

**APPENDIX E** What is and is not working well

Name	Submission/suggestion	Officer Comment	Impact	Recommendation
Berwick St James	<p>If a decision is made by the planning dept or conservation dept which differs from that of the village then a meeting should be arranged with the chairman of the village to discuss the matter. If there is still no agreement the chairman should have the right to appeal to the next higher authority.</p> <p>It is important that planning and conservation departments are seen to be working for the villages.</p>	<p>In an ideal world this would happen but the council has finite resources and circa 10,000 planning applications to process each year so it is simply impractical.</p> <p>If a parish council believes that an application should be considered by committee (as opposed to simply disagreeing with an officer recommendation) it is open to them to discuss the matter with their Division Member and request that the application go before committee.</p> <p>There is obviously scope for the provision of more information on the roles of the development control and conservation teams and the rational behind some of the decisions they make.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Training and information will be provided as part of the council's normal service provision.</p>	<p>No change to current practice.</p> <p>Training opportunities to be provided.</p>
Biddestone & Slaughterford	<p>As a small rural community we feel cut off and ignored – partly because our views are not understood or considered.</p> <p>Decisions do not seem to be uniform – even with parishes. Transparency is important.</p> <p>Your response, of lack of response, will indicate how seriously you take the views of a rural parish.</p>	<p>All consultation responses are carefully considered and taken into account in the decision making process. It is often the case that there are other material planning considerations which outweigh the local perspective. To many, this appears to be the council ignoring representations. This in not the case, it is simply a matter of the council having to make decisions consistently and in line with its own and national planning policy.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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		<p>Each case has to be considered on its merits and the material considerations at work. It is possible for two similar applications to be considered differently because different considerations apply – i.e. one site may be in an AONB, and the other not.</p> <p>The Council does not have the resources to respond to every consultation response that varies with an officer recommendation.</p>		
Bishopstone	We strongly object to plans having to be reduced to the size of a screen. HM Government must not be allowed to dictate this without implementing a means of viewers being able to properly read the plans.	Technology changes but there has been no decision made to stop paper consultation on planning applications.	N/A	N/A
Box	It would be helpful to go back to having a slip attached to planning applications showing the date it was registered, target dates, etc. as was used previously by North Wiltshire District Council.	Sensible suggestion.	Small level of resource input to review response proformas.	Review consultation documentation/process with parishes. Parish/town council comment sheets should be reformatted and automatically populate all necessary information including the application number and consultation response date.
Bradford on Avon	On the postcard sent to members of the public they are now informed that the plans are only available at Wiltshire Council, Bradley Road. Town and parish councils and their opening times are not mentioned but they should be. Members have found that the planning website appears to close down after 2200 hours.	The council's current IT platforms inherited from the former districts do not allow it to tailor neighbour notifications in most parts of the county to specify which parish and town councils provide a facility to view plans locally. This issue will hopefully be addressed when a new IT system is acquired for the development and sister services. There have been prolonged	A capital bid has been made for improved IT which will be considered by councillors in February 2010.	No change possible until improved IT is available.

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	<p>Sometimes the planning website does not work, although officers from the Wiltshire Council can access the site, when we cannot.</p>	<p>problems with the web sites for the four planning hubs which have caused serious difficulties for both the community and staff. The IT service took steps in December 2009 to address the main issues and reliability has improved drastically.</p>	<p>Changes/improvements already in hand so no resource implications.</p>	<p>Solution already in hand.</p>
<p>Broughton Gifford</p>	<p>The parish council feels that it is difficult for members of the public to understand the planning process. Both parish council and applicant had very little notice, if any that one application was going to be refused, giving no opportunity of asking an elected member to refer it to committee for a decision.</p> <p>The current scheme appears to have less 'two-way' interaction between applicant and planning officers. Final decisions increasingly come down to the discretion of one officer, giving immense power to one individual. Planning officers appear to have 'carte-blanche' over the final decision with no chance of amendment or redress.</p>	<p>Every effort is made to ensure everyone knows how the planning process works but delegated decision making to officers has to take place if the council is to process circa 10,000 planning applications a year.</p> <p>The Government has stated that the planning process has to be streamlined and that best performing authorities are delegating over 95% of applications to officers. If the level of delegation is reduced, the council will simply fail to meet National Performance Indicators and agendas and meetings will become lengthy and the quality of decision making decline.</p> <p>It also has to be borne in mind that officers make decisions based on the council's own adopted policies and national guidance. Their reasoning also has to be set out in the decision notices.</p>	<p>If the council was to inform consultees of proposed decisions and then allow them an opportunity to negotiate a call in with the Division Member performance would suffer and every decision would be delayed.</p> <p>(The same would apply if the level of delegation to officers were reduced.)</p> <p>This would also add another administrative step to an already complex process and require additional staff resources.</p>	<p>No change to current practice.</p>
<p>Castle Combe</p>	<p>Communications as above. Do planning officers want the opinion of</p>	<p>Officers do want to hear the views of local councils and do try to act</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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	<p>local councillors? There is a view that no notice is taken of the parish's views.</p> <p>Pleased to see that only one copy of plans is now being received.</p>	<p>upon them wherever possible. It is simply a fact that that they have to take into account/balance other considerations too, and cannot always make the decision the local council would like.</p>		
<p>Charlton &amp; Wishford</p>	<p>We are very unclear as to the actual role and responsibilities of the planning department. For example, is the planning department responsible for the accuracy of the submitted plans and supporting documents? Are they responsible for ensuring that conditions attached to approved planning applications are complied with? What "weight" is given to the views of parish councils on planning applications?</p> <p>There is a need to have a concise document setting out the roles of the planning department and their procedures.</p> <p>In planning department documentation there is a need to use Plain English and not "council" speak.</p> <p>Who determines what will be handled under delegated powers and what are the metrics used in determining this delegation?</p> <p>All communications to interested parties should be by email for speed</p>	<p>Most of the requested information is and can be provided through service training opportunities.</p> <p>Covered in training – the scope of the service is such that it is not practical or cost effective to document it all.</p> <p>Every effort is made to do this but there is clearly scope for improvement.</p> <p>The Planning Scheme of Delegation to Officers forms part of the council's constitution and is endorsed by the council. Officers make recommendations on the level of delegation needed to handle workload within Government performance levels using the resources available.</p> <p>Agreed but some parties decline to use e-mail and still ask to be</p>	<p>Training will be provided as part of the council's normal service.</p> <p>Making electronic communication compulsory would reduce council</p>	<p>Training opportunities to be provided.</p>

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	<p>and cost effectiveness.</p> <p>A website link should be provided to all the policy documents and guidelines mentioned in any of the planning departments' documentation.</p> <p>The parish council has noted that applicants can make any number of amendments to their applications at no additional cost to themselves. However, Wiltshire Council and the parish councils clearly incur costs in dealing with each amendment. All applicants should be charged for each additional amendment they make to their application, irrespective of scale.</p> <p>The powers under the Scheme of Delegation are extensive and, accordingly, it would be appropriate for the Director of Development, and any officers designated by that officer, to sign a declaration of any (emphasis added) interest with the applicant and/or his agents.</p> <p>In summary, it is the view of this parish council that we wish to be part of the whole planning process not merely to be on the periphery; to assist the planning department not only to enable a satisfactory decision/outcome for all interested parties but to make the planning department aware of local information which is not necessarily within their knowledge.</p>	<p>communicated with by post.</p> <p>Agreed, but embedding links in every document is time consuming. All policy documents referred to should be available on the council's web site for easy reference.</p> <p>A wonderful suggestion but the Government prescribed charging regime does not allow this. If, however, the proposed changes are tantamount to a new application, officers decline to treat them as amendments.</p> <p>Officers are governed by the Planning Code of Good Practice, their own professional institutes code and the general rules and regulations of the council. Care is already taken to avoid conflicts of interest.</p>	<p>costs.</p> <p>Most documents are already on the web but requiring officers to put links to them into all documents would require additional resources but it may be simpler than anticipated.</p>	<p>Investigate the ease of link insertion to core documents.</p> <p>No change required to current safeguards.</p>
Codford	A 6pm meeting in Trowbridge for	The start time of meetings was/is a	See Appendix G.	N/A

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	<p>instance can cause serious problems for those members of the public or councillors who work. For example many may work in Salisbury and have to get to drawbridge, through Westbury at a peak time- thus making public consultation much more difficult. We leave Codford one hour before the meeting in order to ensure we are there- add another 45 minutes to come along the A36 out of Salisbury. This scenario can be reproduced across the county and anyone working some distance away will struggle to make a 6 am meeting. We wonder if all Wiltshire councillors find it convenient to be at the start of the meeting if they have jobs elsewhere.</p> <p>It is important that the chairman of the committee has discretion to allow more speakers on important planning applications. For instance when an application to build next to Commonwealth War Graves with access/ drainage/ policy/ environmental implications different people spoke on each subject. No one repeated anything but the committee were fully briefed before the debate &amp; decision. They agreed with the local view unanimously. If this application comes up again we would not have the same opportunities to ensure that each planning aspect was dealt with as thoroughly. There will be times when something has a major impact on the rural community- it needs to be understood that major issues with planning times affect rural villages as</p>	<p>councillor decision and is commented on further in Legal &amp; Democratic Services Appendix G.</p> <p>The chairman has a fair degree of discretion on speaking times and can allow more than the normal three minutes or three speakers if the need arises. It is important, however that an equal 'opportunity' is offered to both those speaking for and against any proposal so there can be no claims of bias. In general, three representatives speaking for three minutes can say all that needs to be said about a proposal and from an officer's perspective, the introduction of time limits has made for better and timelier meetings.</p>	<p>If chairmen use their discretion judiciously and meetings are not allowed to run on for unreasonable periods (from the perspective of members of the public who are waiting for their item, and officers who have usually been at work all day as will have some members).</p> <p>If meetings do run on there are overtime implications for support staff as well as 'time off in lieu' issues for professional staff.</p>	<p>No change to current practice.</p>

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	<p>well as the towns. We appreciate views need to be based on planning grounds and clearly stated without repetition - but all aspects should be heard in order to ensure the planning process is seen to be fair and that people have the right within the guidelines to be heard at Committee.</p>			
Corsham	<p>It would be useful to only receive details of locally relevant applications which are relevant to us on the weekly list of applications i.e. broken down by parish.</p>	<p>This is a reasonable request but it is almost certain that the existing IT packages will not allow this facility to be set up without considerable cost/time input, if it is even possible.</p> <p>It is considered preferable to ensure this facility exists in any new IT package rather than invest in upgrading an old system that will hopefully be replaced shortly.</p> <p>(Other parishes have asked to be circulated with details of every application registered.)</p>	<p>There are almost certainly IT obstacles to delivering on this request and it is not considered worthwhile investing further in systems which will hopefully be replaced sometime soon.</p>	<p>Investigate possibility of making this change and implement if it is easy and inexpensive. Otherwise take no action.</p>
Cricklade	<p>We still do not feel the Section 106 Open Space Policy is working adequately or openly. From a town council perspective it seems we have to request such contributions which even then are not forthcoming rather than this being a part of normal procedures. Perhaps some better explanation of the system and process is required under 'training'. Additionally we have had examples of lost files, Section 106 omissions, conditions not being applied in relation to drainage, and Planning Inspectors agreeing with our recommendations rather than the</p>	<p>The section 106 contribution process is being reviewed by the Spatial Planning Team alongside the services that are involved such as leisure, education, housing and highways. It is anticipated that the process and allocation of funds will be clarified and more information can then be provided as part of training.</p> <p>There is certainly room for improvement in the management and monitoring of Section 106s.</p>	<p>This review process is already in hand so there are no additional resource implications.</p> <p>The development service itself has also recently appointed an officer with a view to better management and monitoring of both historic and new agreements throughout the county.</p>	<p>Continue with Spatial Planning review and provide additional information to local councils at its conclusion.</p>

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	planning officers. This does not give us confidence that the system is operating efficiently with due concern to the opinion of local councils and residents to the benefit of developers.			
Dilton Marsh (also Semington, Westwood and Wingfield)	<p>A six-month review is premature and further time should be allowed before a review is undertaken. Most parish councils have had very few planning applications and the 'new' system – especially that related to the 'call in', has not been properly tested.</p> <p>The 21-day 'call-in' imposition by unelected officers is unacceptable and this element of the present system should be discontinued forthwith. Parish councils and its elected representatives must retain (or recover) the power of 'call-in'. Wiltshire Council is a servant of the electorate – not the other way around. Council officers need to be reminded of this fact.</p>	<p>A number of very useful suggestions have come forward as a result of the review and a further delay would simply delay needed action. The review process will actually always be ongoing so Parishes can make additional suggestions as the need arises.</p> <p>The 21 day call results from operational need and it was a recommendation made by officers to councillors who agreed that it was necessary to ensure the council could operate its development control service and issue decision notices to applicants within a reasonable time frame.</p>	N/A	<p>Complete the current review process.</p> <p>No change to current practice.</p>
Etchilhampton	<p>The on-line search facility "by villages" appears to be less accessible than that previously run by Kennet D.C.</p> <p>Would like the default to be set to show the most recent applications first.</p>	There have been prolonged problems with the web sites for the four planning hubs which have caused serious difficulties for both the community and staff. The IT service took steps in December 2009 to address the main issues and reliability has improved drastically.	Changes/improvements already in hand so no resource implications.	Solution already in hand.
Grafton	The website for East Wiltshire is often not working well.	See response above.	See above	Solution already in hand.
Grittleton	As a parish that contains a number of conservation areas, we are of the view that the designation 'Conservation Area' appears to be almost	The Scheme of Delegation does not contain policies. Where appropriate these will be captured in the ongoing Local Development	N/A	N/A

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	meaningless in terms of protecting the vernacular style of a settlement. We would expect there to be some more specific parameters relating to such areas within the development control scheme.	Framework process.  Officers treat individual applications on their merits and due consideration is always given to the need to protect and enhance designated conservation areas.		
Ham	It is apparent that applicants are often ignorant of the role played by parish councils, both in the application process and in monitoring the progress of works once an application has been approved. This role should be made clear in the planning information packs.	Sensible suggestion although not all parishes/clerks may want potential developers pointed in their direction.	Minor resource implications to review paperwork.	Change paperwork to highlight roles of parish and town councils in the planning process.
Hilperton	The new Wiltshire Council limits three people to speak in favour and three to speak against a planning application. As the number of applications taken to committee has dropped off and meetings now commence earlier - at 6 p.m. - it is felt that this should be left to the discretion of the chairman.  It is also felt that, if parish councils are not given the right to call in applications, then the time-scale for the unitary member to call in an application should be increased from three to four weeks. As Hilperton Parish Council is not sure if the system has been adequately tested, there should be another review in six-months' time.	The chairman already has considerable discretion over speaking times.  The call in period is dictated by the need to deal with applications effectively and in a timely manner and to meet Government performance targets.  The review process will actually always be ongoing so parishes can make additional suggestions as the need arises	N/A  Extending time periods will have a direct adverse impact on performance.	No change to current practice.
Idmiston	We are now expected to find, and if we want to, print planning decision notices. Again, cannot an email or a link accompany the weekly Delegated Lists	Sensible idea but it is likely that current limitations of IT will rule this out without considerable investment in systems the service	Changing IT could have considerable resource implications.	Investigate possibility of making this change and implement if it is easy and inexpensive. Otherwise take no action.

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	which come up, in order to speed up the planning process for parish & town councils?	hopes to replace shortly.		
Kingston St Michael	Concern has been expressed about the people who deal with applications in the conservation area. Are these officers always qualified?	The council employs a number of officers who are qualified to deal with all aspects of the historic built environment.  Where these officers do not deal with the applications themselves they give advice to the case officer.	N/A	N/A
Laverstock and Ford	Printing workable copies of documents for applications to be seen only on the web is still proving a major problem.	To speed up the process and reduce costs it is helpful when local councils access planning documents electronically.  At the moment there is no requirement for local councils to stop using paper copies but when they do, it reduces Wiltshire Council's costs. Electronic consultation with local councils will be considered later in 2010 and reviewing the merits of this is not part of this review.	Continuing to provide paper copies of all applications is a costly business which delays consultation.  Some councils are happy with electronic consultation and others are not. It may be possible to cater for both and therefore make some cost savings.	No change to current practice which allows for both electronic and paper copy consultation.
Limpley Stoke	There has been speculation that parish councils may be removed as consultees for planning applications. It is imperative that this does not happen, as being kept in the loop and able to report local views is a fundamental part of making decisions that effect where people live.	There are no Government plans to change the status of local councils – they will remain statutory consultees for the foreseeable future.	N/A	N/A
Malmesbury	Where officers are minded to determine an application differently to that view conveyed by the town/parish council, some communication takes place – ideally by telephone.	In an ideal world this would happen but the council have finite resources and circa 10,000 planning applications to process each year so it is simply impractical.	Additional staff resources would be required.	No change to current practice.

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Mere	<p>Parish council is concerned that there is no mandatory requirement for area planning committee members to carry out a site visit. Under the previous administration, Salisbury district Council's Area Committee Members were required to attend site visits at pre-set times (itemised on the agenda) which parish council representatives were able to attend and it was reassuring to the parish council and members of the public that the committee members had attended the site and made themselves familiar with the surrounding environment (adjacent buildings, landscape, street scene etc). However, we understand that there is currently no mandatory requirement for site visits and, in theory, one could attend a planning committee meeting where all members are totally unfamiliar with the surrounding environment of the planning application. Whilst we would hope that most diligent members would carry out their own site visits, we feel that the ambiguity of the current arrangement leaves the parish council and members of the public with an element of uncertainty.</p> <p>Second, some residents have complained that, using a standard printer, it is only possible to print off planning applications on A4 paper and often the detail is printed too small to read. The parish council does not know what solution could be used to address this problem but it was suggested that an A3 printer might be</p>	<p>The officer reports and supporting documentation contain enough detail for members to determine almost all applications. Members of a committee are encouraged to make independent visits to any sites they feel they need to view.</p> <p>Consequently, a decision was made by the Implementation Executive (IE) that except in exceptional circumstances site visits would not be prearranged as a matter of course.</p> <p>The IE also made it clear that site visits should only be arranged when a committee in session decided it wanted more information which only a site visit could provide.</p> <p>Residents can view/magnify plans on line and there is no need to print. (It is accepted, however, that printed plans are needed for site visits or if residents do not have access to appropriate IT.)</p>	<p>More frequent site visits would add considerably to the cost of the service.</p> <p>The provision of computers and printers for local councils (and presumably for training and their ongoing maintenance) would have serious resource implications for the council. There is also a licensing issue.</p> <p>If a printer is provided for Mere the</p>	<p>No change to current practice.</p> <p>Do not offer to provide hardware to local councils.</p>

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	installed in the Mere Information Centre.		council could set an expensive precedent.	
Minety	Parish council comments still appear to be ignored.	This is not the case. They are always taken into account in the decision making process but occasionally other material considerations dictate that a decision has to be made which conflicts with the local view.	N/A	N/A
Potterne	There is now no longer any form for discussion of planning issues before decisions are made. Area boards can only consider things retrospectively.	There has been no change made to the planning process in the east of the county. Parishes are still consulted and there is a local planning committee meeting in Browfort which discusses applications at length prior to making decisions.  The area board deals with 'community planning' matters and not town and county planning matters.	N/A	N/A
Purton	We have recently written a letter about some inconsistencies in decision made on planning applications and we have been advised that this letter has been forwarded to Brian Taylor for a response. The letter also contains our concerns about the proliferation of caravans in our area, be they travellers, or just mobiles sited at stables or similar agricultural settings again there seem no similarity of decision and there does not appear to be any action ever taken to remove them. They are becoming an eyesore and are often used for temporary accommodation on green belt land with no agricultural ties and are allowed to fall into disrepair.	Each case has to be examined on its merits and in a number of cases there are 'permitted development' rights which allow certain structures to be stationed.  The recent series of enforcement seminars went to some lengths to explain how time consuming and protracted and frustrating the process can be.	N/A	N/A
Redlynch	Plans put onto the website can be quite	There are limitations to technology	N/A	N/A

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	<p>small and are difficult to read. It also takes time to open each piece of correspondence and to print it or download it.</p>	<p>but it is constantly improving. It is anticipated that a new IT system will be provided for the service in the medium term which should overcome a number of the current technological limitations of the legacy systems Wiltshire Council has inherited from the former districts.</p>		
Salisbury City	<p>Staff are helpful and approachable but in terms of improvement, the current situation regarding management and release of S106 funds, both for projects and the commuted sums seems to have ground to a halt. We have previously approved projects to implement but no apparent means to get the monies released.</p>	<p>Considerable work is already in hand to review the way Wiltshire Council handles S106 funding and in particular, open space and maintenance contributions.</p> <p>Funding which has already been agreed under policy R2 is still available.</p> <p>The whole issue of developer contributions is being examined as part of work on the Local Development Framework and eligibility for funding will be covered.</p> <p>When the City were part of the former Salisbury District Council the parks manager had considerable flexibility in how the R2 'off site' contributions were used.</p> <p>Now Salisbury City Council is a separate entity the R2 money has to be authorised in the same manner as for any other parish/town council on a project specific basis.</p>	N/A	N/A

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Southwick	It would be very useful if when sending applications to a parish council that a list of all properties/land owners that have also been sent a notification letter could be provided. We have had instances when neighbouring residents of a proposed application site were not contacted and so they felt they were not properly consulted. This list would also assist the parish council as when we have large applications to be discussed we try and contact neighbouring residents to advise when they will be discussed to enable public participation.	This information is not currently required to be sent to parishes, nor is it available on the web site.	Current IT systems do not allow for this information to be readily incorporated into parish consultations without significant IT investment.	No change to current practice but keep under review to see if any replacement IT makes this feasible.
Stanton St Bernard	There seems to be over zealous planning enforcements being pursued.	Officers have to investigate every breach of planning control which is brought to their attention.  There is a separate review of the Council's enforcement policy taking place where proactive, as opposed to reactive enforcement measures will be considered	N/A	N/A
Stanton St Quinton (same responses as Box?)	It would be helpful to go back to having a slip attached to planning applications showing the date it was registered; target dates etc s was used previously by North Wiltshire District Council.	See comments on Box.		
St Paul Malmesbury Without	At the moment we are reasonably content with the service although it would be really helpful to parish planning officers if the reason for/detail of revisions to plans could be made explicit when asked to comment again. Sometimes the changes are not obvious and large amounts of time are wasted.	This comment has been repeated by other parishes and there is clearly scope for the council to improve this element of its consultation practice	Minor resource implications to address the issue	Review consultation documentation/process with parishes.
Teffont	Taken time to get used to having to search for planning consents or	All new IT developments take time to adjust to.	N/A	N/A

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	refusals by email or on line. Copies of pre-consultation letters by planning officers written as a follow up from a meeting with applicants and then included in application papers can sometimes be misleading.	Officers have to offer advice based on the information provided by the applicant at the time of a meeting/request. Things often change between then and the submission. Advice is always given on the basis that it is at officer level and will not prejudice the outcome of any application submitted.		
Trowbridge	Occasionally we receive no copies of plans which appear on the list and also copies of plans which then take some time to appear on the weekly list.	The western hub has been in the throws of introducing a new system and it has thrown up some gremlins. It is believed that these have now been sorted out but if any parish is experiencing problems, they should contact the relevant hub so it can be investigated at the time.	N/A	Any local council experiencing consultation problems should contact the admin team in the relevant hub immediately.
Upton Lovell	The parish council met this week and would appreciate because we are a small council and getting enough people together, along with mail delays whether any considerations could be taken to allow for a more flexible approach towards only allowing 21 days for the council to make a decision and forward it to the planning department.	The consultation period for parish and town councils is prescribed by government but the Council makes every effort to be as flexible as possible and will discuss individual cases with parishes if they have particular problems meeting a deadline.  Most parishes have set up a mechanism whereby responses planning consultations can be handled within the deadline	There will be a delay in issuing decision notices and performance against the Governments National Performance Indicators will decline if consultation periods are extended.	No change to current practice.
Urchfont	Apparent lack of action or slow response in enforcement cases. Inaccuracies in drawings should be resolved prior to applications going out for consultation or if picked up during consultation resolved prior to determination of application. Illegible			

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	applications should not be accepted.			
Warminster	I wonder what the cost of sending out applications individually is costing the WC and wonder whether the old system of sending out a parcel once per week would be beneficial. In addition are there going to be talks about extracting plans on line.	This is a difficult issue to address but in the main parishes appear to want as much time as possible to comment on applications and batching them, rather than sending them out as they are registered puts considerable pressure on already tight timescales.	Batching applications would save money but make response deadlines tighter. Officers would then lose any flexibility they previously had to extend deadlines in individual cases where parishes had particular problems in responding to applications.	No change to current practice.
West Knoyle	The parish council is concerned that there is no mandatory requirement for area planning committee members to carry out site visits. Whilst we would hope that most diligent members would carry out their own site visits, we feel that the ambiguity of the current arrangements leaves the public with an element of uncertainty.	The officer reports and supporting documentation contain enough detail for members to determine almost all applications. Members of a committee are encouraged to make independent visits to any sites they feel they need to view.  Consequently, a decision was made by the Implementation Executive (IE) that except in exceptional circumstances site visits would not be prearranged as a matter of course.  The IE also made it clear that site visits should only be arranged when a committee in session decided it wanted more information which only a site visit could provide.	More frequent site visits would add considerably to the cost of the service.	No change to current practice.
Westbury	Working well. Continuation of receipt of hard copy of applications essential. Extension of 21 day limit for call in process be increased. Some concern that the present scheme belittles the role of town/parish councils. Thank you for the hard and difficult work done by the department.	At the moment there is no requirement for local councils to stop using paper copies but when they do, it reduces Wiltshire Council's costs. Electronic consultation with local councils will be considered later in 2010 and reviewing the merits of this is not part of this review.	Continuing to provide paper copies of all applications is a costly business which delays consultation.  Some councils are happy with electronic consultation and others are not. It may be possible to cater for both and therefore make some cost savings.	No change to current practice which allows for both electronic and paper copy consultation.

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		Parish council views are always welcomed and carefully considered in the decision making process.		
Winsley	Without feedback on how the particular parish council's regular contributions are regarded by those dealing with them in the department it might take a very long time to second guess the effectiveness and value of the relationship for the local public interest. We might feel weaker in the new regime because of the vulnerability discussed above.	If a local council has concerns about the value of its consultation responses officers are always pleased to give feedback.  Attendance at training sessions will also increase knowledge about what is, and is not relevant.	Training will be provided as part of the council's normal service.	Training opportunities to be provided.
Woodborough	Problems have been experienced in accessing applications on the Planning Explorer website. On some occasions, plans have not been posted on the site until several days after notification has been received. A more common problem is in opening and downloading the plans; sometimes this is not possible.	There have been prolonged problems with the web sites for the four planning hubs which have caused serious difficulties for both the community and staff. The IT service took steps in December 2009 to address the main issues and reliability has improved drastically.	Changes/improvements already in hand so no resource implications.	Solution already in hand.
Ernie Clark	I accept that the removal of parish council call-in powers seems to have worked well. However, I still have serious concerns at the fact that this council seeks to stop members of the public from addressing planning committee meetings by placing a limit on the number of speakers. If people take the trouble to attend a meeting we, as councillors, should listen to their views.	Ideally, everyone who wanted to would be allowed to speak on an application for as long as they liked but this is simply not practical and some sort of limitation had to be introduced so that meetings could run to a reasonable timetable. The 'three people for three minutes' seems to be reasonable and is both longer and shorter than some of the previous districts used to operate. It is also rare that someone cannot say all they need to within three minutes. After that time repetition creeps in.  The chairman already has a	Unlimited public speaking will extend the time meetings last and could have an adverse affect on the decision making process. Long meetings will have cost implications for staffing.	No change to current time restrictions which generally work well.

Name	Submission/suggestion	Officer Comment	Impact	Recommendation
		reasonable degree of discretion in these matters and can change timings and numbers if necessary (provided a similar facility is offered to the 'other side').		
Richard Clewer	I think the number of applications going to committees is high and will probably grow as the council gets bedded in. I wonder if we would benefit from planning committees with larger membership which could allow for a degree of rotation of members. I did not enjoy planning as a district councillor but it does have a major impact on residents' lives and I think that all councillors would benefit from being on planning committees.	The size of the planning committees accords with Government best practice.  There are advantages in having the same members meeting regularly as they build up knowledge and experience.  Provided the pool from which they were drawn was reasonably small, this suggestion would work.	There are no resource implications, other than perhaps catering for a wider demand for planning training by councillors.	Officers would like to continue with the current size of committee and keep the same members on committee for the sake of consistency and because they build up.
Mary Douglas	Could we have a discussion session with officers and members, with 'permission to speak freely', on expectations on either side?	Agree this would be useful.	No resource implications.	Set up a number of discussion sessions to improve communication and foster trust.
Richard Gamble	Access to documents on-line via my council laptop is still not possible. Some documents are very large PDF files which are very slow to download via a rural broadband connection. Reduction of files to less than 1mb per document would be welcome.	The council recognised that there were councillor IT problems and a lot of work has been out in trying to resolve these by Democratic Services. It is hoped that most issues have now been resolved.  An officer called David Vane has been appointed to work closely with councillors who have ongoing IT problems.	N/A	N/A
Ian Hill	We were lucky in the north because the NWDC Development Control Committee was robust and non-political. I believe that approach has been carried over in the Wiltshire Council Northern Planning Committee. Several members have previous experience, in some cases HUGE	N/A	N/A	N/A

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	previous experience and that helps us all. We have a very good chairman who provides non-partisan and very fair direction when necessary. It is seen by the public to be working.			
Chris Humphries	Fuller explanations of the reasons for recommendations, the public appear not to understand planning vernacular.	<p>Officers try and explain the background to the decision making process wherever possible, both in person and in the content of all committee reports. All refusal notices contain clear reasons for the decision.</p> <p>There is always room for improvement, particularly the avoidance of jargon and acronyms.</p>	N/A	Officers should try and make the planning process more transparent.
Roy While	I consider the earlier start of 6 p.m. for committee meetings at Bradley Road to be an improvement.	The start time for committees was a councillor decision. Meetings which end late in the evening are not conducive to good decision making so earlier start times make sense, particularly during winter months.	The earlier meetings start/end the easier it is to staff them and the fewer resources are required.	Officers prefer earlier starts and support these.