



Minutes

Title of meeting	PINS Board Meeting		
Date	15 September	Time	14:45
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 Susan Johnson (SJ) – Non Executive Director Mark Southgate (MS) – Chief Operating Officer Jon Banks (JB) – Acting Director, Corporate Services Tony Thickett (TT) – Director, Wales Simon Gallagher (SG) – Director of Planning, DCLG		
In attendance	Peter Sloman (PS) – Head of Finance & Commercial (items 5) Richard Addison (RA) – (item 5) Tom Warth (TW) – Head of (item 6) Stuart Campbell (SC) – Head of Communications (item 7) Jo Esson (JEs) – Head of Customer Quality (item 8) Peter Rowlstone (PR) – Project Manager (item 10)		
Observer	Natasha Perrett (NP) – Board Secretary John Pingstone		

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 – PINS Board agreed at the September meeting TT would give a verbal update at the 10 November PINS Board meeting. Paragraph 2.3 of the September minutes.

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scenario planning and then use these for forward planning • include the impact on resourcing and income • the impact on the Business Plan • the impact of moving people 	6.3	By 2 November – for 10 November PINS Board.
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.

Part One

Schedule of Actions – 2 June 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
10.	Ben Linscott	Explore training opportunities with the MoJ.	10.7	30 November – for the 8 December PINS Board meeting.
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 – 16 August 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
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 September MI pack for the November meeting.
6.	Jayne Beeslee transferred to Alison Cooper	Take forward an item at the October People Committee on absences and what is behind the absence data.	4.8	Complete – item 7 on the October People Committee agenda.

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 September MI pack for the November meeting.
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	Complete – item 8 on the October PINS Board agenda.
11.	Jan Ryan	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	Complete – included as part of item 9 – Transformation programme on the October Board agenda.

Part One

Schedule of Actions – 15 September 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
1.	Sarah Richards & Simon Gallagher	SR and SG to discuss the progress of the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and provide an update to the Board.	4.6	Complete - verbal update provided at the October PINS Board meeting.
2.	PINS Board	Provide feedback on the MI pack directly to Peter Sloman and Richard Addison.	5.3	Complete – item 5 on the October PINS Board agenda.
3.	Mark Southgate	Revise the performance by stage table to reflect the PCO steps.	5.6	By 2 November – for 10 November PINS Board.
4.	Jon Banks & Sarah Richards	Consider the budget underspend how we might use some of the funding to improve service to customers.	5.11	Complete – SR provide assurance at the October PINS Board.
5.	Jon Banks	Feedback on cross departmental working on the budget at the October Board meeting.	5.12	Complete – SR provide assurance at the October PINS Board.

6.	Mark Southgate/ Tom Warth	Produce NSIP income forecast covering the range of issues, to be included in the November NI update.	5.13	By 2 November – for 10 November PINS Board.
7.	Tom Warth	Look at bringing in resource from elsewhere to improve hearing performance, whilst tracking the impact on the appeals in the system (amber trajectory).	6.6	By 2 November – for 10 November PINS Board.
8.	Tom Warth	Engage stakeholders most likely to use the inquiry procedure to set expectations and explore options to allocate inquiry dates differently.	6.7	By 30 November - for 8 December PINS Board.
9.	Tom Warth	Draw out the choices and consequences around processing inquiry planning appeals differently.	6.8	By 30 November - for 8 December PINS Board.
10.	Stuart Campbell	Provide a synopsis of issues for key groups which should be presented at PINS Board or CQPSC.	7.3	By 2 November – for 10 November CQPSC meeting.
11.	Stuart Campbell	Produce an interim holding statement to customers highlighting progress against our performance and a communications plan for further engagement with customers when performance has recovered.	7.7	In progress - Timing/content of interim statement to be discussed with Tom Warth/Ops Group, with view to releasing in Oct/early Nov. Full comms plan to be agreed and in place by 11 Nov, ready for future deployment.
12.	Natasha Perrett	Make amendments to the PINS Board forward planner.	8.6, 9.2 & 9.3	Complete – updated 28 September

Minutes

1.0	<p>Welcome and Declaration of Interests</p> <p>1.1 The Chair welcomed PINS Board members and John Pingstone, Board observer, to the meeting.</p> <p>1.2 The Chair called for Declarations of Interest (DoI). SJ advised the Board she has been appointed as a Non-Executive Director for the Health and Safety Executive. SJ has already advised NP of the appointment, the Board</p>
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	level DoI register has been updated and published on the .Gov website.
2.0	<p>Minutes of 16 August Board Meeting</p> <p>2.1 Following the session SW and DH held with staff after the August PINS Board, DH commented that the Horizon update to the Board had not flagged that some areas were not transferred to the system. DH said it would be helpful to alert Non-Executives to this information.</p> <p>2.2 No further comments were received on the 16 August PINS Board minutes.</p> <p>2.3 TT gave an update on action 8 of the February Board minutes. TT's meeting with the Welsh Commissioner was cancelled and rescheduled to take place on 3rd November. The Board agreed TT to give a verbal update at the November meeting.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>2a) The minutes reflect a true and accurate record of the July meeting. 2b) TT to give a verbal update on the Welsh Language Measure at the November meeting.</p>
3.0	<p>Committee Chair updates, meetings of 15 September</p> <p>a) Customer, Quality and Professional Standards Committee (CQPSC)</p> <p>3.1 The CQPSC discussed the work of the Professional Steering Group (PSG) which is chaired by Pauleen Lane (PL). SJ said the work of the PSG is a valuable addition to the Committee.</p> <p>3.2 The CQPSC also discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HAS appeal performance which was the first deep dive session the Committee has held. The Committee would also like sessions on specialist casework performance and customer call volumes. • Customer groups and journey, SJ explained there has been good progress on this work so far. • Root cause analysis and agreed this should be an item for the next 3 meetings. This will help the Committee understand what the analysis is flagging up and how we are taking action on complaints and litigation. <p>b) Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)</p> <p>3.3 The ARAC discussed areas of cross over between the Committee and PINS Board meetings. The Committee and Board Chairs agreed to work together to make sure the various lines of assurance are mapped to the appropriate agendas.</p> <p>3.4 The ARAC also discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) and the Emerging Risk Register (ERR) and how this should be picked up in the risk appetite work.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping of the next internal audit into HR controls, processes and procedures to get a view on the assurance required by the Board. This work will be picked up by the People Committee. <p>3.5 Following the discussion around the ERR, SG agreed to provide regular updates to the Board on emerging policy matters.</p> <p>Agreed: 3a) To note the updates from the Committee Chairs.</p>
4.0	<p>CEO update</p> <p>4.1 SR had a meeting with Gavin Barwell, Housing and Planning Minister. The meeting covered PINS performance, challenges and fees.</p> <p>4.2 SR attended a positive meeting with representatives from the National Infrastructure Planning Association (NIPA). NIPA are taking forward some work which looks at the flexibility in the NSIP regime, and interaction with the Town and Country Planning Act. SR has offered to take part in the research.</p> <p>4.3 SR spoke at the Home Builder Federation (HBF) annual planning conference on the 14 September. SR spoke about PINS work, touched on performance issues and was asked questions about the backlog.</p> <p>4.4 SR's first Accounting Officer meeting with Melanie Dawes took place and was attended by Helen McNamara, the new Director General for Housing and Planning.</p> <p>4.5 The Housing and Planning Bill is now an Act. The commencement of various Statutory Instruments has begun and form part of a long implementation programme.</p> <p>4.6 SG explained he is leading on the new Neighbourhood Planning Bill. SG and SR agreed to update the Board at the next meeting on implications for PINS. SW asked that the Board be made aware of what this change means for PINS and whether we are equipped to deal with it.</p> <p>4.7 TT gave an update on the Bill in Wales which will receive Royal Assent on February 2017. The significant changes are around energy schemes and harbour constructions and alterations.</p> <p>4.8 The restructure at Management Board level is complete; management reporting lines will change in the coming weeks. Work continues on the Head of Service restructure, the new structure will be in place by the 1st November.</p> <p>4.9 Interviews for the Director of Transformation post took place on 9th September. An offer has been made to a candidate internal to Whitehall, if accepted the successful candidate will join PINS at the end of October.</p>

	<p>Agreed: 4a) To note the update from the CEO. 4b) SR and SG to discuss the progress of the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and provide an update to the Board.</p>
5.0	<p>Monitoring performance</p> <p><u>Performance</u></p> <p>5.1 The reduction of planning appeals in the system continues in line with the amber projection on the 'appeals in the system' graph (page 11).</p> <p>5.2 There is currently a budget underspend of £1.4m. One off bids for funding have been coming forward and are being managed with a view to take forward as many bids as possible with good business cases.</p> <p>5.3 PS asked the Board to provide further comments and feedback on the MI pack ahead of the review which is due to take place at the next meeting.</p> <p>5.4 The Board agreed the commentary at the front of the MI pack was a helpful addition.</p> <p>5.5 There was discussion around the changed reporting which looks at time from Start of Valid Appeal to decision. This is not the measure used in ministerial targets, but the Board agreed that this measure best reflects the customer experience. The Board suggested that a discussion needs to take place with the Minister before the start of the 17/18 year to agree what he wishes to measure.</p> <p>5.6 It was agreed the "performance by stage" table on page 11 should be revised to reflect the new process deployed in Planning Casework Operations (PCO). MS suggested breaking the table into the following steps - receipt, validated, start, inspector and decision.</p> <p>5.7 DH asked if there is any possibility to accelerate progress towards the green trajectory on the appeals in the system graph. JB explained it is difficult to track closer to the green trajectory due to inspector availability. Options are being explored, although the big challenge is to improve hearing and inquiry performance, without significantly impacting the current trajectory. Work is underway to look at how we manage Non-Salaried Inspector (NSI) programmes in the PCO environment.</p> <p>5.8 As the National Infrastructure (NI) programme for next year may not see all projects submitted, there is a possibility we could move Inspector resource to work on hearing and inquiry casework. However this creates a budget issue, as hearing and inquiry work is not paid for unlike NSIP work.</p> <p>5.9 TT explained inquiry performance in Wales will report as red next month. This is due to the adjournment of 2 inquiries. TT will raise with Welsh Government on Friday (16 September).</p>

Quality

5.10 The Board discussed the issue of timeliness and the affect this is having on how customers feel about PINS. To build trust and improve the customer experience, DH suggested we prioritise the top 2 or 3 things and focus efforts on resolving these first.

Budget

5.11 The Board discussed the forecast year end underspend. SW asked if this creates an opportunity to address customer service issues, such as on the call handling technology and resource, or on the digital programme, to improve services for our customers. SW asked SR and JB to think about the opportunities for our customers.

5.12 JB flagged that items such as IT or call centre development would be classed as capital spend. SG advised there could be an opportunity to work with DCLG on capital spending. SG and JB agreed to pick this up separately.

5.13 There was a discussion around forecasting income for NI projects. SG said he would like to see one precise income forecast with a chart showing the range of issues which will impact on fee income. This should be included in the November NI update.

Agreed:

5a) PINS Board to provide further feedback on the MI pack directly to Peter Sloman and Richard Addison.

5b) MS to revise the "performance by stage" table to reflect the PCO steps.

5c) SR and JB to investigate opportunities created by the budget underspend to invest for our customers.

5d) MS and TW to produce NSIP income forecast covering the range of issues, to be included in the November NI update.

6.0

Hearings, Inquiries and Band 3 Inspector resource

6.1 The number of planning appeals in the system has been reducing, which has largely affected written representation appeals. Focus is now shifting to planning hearing and inquiry performance.

6.2 Planning hearing cases will be processed through the Planning Casework Operations (PCO) team, which will improve performance as more inspectors are trained to deal with hearing appeals.

6.3 Inquiry performance is harder to calculate, there are a number of actions which are ongoing to identify additional capacity to improve performance.

6.4 One source of delay is adjournments. Analysis of reasons for adjournments in inquiry cases is taking place to understand their cause, with

	<p>broader work looking at the total underperformance of hearings against target. TW is working with NI and Major Casework teams to learn lessons from the way they process and allocate inquiry casework to target.</p> <p>6.5 When looking at why inquiries are adjourned, SR explained there could be a planning application also running at the same time as the appeal. This can result in the adjournment and later withdrawal of the appeal.</p> <p>6.6 SW asked that, if we bring in resource from elsewhere to improve hearing performance, for every hearing case resolved we should understand how would that affect the amber trajectory on the appeals in the system chart.</p> <p>6.7 SJ suggested we talk to the stakeholder group most likely to use the inquiry procedure, to set the expectation of how we would like to operate with this type of procedure in future.</p> <p>6.8 The Board agreed this is a complex piece of work and requires a lot of customer information to be gathered. SG said we should aim to draw out where the choices and the consequences of any resource redeployment are.</p> <p><u>Agreed:</u></p> <p>6a) TW to look at bringing in resource from elsewhere to improve hearing performance, whilst tracking the impact on the appeals in the system (amber trajectory).</p> <p>6b) TW to hold conversations with stakeholders most likely to use the inquiry procedure to set expectations and explore options to allocate inquiry dates differently.</p> <p>6c) TW to draw out the choices and consequences around processing inquiry planning appeals differently.</p>
7.0	<p>Stakeholder Engagement and Reputation Survey</p> <p>7.1 The response rate to the reputation survey was good. SC suggested issuing the survey at a slightly different time might generate even more responses.</p> <p>7.2 As in previous surveys, issues were raised around timeliness and consistency in decision making, which was discussed at the CQPSC meeting. The Professional Steering Group and Operations Group will be looking further into this feedback.</p> <p>7.3 SJ suggested looking further into the data to see if there have been any significant drops for particular stakeholder segments, what are the patterns. A synopsis of issues for key groups should be presented at PINS Board or CQPSC.</p> <p>7.4 SW suggested looking at the trend data to establish whether there had been significant differences in consistency and timeliness feedback over time.</p>

	<p>7.5 SG asked what are we trying to achieve with the data we have received. Are we trying to move those that strongly disagree into a different place. We need to get a sense of what we are trying to achieve.</p> <p>7.6 The Board discussed carrying out the survey at a different time to maximise returns and sample size. SC said we will, in future, not be waiting for the annual cycle and we are considering other options for gathering more regular feedback.</p> <p>7.7 As performance is improving, SW suggested SC draw up a communications plan that can be implemented when we are in a position to approach customers to talk about our improved performance to begin the process of rebuilding stakeholders' trust in PINS. SW suggested a holding statement is prepared to be used with customers; SR agreed an interim communication should be issued highlighting progress.</p> <p>7.8 The Board discussed the improvement rating around 'we are open' and what that means to our customers, and suggested we should continue to work with customers to understand what their expectations are.</p> <p>Agreed: 7a) SC to provide a synopsis of issues for key groups which should be presented at PINS Board or CQPSC. 7b) SC to produce an interim holding statement to customers highlighting progress against our performance and a communications plan for further engagement with customers when performance has recovered.</p>
8.0	<p>Board Effectiveness Review</p> <p>8.1 The Board Effectiveness internal audit received a green (substantial assurance) opinion.</p> <p>8.2 The Board discussed key finding 1 which relates to the frequency of PINS Board and Committee meetings. SW and SR had discussed various options around meeting frequency. SR is planning to benchmark PINS' approach against comparable organisations with a Non-Executive Board and take views from Management Board, Heads of Service and NEDs before bringing proposals back to the PINS Board.</p> <p>8.3 SW suggested that we consider whether any board days released through a different meeting cycle, could be used as an opportunity for the NEDs to get out into the business to spend time with teams.</p> <p>8.4 There was discussion around the committee and board agendas as some items overlap. DH suggested the Board could delegate more items to the Committee meetings, as these are attended by all NEDs and there is a good level of trust and assurance between these groups.</p> <p>8.5 SJ suggested holding meetings in different venues so the Board and</p>

	<p>Committees can engage with those working out in the field.</p> <p>8.6 The Board agreed, there needs to be a balance between what works for the Executives, NEDs, DLCCG and Wales sponsors. SG suggested SR pick this up with Gavin Barwell and the sponsorship team to give them early sight. SW asked SR to bring the recommendations back to the November Board with a view to take these forward in 2017.</p> <p>Agreed: 8a) SR to bring the PINS Board and Committee meeting proposals back to the November Board meeting.</p>
9.0	<p>Forward agenda & AOB</p> <p>9.1 The Board discussed the forward planner and agreed the following items:</p> <p><u>October:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan outline • Productivity project <p><u>November:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales update • National Infrastructure update • PINS Board and Committee proposals <p><u>December:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Strategic Plan • Financial Sustainability <p><u>January:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget and delivery plans • Customer programme <p><u>February:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plan • KPIs and measures setting for the financial year <p>9.2 The Board agreed to remove the top risk deep dive session from the October Board agenda.</p> <p>9.3 DH suggested the Strategic Risk Register (SRR) is reviewed and aligned with the agreed Strategic Plan. The Board agreed the revised SRR should be reviewed at the January meeting in place of the top risk deep dive.</p> <p>Agreed: 9a) NP to update the PINS Board forward planner.</p>

Next meeting: 13 October 2016, 12.30pm – 3.30pm