The Planning Inspectorate
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

FINAL
(10 November 2016)

Minutes

Title of meeting	PINS Board Meeting		
Date	13 October	**Time**	12:30
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		
	Tony Thickett (**TT**) – Director, Wales		
	Ben Linscott (**BL**) – Head of Inspectors		
	Simon Gallagher (**SG**) – Director of Planning, DCLG		
In attendance	Mark Southgate (**MS**) – Director, Major Casework (item 5)		
	Phil Hammond (**PH**) – Director, Casework (item 5)		
	Richard Addison (**RA**) – (item 5)		
	Peter Sloman (**PS**) – Head of Finance & Commercial (items 5, 6 & 7)		
	Tracey Jones (**TJ**) – Portfolio & Programme Manager (item 9)		
	Dave Jones (**DJ**) – (item 9)		
	Bob O'Brien (**BOB**) – (item 9)		
	Natasha Perrett (**NP**) – Board Secretary		
Apologies	Jon Banks (**JB**) – Acting Director, Corporate Services		

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	**Complete –** item 6 on the November PINS Board agenda.

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	**Complete –** item 7 on the November PINS Board agenda.
7.	Tom Warth	Carry out more work around: • scenario planning and then use these for forward planning • include the impact on	6.3	**Complete –** item 7 on the November PINS Board agenda.

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		resourcing and income • the impact on the Business Plan • the impact of moving people			
9.	**Tom Warth** & Mark Southgate	Develop a risk map which covers financial risk and people/ reputational risk.	7.7		**Complete** - Risks are now considered in the new risk management framework at strategic and operational level and these specifically account for financial and reputational risks. We will specifically assess any risks emerging from the Neighbourhood and Planning Bill, currently progressing through Parliament, and those that may arise from the emerging White Paper in a revised emerging risks register.

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 2 June 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
10.	Ben Linscott	Explore training opportunities with the MoJ.	10.7	**Deferred to January Meeting.** BL advised this work has grown in scale.
11.	Ben Linscott	Review the reasons for failure and success in planning challenges.	10.8	**Complete –** item 8 on the November CQPSC agenda.

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 16 August 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
5.	Jon Banks/ Peter Sloman	Update FKPI5 audit recommendations table to include a RAG status against PINS view of the progress against the audit actions.	4.6	**Complete –** status column added.

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
7.	Jon Banks/ Tracey Jones	Add 2 columns to PFKPI2 (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	**Complete -** status column added.

Schedule of Actions – 15 September 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
3.	Mark Southgate	Revise the performance by stage table to reflect the PCO steps.	5.6	**Complete –** MI pack updated.
6.	Mark Southgate/ Tom Warth	Produce NSIP income forecast covering the range of issues, to be included in the November NI update.	5.13	**Complete –** item 7 on the November PINS Board agenda.
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	**Complete**
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	**Complete –** update paper attached as an annex to the November CQPSC minutes. Customer themes and experience is also an item on the February CQPSC agenda.
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	**Complete –** Updated performance data published on GOV.UK on 12 October. Revised data, aligned more closely with customer journey, and performance

					statement to be published by 11 November. Draft comms plan established, subject to approval, to be implemented once performance has recovered and is sustainable.

Part One
Schedule of Actions – 13 October 2016

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
1.	Natasha Perrett	Add risk appetite discussion to the PINS Board forward planner for February.	3.2	**Complete**
2.	Simon Gallagher	Update the Board on progress on the White Paper in November.	4b	**Complete –** SG gave an update at the November PINS Board meeting.
3.	Mark Southgate	Bring an impact assessment to the December PINS Board on the outcomes of the White Paper and its implications for PINS.	4.3	**By 30 November -** for 8 December PINS Board.
4.	Peter Sloman & Natasha Perrett	Consider PINS Board meeting schedules as part of the PINS Board and Committee frequency review.	5.1	**Complete –** item 7 on the November PINS Board agenda.
5.	Peter Sloman & Richard Addison	Review the MI pack and consider which sets of data are critical for the Board to see.	5.2	**8 February 2017 –** for the 16 February PINS Board meeting. MI pack to be aligned with Business Plan approval.
6.	Richard Addison	RA to remove the start to decision data from the MI pack.	5.3	**Complete –** page removed.
7.	Peter Sloman and Simon Gallagher	Discuss spending options and to bring propositions back to MB.	5.7	**Complete –** PS has set out proposals and is working with the sponsorship team.
8.	Peter Sloman and Richard Addison	Discuss the narratives with Jayne Erskine in more detail.	5.8	**Complete –** meeting scheduled for 9 November.
9.	Peter Sloman	Provide more detailed narrative around the assumptions made in forecasting and slippage in major schemes.	5.9	**Complete**

10.	Peter Sloman	Look at profit and loss segmentation reporting.	6.4	**30 November** – for 8th December PINS Board meeting.
11.	Peter Sloman	Review the MTFP to consider the audience of the document and ensure it is not seen simply as a "cost-cutting" exercise. It needs to reflect a focus on the end-goal of inspectors and decisions. The document should demonstrate the importance of delivering the right service at an affordable cost.	6.5	**8 February 2017 –** for the 16 February PINS Board.
12.	Peter Sloman	Explore with staff the vision statement "Independent experts, inspiring confidence and shaping exceptional communities, now and for future generations" and feedback responses to the November Board.	7.8	**Complete**
13.	Peter Sloman	Take forward next steps: • to look at how big the productivity phase 1 "BAU" cost reduction might be • consider, in phases 2 and 3, what else might get us to a sustainable footing (changes to the service proposition, fees) • identify the metric that shows we are becoming more productive • identify what needs to be in the budget.	8.6	**By 30 November -** for 8 December PINS Board.
14.	Tracey Jones	Share the outcomes and benefits tracker with David Holt.	9.4	**Complete –** tracker sent to DH on 3 November.
15.	Mark Southgate	Lead a deep dive item at the CQPSC meeting on the customer journey and technology.	9.11	**8 February 2017 –** for the 16 February CQPSC.

Minutes

1.0	**Welcome and Declaration of Interests** 1.1 The Chair welcomed PINS Board members to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jon Banks. 1.2 The Chair called for Declarations of Interest (DoI) of which there were none.
2.0	**Minutes of 15 September Board Meeting** 2.1 No further comments were received on the part one or part two September PINS Board minutes. 2.2 SG gave an update on the Neighbourhood Planning Bill (action 1 of the September minutes) which will receive Secondary reading on Monday. The Bill is progressing well. **Agreed:** 2a) The part one and part two minutes reflect a true and accurate record of the September meeting.
3.0	**Committee Chair updates, meetings of 15 September** **a) People Committee** 3.1 JE reported. The People Committee discussed: • People Strategy and agreed work will continue on measures of success and indicators. • People Group update: People Group has begun well, has taken forward lots of activity and is engaging across the organisation. • People Risk Register, and agreed it was a good first draft, with further work being done. • Workforce Planning, particularly inspector resource, where the Committee discussed forecasting for demand, long term supply, connecting this to the budget and resourcing work effectively at band. This item will return to the November PINS Board meeting. • Staff Survey: Engagement activity across the organisation since the last staff survey has focused on leadership and managing change and acting on feedback. It is hoped that this work will feed through to results in the current survey. • The Committee also discussed the value of ensuring staff engagement was built into managers' targets. • Sickness absence and the development of a wellbeing policy. **b) Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) minutes** 3.2 SJ referred to the risk appetite discussion at the September ARAC

	meeting, and asked if risk appetite should come to the next ARAC meeting or to each of the Committee meetings. DH said each committee should review risk appetite individually and come together to discuss at the February Board. **Agreed:** 3a) To note the updates from the Committee Chairs. 3b) NP to add risk appetite discussion to the PINS Board forward planner for February.
4.0	**CEO update** 4.1 The Wales stakeholder event took place in September. The event was well received and feedback has been positive. 4.2 SR has attended meetings with: • Gavin Barwell, Housing and Planning Minister where they discussed cost recovery, consistency in decision making and Ministers' attendance at the annual training event for inspectors. • Jeremy Pocklington from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) where they discussed potential changes to the energy centre and how these might affect us. • Paul Hamblin of the National Parks Authority, the authority is very supportive of the work of PINS. 4.3 The Board discussed the potential outcomes of the White Paper and the impact on PINS. MS and BL are working closely with DCLG colleagues and are updating Management Board on a weekly basis. MS will bring an impact assessment to the December PINS Board meeting. 4.4 SW had met with SG and attended a meeting with Helen McNamara where discussion was around the role of PINS. SW said the challenge might be for the Board to focus more on the Inspectors, and decision making, rather than on internal operations of the organisation. The Board might therefore wish to consider how it might need to rebalance its agenda and membership to reflect this shift in focus. 4.5 The Board referred to actions 4 and 5 of the September minutes, SR assured these actions are in progress. **Agreed:** 4a) To note the update from the CEO. 4b) SG to update the Board on progress on the White Paper in November. 4c) MS to bring an impact assessment to the December PINS Board on the outcomes of the White Paper and its implications for PINS.
5.0	**Monitoring performance** <u>MI pack review</u> 5.1 The Board discussed the production timetable for the MI pack, and asked

PS and NP to consider PINS Board meeting schedules as part of the PINS Board and Committee frequency review. Aligning the production timetable and the Board meeting schedules will ensure the most up to date MI is presented to the Board.

5.2 DH asked PS and RA to review the MI pack and consider which sets of data are critical for the Board to see urgently, based on the objectives of PINS. This will also assist PS to align the data coming to the PINS Board meetings.

5.3 The Board agreed OKP13 (average time to decide (start to decision)) data is no longer required as OKP12 (average time to decide (valid to decision)) and OKP14 (% in target (start to decision)) provide the data required by the Board.

5.4 SR gave an update on PFKPI1 which tracks progress against projects. The Transformation Programme Board (TPB) will also track projects against benefits delivery, budget and overall project delivery. The revised table will be included in the November MI pack to the Board.

5.5 There was discussion around reporting against the customer experience. SJ said at present we are using a narrow indicator to capture the customer experience. Further consideration should be given to where else and how else we can capture the experience. SJ said we should also review the impact of amber projects on the customer, as they maybe creating a ripple effect. The Customer, Quality and Professional Standards Committee (CQPSC) should work up the customer experience requirements.

5.6 Staff engagement was also discussed by the Board and how they might get assurance that regular team meetings informed by the core brief are taking place. SW suggested the staff engagement workstream could be managed as a programme. SR confirmed discussions have already taken place with Tracy Jones; the activities underway to improve staff engagement will be monitored through the TPB. Any elements of the programme reporting amber will be reported to the PINS Board.

August MI pack

5.7 Following the September PINS Board discussion on the underspend, SR explained MB have focussed on how we might use funding to improve the customer experience. PS explained options are limited on some areas of spending as it would be capital spend. PS and SG agreed to discuss further and to bring propositions back to MB.

5.8 JE raised concern around the narratives included in some areas of the pack not reflecting the charts. PS and RA agreed to refine the pack following the Board, and then to discuss next month's report further with JE.

	5.9 There was discussion around the forecasting of income reported in FKPI1 (forecasting accuracy) and FKPI2 (phased budget). PS explained there has been slippage in major schemes coming forward. Further work needs to be carried out on the accuracy of phasing. DH said it would be useful to have more detail around the assumptions made in the narrative. **Agreed:** 5a) PS and NP to consider PINS Board meeting schedules as part of the PINS Board and Committee frequency review. 5b) PS and RA to review the MI pack and consider which sets of data are critical for the Board to see. 5c) RA to remove OKP13 from the MI pack. 5d) PS and SG to discuss spending options and to bring propositions back to MB. 5e) PS and RA to discuss the narratives with JE in more detail. 5f) PS to provide more detailed narrative around the assumptions made in forecasting and slippage in major schemes.
6.0	**Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)** 6.1 The PINS Board received the draft MTFP. PS explained a more detailed version including the outcomes of the autumn statement, 2017-18 budget and updated strategic plan will be presented at the December PINS Board. A final version of the MTFP will come to the February Board meeting, and will include a section on risk and be aligned with other strategies across the organisation. 6.2 The Board discussed the revised Spending Review position. PS explained the slippage against the recovery of National Infrastructure fees, and cost recovery currently forecast for 2017-18 is leading to a shortfall against the phasing for that period. PS will be meeting Heads of Service to review budgets and will also be discussing with DCLG colleagues. 6.3 SR said there is increasing evidence we need to do more about fee forecasting in the organisation, and that we need to make better use of intelligence. SR suggested that there needs to be a greater link between income and costs as we move to a more commercial focus. 6.4 SW suggested we use "segmental" profit and loss reporting, particularly as we start to think about income and cost recovery. NSIP costs and income need to be managed closely in parallel. It is also important for non-NSIP casework where we have costs, but do not receive income for this work. We need to look at the relationship between fees to cover costs (NSIP) and the cost recovery of variable costs (potential approach in Householder casework). SR said going forward budgets will be allocated to individuals and they will be accountable. 6.5 SW said it is really important the MTFP lands well in the organisation, and suggested PS review the MTFP to consider the audience of the document and ensure it is not seen simply as a "cost-cutting" exercise. It needs to

	reflect a focus on the end-goal of inspectors and decisions. The document should demonstrate the importance of delivering the right service at an affordable cost. **Agreed:** 6a) PS to look at profit and loss segmentation reporting. 6b) PS review the MTFP to consider the audience of the document and ensure it is not seen simply as a "cost-cutting" exercise. It needs to reflect a focus on the end-goal of inspectors and decisions. The document should demonstrate the importance of delivering the right service at an affordable cost.
7.0	**Strategic Plan Outline** 7.1 SR explained to the Board we are in a good place to start working on the Strategic Plan as we already have a plan in place. Main changes will be around the language and approach to drafting the plan going forward. 7.2 PS and Alison Cooper (AC) held a workshop with staff which was well attended and received positive feedback. During the workshop focus was on PINS vision, motivating factors and behaviours. 7.3 The group were encouraged to think big and came up with the following vision "Independent experts, inspiring and shaping exceptional communities, now and for future generations". 7.4 SR intends to develop a visual for the organisation that shows PINS as one team with Planning Casework Operations (PCO) as our functional working model. 7.5 The Board discussed the changes in vision from those of the current SP, which focusses on customer service excellent and productivity which is not captured in the new vision. SR explained customer focus and productivity remain essential, and these will be fully reflected in the supporting plans. 7.6 The Board agreed the vision was powerful, particularly as it had been developed by our people. PS explained staff shared the same energy as the Board did when they discussed the SP in September. The group came up with a number of statements that were similar to the Board. 7.7 The Board discussed how PINS "inspires" exceptional communities. SW suggested adding the word 'confidence' to the vision, to reflect the importance of "inspiring confidence" might reflect previous Board discussions. SR agreed she would explore this in further conversations with staff. 7.8 Subject to staff feedback, the vision would read "Independent experts, inspiring confidence and shaping exceptional communities, now and for future generations". PS will to go back to the group with the revised vision to test their response, as the Board agreed that it is critical that colleagues feel they own the ultimate wording.

	Agreed: 7a) PS to explore with staff the vision statement "Independent experts, inspiring confidence and shaping exceptional communities, now and for future generations" and feedback responses to the November Board.
8.0	**Productivity project, phase 1** 8.1 The Board reviewed the paper which looked at the scope of productivity savings that could be achieved in a variety of hypothetical scenarios. The Board discussed the scenarios set out in section 5.3 of the paper which included: • Productivity of inspectors increased by 10% • Reduction in admin budgets of a further £1m • Working at band • Planning officers – HAS casework. 8.2 PS explained the figures and outcomes from the scenarios affect the MTFP, unit costs and forecasting, appeals intake and how we deliver. There is a link between the productivity project and commercial strategy. 8.3 Working at band by inspectors was discussed, PS explained it is key for the Operations Group to understand the assumptions around this work. 8.4 SG said we should focus on getting confidence in the culture and systems in the organisation to drive productivity and then understand how we will know we have become more productive, what is the metric that would tell us. PS said we will move from unit costs to look at what are the outcomes and what do these mean to cost. 8.5 SJ suggested looking at sickness absence and what this costs the organisation. SW suggested the Management Board have a 2-3% productivity challenge which would include exploring average working days lost, structure and fees. SR agreed we need to look at the budget and not just on cost. 8.6 SW summarised the discussion and the next steps, which were: • to look at how big the productivity phase 1 "BAU" cost reduction might be • consider, in phases 2 and 3, what else might get us to a sustainable footing (changes to the service proposition, fees) • identify the metric that shows we are becoming more productive • identify what needs to be in the budget. **Agreed:** 8a) PS to take forward next steps: • to look at how big the productivity phase 1 "BAU" cost reduction might be • consider, in phases 2 and 3, what else might get us to a sustainable

	footing (changes to the service proposition, fees) • identify the metric that shows we are becoming more productive • identify what needs to be in the budget.
9.0	**Transformation programme** Review of project portfolio 9.1 TJ updated the Board on the work of the Transformation Programme Board (TPB) which has: • ensured new and existing projects have gone through the formal start up process • challenged projects not just to make sure it delivers, but also to make sure the project is a good thing to do for the organisation • challenged the statuses of projects. 9.2 TPB approved the business case for the "GIS – find my consultee" project which was balanced with timescale and value for money. The timely delivery of this project is key. 9.3 Next steps for TPB is to understand the resource allocation across all projects, so the TPB can understand the impact of new work and slippages. 9.4 TPB will be tracking outcomes and benefits. The new TPB tracker will be included in the MI pack to the Board next month. TJ agreed to share the tracker with DH. 9.5 The Director of Transformation joins PINS on the 31st October and will take over as chair of the TPB. Improving customer experience using technology 9.6 BOB and DJ updated the Board on current IT projects: • improving the Library Service for inspectors • moving services to Cloud hosting • Smart Phone project for inspectors • Telephony contract 9.7 SJ asked about the external customer focus of developments in IT; DJ explained focus is currently internal. Work is underway with the Customer Services Team to monitor the number of calls received and mapping this information with a view to identifying potential improvements. 9.8 BOB explained there is already functionality available which is under-used eg an opportunity to use case notes to record customer contact. 9.9 The Board discussed the customer journey from pre-submission, submission and tracking the appeal at all stages. SW said we should think about the role technology has to play in the journey. Consideration should be given to a list of criteria for the priorities including cost, customer impact and

	volume. SG said we would also need to understand the benefits and cost to understand what this programme of work would contribute. 9.10 SW suggested that the goal was to build a project portfolio which could deliver customer service excellence, improved productivity and take waste out of the system. Reflecting BOB's input, time also needs to be spent thinking about how we exploit the current technology. 9.11 The Board agreed the CQPSC should have a deep dive item on the customer journey and where technology plays a part, the costs, ease of implementation and benefits grid. This should include input from Pauleen Lane on the frustrations raised by inspectors and how we close the gap. **Agreed:** 9a) TJ to share the outcomes and benefits tracker with DH. 9b) MS to lead a deep dive item at the CQPSC meeting on the customer journey and technology.
10.0	**Forward agenda & AOB** 10.1 The Board discussed the forward planner and agreed the November PINS Board agenda items. The November meeting will take place in Wales. 10.2 The December Board items will include the budget, strategic plan and high level staff survey results. **Agreed:** 10a) The November PINS Board agenda.

Next meeting: 10 November 2016, 12.30pm – 3.30pm