



**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.
V2.0	31 October	Q2 document prepared	
V2.1	31 October	Refinements – Q2 improvement plan actions added.	3 January 18 for end January submission

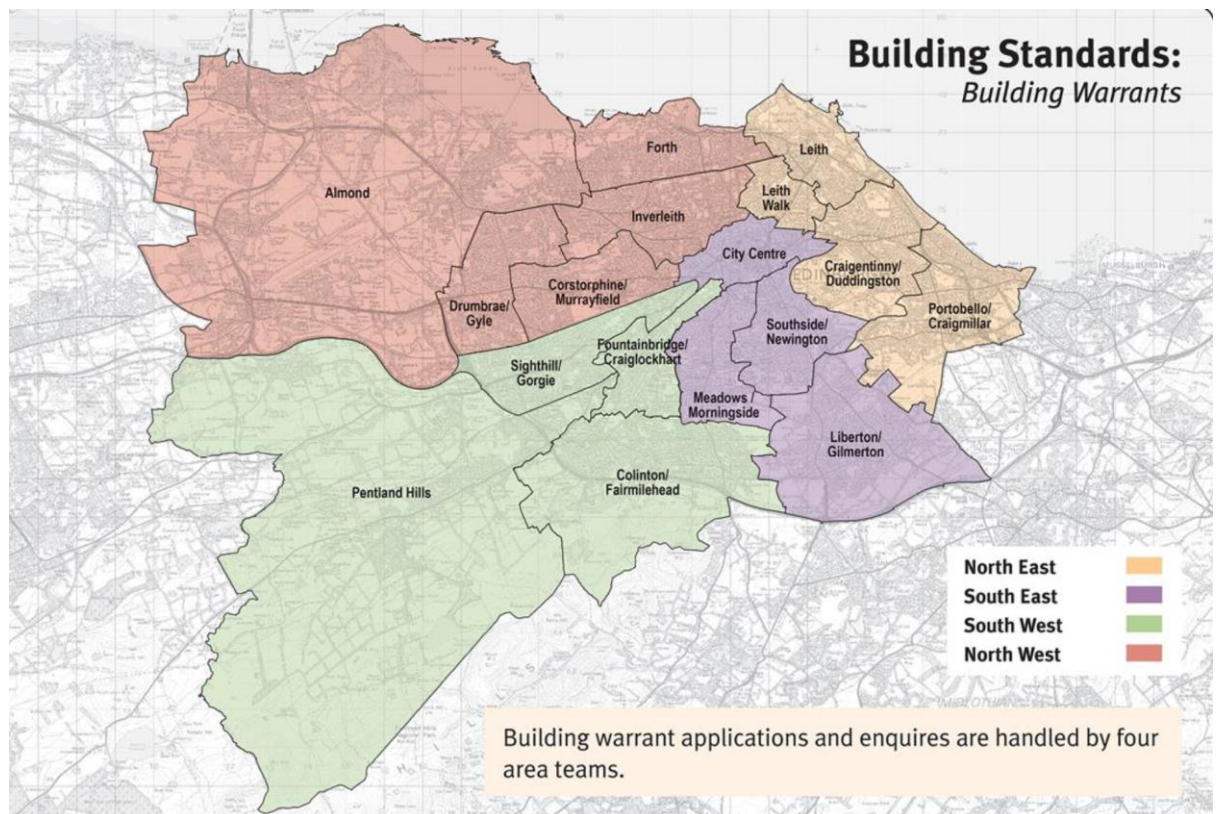
# 1 Introduction to the verifier

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 an area of 262 km<sup>2</sup>



Map showing the extent of the Council's administrative boundary and our Building Standards Team areas.

## Population and economy

The City of Edinburgh Council's area is home to 507,000 people.

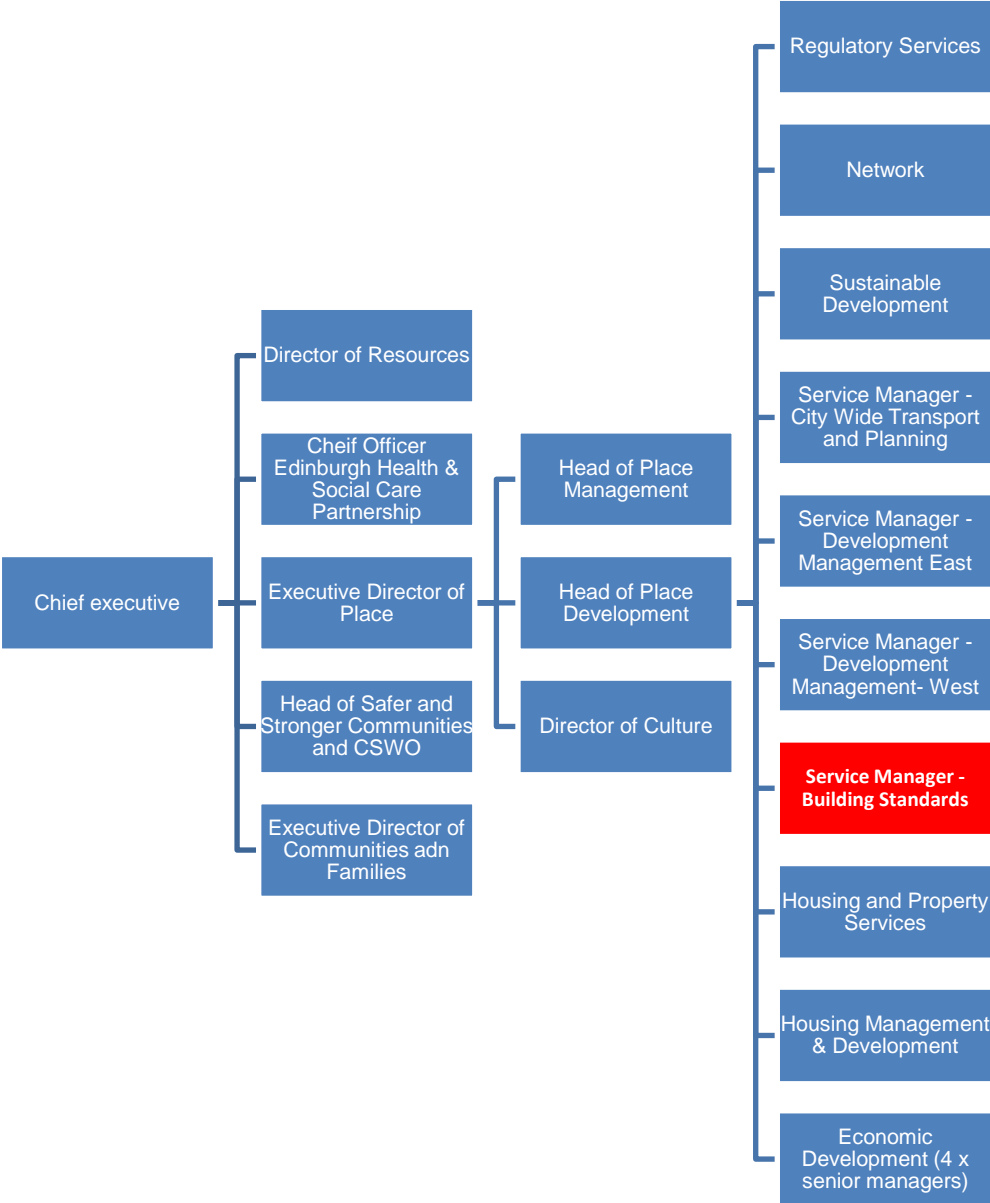
The Council area includes the City of Edinburgh which contains most of the population, as well as a large rural hinterland. Within the rural area are the towns and villages of Queensferry, Kirkliston, Newbridge and Ratho. Edinburgh has a rich built heritage with conservation areas covering much of the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

Between 2006 to 2016 Edinburgh’s population grew by 12% against a population increase in Scotland during the same period of 5.2%. This growth is expected to continue with a projected population of 619,000 by 2037.

Edinburgh’s economy is robust with 75% of the population (aged 16-64) economically active. Key employment sectors include health; financial and insurance; education; retail; professional, scientific and technical; and accommodation and food services.

**High level organisational structure**

The Council’s Building Standards service is located within the wider Place Development service of the Directorate of Place. Other services within Place Development are Planning, Transport, Licensing, and Economic Development. These support a wide range of services to local communities as well as the development industry.



## 2 Building Standards Verification Service Information

The Building Standards service in the City is one of the largest Building Standards services 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 £1 billion which generated approximately £3.57 million in fees.

The verification services and functions carried out include:

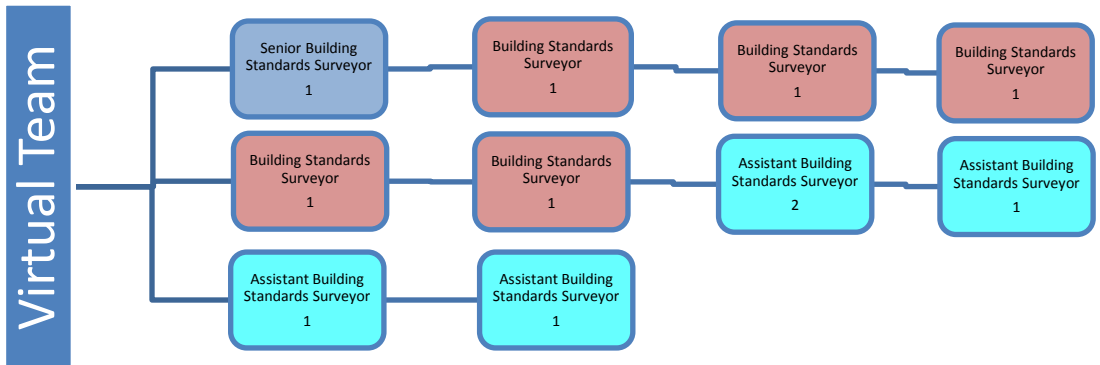
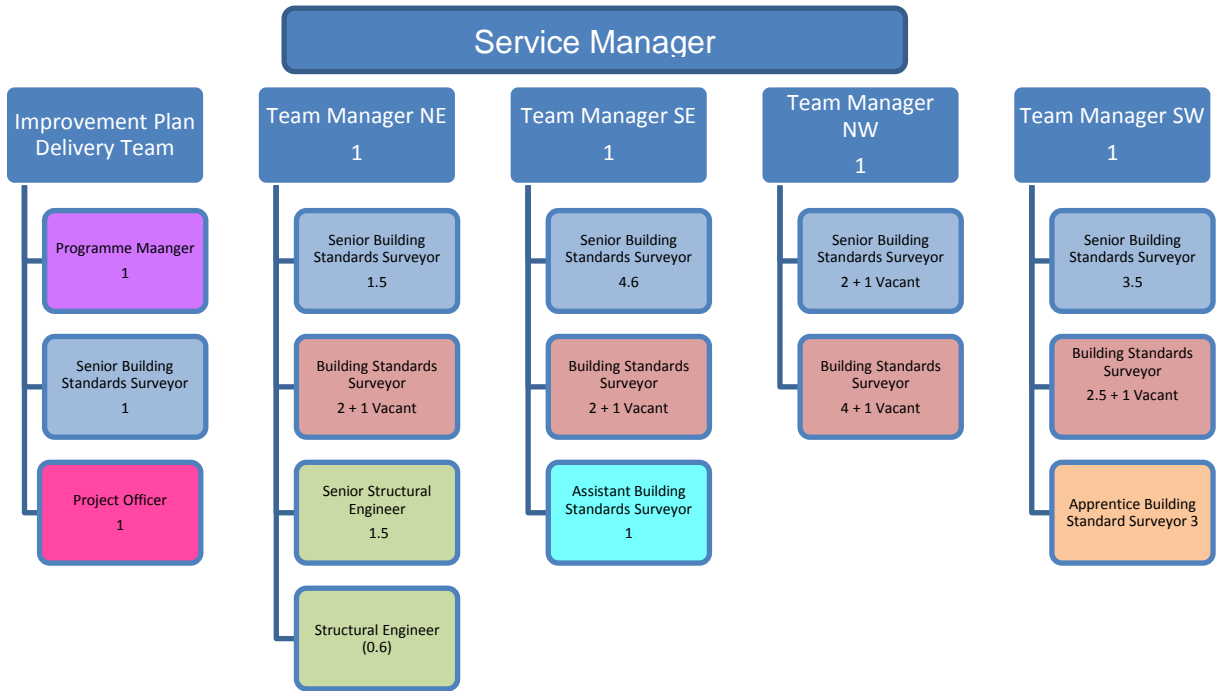
- Verification of Building Warrants under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Enforcement in relation to Building Standards matters under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Consultee to applications in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation and Liquor Licensing.
- Provide preliminary advice on the procedures to be followed to obtain building warrant approval, in advance of a formal application;
- Maintaining a public records register of building warrants, completion certificates and energy performance certificates.
- 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.

### Organisational Information

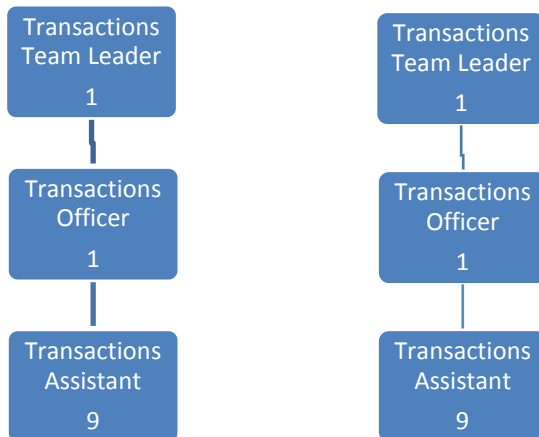
The chart on the following page shows the structure of the building standards service. The Building Standards Service Manager reports to the Head of Place Development. The service manager is responsible for the four Building Standards teams. Some of the staff from these teams currently sit within the 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, senior building standards surveyor and project support officer report to the Building Standards Senior Manager. The tables and charts show the number of staff within the Edinburgh verification service.

A mobile working scheme for staff is also operated by the section whereby 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.

# Building Standards Structure October 2018



## Transactions Team



<b>Senior Management with Council</b>	<b>Number of posts</b> (FTE at 31 October 18)	<b>Vacancies</b> (included in numbers of posts)
Chief Executive	1	
Executive Director of Place (Tier 1)	1	
Head of Place Development (Tier 2)	1	

<b>Building Standards Full Time Equivalent Posts</b>	<b>Number of posts</b> (FTE at 31 October 18)	<b>Vacancies</b> (included in numbers of posts)
Building Standards Service Manager (Tier 3)	1	
Programme Manager*1	1	
Team Managers	4	
Senior Building Standards Surveyors	15.6	1
Senior Structural Engineers	1.5	
Building Standards Surveyors	19.5	4
Structural Engineers	1.6	
Assistant Building Standards Surveyors	6	
Business Support Services	3	
<b>Total employees (FTE within service area)</b>	<b>53.2</b>	
Transactions Team Manager (FTE)	1	
Transactions staff (FTE)	6	

<b>Staff age Profile within service area</b>	<b>Number of posts</b>
Under 30	8
30 – 39	10
40 – 49	6
50 and over	26

\*1 – Programme manager is a fixed term contract until August 2019.

### **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.

### **How to find us**

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](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards)



### 3 Strategic Objectives

#### Overarching Goal and Vision of the Service

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. The role of Building Standards within this business plan is to:

- 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.

#### Vision

**Within the next three years, our aspiration of the service is to be one of the top performing Building Standards Verifiers in Scotland. We will build a reputation as a great organisation to do business with and to work for.**

#### Departmental issues to be addressed in the coming year

In its audit of November 2017, the Scottish Government identified a range of areas for improvement. These included,

- Leadership and Management;
- Performance;
- Culture of Continuous Improvement; and,
- Customer.

The findings of that audit were confirmed by the Council's Internal Audit team which highlighted a number of similar improvement recommendations.

Specific objectives were developed as part of the Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018-2021 which was agreed with the Scottish Government.

#### The key strategic objectives for the coming year

We will implement a range of measures to improve leadership within the service. These include, the development of a shared vision, a people plan and a framework for governance for the improvement programme, as well as a communication plan for employees and the service.

We will improve management within the service by ensuring managers are clear about priorities and that management systems are used to improve performance. Employees will be empowered to realise their potential. We will ensure vacant posts are filled and employees are recruited / resource put in place to deliver the improvement programme.

We will ensure compliance with the Scottish Government's Operating Framework for Building Standards verifiers. In doing so, we will prioritise providing a structured approach to the project management and the delivery of our actions, preparing business

cases for projects that have SMART objectives and create processes for monitoring our progress on improvements.

We will improve performance by reducing the time taken to process building warrant applications. In doing so we will evaluate the effectiveness of our plan reporting team and site inspection processes. We will implement a new quality assurance framework to meet the government's requirements and reduce variation in our processes and procedures.

We aim to transform our relationship with our customers by setting up a stakeholder panel to advise on the delivery of our Improvement Plan and on improving customer engagement. We will enhance our website and use complaints and feedback to help inform service improvements.

These strategic objectives are set out in our Improvement Plan 2018-2021 and the detailed objectives are included in Section 6 of this document.

## 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)

<b>Professional Expertise and Technical Processes</b>	
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
<b>Quality Customer Experience</b>	
KPO3	Commit to the building standards customer charter
KPO4	Understand and respond to the customer experience
<b>Operational and Financial Efficiency</b>	
KPO5	Maintain financial governance
KPO6	Commit to eBuilding Standards
KPO7	Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report

## Summary of Key Performance Targets

<b>KPO1 Targets</b>	
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).
<b>KPO2 Targets</b>	
	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2.
<b>KPO3 Targets</b>	
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.
<b>KPO4 Targets</b>	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
<b>KPO5 Targets</b>	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
<b>KPO6 Targets</b>	
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"> <li>• Plan checking</li> <li>• Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued</li> <li>• Verification during construction</li> <li>• Completion certificates being accepted</li> </ul>
<b>KPO7 Targets</b>	
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

Quarter of year 2018/19	% of 1 <sup>st</sup> reports and grants of warrant within 20 day target
1	66%
2	72%
3	
4	

The Council is working towards achieving the target of 95%. Therefore, the figure of 72% requires to be improved upon. This figure does however include the backlog of applications that are more than 20 working days old and are awaiting first reports. During Q2, this backlog was reduced from 320 to 50 applications. At the same time, 97% of all applications received since 1 July 18 and subsequently reported on during Q2 were progressed within the 20 working day target.

To achieve this improved performance, new ways of working were put in place from July 18. It was decided to roll out a plan reporting approach whereby applications are reported without the assessment necessarily being done by a surveyor within that application's area's team. 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.

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.

The new approach to plan reporting and site inspection continues to be monitored closely to ensure that the benefits realised so far, continue to be achieved.

1.2

Quarter of year 2018/19	% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days
1	58%
2	62%
3	
4	

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 62% figure above exceeds 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 performance (in relation to turn around times once satisfactory information is received) is improved.

### 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.
3.2	All BSD requests for information on a BSD ‘Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers’ case area responded to by the Council 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 annual national survey conducted by the Building Standards Division in Q3 2017/18. The 2018/19 national survey is currently underway.</p> <p>It is a priority to improve customer satisfaction with the service. A range of measures are being developed to help ensure this. These include the development and implementation of a customer improvement plan. A Building Standards Stakeholder Panel has been established. This includes customers who represent the range of those using the service. After its initial meeting in October 2018, it will meet quarterly. It will provide constructive advice which will be used by the Council to help it improve its Building Standards service and will hold the Council to account on the delivery of its Building Standards improvements.</p> <p>A review of the Council’s Building Standards web-pages is underway.</p> <p>The performance improvement outlined in 1.1 and 1.2 above are further help in improving customer satisfaction levels.</p>
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### KPO5 Targets - Maintain financial governance

5.1	<table border="1" data-bbox="379 1451 1278 1653"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Quarter 1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Q4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Fee income</b></td> <td>£973,462</td> <td>£988,039</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Expenditure</b></td> <td>£544,599</td> <td>£591,931</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing costs:</td> <td>£501,031</td> <td>£502,286</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non staff costs:</td> <td>£33,126</td> <td>£28,625</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other investment:</td> <td>£53,508</td> <td>£61,020</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 two quarters. This is being monitored closely.</p> <p>While overall, staff costs plus 30% are below the annual income, other non-staff costs include 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	<b>Fee income</b>	£973,462	£988,039			<b>Expenditure</b>	£544,599	£591,931			Staffing costs:	£501,031	£502,286			Non staff costs:	£33,126	£28,625			Other investment:	£53,508	£61,020		
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<b>KPO6 Targets - Commit to eBuilding Standards</b>	
6.1	<p>Full details of the Building Standards Service in Edinburgh is available on the Council website at <a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards">www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards</a></p> <p>This includes a link to the eBuilding Standards website.</p>
6.2	<p>Plan checking of both building warrants and amendments are in excess of the 75% target, with over 82% processed electronically during quarter 2 of 2018/19.</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 a trial of inspections with Microsoft Surface computers.</p> <p>Completion certificates are submitted online and processed electronically in many cases.</p>
<b>KPO7 Targets - Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report</b>	
7.1	<p>The annual verification performance report for 2018-19 is on the Council website at:  <a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20212/property_planning_and_housing/587/building_standards_customer_service_charter">http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20212/property_planning_and_housing/587/building_standards_customer_service_charter</a></p>
7.2	<p>The annual verification performance report for 2019/19 includes performance data.</p>

The following table shows the progress made on the Building Standards Improvement Plans 2018-21 over quarter 2 (July to September 18) and the planned actions for Quarter 3 (October to December 18):

<b>Leadership / Management</b>	
<b>Delivered in Quarter 2 (July – Sep 18)</b>	<b>Planned for Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec 18)</b>
<p><b>Leadership and Management Action Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A clear set of actions to drive forward improvements have been developed and included in the Leadership and Management Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership/Management Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dedicated appointment of Service Manager to Building Standards</li> <li>✓ Building skills and capacity in the senior managers is a priority. The Service Manager and four Team Managers have commenced a series of work related</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engaging all staff in the Improvement Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A series of workshops is planned early November to share and ensure full engagement with all staff in driving forward the improvement actions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Networking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Visits to Fife Council and Perth and Kinross Council to examine the use of Enterprise Module for reporting and discuss their approach to customer engagement and Quality Assurance</li> </ul>

<p>initiatives designed to build confidence, enhance their skills, and tackle the challenges that come with delivering robust improvements. This work is supported by Building Standards Improvement team, Programme Manager and the Council's Organisational Development team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Project Leads and teams are now appointed to each improvement strand. The teams are made up from various grades at all levels within the Building Standards Service, Transactions Team, ICT, HR as well as the Building Standards Improvement Team.</li> <li>✓ Weekly Management Teams taking place with structured agendas and action logs.</li> <li>✓ 360° review with Service Manager and support from Building Standards Improvement Team. A series of improvement activities for have been identified as a result.</li> </ul> <p><b>Attendance Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Training has been provided to managers to help support them in ensuring that absence is managed. Managers are monitoring and managing absence cases on a weekly basis with support from HR and Occupational health. This is helping to ensure the available resources within the current structure are deployed appropriately. This approach is helping resolve long term absences where these arise.</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A review of the current structure took place with the realignment of resources in some areas. A further review of the structure will take place at end of December 2018.</li> <li>✓ The appointment of a new Team Manager to the South East Area.</li> <li>✓ Recruitment of 3 apprentices to the team. This is the first time Building Standards have taken on apprentices. Meeting with Heriot Watt University in diary to ensure a joint approach to development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A further review of the structure will take place in December as a means to ensuring the balance of staff numbers and skill sets are aligned appropriately to the teams.</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal communication Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensuring a structured approach to Team Briefings and programme of all staff meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Procedures and Quality Assurance checks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ In addition to their building standards duties, staff are taking forward additional tasks such as developing the procedures and the quality assurance around these.</li> </ul> <p><b>Embedding new practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Carrying out a first quality assurance assessment of the newly deployed procedures to check their effectiveness and to enable updates to them / learning to be developed as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Survey and Focus Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Analysis of the staff survey and a series of focus groups with staff to enable solutions to be developed in relation to the issues that are identified from the survey.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training and development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Robust training and development programmes for all staff are being developed.</li> <li>✓ Training packages will be developed for the Apprentice Building Standards Surveyors in conjunction with Heriot Watt University.</li> <li>✓ Training for assistant building standards surveyors will be developed taking account of their individual requirements.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Staff Survey</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ It is important to capture the current thinking of all the staff during this period of change/improvements. A staff survey will run for two weeks from 17 October until 31 October 2018. The findings from the survey will help set out further improvements.</li> </ul>	
<b>Performance and Continuous Improvement</b>	
<b>Delivered in Quarter 2 (July – Sep 18)</b>	<b>Planned for Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec 18)</b>
<p><b>Continuous Improvement Action Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A clear set of actions to drive forward improvements have been developed and included in the Continuous Improvement Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Backlog</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Significant progress in clearing the backlog since last quarter whilst improving statistics for all new cases coming in. However, It is also recognised that progress is required to further reduce the backlog of revised plans.</li> <li>✓ A review of the performance figures takes place on a daily basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cleansing of Data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Daily reports are run from Uniform system to performance manage the daily workflow and allow exceptions to be identified.</li> </ul> <p><b>Review of Programme Risk Register</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A review of the Programme Risk Register now complete (see section 6 of this report). This will continue to be reviewed monthly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard Report Templates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Standard report templates for applications of low risk, eg, Conservatories, Sun Rooms, Patio Doors and Domestic Garages, have been developed and are being used by staff. This is effective in helping develop more junior members of the team.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Embed procedures across Building Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Include revised/ new procedures as part of scheduled staff briefings</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch of Uniform IT upgrade</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure all staff are trained on the use of Uniform in the new upgrade. Schedule of training briefings</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard Letter Templates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A review of the standard letter templates will be carried out. The first phase of revised letters will be prepared and this will ensure they are much more customer focused.</li> </ul> <p><b>Review of flow of work for Building Standards Call Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Introduce a customer focussed triage service to ensure calls are dealt with efficiently and effectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Standardised messages for Voicemail</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Introduce robust protocols for voicemail handling consistently across Building Standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard Report Templates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Additional standardised report templates will be created to include additional building types.</li> </ul>
<b>Customer Improvements</b>	
<b>Delivered in Quarter 2 (July – Sep 18)</b>	<b>Planned for Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec 18)</b>
<p><b>Customer Improvement Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A clear set of actions to drive forward improvements have been developed and included in the Customer Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The website will be restructured to reflect the needs of customers with a particular focus on ensuring it is helpful for those least familiar with the Building Standards processes.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Early consideration of mapping our customer improvements against Customer Service Excellence criteria is underway.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stakeholder Panel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ First meeting of the stakeholder panel took place on 1 October, with a broad range of attendees across commercial and residential organisations. A partnership approach to working together going forward was agreed, with areas of activity to include a shared understanding of the issues and how these can be addressed by all parties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Customer Journey mapped.</li> <li>✓ Web publishers identified and are being trained on putting Building Standards content onto website to ensure real time information/updates</li> </ul>	<p><b>Embedding a Customer Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Workshop will be held early December with all staff on the Customer Improvements and discussion on challenges of embedding an excellent customer experience throughout Building Standards</li> </ul> <p><b>Complaints Analysis and handling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work underway to ensure the information captured on customer complaints is accurate and more importantly dealt with in accordance with agreed Council protocols. This work will be a key activity over the next few months and use trends and analysis of complaints to drive improvements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Standards News</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ As part of key communications with our customers, a model will be developed to provide news and updates to customers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stakeholder Panel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The next Stakeholder Panel meeting is planned for January 19. Feedback will be given on the progress made on the Panel's recommendations.</li> </ul>
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## 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. Quality assurance checks are being rolled out. Risk management procedures are used to ensure applications are allocated to staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to deal with them. 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 needs are identified at annual performance conversations. 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. This helps to meet RICS professional training requirements.
- Benchmarking - Benchmarking of the service is carried on a regular basis with other partner councils in the LABSS consortia. In addition, the service has met with Glasgow City Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Fife 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 and 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 a 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 two 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 method of working is being reviewed over summer/winter 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, AutoVue and workflow systems. 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 by 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 is 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

### Continuous Improvement Actions for last year - 2017-18

The following table sets out progress on the continuous improvement actions that were set for the previous 12 months (2017/18). In the previous 12 months (2017/2018) we did:

No.	Continuous Improvement Action for 2017-18	Time- scale	Status										
1	<b>Turn around times</b>												
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	<b>Ongoing:</b> 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	<b>Ongoing:</b> 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="1" data-bbox="363 571 762 918"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="363 571 496 779">Quarter</th> <th data-bbox="496 571 762 779">% of BWs and amendments issue within 10 days of satisfactory info being provided</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 779 496 813">1</td> <td data-bbox="496 779 762 813">20 – 30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 813 496 846">2</td> <td data-bbox="496 813 762 846">25 – 35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 846 496 880">3</td> <td data-bbox="496 846 762 880">30 – 40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="363 880 496 918">4</td> <td data-bbox="496 880 762 918">40 – 50%</td> </tr> </tbody> </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	<b>Ongoing:</b> 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%												
<b>2 Level of customer satisfaction with the service</b>													
2.1	Carry out a survey every 6 months, to monitor customer satisfaction with the service	Commence May 2017	<b>Incomplete:</b> A customer survey was conducted in autumn 2017. Feedback from this was similar to that from the national survey. Further survey is required.										
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	<b>Complete:</b> 4 focus group sessions were held in quarter 3 2018 and published on the Council's <a href="#">website</a> . 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	<b>Ongoing:</b> 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.
<b>3</b>	<b>Investment of building warrant fee income into the service</b>		
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	<b>Complete:</b> 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.	<b>Complete:</b> 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><b>Complete:</b> 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>
<b>4</b>	<b>Quarterly reporting to Scottish Government</b>		
4.1	Ensure quarterly reporting to Scottish Government is done on time	By end of the first quarter of 2017	<b>Complete:</b> This has been done for each quarter 2017/18.



## Continuous Improvement Actions for this year – 2018-19

Our Building Standards Improvement Plan for 2018-2021 sets out objectives for the next 12 months and for the following two years. It includes information on where we are now as a service, the overall strategy for improvement, the improvement approach and measures for success. The following table is taken from the Improvement Plan. It sets out what we will do in the next 12 months. The objectives are accompanied by an action plan which sets out timescales for particular tasks that arise from the objectives. Therefore, in the next 12 months (2017/2018) we will –

Improvement Themes	Objective	Timescale
<p><b>Improve Leadership And Management:</b></p> <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p><b>Management</b></p>	<p>We will value our employees as the people who know what works, what needs to be improved and who have the ability to suggest, implement and sustain improvements.</p> <p><b>We will prioritise our improvements for leadership to achieve the following this year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shared vision for Building Standards Services.</li> <li>• People Plan that enables and motivates managers and employees to meet the needs of Building Standards Services and the Council within the context of a growing city.</li> <li>• A Framework for Governance that includes approving resources to deliver improvements, and that is overseen by the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and has the support of elected representatives</li> <li>• A Communication plan for informing and consulting with employees and key stakeholders every step of the way.</li> <li>• Embedding a leadership culture that supports management to deliver the service improvements</li> </ul> <p><b>We will prioritise our improvements in management to achieve the following this year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all managers are clear about service priorities and are accountable for their delivery.</li> <li>• Embed agreed ways of working to ensure better consistency for our customers and employees and ensure that decisions are made efficiently and proportionate to the level of risk</li> <li>• Ensure management information is used to improve performance.</li> <li>• Ensure that employees are empowered to realise their maximum potential and that they are enabled to have the autonomy to do so.</li> <li>• Ensure vacant posts are filled and employees are recruited / resource put in place to deliver the improvement programme</li> </ul>	<p>By April 2019</p>

Improvement Themes	Objective	Timescale
<p><b>Improve Strategic Planning and create a culture of continuous Improvement:</b></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"> <li>• Provide a structured approach to project management and delivery of the Action Plan (Appendix 1).</li> <li>• Prepare business cases for the board for improvement projects that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.</li> <li>• A process for monitoring and reporting the effectiveness of this Improvement Plan and general performance, including the development of a "dashboard"</li> <li>• Form a cross service employee group that champions the continuous improvement model of planning, doing, checking and acting.</li> </ul>	<p>By April 2019</p>
<p><b>Improve response times to Building Warrant Applications:</b></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"> <li>• Evaluate effectiveness of 'Virtual' team to improve performance.</li> <li>• Complete process review for site inspections</li> <li>• Evaluate effectiveness of the revised the Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP) list to reduce the number of low risk site inspections currently undertaken.</li> <li>• Implement a new Quality Assurance Framework to meet BSD standards and further reduce variation in our processes and procedures</li> </ul>	<p>By April 2019</p>

Improvement Themes	Objective	Timescale
<p><b>Improve Customer Engagement:</b></p>	<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"> <li>• Set up a stakeholder panel to advise the board on the improvement plan and its implementation.</li> <li>• improve customer engagement</li> <li>• use complaints and feedback to inform service improvements.</li> <li>• Improve our website</li> </ul> <p>We will identify and work with key stakeholders, other council service areas and employees to develop a 3year Customer Strategy.</p>	<p>By April 2019</p>

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