINS Board.
12.	Rachael Pipkin	Review and transfer risks to the strategic risk register.	7.12	**Complete** - Under the new risk management framework, risks arising from policy changes are being tracked through the Emerging Policy Risk Register and escalated through the Operations Risk Register, to be managed by that Group and escalated to MB for the SRR as necessary. Significant risks identified through this process have been included on the SRR (ref S05).

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 2 June 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
6.	Mark Southgate	CQPS Committee to review HAS performance at the September meeting.	5.12	**Complete** – item 5 on the September CQPSC

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
				agenda.
10.	Ben Linscott	Explore training opportunities with the MoJ.	10.7	**In progress –** BL has liaised with GLD and has a further meeting with their Head of Planning Litigation on 13 September. A plan for the potential interaction / shared training / experience with MoJ will be drafted for the Board. NP will agree a date with BL.
11.	Ben Linscott	Review the reasons for failure and success in planning challenges.	10.8	**By 2 November –** for 10 November CQPSC meeting. Following discussion with Jo Esson, it was agreed this would be taken as an item at the November CQPSC. Added to the CQPSC forward planner.

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 7 July 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
4	Stuart Campbell	Stakeholder Engagement and the Reputation Survey to be added to the agenda for September meeting.	7.4	**Complete –** Item 8 on the September agenda.

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 16 August 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
1.	Jon Banks	Bring a briefing back to the Board which looks at the impact of our hearings and inquiries performance on housing and economic output.	3.6	**Complete –** included in the Hearings, Inquiries and Band 3 inspectors paper. Item 6 on the September agenda.
2.	Mark Southgate	Check 7-10 day validation performance for CTP appeals and include in the commentary	4.3	**Complete –** included in the PINS Board MI

		in the next MI pack.		pack.
3.	Richard Addison	Retitle the "Resource spend without budget chart" to "Forecast Accuracy" to better reflect what was being measured.	4.4	**Complete** – included in the MI pack to the Board.
4.	Jon Banks	Present the run rate and year end forecast to the Board.	4.5	**Complete** – included in the PINS Board MI pack.
5.	Jon Banks/ Peter Sloman	Update FKP15 audit recommendations table to include a RAG status against PINS view of the progress against the audit actions.	4.6	**In progress** – Audit recommendations (FKP15) are reported quarterly to the Board. This update will be in the November MI pack.
6.	Jayne Beeslee	Take forward an item at the October People Committee on absences and what is behind the absence data.	4.8	**By 5 October** for the 13 October People Committee. The latest and more detailed absence data will be considered by the September People Group.
7.	Jon Banks/ Tracey Jones	Add 2 columns to PFKP12 (Business plan delivery) to include, how well we are progressing against the actions and if we will deliver the quality of output required.	4.9	**In progress** – The Business Plan delivery update (PFKPI2) is reported quarterly to the Board. This update will be in the November MI pack.
8.	Jayne Beeslee	Discuss with Dave Cobbin, the ability to split the planning casework staff survey results by classic and PCO.	5.6	**Complete –** It has been agreed that we will break down the survey results based as closely as possible on the future PCO structure.
9.	Jon Banks	Bring step 1 of the project back to the PINS Board in October and step 2/3 back to the Board in December alongside initial budget discussions.	6.8	**By 5 October** for the 13 October PINS Board.
10.	Tom Warth & Mark Southgate	Take forward band 3 resource considerations as part of the item coming to the September Board on hearings and inquiries performance.	7.5	**Complete –** Item 6 on the September agenda.

11.	Jan Ryan	Jan Ryan to include how we are going to leverage our digital capabilities to improve delivery of service to our customers (e.g. through improved self-service tools) as part of the IT update at the October Board.	8.3	**By 5 October** for the 13 October PINS Board.
12.	Natasha Perrett	Make amendments to the forward planner and circulate the revised planner to the PINS Board.	9.1	**Complete –** circulated 23 August.

Minutes

1.0	**Welcome and Declaration of Interests** 1.1 The Chair welcomed PINS Board members and Alex O'Doherty, Board observer, to the meeting. 1.2 The Chair called for Declarations of Interest of which there were none.
2.0	**Minutes of 7 July Board Meeting** 2.1 No further comments were received on the July PINS Board minutes. 2.2 MS gave an update on action 8 from the May meeting 'Discuss lead in times and resource challenges with DCLG colleagues for PINS on the areas of work which will change'. 2.3 MS will be meeting SG on Thursday 18 August. Discussions with DCLG colleagues are taking place and there is good engagement. MS is taking a paper to the DCLG Planning Reform Programme Board on 18 August about the planning appeal backlog. **Agreed:** 2a) The minutes reflect a true and accurate record of the July meeting.
3.0	**Chief Executive's update** 3.1 SR reported that she had a positive introductory meeting with Lesley Griffiths the newly appointed Welsh Minister. 3.2 Sajid Javid, Secretary of State (SoS) for DCLG and Gavin Barwell, Housing and Planning Minister visited PINS on the 27 July. The SoS and the Minister had a short meeting with SR, MS and Ben Linscott, which was followed by a walk around the office where they spoke to teams. 3.3 The first staff engagement panel took place on the 11 August. The meeting was well attended, with varying grades of office based staff, and inspectors dialling in. Suggestions were received on how to use the group moving forward, these include review of the Performance Management

Review process and PINS visioning work.

3.4 The Senior Leadership Team restructure will launch on the 17 August.

3.5 Management Board are focusing on hearing and inquiry performance. Whilst s78 written representation performance is improving, hearing and inquiry performance is not so good. A small group is reviewing how we can increase our senior inspector resources considering a range of options. A further update will be provided to the Board as an agenda item for September.

3.6 SW suggested Management Board's briefing to the Board looks at the impact of our hearings and inquiries performance on housing and economic output.

Agreed:
3a) To note the update from the CEO.
3b) JB to bring a briefing back to the Board which looks at the impact of our hearings and inquiries performance on housing and economic output.

4.0	**Management Information (MI) reporting pack**

4.1 The Management Board response on performance recognises the emerging issues around s78 hearings and inquiries. JB explained with the work of the small group focussing on this issue, there is confidence we will bring performance back on track.

4.2 Reductions to the backlog continue in line with the yellow trajectory on page 6.

4.3   There was a discussion around the baseline and current position figures. RA explained the baseline figures need to be reviewed. At present the classic appeals and CTP appeals are pulled together to give the baseline figures. Under CTP, MS explained there is a gap between the receipt date and 'start' of the appeal. The target to validate appeals is 7-10 days. SW asked are we achieving this for appeals in CTP. MS said we are not and agreed to check and include current performance his commentary in the next MI pack.

4.4   JB explained we are currently carrying an underspend against our budget.   Work is underway to bring the underspend down, by bringing forward projects and looking at inspector resource. SW asked if the income variance should be red: is this sending the right message? JB said it does send the right message as more discipline is needed around forecasting. As income changes, JB explained he would expect to see a corresponding resource figures change but this is not always happening. It was agreed that this chart should be retitled as "Forecast Accuracy" to better reflect what was being measured.

4.5   DH said we need to understand the key KPIs, target run rate and the

risks associated with this to make sure we utilise the underspend. It was agreed missing operational targets, while underspending budget provided for Inspector recruitment would not be an acceptable outcome. SW said the Board needs to see a year-end forecast to understand how big the underspend is likely to be, and how we can improve year end performance. MS explained the run rate issue is for s78 hearing and inquiry cases, which will be reviewed by Management Board.

4.6 The Board discussed FKP15 audit recommendations. It was agreed the table was primarily intended to track PINS' delivery of audit actions, and so should also include a RAG status against PINS view of the progress against the audit actions.

4.7 SW asked JB to use the data on unit costs (page 27) as part of the productivity project. JB confirmed he will be using the data as part of the project and will bring this back to the Board.

4.8 The working days lost trend is rising. SR explained the People Group are reviewing absence management and is due to report back to Management Board. JE explained we need to understand what is behind the absence. SW agreed and suggested JE and JBe take this forward as an item for the October People Committee.

4.9 There was discussion around the reporting against the Business Plan key actions. SW said it would be useful for the table to include how likely the actions are to deliver the required outcomes, as well as tracking how well we are progressing against the actions. A RAG status for expected outcomes would be helpful.

4.10 The Board agreed, for example, that the RAG status of green against customer service and stakeholder confidence could reasonably be considered to be red/ amber. This is due to the difference of input (where actions are being delivered) and output (where timeliness and therefore stakeholder confidence are behind where they should be in BAU). All of the key actions should be reviewed in this way.

4.11 DH suggested it would be useful to have 2 columns which show what we have recently achieved and what the view is on the longer term position. DH has seen the short term and long term view used elsewhere and will send a copy to JB.

Agreed:
4a) MS to check 7-10 day validation performance for CTP appeals and include in the commentary in the next MI pack.
4b) RA to retitle the "Resource spend without budget chart" to "Forecast Accuracy" to better reflect what was being measured.
4c) JB to present the run rate and year end forecast to the Board.
4d) JB/ PS update FKP15 audit recommendations table to include a RAG status against PINS view of the progress against the audit actions.

	4e) JBe take forward an item at the October People Committee on absences and what is behind the absence data. 4f) JB/ TJ to add 2 columns to PFKP12 (Business plan delivery) to include, how well we are progressing against the actions and if we will deliver the quality of output required.
5.0	**Casework Transformation Project (CTP), progress towards readiness for transition** 5.1 The CTP is in transition phase and is on track against the plan. Phase 1 of the project was initiated on the 18th July. This means all new planning band 1 and band 2 written representation and hearing appeals are processed by the Planning Casework Operations (PCO) team. 5.2 The project initiated phase 2 of the project on the 15th August, which saw more inspectors and case officers added to the PCO team. Transition of inspectors and case officers to the PCO team will continue through phases 3 and 4. A dedicated team continue to process appeals in the 'classic' casework environment. 5.3 Each case officer's workload is being monitored closely to make sure skills are matched to cases on complexity in the classic environment. TW explained this is also helping to provide a better service to customers. 5.4 The Board congratulated PH and the team for reaching 2 key milestones in the project. The Board also thanked all of the team involved in helping to shape and deliver the new service. 5.5 JE asked if any concerns or issues have been raised throughout the transition by those involved. PH said those moving to the PCO are recognising the benefits of the new way of working, whilst some of those facing transition are a little apprehensive. An extensive training programme has been designed which should help. TW explained managers are having 1-1 conversations with individuals to address concerns. 5.6 SW asked if the feedback from the staff survey could be split to show outcomes from those in the classic environment and those in the PCO team. This would give a view to the impact the new way of working is having on individuals. JBe agreed to look into this. **Agreed:** 5a) JBe to discuss with Dave Cobbin, the ability to split the planning casework staff survey results by classic and PCO.
6.0	**Productivity Project Scope** 6.1 JB explained the productivity project will be set out in 3 steps, 1 will be base lining and carrying out analysis of the impact of savings already planned within the SR response. Step 2 will be to identify further savings as part of budget planning for 2017/18. These savings will be assessed for viability and

	desirability. Step 3 will be to design and decide on new service options. 6.2 The Director of Finance and the Head of Finance will take overall responsibility for the project. The productivity project will have clear linkages with existing and new projects, which will be assessed for implications on productivity. 6.3 The Board discussed utilisation levels of staff and making sure we are doing the right things with people at the right levels. JE asked are there savings that can be identified by doing work at different grades. 6.4 DH said we need to have a clear understanding of "Activity Based Costings" i.e. to understand the things which cost the most money and attach the cost to doing different activities. We need to know exactly where our costs are. Understanding what costs us more per unit than others would be a good place to start. 6.5 There was some discussion around utilisation levels. JBe suggested reviewing data on other organisations that have faced similar challenges e.g. through data accessed from Companies House. Other departments that have transformed processes and costs, will have identified how much cases and investigations cost and may be able to share their learning with us. 6.6 SW said step 1 of the project should be to look at the spending review and the shared services plan to establish what this does to the base cost. Step 2 should be to carry out analysis of efficiency opportunities, such as reducing sickness absence, looking at the geographic and skills match between inspectors and work, and at communication opportunities to inform appellants and thus reduce demand for the services. Step 3 once steps 1 and 2 are complete, can be to consider the options to redesign the service we offer our customers. As part of step 2, SW said that DH's reference to the role of activity based costing need more work and detail. 6.7 The Board agreed step 1 of the project should come back to the Board in October, with an initial view of step 2/3 taking place at the December Board meeting alongside initial budget discussions. **Agreed:** 6a) JB to bring step 1 of the project back to the PINS Board in October and step 2/3 back to the Board in December alongside initial budget discussions.
7.0	**Implications of Brexit** 7.1 The Board reviewed a paper on possible implications of Brexit on PINS. In discussion with DCLG colleagues and after a review of LPA application statistics, there is no evidence in the reduction of applications being submitted since the EU referendum. Any potential impact is likely to be seen over the coming months and should be reviewed again in December.

	7.2 SW said it was good news that we could gain early insight into the likely submission of appeal numbers. This gives us the opportunity to flex inspector resources to meet demand at Bands 1 and 2. 7.3 MS explained there are issues around private sector funding for some infrastructure projects. Some of this is not purely as a result of the EU referendum, but it will be having some impact. 7.4 DH said we need to look at how we use our band 3 resource if we are not allocating them to NSIP casework. Is there an opportunity to use this resource for other casework. 7.5 The Board agreed band 3 resource should be considered as part of the item coming to the September Board on hearings and inquiries. Consideration should be given to allocating this resource to hearings and inquiries casework to assist performance. **Agreed:** 7a) It is too early to assess the impact of the EU referendum. We should continue to monitor the pipeline of work and review in November/ December in line with the Budget preparations. 7b) TW and MS to take forward band 3 resource considerations as part of the item coming to the September Board on hearings and inquiries performance.
8.0	**Horizon Demonstration** 8.1 BOB gave a presentation to the Board on Horizon, the system used to process our cases and the appeals casework portal which is used by our customers. 8.2 Horizon is now the single platform for our main casework types. As a result of decommissioning other systems we have made in year savings. 8.3 IT is an item on the October Board agenda. SW said this should also include how we are going to leverage our digital capabilities to improve delivery of service to our customers (e.g. through improved self-service tools). **Agreed:** 8a) Jan Ryan to include how we are going to leverage our digital capabilities to improve delivery of service to our customers (e.g. through improved self-service tools) as part of the IT update at the October Board.
9.0	**Forward agenda & AOB** 9.1 The following amendments should be made to the forward agenda: September • Hearing, Inquiries and Band 3 performance update • Stakeholder Engagement and Reputation Survey • Readiness for changes to the NSIP fee regime

- Board Effectiveness Review

October
- IT update including – Smarter Working progress, IT Strategy and Roadmap and Digital Transformation
- Strategic Plan
- Productivity Project, phase 1
- DNS update
- Welsh Language Measure, Election outcomes and risks (subject to timing, TT to advise).

November
- Workforce Planning NI update inc runway capacity update

December
- Budget – including latest view on impact of Brexit, NSIP pipeline and Band 3 resources
- Productivity project, phases 2/3, broader project overview

January 2017
- Approve 2017/18 Budget
- Initial review of delivery plans (e.g. People Plan, IT Plan)

February 2017
- Approve Business Plan
- Agree KPIs to include in MI pack and targets for 17/18

9.2 NP to circulate the revised forward planner to the PINS Board.

AOB

9.3 PINS Board agreed a meeting in August 2017 may not be necessary. The CEO report and MI pack could be provided by circulation and would be sufficient to keep the Non-Executive Directors up to date.

9.4 This was the last PINS Board meeting for JBe, the Board took the opportunity to thank JBe for her contributions to the PINS Board and People Committee.

Agreed:
9a) NP to update the PINS Board forward planner.

Next meeting: 15 September 2016, 2.45 – 5.45