



PINS : PRE APPLICATION SERVICE
A SUMMARY OF THE NIPA QUESTIONNAIRE
RESULTS
6 JUNE 2013

THE ROLE OF CASE MANAGERS

- There is very little understanding of the structure of the MAP Directorate, including the relationship with the Consents team and with external Defra and other teams. A diagram would be helpful.
- Case managers are understood to be like planning officers but with additional responsibilities to explain the process, provide feedback and co-ordinate PINS advice.
- Case managers should be (more) proactive, taking more responsibility for the good conduct of the pre-application process and helping applicants ensure that they do not “slip up”
- Members have some very good experience of case managers but also find them sometimes hard to get hold of, insufficiently pro-active and overly defensive.

CASE MANAGERS : ADVICE REQUIRED

- Members generally want precise, specific and committed advice, rather than general guidance.
- Case managers should be less risk averse.
- Particular concerns arise from advice on consultation requirements.
- Case managers could help more to scope down documentation.

A STRUCTURED APPROACH?

- There is some appetite for a structured and agreed timetable from the outset.
- The S.55 check list is helpful in principle but may need to be revised. PINS tend to be too fussy about pedantic requirements and insufficiently committed to larger issues.
- Members would welcome worked examples of the check list and the ability to go through the exercise in draft with PINS before submission.
- Greater PINS engagement with document review pre-application would reduce the trauma of acceptance.

ADVICE NOTES

- CLG Guidance and PINS Advice Notes are welcome and generally well regarded.
- Guidance on preliminary environmental information and on consultation is less good.
- Guidance does not help scope down documentation.
- Detailed comments on some advice notes for PINS to consider.

MERITS, CASE MANAGERS, INSPECTORS

- Members value Case Managers and Inspectors equally but for different purposes. Case Managers are better at process, Inspectors are more experienced on issues that could affect the examination.
- The new potential to advise on merits is understood to go beyond the technical merits of the application – we get that anyway.
- Few members actually want guidance on the chances of success – premature, unnecessary and damaging if published.
- Advice on issues such as Section 106, the role of authorities and key steps would be welcome.
- Critical advice still relates to the sufficiency of the application.