

<b>PIPA the RTPI Politicians in Planning Network Core Group Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2007</b>	
	<b>Action</b>
<b>Present:</b>	
Cllr Mike Roberts (Chair)	
Cllr Maryse Iles	
Trevor Roberts	
And for item 6 Rynd Smith, RTPI Director of Policy & Communications	
Andrew Matheson (Network Manager)	
<b>Apologies had been received from:</b>	
Ashis Choudhury	
Cllr Brian O'Hare (prevented from attending by failure of train)	
<b>1. Minutes of the Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2007</b>	
The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record.	
Action points from the Minutes:	
2 PIPA Conference 2008 – <i>item on Agenda</i>	
3 Draft Business Plan 2008 – <i>revised Plan on Agenda</i>	
4 Audit of 'Competition' - <i>item on Agenda</i>	
5 Democratic Case for Regionalism - <i>item on Agenda</i>	
5 Climate Change article – <i>forthcoming</i>	
6 South-east Regional Plan – <i>Mike's article will be in the next edition of Planning</i>	
6 Map of political networks for planning – <i>yet to be delineated</i>	
<b>2. Audit of other Organisations in the same field as PIPA</b>	
From the presented list there was felt to be some common interests between PIPA and the TCPA, the Civic Trust, the LGA, PAS and the Improvement Service in Scotland, but the wider interests of the other organisation mean that it is difficult to find <i>mutual</i> interests. Andrew and Mike will spend a little time exploring propositions which might spark a mutual interest with the majority of the other bodies – or particular parts of them.	MR/AM
<b>3. The Planning Convention 2008</b>	
Andrew explained that the organising Committee for the Convention had invited PIPA to host a workshop session on 'Getting effective engagement with communities' as they would like a Councillor(s) to lead the session. He further commented that the Core Group of the Planning with Communities Network was offering assistance. Core Group members agreed to think about suitable candidates to lead the session and to advise Andrew of their names as quickly as possible.	ALL
<b>4. Any Issues Arising from:</b>	
<b>The Government's Legislative Programme</b>	
Mike noted an extensive programme of potential interest to PIPA and PIPA members. He felt that a 'task & finish' group meeting initially in January 2008 would be helpful to get the measure of the implications of the Bills	

individually and collectively. The Group also expressed an interest in a joint Networks event exploring the outcomes from the Householder Consents review.	MR/AM  AM
<b>The Planning Reform Bill</b>	
The Group expressed an interest in a joint Networks event exploring the Reform Bill implications in some detail.	AM
<b>Q3 Progress with 2007 Business Plan</b>	
The Report was noted.	
<b>Draft 2007 Network Monitoring Report</b>	
There was a general agreement amongst Core group members that PIPA had made a lot of progress in its relaunch year.	
<b>Business Plan 2008 for PIPA Network</b>	
The revised Plan was noted.	
<b>5. Network Events for 2008:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Networks event on the Planning Reform Bill – <i>supported as noted above</i></li> <li>• Joint Networks event on Householder Consents Reform – <i>supported as noted above</i></li> <li>• PIPA Conference in England – <i>favoured locations were Manchester or Leeds</i></li> <li>• PIPA Conference in Scotland – <i>whilst it was appreciated that funding would be an influencing factor, Glasgow or Edinburgh were ‘clear favourite’ locations</i></li> <li>• Joint event with Planning with Communities Network on Community Strategies – <i>noted as being raised with RTPI Conferences</i></li> </ul>	AM
<b>6. The Democratic Case for Regionalism</b>	
Rynd Smith joined the meeting for this discussion.	
Mike on behalf of the Group thanked Prof Alan Townsend for the documents circulated prior to the meeting enabling members to feel well informed and abreast of current issues. Group Members present shared Alan’s concerns for the effectiveness of the regional tier of planning.	
<p>Rynd explained the emerging RTPI Policy position on single regional strategies against what he feared was a collapse in the Government perception of regionalism. His was a two step approach:</p> <p><i>First:</i> the RTPI will welcome the single regional strategy approach but note that the following are missing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the RDAs simply ‘take over’ the Regional Assembly (RA) areas of responsibility there will be a loss of the culture of effective community engagement and the integrated planning which underpins the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS)</li> <li>• Community/political accountability – whilst there will be a Regional Minister there is no indication as to how regional statements will be reattached to the lower tiers below the regional level</li> <li>• Human Resource attention – massive effort will be needed to convince regional staffs that the proposals can actually improve things and that appropriate effort will be given to skilling the regional bodies</li> </ul> <p>The RTPI is proposing to ‘broker’ a meeting between the RDAs and RAs to seek a common view on plan-making, to seek to accelerate delivery and so address morale, to ensure attention to engagement with</p>	

<p>stakeholders/communities and to provide a forum for suggestions for properly democratic structures that will work.</p> <p><i>Second:</i> If these issues are not properly addressed by Government then the RTPI will assert that the Regional Plan is no longer a credible document.</p>	
<b>Other Issues raised with Rynd</b>	
<p><b>New Single-tier Authorities</b>  A concern was raised that these proposals should be opposed by the RTPI. Rynd responded that whilst it was apparent that the result would be a 'dogs breakfast of a structure' he felt that the RTPI's concerns needed to be for the principles of the structure rather than the fate of individual authorities.</p> <p><b>The Planning Reform Bill</b>  Rynd was asked to update the meeting on the RTPI's response to the Planning Bill and he distributed and explained a RTPI Briefing that had been prepared in advance of the Parliamentary Reception to be held that evening.</p> <p><b>Householder Consents Review</b>  The meeting expressed some concern at the apparently enthusiastic response to the reforms announced as part of the Planning Bill whereas the joint Networks' Meeting had expressed strong reservations about the extent of areas that might be freed from an explicit consent. Rynd explained that the final RTPI response to consultative documents will always be a derivative from rather than an amalgam of inputs – but he agreed to look again at the wording used on the website briefing.</p> <p><b>Fire Regulations within the Building Regulations</b>  Mike expressed a concern that too little attention was being given to fire protection within buildings and asked for RTPI support in extending the use of sprinkler and related systems through the Building Regulations.</p>	RS
<b>7. Any other Business</b>	
<p>Mike noted that there would be a Network Chairs' meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December (that he hoped he would be able to attend) and he asked if Group Members had issues which they would wish him to raise. There were none.</p>	
<b>8. Dates of Next Meetings</b>	
<p>It was agreed that the programme of meetings for 2008 would be:</p> <p>Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008  Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2008  Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008  Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008</p>	ALL to note