

ENGAGING MEMBERS

Checklist for Officers

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RELATED RESOURCES	<p>PN011_Engaging Members_V1 PN011_Introduction for Planning Committee Members_V1</p>
ABOUT	<p>This resource was produced as part of the Public Practice Research and Development programme and should be read alongside the Practice Note: PN011_Engaging Members_V1. Guidance for using the resource can be found within the Practice Note.</p> <p>Practice Notes and other resources are available to download at www.publicpractice.org.uk/resources</p> <p>Public Practice welcomes feedback to help update current resources and inform future research. If you are interested in contributing to our research please contact us at info@publicpractice.org.uk.</p>

Design Review: Checklist for Officers

STAGE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS <i>Order of actions may vary between Authorities and not all actions are applicable to every DRP</i>
1) DRP INCEPTION, SET-UP AND INDUCTION	Consult Planning Committee, Cabinet Members and Ward Members on any requirements in the selection of Panellists. This should include identification of any areas of expertise that are felt to be specific priorities for the Authority, based on the Local Plan.
	Include the Chair of Planning Committee on the interview panel for the DRP chair.
	Include panel members with a local connection on the DRP. This is likely to be important to Members and should be a factored into the recruitment and selection process.
	Agree a mechanism for Member training by the DRP from inception. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schedule and timing of training events - Additional time/resources required from panel members and panel managers - Potential additional funding requirements
	Invite Lead Member or Chair of Planning Committee to present their priorities to the DRP at panel induction (and when new policies are published eg. Local Plan)
2) DRP MEETINGS	Invite Members to attend DRP meetings. Attendance should be encouraged, but limit the numbers attending each meeting to keep numbers manageable.
	Suggested approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nominate a 'Design Champion' (e.g. Chair of the Planning Committee, Portfolio Holder for Housing) who can consistently attend DRP meetings. This approach can work well in Boroughs where there is a Member with relevant skills, experience and capacity. - Invite Planning Committee Members to attend on a rotational basis, with 2 - 4 attendees at each meeting. - Invite the Leaders of each Political Party represented in the Council to attend.

	Brief Members on confidentiality issues and on the Terms of Reference of the Panel and make aware of confidentiality procedures.
	Invite Members to observe rather than to contribute to meetings because of tight timeframes. A specific agenda item can be included at the start / end of the meeting for Members to raise issues / questions.
3) BRIEFING THE PLANNING COMMITTEE	Consider including a specific agenda item at Planning Committee for the Chair of the Planning Committee to question the Case Officers about how schemes have responded to the DRP report.
	Hold pre-briefing session, taking into account pre-determination rules. For example, Officers update Members on the pre-app process. Questions only allowable from Members.
4) MEMBER TRAINING	Recommend getting DRP members involved in biannual training events.
	Agree a fixed number of training events with an external Design Review provider as part of the contract or establish if a portion of Design Review fees can contribute to training budgets if managed in-house.
	Consult with Members on topics / areas where they would like additional design training.
	<p>Set up study tours within the Local Authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite a member of the DRP on a study tour with the Planning Committee - Include schemes that DRP members have worked on, where appropriate. - Look at lessons learned in previously consented schemes and consider what questions should have been asked at Planning Committee. - Visit Case Studies outside the Local Authority in similar contexts to look at best practice approaches. - Establish themes for study tours based on common issues arising from Planning Committee, e.g. approaches to sustainable development, integration of higher density housing. - Alternatively, or in addition, make use of external training providers including Urban Design London, Place Alliance, RIBA, Design South East, etc.

5) DESIGN GUIDANCE	Direct Members to the UDL ‘Councillor Companion to Design in Planning’ guide and include a training session to introduce the guide.
6) ANNUAL REVIEW OF DRP	Measure and present the impact of Design Review panels. Surveys should be sent out to Applicants, Officers and Councillors involved. Templates for surveys can be found within the Practice Note PN003 ‘Measuring Design Review’ .
	<p>Invite Members to Annual Reviews to learn the impact of DRPs and update Local Authority employees on progress. The inclusion of the following groups should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning/Design Officers - Representative from outside Planning, including Regeneration, Housing, Highways and Environment - Planning Committee Members - Cabinet Members - Panel Members
	If necessary, split groups across different events in order to get valuable feedback from various perspectives.
	<p>Agendas for Annual Review events can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary of schemes seen in the previous year, including quantity and type of review. - Summary of survey responses from Applicants, Officers and Councillors. - Case study schemes examined in more detailed to assess the impact of the design review post-submission. - Discussion and feedback on how Design Review process can be improved.