



**Building Standards
Verification Annual
Performance Report**

2018-2019

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Front cover image – St James Centre under construction

Version Control Information

Version	Date	Comments	Date for next review
V1.0	30 July 18	Q1 document prepared	1 October 18 for end October submission.

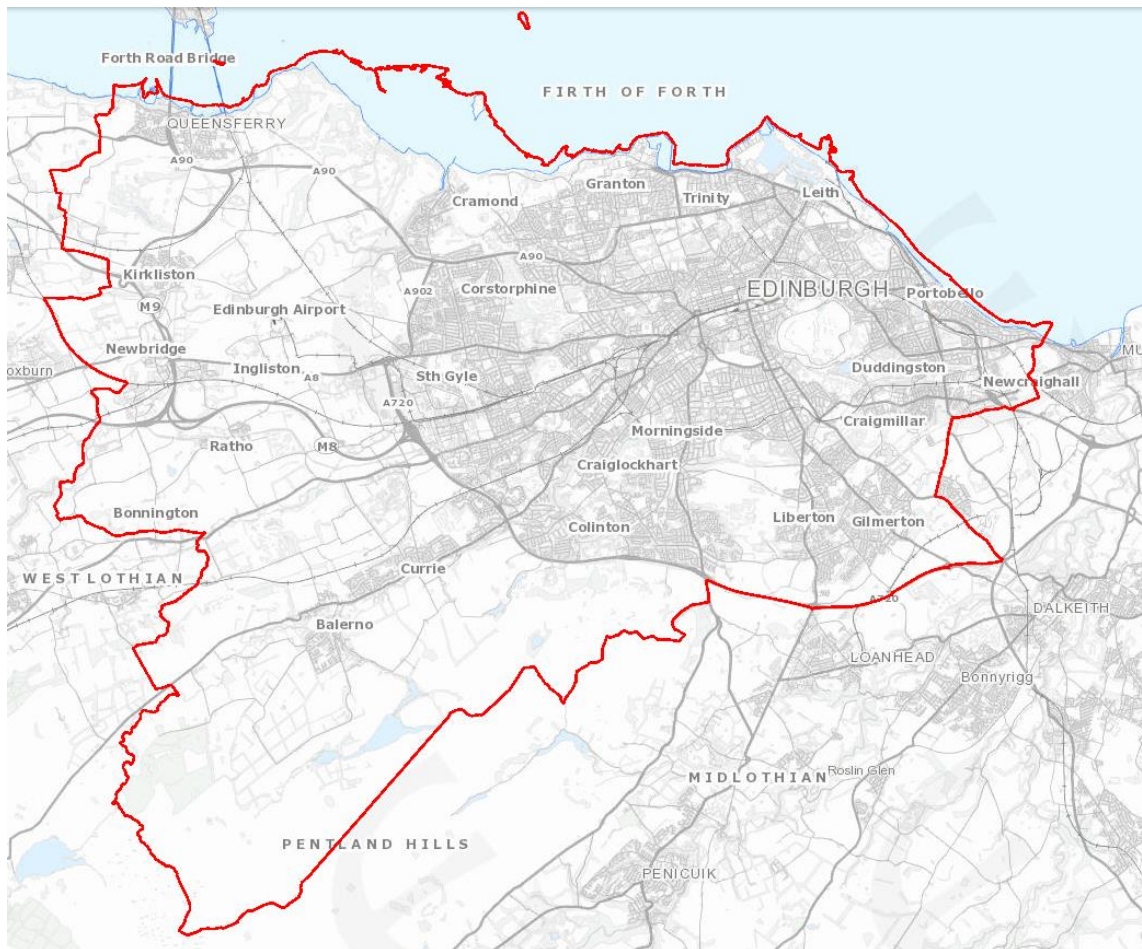
1 Introduction to the verifier

The verification performance report is a strategic planning and management tool that provides information about the local authority building standards service, communicates the vision and strategy, and sets out performance against strategic goals and targets.

Building standards verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the performance report to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business, and should focus on the performance framework's core perspectives and cross-cutting themes.

Key facts about the Local Authority

The City of Edinburgh Council has a geographical area of 262 km²



Map showing the extent of the Council's administrative boundary

Population

The population of the Council area is 499,000 with the following demographics:

	Edinburgh	Scotland
Total	507,000	5,400,000
Male	247,000	2,630,000
Female	260,000	2,780,000
Child (0-15)	77,000	916,000
Working age (16-65)	354,000	3,490,000
Over 65 years	76,000	998,000
Population density (people / km ²)	1,929	69

The population has risen in Edinburgh between 2006 to 2016 by 12% against a population increase in Scotland during the same period of 5.2%. It is projected that Edinburgh's population will be around 619,000 by 2037.

The Council area contains the City of Edinburgh as well as a large rural hinterland. Within the rural area are the towns and villages of Queensferry, Kirkliston, Newbridge and Ratho. Edinburgh has a rich built heritage with conservation areas covering much of the city. There are 2 World Heritage Sites: the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and the Forth Bridge. Edinburgh is a densely populated city with many residential properties being flats. Edinburgh is a growing city and has a vibrant economy with a mix of employment sectors.

Employment in Edinburgh

The Economic Status of residents aged 16 – 64 in Edinburgh is as follows:

Economically active (employment)	72.8%
Economically active (unemployed)	2.6%
Economically inactive (want a job)	5.6%
Economically inactive (don't want a job)	19.0%

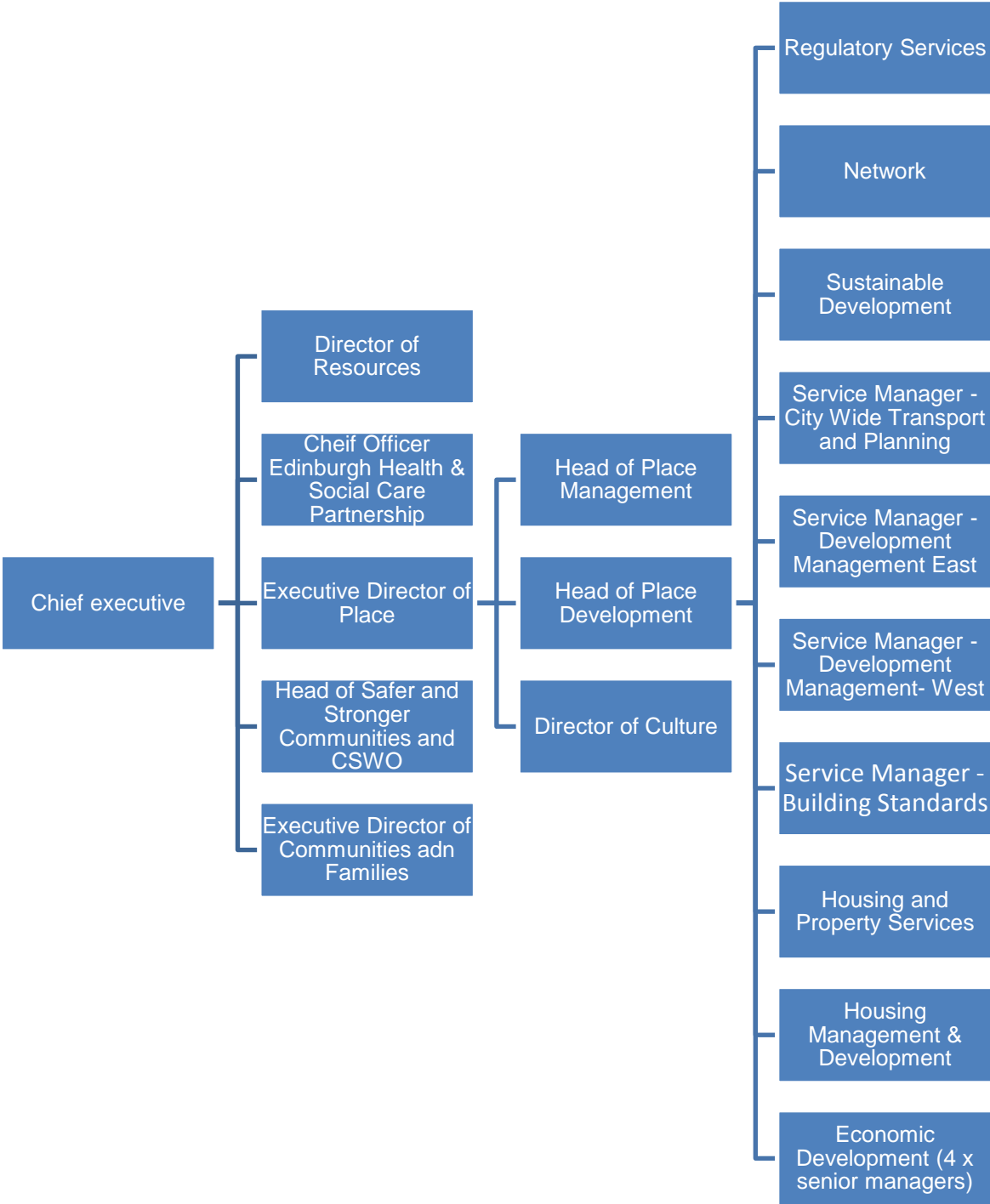
Of the above economically inactive, the breakdown is as follows:

Student	42.0%
Looking after home family	14.3%
Long term sick	17.9%
Retired	15.3%
Other	10.5%

Employment in Edinburgh is structured around the following sectors:

Health	14.8%
Financial and insurance	10.8%
Education	9.3%
Retail	8.6%
Professional, scientific and technical	9.0%
Accommodation and food services	9.6%
Business admin and support	7.7%
Public administration and defence	5.9%
Arts entertainment and recreation	4.9%
Information and communication	4.6%

The Council’s Building Standards service is located within the Place Development division of the Directorate of Place. The Directorate of Place has 2 divisions: Place Management and Place Development. Other services within Place Development are Planning, Transport, Licensing, and Economic Development.



2 Building Standards Verification Service Information

Building Standards is located in the Council's headquarters at Waverley Court:

Building Standards
The City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

Telephone: 0131 200 2000

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards

A mobile working scheme for staff is also operated by the section whereby approximately a proportion of the technical staff for 2 days each week operate from one of the satellite offices located in different areas of the City when carrying out their site inspection work.

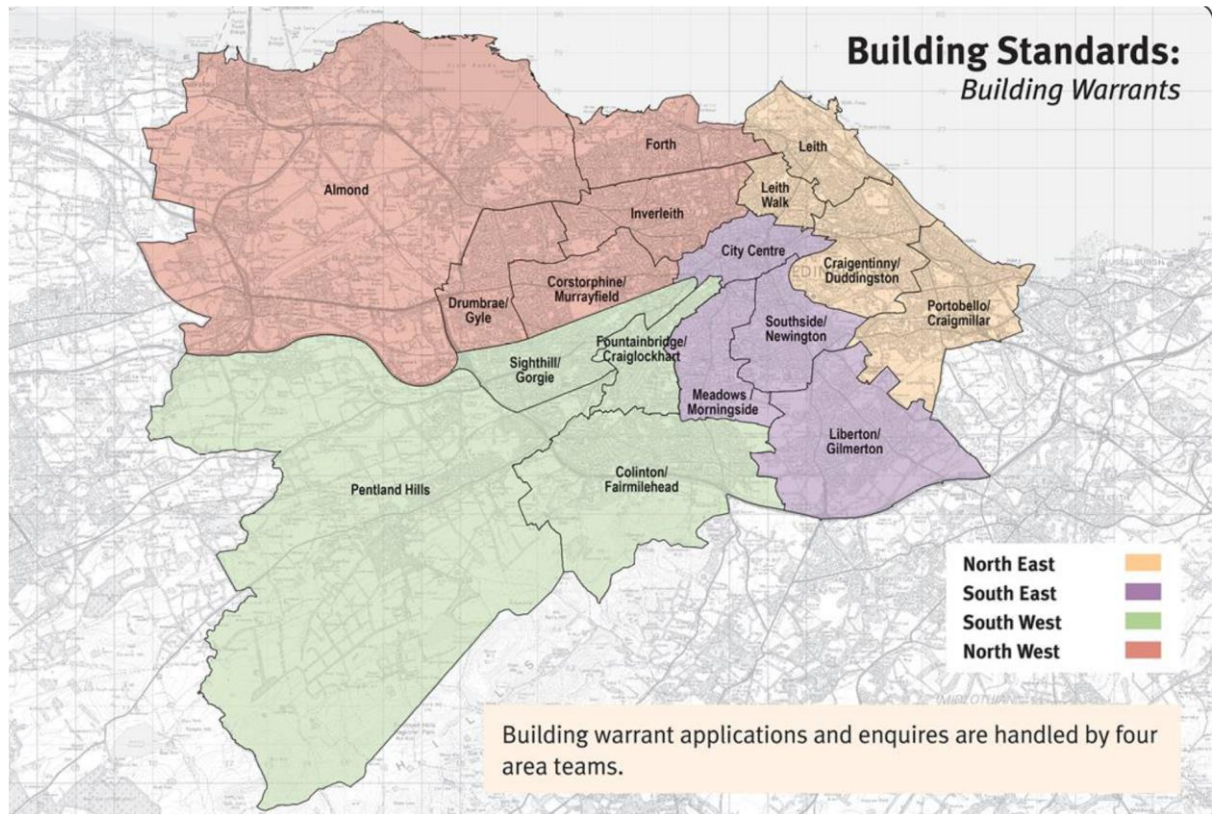
The Building Standards service in the City is one of the largest Building Control operations in the UK in relation to both the number of building warrant applications processed each year and the fee income received. During the financial year 2017/18, the service received 5029 building warrant applications, covering building construction work with an estimated value of just over £5.25 billion which generated approximately £3.57 million in fees.

The verification services and functions carried out include:

- Assessment and processing of building warrant applications, including amendment to warrant applications, staged applications, extension to warrant applications and approval of other building operations in the Council area;
- Consulting with other building industry professionals to ensure that the construction of the built environment meets statutory requirements;
- Consulting, advising and negotiating with applicants and agents and arranging for proposed building operations in respective building warrant applications to be amended as required. Granting and arranging the issue of building warrants when the proposals are in compliance with the statutory requirements of the building regulations;
- Provide preliminary advice on the procedures to be followed to obtain building warrant approval, in advance of a formal application;
- Advising on the design of a building in terms of the requirements of the building regulations and the impact of the performance standards required;
- Inspecting approved building operations during construction and on completion;
- Recording progress during construction and corresponding with other parties on unacceptable building practice or consulting with other professional bodies, if required, on amendments;
- Arranging for the acceptance of completion certificates or temporary occupation or use, where building operations have been satisfactorily completed;
- Maintaining a public records register of building warrants, completion certificates and energy performance certificates. Recording and maintaining appropriate data in the building standards computerised management system; and

- Work with the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division, to meet the fundamental overarching principles of driving forward the future of building standard throughout Scotland.

The verification service for The City of Edinburgh Council is operated on an area basis and is illustrated in the map below:



Non-verification functions

The only non-verification functions which Building Standards deal with is to report on Liquor License applications to the Edinburgh Licensing Board and carry out a small amount of property inspection work under the Council's 'Property Services for Homeowners' scheme. (ie Letters of Comfort) for which the Council charges a separate fee. Other licensing activities are dealt with by the Public Safety section of the Council which is located in the Corporate Governance Department.

Public Interest Statement

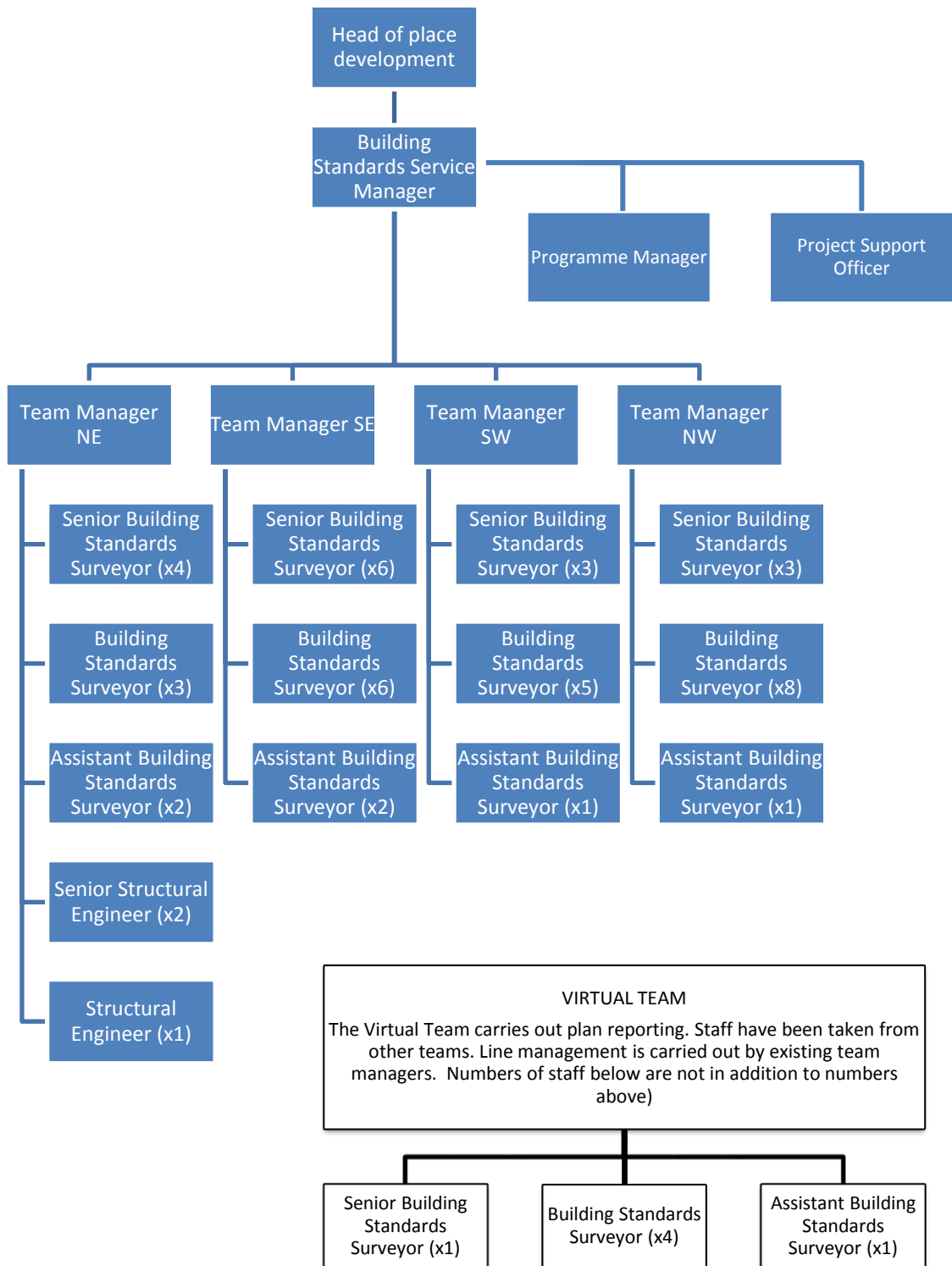
The purpose of the building standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the essential standards that are required to be met when building work or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet building regulations.

The building standards system checks that proposed building work or conversion of a building meets standards; inspections are limited to a minimal necessary to ensure that legislation is not avoided. The control of work on site is not down to the system but is a matter for contracts and arrangements in place between a builder and client.

Verifiers, appointed by Scottish Ministers are responsible for the independent checking of applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings, or for conversions.

Organisational Information

The chart on the following page shows the structure of the building standards service. The Building Standards Service Manager reports to the Head of Place Development. The service manager is responsible for the four building standards teams. Some of the staff from these teams currently sit within the Virtual Team. This is a plan reporting team that currently processes applications below £50,000 in value. In addition to the area teams, a programme management team is being developed. The programme manager and project support officer currently both report to the Building Standards Senior Manager. The tables and charts show the number of staff within the Edinburgh verification service.



Building Standards Management		
	Number of posts	Vacancies (included in numbers of posts)
Chief Executive	1	
Executive Director of Place	1	
Head of Place Development	1	
Senior Manager	1	
Team Manager	4	1
Senior Building Standards Surveyors	16	2
Senior Structural Engineers	2	
Building Standards Surveyors	22	1
Structural Engineers	1	
Assistant Building Standards surveyor	6	
Business Support Services	2	
Transactions team managers	2	
Transactions staff	4	

Staff age Profile	Number of posts
Under 30	4
30 – 39	10
40 – 49	6
50 and over	31

3 Strategic Objectives

The Council Business Plan

The [Council's Business Plan 2017 - 2022](#) sets out that it is committed to improving our services and our amenities in ways that meet the needs of our citizens and communities. This improvement plan has been designed to be aligned to the aims, outcomes and commitments of the Council's Business Plan.

The strategic aims of the left hand column in the table below are accompanied by 20 outcomes in the right hand columns. An efficient building standards service will:

- assist economic growth;
- support the housing programme;
- help ensure our built environment is protected and enhanced;
- ensure value for money while meeting the needs of our citizens; and,
- deliver excellent customer service.

City Council	A Vibrant City	Citizens lead healthy and active lives with improved wellbeing	Every citizen and community can participate in the cultural life of our city	Our places and localities make Edinburgh a great and unique place to visit and study	Our economy thrives with excellent and equal opportunities for business, employment and innovation
	A City of Opportunity	Everyone, regardless of wealth and background can fulfil their potential and benefit from the city's success	All children and young people have the best start in life and are able to reach their full potential	Citizens are socially connected and able to participate and develop throughout their lifetime	Everyone has access to suitable housing, facilities and amenities
	A Resilient City	Communities are safe, strong and able to cope with change	Our built and natural environment is protected and enhanced	Edinburgh is a low carbon, connected city with transport and infrastructure that is fit for the future	Edinburgh is clean, attractive and well looked after
	A Forward Looking Council	We deliver value for money services through optimising our use of resources and building on the capabilities of our talented workforce	We provide services that are focused on prevention and early intervention	We plan our services to ensure we can continue to meet the needs of citizens and communities into the future	Our organisation is flexible and adaptable and embraces change
	An Empowering Council	A leading Council in community engagement and empowerment, giving citizens confidence to make decisions and act on issues	We place our customers at the heart of all that we do, we are responsive, accessible and fair to all	We work with our partners and communities to deliver services locally	We are an open, honest, inclusive and transparent organisation

Council Commitments

The Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018-2021 has been created. This improvement plan will support the following [Council Commitments](#) which are relevant to Building Standards:

Ref Commitment

- 1 Deliver a programme to build at least 10,000 social and affordable homes over the next 5 years, with a plan to build 20,000 by 2027
- 4 Direct development to growth corridors as the best way to accommodate the extra housing needed for Edinburgh's growth and allowing the city to manage and protect green belt
- 10 Prioritise the use of brownfield sites and work with public sector and private landowners to develop land for affordable housing
- 28 Create a first-class education estate – building two new secondary schools and 10 new primaries by 2021. Ensure safe standards are met by rigorous inspections of new and existing school buildings
- 41 Review the application process and increase the budget for housing adaptations with a view to supporting more disabled tenants and owners to remain in their own homes. Help older and disabled homeowners to move to more suitable housing should they wish to do so.

Departmental Issues to be Addressed in the Coming Year

The building standards system is based upon the application of the building regulations which set out minimum standards of design and construction. They protect the health, safety, welfare and convenience of people in and around buildings, and for the conservation of energy, and sustainable development.

City Growth

The City is experiencing an unprecedented period of growth with significant current and planned development across strategic areas of growth in West Edinburgh, the City Centre, South East and Waterfront.

Edinburgh's population expected to grow by over 100,000 over the next 19 years (a projected 24% increase between 2015 and 2037). To support this growth in population, a wide range of new buildings will be needed, including new workplaces, education buildings for schools, nurseries and universities, a range of leisure and commercial buildings as well as large numbers of new housing. In relation to housing, the Council is committed to a programme which will deliver at least 10,000 social and affordable homes over the next 5 years, with a plan to build 20,000 by 2027. It is essential that the Building Standards service can support this growth.

Scottish Government Audit

As a result of Ministerial concern about the performance of the service, the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division (BSD) visited the service in February 2017. It made recommendations which resulted in a one year appointment as local authority verifier of building warrants in this council's area from May 2017 to April 2018. Part of this recommendation was the development on an improvement plan.

In November 2017, the BSD carried out an audit of the service which examined progress made on the improvement plan since the last visit. This results of the audit were finalised and reported to the Council in March 2018. The audit found that insufficient progress had been made on service improvements. The report made a series of recommendations which included:

- To review and implement processes to meet the Scottish Government's Operating Framework requirements and to mitigate fraud risk;
- To review and implement processes to meet legislative requirements;
- To continue to implement processes to meet requirements in relation to performance;
- To identify and programme actions to improve customer satisfaction results;
- To identify and programme actions for service improvements ;
- To identify and programme a review of procedural documentation and put version control in place; and,
- To review strategies for business planning and resourcing.

Appointment as Local Authority Verifier

Following this, in April 2018 the Minister for Local Government and Housing appointed the Council as Building Standards Verifier for the geographical area of the Council for a period of one year (up to 30 April 2019). This appointment was conditional on the Council setting out how it will address the audit report and providing quarterly reports on actions, outcomes and performance. This improvement plan is a key component of this quarterly reporting. In addition, the Council, in conjunction with Scottish Government has appointed an improvement team to assist with the delivery of this improvement plan.

Internal Audit

In the run up to the Scottish Government's November 2017 Audit, the Council's independent Internal Audit Team were appointed to conduct an audit on the service.

They made similar findings to the Scottish Government. Internal Audit's reported these to the Council's Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee in May 2018. The internal audit findings were consistent with those of the BSD.

Customer

Our service has not been meeting the expectations of our customers. Our analysis shows that there is a lot of concern about our performance and the time it takes us to progress building warrants and completion certificates. Our objective is to turn the service around so that it fully meets the expectations of our customers.

Our current performance is below the expectations of Scottish Government which sets key performance indicators of:

- 95% of first reports on building warrants shall be issued within 20 working days of an application being made and;
- 90% of warrants shall be granted within 10 days of receipt of satisfactory information.

For quarter 4 of 2017/18 our performance was 71% in relation to the 20 day target and 56% in relation to the 10 day target. Performance on both these indicators was an improvement on the previous year's quarter 43% for first reports issued within 20 days and 41% of warrants granted within 10 days of satisfactory information being supplied. A plan reporting team has been introduced for applications below £50,000. This led to a significant improvement in performance. The approach is now being extended to applications above the £50,000 threshold.

The national customer survey found that many people were not satisfied with the service. Our score was 5.6/10 for the question on overall satisfaction levels. These views have been confirmed by four Customer Engagement groups which met in autumn 2017 and by the Planning and Building Standards Customer Engagement Event of June 2018. .

Employees

Employees recognise that they are key to the delivery of the improvement plan. Their involvement in its implementation is essential to its success. Regular employee briefing sessions have been established. A People Plan has been developed and as part of this, a recruitment plan is being implemented which considers the skills required for the service and the resources needed to take forward service improvements.

4 Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

The national verification performance framework is based on three core perspectives:

- Professional Expertise and Technical Processes;
- Quality Customer Experience; and
- Operational and Financial Efficiency.

There are also three cross-cutting themes, comprising:

- Public Interest;
- Continuous Improvement; and
- Partnership Working.

Summary of Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes	
KPO1	Minimise time taken to issue a first report or issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant.
KPO2	Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes
Quality Customer Experience	
KPO3	Commit to the building standards customer charter
KPO4	Understand and respond to the customer experience
Operational and Financial Efficiency	
KPO5	Maintain financial governance
KPO6	Commit to eBuilding Standards
KPO7	Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report

Summary of Key Performance Targets

KPO1 Targets	
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
KPO2 Targets	
	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2.
KPO3 Targets	
3.1	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).
3.2	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days.
KPO4 Targets	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
KPO5 Targets	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
KPO6 Targets	
6.1	Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.
6.2	75% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan checking • Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued • Verification during construction • Completion certificates being accepted
KPO7 Targets	
7.1	Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).
7.2	Annual performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2016 – March

5 Performance Data

KPO1 Targets - Minimise time taken to issue a first report or issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant

1.1	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="379 371 711 405">Quarter of year 2017/18</th> <th data-bbox="831 371 1426 439">% of 1st reports and grants of warrant with no 1st report within 20 day target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 472 400 501">1</td> <td data-bbox="831 472 895 501">66%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 506 400 535">2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 539 400 568">3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 573 400 602">4</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="379 640 1418 808">The Council is working towards achieving the target of 95%. The figure of 66% requires to be improved upon. As a result, new ways of working have been put in place for site inspection and plan reporting from July 2018 and will be trialed for a 3 month period. Initial indications are that these methods will help drive down backlogs of work and allow the 20 day target to be better met.</p> <p data-bbox="379 842 1420 1111">The new ways of working result from a review of the “Virtual” plan reporting team. The team progresses smaller value (below £50,000) applications. The review identified that it is very effective in achieving target timescales. It was therefore decided to roll out this plan reporting approach more widely within the service. This is a major change to the way the service operates. As well as being more efficient it creates greater resilience as the progress of an individual application is much less dependent on a particular surveyor progressing it from beginning to end.</p> <p data-bbox="379 1144 1434 1312">This change accompanies a new approach to site inspection, whereby there is now a dedicated team of surveyors in place. This team is taking a risk based approach to assessment of compliance on site. Greater efficiency is achieved by this approach with less time spent on travelling from site to site as well as reduced disruption to plan assessment.</p> <p data-bbox="379 1346 1374 1413">The new approach to plan reporting and site inspection are being monitored closely to ensure that the benefits realised so far, continue to be achieved.</p>	Quarter of year 2017/18	% of 1 st reports and grants of warrant with no 1 st report within 20 day target	1	66%	2		3		4	
Quarter of year 2017/18	% of 1 st reports and grants of warrant with no 1 st report within 20 day target										
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1.2	<table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 226 715 259">Quarter of year 2017/18</td> <td data-bbox="831 226 1406 293">% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 293 400 327">1</td> <td data-bbox="831 293 903 327">58%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 327 400 360">2</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 360 400 394">3</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 394 400 427">4</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The Council is working towards the target of 90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information. The 58% figure above is above that for each quarter of last year. A focus for this coming year is to improve performance. The service change outlined in 1.1 above will help ensure that this performance in relation to turn around times once satisfactory information is received are improved.</p>	Quarter of year 2017/18	% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days	1	58%	2		3		4	
Quarter of year 2017/18	% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days										
1	58%										
2											
3											
4											
KPO3 Targets – Commit to the Building Standards Customer Charter											
3.1	The National Customer Charter is displayed prominently on the website. This document was updated in May 2018 to ensure it reflects current targets etc.										
3.2	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD ‘Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers’ case responded to by verifier within 5 days.										
KPO4 Targets - Understand and respond to the customer experience											
4.1	<p>The performance of the service has resulted in an overall satisfaction rating of 5.6 / 10. This was recorded via the national survey conducted by the Building Standards Division in Q3 2017/18. Customer satisfaction levels remain low with turn-around times and communications being a key concern of customers.</p> <p>As set out in Section 6, it is a priority to improve customer satisfaction with the service. This is expected to improve as a result of better turn-around times for processing building warrant applications and completion certificates. Measures such as surveys and engagement events are also being held throughout the course of the year.</p>										
KPO5 Targets - Maintain financial governance											

5.1	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Quarter 1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Q4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fee income</td> <td>£973,462</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td> <td>£544,599</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing costs:</td> <td>£501,031</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non staff costs:</td> <td>£33,126</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other investment:</td> <td>£53,508</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Building standards verification fee income is to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%). The figures for expenditure plus 30% are currently below the income level. This is due to income having exceeded projected levels for the first quarter. This is being monitored closely.</p> <p>While overall, staff costs plus 30% are below the annual income, other non-staff costs includes sums for shared services whereby plans are assessed by partner local authorities. Expenditure on other investment will rise later this year due to the implementation of the new computer system.</p>		Quarter 1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Fee income	£973,462				Expenditure	£544,599				Staffing costs:	£501,031				Non staff costs:	£33,126				Other investment:	£53,508			
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KPO6 Targets - Commit to eBuilding Standards																															
	<p>Full details of the Building Standards Service in Edinburgh is available on the Council website at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards</p> <p>This includes a link to the e.Building Standards website.</p>																														
6.2	<p>Plan checking of both building warrants and amendments are in excess of the 75% target and over 90% of cases are processed electronically for the period 2016/17.</p> <p>A comprehensive update of the case management and document management systems is underway and will be delivered for December 2018. This is a major investment involving the upgrade of associated software and hardware.</p> <p>Mobile technology is being piloted for on-site work including inspections with Microsoft Surface computers currently being trialled.</p> <p>A monitoring report is being arranged to provide the details required to show compliance with the CCNP requirements.</p> <p>Completion certificates are submitted online and processed electronically in many cases.</p>																														
KPO7 Targets - Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report																															
7.1	<p>The annual verification performance report for 2018-19 is on the Council website at: http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20212/property_planning_and_housing/587/building_standards_customer_service_charter</p>																														
7.2	<p>The annual verification performance report for 2019/19 includes performance data.</p>																														

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes

- Protocols for dealing with work – During spring 2018, an overhaul of procedural documentation was carried out with a new structure put in place for the procedures. These were then prepared and signed off by management before being used by staff. Preparation is underway (as of July 18) to roll out quality assurance checks for these procedures. This will start in August 18 and be carried out quarterly. Risk management procedures are used to ensure applications are allocated to staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to deal with it. In addition, 5% of building warrants are checked by senior surveyors to ensure consistency.
- Performance management systems - The Council has a detailed performance reporting system based on Microsoft Access. This has been augmented during 2017/18 and will continue to be updated. Monthly reporting to the Planning and Building Standards Leadership Team allows an assessment of how individual teams are performing in relation to targets set in the National Customer Charter. Targets are also set through annual performance conversations. Regular meetings are held between team managers and senior managers to discuss performance and an improvement plan is in place to remedy current problems.
- Training and development/CPD - Training in the main is derived from annual performance conversations. During this process the training needs of each member of staff are identified and tasked. The service aims to provide 36 hours of training per year per member of staff. In addition to this, other centralised training will be given which concentrates on health and safety requirements and changes to legislation. A staff development group which has 2 building standard representatives on the group also assists in providing training for Planning and Building Standards staff. This helps to meet RICS professional training requirements.
- Benchmarking - Benchmarking of the service is carried on a regular basis with other partner councils. This is achieved through the Council's active participation groups and by contributing to benchmarking survey's carried out by the groups.

In addition, the service has met with Glasgow City Council, South Lanarkshire Council and Angus Council to benchmark the Council's work.

- Shared Services - Currently CEC Building Standards provides structural engineering to another local authority (Midlothian) and another local authority (Argyll and Bute Council) is being used to assist with the Building Standards verification service in Edinburgh.
- Succession planning – the age profile within the service indicates that new staff are needed to ensure the resilience of the service. A recruitment plan is in place but there are problems of supply which require wider discussions with the Scottish Government and education authorities. A People Plan has been put in place. Part of this considers succession planning for the Service.

Quality Customer Experience

- Customer communication strategies – A communications plan has been put in place for 2018/19. This covers the range of customers, including applicants and agents, the public and councillors. It sets out existing and new methods for communicating with them. The communications plan will be aligned with customer strategy which is due to be developed in quarter 2 2018/19.
- Charter – the National Customer Charter was approved in May 2016 and published on the Council website. This document links to the Planning and Building Standards Customer Service Charter which clearly sets out the level of service the Council will provide for the Building Standards service in Edinburgh. Both charters are available from the Council's [website](#).
- Customer feedback - The service is fully involved in national surveys and is also committed to local surveys to get customer feedback. In addition, complaints are monitored and lessons learned are used to make changes to the service. In June 2017, the service held a customer forum which has helped to inform actions for 2017/18. Key actions going forward are the development of a Customer Strategy. This will be used to help deliver improvements for customer in relations to communications and performance and to continue to develop information and engagement which helps agents improve the quality of submissions so that their applications can be assessed more quickly.
- Customer Advice – pre-submission advice is available through the help desk surveyor or by writing/emailing the service. For smaller developments, the enquirer is asked to look at the information on the Council website. The email, phone and face to face service is available from 9am to 1pm every weekday.

Operational and Financial Efficiency

- Team Structures – the Building Standards teams are based on four area based teams. This is set out in the organogram on page 9. This method of working is being reviewed over summer 2018. Arising from this review will be recommendations on how new ways of working should be rolled out for the service as a whole. It is anticipated that this may have impacts on the existing area based model. There is potential that certain teams may have a greater site inspection or plan reporting emphasis.
- Financial Monitoring - Monthly monitoring of fee income is undertaken and verification costs are reported on a quarterly basis to the BSD and verification income reported on a quarterly basis to the BSD.
- IT Systems - The BS service uses the Uniform, IDOX GMS and workflow systems plus AutoVue Professional. The introduction of e.Building Standards has led to a number of issues that have affected performance. An upgrade of the software systems has been commissioned and this will be delivered in December 2018.
- Digital Services – a full range of digital services including online applications and website information is available.
- Finance Systems - the Building Standards service adheres to the Council's financial policies and budgets and spending are kept under review.
- Internal communication strategies – team briefs and regular team meetings are held to ensure staff are fully up-to-date with work matters.

6 Service Improvement and Partnership Working

The following table sets out progress on the continuous improvement actions that were set for the previous 12 months (2017/18):

No.	Continuous Improvement Action	Timescale	Status										
1	Turn around times												
1.1	<p>Improve the consistency and level of turn around times for issuing first reports</p> <p>Given the underperformance of the service in early 2017, step by step improvement is intended throughout the course of the year 2017/18. Quarterly targets have therefore been established as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>% of 1st reports within 20 days</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>50 – 65%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>55 – 70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>60 – 80%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>65 – 90%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The intention is that within quarter 4, the final 2 months will achieve the national target of 95%.</p>	Quarter	% of 1st reports within 20 days	1	50 – 65%	2	55 – 70%	3	60 – 80%	4	65 – 90%	Ongoing with quarterly reporting	Significant progress was made during 2017/18 on improving performance. In quarter 4 turn around times for first reports was 71%.
Quarter	% of 1st reports within 20 days												
1	50 – 65%												
2	55 – 70%												
3	60 – 80%												
4	65 – 90%												
1.2	<p>Improve the consistency and level of turn around times for issuing follow up reports</p> <p>This target relates directly to better turn-around time for issuing building warrants, since where this is achieved there will be a consequential improvement in turn-around time for follow up reports. (See 1.3 below)</p>	Ongoing with quarterly reporting	Due to the link between assessing revised plans and the timescale for granting warrants once satisfactory information has been received, turn around times for issuing follow up reports was improved during 2017/18. (See 1.3 below.)										

1.3	<p>Improve the consistency and level of turn around times for issuing building warrants</p> <p>As with 1.1 above, step by step improvement is intended throughout the course of the year 2017/18. Quarterly targets have therefore been established as follows:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="368 584 823 887"> <tr> <td>Quarter</td> <td>% of BWs and amendments issue within 10 days of satisfactory info being provided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>20 – 30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>25 – 35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>30 – 40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>40 – 50%</td> </tr> </table> <p>While it is acknowledged that the quarter 4 target is below the national target of 90%, it is a significant improvement on the current performance</p>	Quarter	% of BWs and amendments issue within 10 days of satisfactory info being provided	1	20 – 30%	2	25 – 35%	3	30 – 40%	4	40 – 50%	Ongoing with quarterly reporting	The performance in Quarter 4 was 56%. This was above the target for the 2017-18 improvement plan.
Quarter	% of BWs and amendments issue within 10 days of satisfactory info being provided												
1	20 – 30%												
2	25 – 35%												
3	30 – 40%												
4	40 – 50%												
2	Level of customer satisfaction with the service												
2.1	Carry out a survey every 6 months, to monitor customer satisfaction with the service	Commence May 2017	A customer survey was conducted in autumn 2017. Feedback from this was similar to that from the national survey.										
2.2	Carry out regular agent events (6 per year) with the aim of improving the quality of submissions in order that warrant applications can be progressed more quickly	Commence June 2017	4 focus group sessions were held In quarter 3 2018 and published on the Council's website . A Planning and Building Standards customer event was held in June 2018. In addition, building standards presented a session on improving application submissions to the Edinburgh Chartered Architects' Network in Spring 2018.										

2.3	Instigate a post-warrant survey which would be issued to agents at the point when the warrant is granted.	Commence June 2017	A post warrant survey has been included on Building Warrant decision. A revised decision letter is being developed to allow the post warrant survey to feature more prominently and therefore increase the potential for greater customer feedback.
3	Investment of building warrant fee income into the service		
3.1	Increase the level of investment in the service by recruiting additional staff beyond the 2016 / 2017 established staff structure (this is in addition to ensuring the established staff structure is fully filled).	Ongoing – with staffing under recruitment at present	New staff have been brought into the service as a result of increasing fees. This has been ongoing throughout 2017/18.
3.2	Invest the increased fee (from July 2017) in the service with additional recruitment beyond that set out in 3.1 above.	If and when the fee increase happens.	Assessment has been done on the level of increased fee as it was achieved in Q2, 3 and 4 2017/18. Investment in the service for 2018/19 is higher.

3.3	Review the funding of the service in relation to staffing levels and fee income.	During the 2017/18 financial year	<p>Funding for the service continues to be monitored closely. Additional staff will be brought into the service during 2018/19.</p> <p>In addition, a major investment in the case and document management systems (Uniform and Idox) is underway and due for delivery in December. This investment will enable improved efficiency and turn around times in the processing of applications.</p> <p>The Building Standards Improvement Team have been appointed by the Council and will continue to work for the service throughout the year (2018/19).</p>
4	Quarterly reporting to Scottish Government		
4.1	Ensure quarterly reporting to Scottish Government is done on time	By end of the first quarter of 2017	This has been done for each quarter 2017/18.

Improvement Themes	Objective	Timescale
<p>Improve Strategic Planning and create a culture of continuous Improvement:</p>	<p>We will ensure full compliance with the Scottish Government's Operating Framework for Building Standards Verifiers which sets out how the Council must operate the service.</p> <p>We will prioritise our plans this year to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a structured approach to project management and delivery of the Action Plan (Appendix 1). • Prepare business cases for the board for improvement projects that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound. • A process for monitoring and reporting the effectiveness of this Improvement Plan and general performance, including the development of a "dashboard" • Form a cross service employee group that champions the continuous improvement model of planning, doing, checking and acting. 	<p>By April 2019</p>
<p>Improve response times to Building Warrant Applications:</p>	<p>Our aim is to improve turn-around times for the issuing of first reports on building warrant applications and improve the timescales for granting building warrants, meeting both national and Council targets for performance.</p> <p>We will prioritise our plans this year to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate effectiveness of 'Virtual' team to improve performance. • Complete process review for site inspections • Evaluate effectiveness of the revised the Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP) list to reduce the number of low risk site inspections currently undertaken. • Implement a new Quality Assurance Framework to meet BSD standards and further reduce variation in our processes and procedures 	<p>By April 2019</p>

Improvement Themes	Objective	Timescale
Improve Customer Engagement:	<p>We aim to transform our reputation with our customers by delivering a step change of improvement in the relationship between the service and our customers.</p> <p>We will prioritise our plans this year to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a stakeholder panel to advise the board on the improvement plan and its implementation. • improve customer engagement • use complaints and feedback to inform service improvements. • Improve our website <p>We will identify and work with key stakeholders, other council service areas and employees to develop a 3year Customer Strategy.</p>	By April 2019

7 Building Standards – Additional Data

In 2017/18, Building Standards performance was as follows:

Building warrants and amendments to building warrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5027 building warrant applications received including amendment to warrants • 3901 decisions made on building warrant applications
Completion certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5347 completion certificates submitted • decisions made
Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2354 certificates of design submitted • 2867 certificates of construction submitted
Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1078 copy certificates received (domestic) • 20 copy certificates received (non-domestic)
Statements of Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 659 copy certificates received (domestic) • - copy certificates received (non-domestic)
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Notices served under sections 25 to 30 • 0 Cases referred to procurator fiscal • 0 Cases where LA has undertaken work