

PIPA the RTPI Politicians in Planning Network Core Group Meeting on 20th September 2007	
	Action
Present:	
Cllr Mike Roberts (Chair)	
Ashis Choudhury	
Trevor Roberts	
Martin Willey – RTPI Junior Vice-President	
Andrew Matheson (Network Manager)	
Apologies had been received from:	
Cllr Maryse Iles	
Cllr Brian O’Hare	
Mike welcomed Martin to the meeting; Martin explained his intention to visit each of the Network Core/Steering Groups in turn.	
1. Minutes of the Meeting on 5th June 2007	
The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record.	
Action points from the Minutes: 2. The ‘task & finish group’ had, in the event, become a joint group with other Networks 4. Event in Scotland: Andrew confirmed that there was interest but care would be needed in selecting a date 5. Shaping & Delivering Tomorrow’s Places: Andrew noted that no issues had been raised for discussion 6. Network Marketing Strategies: these would now await the outcome from the consultation on charges for the Networks.	
2. PIPA Conference & Relaunch	
The analysis of feedback from the Conference was noted – although the numbers providing feedback were relatively small.	
It was agreed that the Conference had been very important in demonstrating and celebrating the importance of the political aspects of planning.	
It was agreed that the Conference should be repeated in 2008 – a theme already identified was the economic aspects of planning – with a slightly revised format - as suggested by the feedback - and a particular emphasis on improved timekeeping.	MR/AM
3. Draft Business Plan 2008	
Whilst the ‘slimming down’ was generally appreciated, Martin wondered whether the Plan presented the role for PIPA distinctively enough. In particular the document needed to address ‘What’s in it for the politician as a primary focus?’	
It was felt that PIPA could and should develop a voice on the topic of ‘the status of planning’ and that PIPA members could help to press: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chartered status of planning • The status of the Chief Planning Officer within the local authority 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to increase the numbers of qualified planners; in relation to this latter point the report from the Academy for Sustainable Communities would provide an evidence base. 	
It was agreed that the Plan should be amended to reflect this issue.	AM
4. Building Links	
Martin was concerned that PIPA should become properly established so that it could 'negotiate' with potentially like-minded bodies from a position of confidence and strength. Building links should therefore start with an audit of the 'competition in order that subsequent progress might be well informed.	MR/AM
5. Any Issues Arising from:	
Report on Progress with 2007 Business Plan	
Earlier circulation of the Report had not prompted any comments and it was agreed that efforts be focussed now on the Plan for 2008.	
RTPI Consultation on Charges for the Networks	
Andrew noted that the consultation period had now closed and the RTPI Executive Board would consider a report in due course; clearly this would impact on the business planning for 2008.	
The RTPI Networks and the Membership & Lifelong Learning Team	
The Report was noted, with thanks to Trish Cookson.	
RTPI Response to the Planning White Paper	
Those that had attended the Networks meeting with the Policy Team agreed that it had been a most stimulating event with a significant number of synergies across the table being identified.	
'Single Regional Strategies' Paper	
The paper from Prof Alan Townsend was gratefully received. For PIPA purposes it was felt that a paper examining the democratic case for regionalism, perhaps making comparisons with the experiences of other European countries, would be useful if Prof Townsend was prepared to extend his work.	MR/AM
PIPA Contribution to 'Climate Change' articles	
Mike confirmed that he was still happy to make the PIPA contribution to the series of articles being published in Planning; the PIPA piece will need to be ready by March 2008.	MR/AM
6. Other Current & Forthcoming issues:	
Inspector's Report on the SE Regional Plan	
Mike noted that this document would inevitably have national repercussions and it therefore merited close examination. Martin suggested that, particularly in view of this high level of significance, it would be helpful if Mike would write a piece for Planning given a politicians perspective of the potential implications from this Inspector's Report. Mike agreed to look at this as soon as he was able.	MR/AM
Nationally Significant Infrastructure	
<i>Martin declared a conflict of interest on this topic in view of a client and he did not take part in the discussion.</i> It was noted that the planning/transport interface would be the subject of a Networks Conference in late October – details will be included in the Bulletin.	ALL

Housing Green Paper	
The Core Group meeting was to be followed by a Housing Network meeting on this topic that would influence the RTPI's response to the Green Paper.	
At the subsequent meeting, also attended by CLG officials, a number of areas were identified where more clarity was required eg how infrastructure costs will be forward-funded and how differences in funding rules across Government Departments might be resolved. But the meeting stressed that it was keen to work with CLG in moving the discussions and therefore policy forward.	
Planning Gain Supplement	
Although it was noted that the Housing Green Paper had referred to 'other models' being considered, it was not clear whether anyone was pressing any of these alternatives. In order to consider the means to influence outcomes on this and other issues it was felt that it would be useful to have a 'map' of the political networks of planning influence eg Select Committees, Special Advisors etc.	
Andrew will explore what already exists within the RTPI.	AM
7. Any other Business	
Trevor asked that future meetings should start at 1pm to allow him sufficient travelling time in the event that he is travelling from home.	ALL to note
8. Date of Next Meeting	
It was agreed that the next meeting will take place at RTPI Offices, London on Thursday 29 th November 2007 The programme of meetings for 2008 was agreed as (Note change to June date from draft proposals): Thursday 6 th March 2008 Wednesday 11 th June 2008 Thursday 4 th September 2008 Thursday 27 th November 2008	