

| PIPA the RTPI Politicians in Planning Network Core Group Meeting on 27th November 2008 | |
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| | Action |
| Present: | |
| Cllr Mike Roberts (Chair) | |
| Ashis Choudhury | |
| Cllr Brian O'Hare | |
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| Andrew Matheson (Network Manager) | |
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| Apologies had been received from: | |
| Cllr Bill Sharp | |
| Trevor Roberts | |
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| 1. Minutes of the Meeting on 4th September 2008 | |
| The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record. | |
| Action points from the Minutes: | |
| 2 Killian & Pretty Review: <i>RTPI response circulated; Andrew updated that the Review had just been published and had certainly picked up on several of the recommendations raised in the last meeting</i> | |
| 4 Future of the Core Group: <i>Mike attended Networks' Awayday and subsequently met with Trish Cookson & Andrew Matheson</i> | |
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| 2. Update on the PIPA Conference 2008 | |
| The circulated analysis of the feedback forms was noted with pleasure. | |
| Issues raised in relation to future events were: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all speakers are likely to please everyone – this is especially so when audience loyalties are inevitably politically influenced • The shared dining room overemphasising the restricted menu choice for delegates was the likely reason for the lower level of satisfaction with the catering • Sessions that overrun are likely to give rise to more dissatisfaction than satisfaction – so session Chairs need to be strict on the timetable. | |
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| 3. Member meeting with Steve Quartermain, CLG Chief Planner | |
| Andrew advised that, following his contribution to the PIPA Conference, Steve Quartermain had agreed in principle a meeting with Members to discuss current issues and any unresolved questions from the Conference. However, he asked for further discussions about the format and these would be resolved in the New Year after an internal discussion with Policy. The meeting felt that a small event under 'Chatham House' rules was to be preferred and could be a helpful format. | AM |
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| 4. Activities 2009 | |
| The long list circulated was prioritised into low/medium or high priorities: Olympic Legacy – High Regional events to boost local contacts – High Welsh Conference – Medium 2 nd Scottish Conference – Medium Conference in Northern Ireland – High UK Conference – High, with the most suitable dates being around October | |

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| All-Party Parliamentary Committee – Medium Joint Climate Change Task Group – Medium Joint events with NALC – Medium, more of a priority for Planning Aid Closer links with Planning Aid – regular contact as above Planning Convention – High, but other immediate priorities | |
| Ashis was particularly concerned that the issue identified in the Killian/Pretty review, about improved understanding of respective needs between planning officers and Councillors warranted some activity by PIPA and this was agreed to warrant a high priority - High | |
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| 5. Future of the Core Group | |
| Updating the circulated note, Andrew advised that the expected financial stringency for 2009 had now been formalised as a 5% cut + no inflation increase. All sections are being required to critically assess all expenditure and the priority for the Networks would be to maintain a service to members as a whole. Andrew did however reassure that the RTPI commitment to PIPA as a part of the Institute was as strong as ever. | |
| Mike as Chair said that whilst the need for ‘virtual’ meetings was accepted, saving on travel and associated costs, he felt that abandoning the Core or Steering Group completely was not appropriate. PIPA membership was different from that of the other Networks and PIPA needed a stronger not weaker voice, reflecting the planning leadership role of Parliament & local Councillors. There would continue to be the opportunity for time- & cost-effective Core/Steering Group meetings in conjunction with other PIPA events. <i>Mike subsequently added that, in connection with his Councillor responsibilities, he had subsequently had a conversation with Hazel Blears MP and she was again supportive of PIPA suggesting that Mike remind the RTPI of the Killian & Pretty Review emphasis on the important roles of local Councillors.</i> | |
| Andrew confirmed that he would pass those comments back to Trish, with the 2009 RTPI Budget in mind. But he also re-emphasised that inputs from the membership as a whole would continue to be sought eg via the annual Member survey and special requests for contributions to the general and specific events Programme. For the sake of its credibility, PIPA needed to engage more effectively both with existing and new members and with the demands of multiple priorities the RTPI would have to determine, once the allocation of 2009 resources has been determined, how far those resources could be stretched. | |
| Andrew thanked all Members for their contributions during 2008 and for their continuing enthusiasms for an active PIPA Network. | |
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| 6. Any issues arising from: | |
| RTPI East of England Conference for Planning Councillors | |
| Trevor was thanked for representing PIPA at this event. | |
| Q3 Progress with 2008 Action Plan | |
| Noted. | |
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| 7. Any other Business | |
| There was none. | |