

ODPM Planning Delivery Grant
Budget Planning for 2004/5 and beyond

Planning Delivery Grant 2004-5

The following provides a justification for the commitment of the Planning Delivery Grant.

In his letter dated 9th March 2004, the Rt Hon Keith Hill MP suggested areas that Local Authorities could concentrate the use of the Planning Delivery Grant resources as follows,

..."Areas in which authorities might consider concentrating their additional resources include: the preparation of regional planning guidance and the future regional spatial strategies; completing current reviews of existing development plans and preparing for the new system of local development frameworks; the better resourcing of IT systems; assistance from consultants; outsourcing of certain planning services; increasing staffing levels; training for staff and councillors; supporting mediation services; encouraging a more diverse planning workforce; bursaries for employees to gain planning qualifications and more use of technical staff.."

The grant of £570,445 has been awarded to Winchester City Council according to the following criteria:

1. Part of the grant has been awarded to areas of high housing demand in the wider South East. The amount awarded for housing and growth areas for Winchester was **£39,933**
2. Part of the grant has been awarded on the basis of the Best Value Performance Indicators on plan making performance – and Winchester City Council qualify as we have passed a statutory stage of the preparation of a new local plan between March 2002 and September 2003. The amount awarded on this basis was **£76,109**
3. The above two criteria are added together to get a total possible score of up to 5 points and multiplied by a weighting for District Councils - a population of 75,000 to 150,000 has a weighting of 1.25.
4. Top Performers - Winchester received a payment for meeting the Governments Best Value Performance Indicator for the category "Other" planning applications in September 2003, scaled according to the number of planning decisions handled in the year ending September 2003.

5. Performance weights have been multiplied by workload weights for the category of “Other” planning applications– Winchester’s total was 2. Whilst minor and major planning application category performance did not meet the government targets, some allocation was awarded on workloads only (the number of applications dealt with) – Minor applications scored a workload weighting of 2 (over 400 decisions) and Major applications (over 30 decisions) a workload weighting of 2.
6. Performance Improvement – Winchester received a payment for improving performance against minor and other applications – on a weighted average basis of improvement over the period ending September 2002 to year ending September 2003.
7. Winchester received a payment for determining more than 10 Major applications in the year ending September 2003. For a 1-10% performance improvement a weight of 1.
8. The total amount awarded for Development Control allocation was **£433,793**.

For next years’ award the criteria have yet to be decided, but will include:

1. Link to improved performance to incentivise authorities to reach and exceed the development control handling targets and produce local development documents in a timely manner. The ODPM will monitor performance in respect of both development control and plan making in order to inform future decisions on this.
2. The National Planning Forum conference revealed that performance is also likely to be measure on the new “Quality Checklist” Best Value Performance Indicator score.

Allocating the Planning Delivery Grant 2004/5

	Description	Justification	Amount	Annual or one-off commitment
1	Enforcement Staffing & Improvements Proposal	In part due to the outcomes of the CPA Improvement Plan and Scrutiny findings, enforcement and compliance performance measures are required. The paper EA29 (Environment and Access Performance Improvement Committee (EAPIC)) sets out a number of measures for improving the enforcement service, including additional staff resources, IT equipment and support for mediation services.	£117,000	Annual - See EA29 and * below.
2	Neighbourhood & Design Statements	The paper EA12 (EAPIC, 4 December 2004) – discussed the need to be more proactive in the development of Village/Neighbourhood Design Statements; Development Briefs and Local Area Design Statements in response to community feedback on PPG 3. A minimum amount of £25,000 and a maximum of £100,000 was discussed, payable from the PDG.	£55,000	One-off
3	Principal Planning Officer	One Principal Planning Officer post at scale 6 was approved in July 2003, with a salary of £31,500 per annum at SCP43 (employer's annual cost of £40,000). It was agreed that this post would be funded by the Planning Delivery Grant in 2004/5 and beyond.	£40,000	Annual – agreed by Cabinet/ Personnel Committee in 2003
4	Development Control Validation & Admin Support	Additional temporary validation/registration support for the early stages of the planning application process. This will enable maintenance of the national performance guideline of 2 days turnaround. Temporary support will ensure consistency of performance in validation and registration.	£15,000	One-off
5	Urban design consultancy	In 2003/4 PDG is being used to pay for a contracted Urban Designer to respond to DC and Forward Planning's urban design needs. This service provides important expert support to the service and relieves the workload of a DC Manager. It is important that this specialist urban design service is continued especially due to the pressures of policies such as PPG3 and minor/major planning applications.	£15,000	One-off

6	Appeal Work – consultancy contract	In 2003/4 PDG is being used successfully to pay for contracted planning consultants to relieve the appeal workload of the planning staff. This allows officers to focus on performance on determination of applications. It is important that this consultancy is continued and may be used for some minor application processing.	£30,000	One-off
7	Legal budget/reserve supplement for legal costs	Surplus planning income was used in 2002/3 to provide some budget for a depleted legal budget/reserve for 2003/4 and pay for an expensive judicial review. This amount will help to ensure that the legal reserves are at reasonable levels to pay for any further expensive single or multiple legal cases.	£15,000	One-off
8	Recruitment and retention packages	In line with other Local Planning Authorities, recruitment and retention packages may need to be awarded to staff. Alternatively this could pay for temporary staff where required, additional professional training, or overtime or honoraria in recognition of additional workload taken on.	£40,000	One-off
9	Consultancy for major appls/MDAs and Development Briefs	Provision of planning/architectural and urban design input into master planning and design/development briefs for major applications (such as Broadway Friarsgate) and MDAs including West of Waterlooville. This fits ODPM criteria on housing need development and was a key area of funding for 2003/4 that needs to be continued into 2004/5.	£30,000	One-off
10	General administrative support	In order to complete a number of initiatives and to manage performance, administrative support to specialist teams (electronic files/scanning as required) for Conservation, Landscape and Forward Plans.	£25,000	One-off
11	PPG 3 Training & Seminars/bursaries	Existing training budgets are used to provide training to all staff, including professional qualifications for junior planning staff – however bursaries for this purpose need to be supplemented further with the lack of qualified staff generally available. This budget will also enable supplementary development training in key and new areas to be undertaken.	£12,000	One-off
12	Scanning temporary staff for DMS	This Document Management Service post requirement to scan in planning documents can be met from the delivery grant in 2004/5.	£15,000	One-off

13	Customer care/reception improvements	The relocation of the Development Services reception to the ground floor is planned for completion in May 04. Further improvements/technology associated with web based and Document Management services will be required to improve customer care.	£3,000	One-off
14	Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Plan preparation	Consultants/specialist training will be required to ensure that preparatory work can be undertaken for new Local Development Framework requirements in the future. This amount will also ensure that performance on the Winchester District Local Plan, including speed of development/adoption, can be maintained in 2004/5. Plan Making performance will contribute to any PDG award for 2005/6.	£50,000	One-off
15	Conservation area consultancy	The Conservation Area Project identified a number of actions for 2003/4 and 2004/5. Due to priorities including consultation on planning applications, these actions have been delayed. Use of consultants would enable these activities to be implemented and the Conservation Area Project to progress fully.	£11,500	One-off
16	CAPS and GIS data capture and development	Corporate Geographical Information and planning data capture and enhancements were commenced in 2003/4 through the use of Planning Delivery Grant. These initiatives will continue, with the need for more data capture. This investment would be wasted if not continued through to completion – without proper records the council is at risk of administrative error.	£35,500	One-off
17	Document Management System Phase 2 & Homeworking technology	(See Post-Implementation Review Cabinet Report CAB 795). This is an extension of ICT requirements to ensure realisation of the benefit of the existing Document Management Service investment - including links to CAPS Solutions Public Access and the Planning Portal and other computer enhancements. Technology to ensure maximum benefit from the investment includes laptops, flatscreens, broadband, DMS access facilities, hand-held on-site devices, palm tops and graphics tablets.	£38,000	One-off

18	Improving pre-application advice/checklists	Consultancy to develop pre-application protocol, design guidance and development of appropriate documentation and checklists – in line with the new Quality Best Value Performance Indicator performance requirements, which the National Planning Forum stated will be part of the criteria for 2005/6 Planning Delivery Grant.	£5,000	One-off
19	Member/Parish/Complaint Liaison Post	Admin assistant to provide a centralised service to ensure complaints are properly logged, allocated and replied to within agreed standards.	£18,500	Annual – report to Cabinet & Personnel Committee required

* EA29: The costs associated with implementing the proposals in the report will be contained within the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) in 2004/5. There can be no guarantee of continued PDG, as the Government has only allocated finance until 2005/6 (depending on performance). The Government are currently consulting Local Government on raising planning fees by up to 39% which, if implemented in Winchester, could increase income to £235,000 per annum (estimate). Increased planning fees are likely to replace the PDG in 2006/7 and beyond. *However, there is a risk that on-going finance may not be available to pay for these improvements beyond 2006, but it is unlikely that the Council will receive no additional resources.* Please also refer to the Resource Implications Section of CAB856 in the main body of the report.