



Minutes

Title of meeting	PINS Board Meeting
Date	12 February 2015
Venue	Wales
Chair	Sara Weller (SW) – Chairman
Present	Simon Ridley (SR) – Chief Executive Janet Goodland (JG) – Non Executive Director Jayne Erskine (JE) – Non Executive Director David Clements (DC) – Non Executive Director Jon Banks (JB) – Director (Acting), Corporate Services Tony Thickett (TT) – Director, Wales Peter Schofield (PS) – Director General, DCLG Natasha Perrett (NP) – Board Secretary
In attendance	Neil Hemington (NH) – Chief Planner, Welsh Government Helen Adlard (HA) – Head of People, Strategy & Change (item 7) Stuart Campbell (SC) – Head of Communications (item 8) Rachael Pipkin (RP) – Head of Knowledge (item 9)
Observer	
Apologies	

Part One

Schedule of Actions

	Owner	Action	Minutes	Timeframe
1.	Simon Ridley/ Management Board	Present a forward view of PINS workforce plan with risks included as scenarios or sensitivities.	4.10	Complete – March PINS Board item 9.
2.	Peter Rowstone	Present and discuss the implementation plan for the planning reforms in Wales.	6.4	In progress – to be discussed at the July PINS Board meeting.
3.	Helen Adlard	Make amendments to the Business Plan and Strategic Plan.	7.6 & 7.8	Complete
3.	Natasha Perrett	Circulate the ToR for the finance group to the NEDs.	7.7	Complete

4.	Stuart Campbell	Consider and add if necessary the following stakeholder groups to the grid at annex c: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Committee • Trades unions • NAO • Treasury • Infrastructure UK • UKTI • BIS • Big developers, providers of finance for large infrastructure projects. 	8.3, 8.4 & 8.6	Complete – to be discussed at the June PINS Board meeting
5.	Stuart Campbell	Report back to the Board on how we might measure our stakeholder reputation and provide a forward view of planned engagements for 2015/16.	8.7	In progress – to be discussed at the June PINS Board meeting.
6.	Natasha Perrett	Add stakeholder engagement update to the May forward agenda	8.7	Complete – subject to PINS Board approval this item has been scheduled for discussion at the June meeting.
7.	Simon Ridley and Peter Schofield	Discuss the opportunities available to improve the relationship with DfT colleagues.	9.2	Complete – DfT meeting confirmed
8.	Rachael Pipkin	Produce a clear plan to include how we are going to implement the various policy changes and the implications for PINS of potential spending review constraints post May.	9.4	In progress – to be discussed at the July PINS Board meeting.
9.	Simon Ridley	Revise the PINS Board forward planner in line with the Strategic Plan and Business Plan for review at the March Board meeting.	10.1	Complete

Minutes

1.0	<p>Welcome and Declaration of Interests</p> <p>1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>1.2 The Chair called for declarations of interest of which there were none.</p> <p>1.3 SW raised a potential declaration of interest in relation to Cuadrilla, whilst there are no appeals lodged at present, SW asked the Board to be aware.</p>
2.0	<p>Minutes of 14 January Board Meeting (Part One)</p> <p>2.1 No further comments were received on the accuracy of the January minutes.</p> <p>2.2 JG and BL agreed action 2 of the January minutes would be discussed at the next Quality and Professional Standards Committee meeting (6 May 2015).</p> <p>2.3 JE advised following discussions with TT and SR a further briefing on the KPI scorecard was no longer necessary and that actions 3 and 4 could be marked as complete.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>2a) The minutes reflect a true and accurate record of the 14 January Board meeting.</p>
3.0	<p>Committee Chairs: Reports, Comments and Minutes</p> <p>(a) Quality and Professional Standards Committee (meeting 12 February)</p> <p>3.1 JG explained the Committee was considering its remit following the last meeting in relation to standards, measures and how the Committee could take the appropriate action and be assured. The Committee had a discussion around this and agreed actions, focussed on embedding learning from errors and having greater customer focus.</p> <p>3.2 The Committee also had an update from the Casework Directorate on quality checks, National Infrastructure on customer feedback and BL on managing and maintaining inspector professionalism.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>3a) To note the Committee update.</p>
4.0	<p>Chief Executive's update</p> <p>4.1 Melanie Dawes the newly appointed Permanent Secretary, visited PINS on the 10 February and met with the Directors and various staff. The visit was a success and Melanie left with a good understanding of PINS' work.</p>

4.2 SR advised following the recent inspector recruitment, candidates have been shortlisted and plans are being drawn up to interview a large number of candidates with a view to bringing in 50-60 inspectors.

4.3 Since the last PINS Board meeting further investigation into the casework backlog has been carried out. The casework backlog is made up of HAS, planning and enforcement appeals. There are further appeals which have not been started for a number of reasons. We are offering the additional casework supplement (ACS) to inspectors to help clear the casework backlog. Responses have been positive. We continue to explore more innovative options to try and address the casework backlog such as utilising our planning officers in decision making.

4.4 There was some discussion around the opportunities and risks around using planning officers as decision makers. There is potential to clear 100-200 decisions using planning officers which would free up inspectors to deal with more complex casework. PS advised careful consideration should be given to the title of those taking this work forward, (e.g. are they assistant planning inspectors). SR agreed and advised Janet Wilson is considering this as project manager. DC supports this initiative as the risk to our reputation of not doing it is greater due to the size of the backlog.

4.5 SR updated the Board on Shale and casework issues. There is a lot of challenging casework which is driven by political and policy concerns. We are working closely with DCLG to manage these issues.

4.6 BL advised he is working closely with Richard Watson to manage the Gypsy and Traveller cases which could potentially be transferred back to PINS following a successful legal challenge to the Government's recovery criteria.

4.7 S106 cases have also been affected by policy changes which have been challenged in relation to affordable housing.

4.8 Whilst work is underway to speed up the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process, this won't take effect for approximately 2 years.

4.9 JG asked if the casework issues were on the strategic risk register, SR confirmed the issues are on the risk register and that Management Board (MB) is aware of the wide range of risks.

4.10 SW noted throughout the report there were a number of strands associated to workload planning. The Board asked MB to present a forward view of PINS workforce plan with the risks included as scenarios or sensitivities. This will give the Board a forward view to quantify the risk.

4.11 SR advised this was one of the priorities for the People Committee which should be discussed with the Board and explored further at a later People Committee.

Agreed:

	<p>4a) To note the CEO's update.</p> <p>4b) Management Board to present a forward view to the Board of PINS workforce plan with risks included as scenarios or sensitivities.</p>
5.0	<p>Monitoring Performance – KPI Scorecard</p> <p>5.1 As issues on KPIs had largely been dealt with in the CEO update, further feedback will be dealt with by correspondence.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>5a) Agreed to deal with this paper via correspondence.</p>
6.0	<p>Wales Update</p> <p>6.1 SW welcome Neil Hemington, Chief Planner Welsh Government to the meeting. NH gave some background to the Board on the development of Planning in Wales. The Welsh Planning Bill was introduced in October 2014 and is currently at Committee stage.</p> <p>6.2 TT referred to sections 4 and 5 of his paper and the impacts the Bill will have on PINS Wales. Of the list of implications outlined in section 5 the biggest are developments of national significance and applications for major development where an LPA is designated as poorly performing. TT is working with NH and colleagues and Mark Southgate (MS) to draw up a process. Changes to development plans could also bring a lot of work to PINS Wales.</p> <p>6.3 The Bill has passed stage 1 of the process and is now at amendment stage. There will be a series of meetings to process the amendments ready for April, with a final version in May and Royal Assent in June.</p> <p>6.4 JG advised using the same project manager that managed the planning reforms in England. JB confirmed the same project manager (Peter Rowstone) is being used. SW asked PR to come to the Board to discuss the implementation plan for the reforms in Wales. TT has also had a conversation with Tracey Jones to discuss project implementation.</p> <p>6.5 There was some discussion about the cross boundary issue with some developments. PS said some of the ancillary development would come under Wales but wind turbines for example over 50W would be decided by England under the NSIP regime.</p> <p>6.6 SW asked TT if he was happy that we will be funded, have the skills and understand the pressure points to be ready to deliver. TT has the funding required from the Welsh Government, more people will be needed with a strong planning background as well as admin support. TT is not anticipating the first development of national significance until June 2016.</p> <p>6.7 The Board discussed how to overcome distrust in relation to the decision making process and avoiding those involved in believing the decision has been made before the examinations take place. NH advised work is being done with a research planning service and then followed up with focus groups to find out where the negative views are coming from, with a view to</p>

moving to front loading the system to include a community involvement scheme. SW suggested this approach should be used in England as well as Wales.

Agreed:

6a) To note the update on the planning reforms in Wales.

6b) Peter Rowstone to present and discuss an implementation plan for the reforms in Wales to the Board.

7.0 Draft Business Plan & Strategic Plan

7.1 HA updated the Board on the actions taken since these items were last discussed. There has been lots of engagement with Heads of Service (HoS) and Directors on the themes and actions set out in the plans. The plan is still being developed to strengthen its strategic clarity and HA and SC are working on a communications plan. HA advised the messages in the plans are clearer and focus is now on the measures and how we can show we are improving. Views were also sought on customer satisfaction benchmarking.

7.2 PS felt the Strategic Plan was developing well, after May housing and growth will be high up the agenda, how are we going to drive more house building. In the opening sentence of the Strategic Plan reference is made to holding the confidence of customers, the public and ministers. PS feels the metrics must include indication of the level of confidence. PINS will have to do more and will have a higher profile, we need to find a way of maintaining the confidence of key stakeholders whilst still delivering understandable and impartial decisions.

7.3 JE felt the Strategic Plan had improved and there was a sense of where we might be heading, but nothing to describe the end state in 3 years and indicate how much resource will be needed. JE suggested narrowing down the key things which need to be done.

7.4 DC referred to the vision in the Strategic Plan and said that PINS is a key organization. The vision doesn't demonstrate clearly enough what we are doing, the strategic goals are more about how and should be about what. Under the improve operations section of the Strategic Plan it should be about improving what we deliver. The one team issue should also be considered as this is fundamental to the culture and values of PINS.

7.5 SW felt a sense from the Board that the Business Plan was in a good position whilst further work was required to the Strategic Plan. SW said the Strategic Plan needs to demonstrate what sort of organization we want to be, the strategic goals need to get us to that organization. Consider the 3 year outcomes and then link the strands of activity to get to those outcomes.

7.6 SW said the Business Plan was close to completion, additions need to be made around one team and be clearer about the implementation of the May elections and the spending review which will be fundamental to the Business Plan.

7.7 SR explained the set-up of the Executive Groups is a move towards

creating one team and achieving flexibility. DC asked to see the ToR for the finance group as well as the people group.

7.8 SW asked HA to produce a page which demonstrates the end goals and the strands of work needed to deliver these outcomes. Areas of focus to reflect in the plan should include: (a) the need for greater flexibility and better resource planning to ensure the right skills can be applied in the most close effective way, (b) embedding a CI culture to create an ongoing pipeline of savings and productivity improvements (c) ensuring customer focus to maintain PINS' reputation, confidence and regard among stakeholders.

7.9 There was some discussion around publishing the Strategic Plan and, it was agreed that extracts would be published.

Agreed:

7a) The Business Plan is in a good position subject to the additions around creating one team, the May elections and the spending review.

7b) The Strategic Plan required further development. The following areas of interest should be added to the plan:

- Flexibility, skills and workforce planning
- Getting the right people skills in a cost efficient way to drive savings and productivity
- Embedding the CI culture
- Customer focus – reputation, confidence and regard amongst stakeholders.

8.0 Stakeholder Engagement

8.1 SC drew the Board's attention to the 3 bullets in the papers and asked the Board for its views on the approach, who we engage with and how we do it and also asked for views on the core narrative.

8.2 JG thought this was a very good approach and found the layout of PINS stakeholders set out in annex c very useful but felt the transport industry was a little bit light.

8.3 DC said the wording of the core narrative was interesting and consistent with the strategic plan and could help to shape the outcomes of the strategic goals. Elements of the narrative should make its way into the strategic plan; the two documents should remain consistent. DC questioned whether the Select Committee should be added to our list of stakeholders.

8.4 JE asked if consideration had been given to some of the internal stakeholders, which we engage with regularly such as the trades unions. SC explained that focus had been on external stakeholders, SW asked SC to give more consideration to the unions, NAO and the Select Committee.

8.5 SW liked the core narrative and agreed it was the right statement for PINS and could be used throughout the organization. Under section 5 of the paper (monitoring and measuring) SW referred to how we might monitor customer feedback and how this affects our reputation. SW referred to the

focus groups set up by Wales to gather information from various stakeholder groups. SC suggested the use of a short survey as a benchmarking exercise.

8.6 PS advised SC might want to consider and add the following stakeholders to annex c: the Treasury, Infrastructure UK, UKTI, BIS, big developers, providers of finance for large infrastructure projects.

8.7 SW asked SC to come back to the Board with how we might measure reputation and also give a forward view of the planned engagement with these stakeholders for the next twelve months.

Agreed:

8a) The new core narrative was representative of PINS and the three operational areas of our work.

8b) Further consideration and additions should be made to the grid of stakeholders at annex c. With particular consideration given to those that might be classed as internal stakeholders.

8c) SC to come back to the Board with suggestions on how we might measure reputation amongst our stakeholders and a forward view of planned stakeholder engagement.

9.0 **Election and spending review 2015 planning**

9.1 SR informed the Board that RP has been given a relatively new role to bring together the priority issues and to work in parallel with DCLG colleagues on policy matters.

9.2 PS said this was a good paper and covers the areas of joint working. From RP's point of view the relationship with DCLG appeared to be working well. PS said Paragraph 4.2 of the paper captured all of the right things and whilst engagement with DECC is good, it appeared that engagement with DfT needed further work. SR advised this was due to transport being spread out, but work was being done to improve the links. PS and SR agreed to discuss this further.

9.3 As there appears to be cross party support for neighbourhood plans, DC asked how will this impact on PINS. SR advised Jane Everton and RP are in regular contact, input from PINS will be most useful to inform DCLG about the implications of policy such as neighbourhood plans. BL advised similar engagement has taken place on the viability of CIL and we have used our experience to make operations easier and take waste out of the process.

9.4 SW asked are we proactively taking information out of the conversations being held to prepare the Board and PINS for the changes ahead. RP explained evidence gathering and analysis has taken place to see what comes out of DCLG policy thinking, this has been passed to DCLG. RP is awaiting feedback from DCLG. SW asked for a clear plan to be drawn up to include how PINS would implement known changes such as those in the Lyons review to and the implications for PINS of potential spending review constraints post May to prepare for possible new government.

	<p><u>Agreed:</u> 9a) With the approach being taken to co-ordinate policy input and working with DCLG colleagues. 9b) PS and SR should discuss the opportunities available to improve the relationship with DfT colleagues. 9c) RP to produce a plan for the Board to include how we are going to implement the various policy changes and the implications for PINS of potential spending review constraints post May.</p>
10	<p>Review of the meeting and forward agenda</p> <p>10.1 SR advised the forward agenda should be revised in line with the work identified in both the business and strategic plans to keep the Board up to date on progress. The review should be complete in time for the March PINS Board. SW agreed and asked SR to discuss this over the Board dinner on the 10 March.</p> <p>10.2 SW advised DM would conduct the Board Effectiveness review. DM will conduct the Board Effectives evaluation interviews in April, with a report coming to the Board in either May or June.</p> <p>10.3 SW asked for MS to be invited to a future PINS Board so the Board can have an update on MAP directorate.</p> <p><u>Agreed:</u> 10a) To the amendments to the PINS Board forward agenda.</p>

Next meeting: 11 March 2015, 1.00pm – 4.00pm