



**Building Standards  
Annual Verification  
Performance Report  
2024-2025**

## Contents

/	Introduction statement from the Scottish Government	3
1	Introduction to the verifier	4
2	Building Standards Verification Service Information	6
3	Strategic Objectives	11
4	Key Performance Outcomes and Targets	15
5	Performance Data	17
6	Service Improvement and Partnership Working	26
7	Building Standards – Additional Data	43

Front cover image – Old Town skyline, Edinburgh

## Version Control

Version	Date	Comments	Date for next review
1.0	11 April 25	Draft Document Created	
1.1	05 May	GGil overview updates	
1.2	12-30 May	GGil main updates	
1.3	2 <sup>nd</sup> June	GG Review	
1.5	19-21 June	GGil Final Edits	
1.6	25 June	Final Review of Document	01/04/2026

## ***Introduction statement from the Scottish Government***

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.



## **Section 1. Introduction to the Verifier**

### **Verifier Overview**

Edinburgh is known throughout the world as a historic city and our nation's capital. Over recent decades, it has built a reputation as a successful and prosperous city – regularly voted as one of the best cities in the world to live in. It attracts more visitors than any UK city outside London and sits in the top 10 cities in the UK for attracting inward investment.

The City of Edinburgh Councils Building Standards service has a major role to play in the contribution of the overall Council commitments. 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 2024/25, the service received 4338 building warrant and associated applications, covering building construction work with an estimated value of just under £800 million which generated approximately £4.5 million in building warrant related income fees.

### **Population**

The City of Edinburgh Council's area is home to an estimated 523,250 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 South 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 2013 to 2023, Edinburgh's population grew by 8.4% from an estimated 482,850 to an estimated 523,250 people. In the same time period, Scotland's population grew by 3.2%. Overseas migration continues to be the main driver of population change in Edinburgh. The net effect of births and deaths on Edinburgh's population from 2012 to 2022 was 5,726. The net effect of migration was almost ten times higher at 53,420. In 2023 Edinburgh's population density was 1,987 residents per square kilometre. Cities like Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield have over twice the population density level of Edinburgh. Edinburgh's population increase of 8.4% between 2013 to 2023 was the fourth highest in proportional terms behind Manchester, Bristol and Leeds.

This growth is expected to continue with a projected population of 604,000 by 2035.

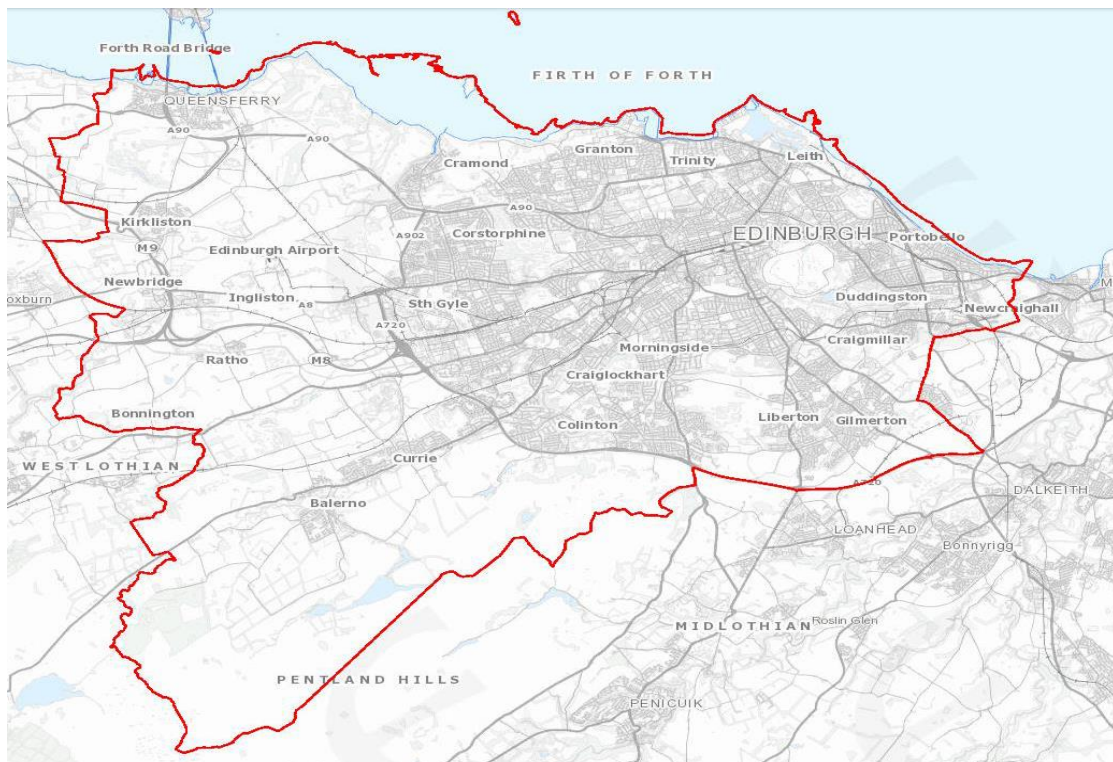
### **Economy**

Key employment sectors within the city include health; financial & insurance; education; retail; professional, scientific and technical; retail; business administration and support services and accommodation and food services.

Over four fifths (81.9%) of the population between 16 and 64 years are in employment, which is the highest percentage of the eight main cities in UK. The main reasons for being economically inactive in Edinburgh include being a student (38.1%), being looked after (12.9%) and being long term sick (11.5%).

Tourism was the main purpose for visiting our city and while international visitors account for 73% of overnight stays, this figure is only 35% for domestic visitors. The highest combined spend continues to take place in the summer months. International business visitors spend the most per night, with the majority of international trips lasting only between one and three nights (86%), compared to 40% of domestic trips which last between 4 and 7 nights. The list of countries that produce the largest number of international visitors to Edinburgh, spending the most per night and in total is led by the USA.

### Map of Area



*(Map showing the extent of the Council's administrative boundary.)*

## **Section 2. Building Standards Verification Service Information**

### **Where to find Building Standards**

The Building Standards team along with colleagues in related Planning teams are all based on the second floor of the council headquarters at Waverley Court in East Market Street, Edinburgh. This building houses the majority of Council services but has also become a community partner HUB in recent times welcoming partners such as Police Scotland, Scottish Water and Historic Environment Scotland.

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 529 3550

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

### **Overall roles and responsibilities of Building Standards**

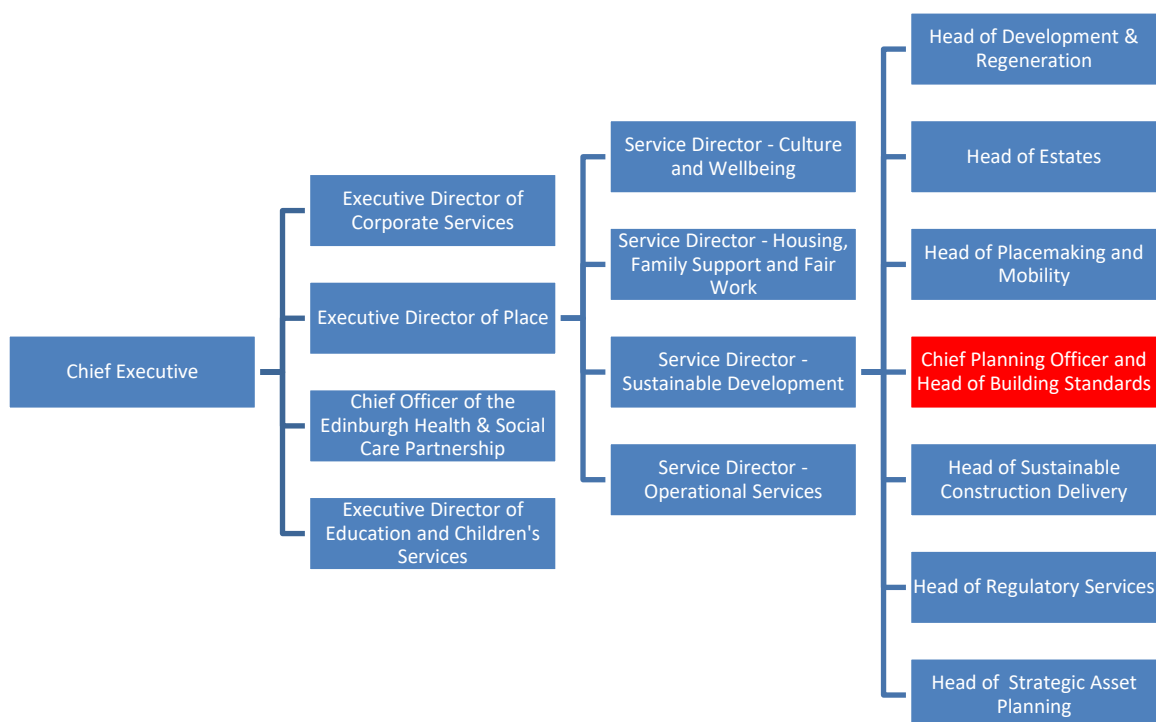
The verification services and functions delivered include:

- 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 Liquor Licensing.
- Providing preliminary advice on the procedures to be followed to obtain building warrant approval, in advance of a formal application.
- Maintaining a public record 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 standards throughout Scotland.

The Council's Building Standards service is located within the wider Sustainable Development service (part of the Place Directorate). Other services within Sustainable Development include Planning, Development and Regeneration, Estates, Sustainable Construction Delivery, Regulatory Services, Business Growth and Inclusion and Strategic Asset Planning. These support a wide range of services to local communities as well as the development industry.

Sustainable Development covers several of the Council's regulatory functions including enforcement, licensing, environmental services, social housing, and economic growth. The natural synergies across the directorate provide opportunities for collaboration, multi-disciplinary teams, and a high-level, consistent approach across delivery.

## City of Edinburgh Council Management Structure



Senior Management within Council	Number of posts (FTE at 31 March 25)	Vacancies (not included in numbers of posts)
Chief Executive	1	
Executive Director of Place (Tier 1)	1	
Service Director - Sustainable Development (Tier 2)	1	
Chief Planning Officer and Head of Building Standards (Tier 3)	1	

## **Building Standards Team**

The service has had its current structure in place since early 2020 which has served the department well through an upturn in performance following previous poor results in Scottish Government audits and through the global pandemic. The current structure gives the benefit of economies of scale which are a necessity against the large number of warrant applications processed on a weekly, monthly and yearly basis. It also allows a structured but flexible framework for the training and continuous improvement of junior and less experienced staff which the department has decided to employ over the last few years in response to the national shortage of ready-made Building Standard Surveyors.

The Operations Manager is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations within the team which allows the Service Manager to keep oversight of Building Standards and have an increased focus on the management of the Planning Service. The three main teams within the service are in turn overseen by a Team Manager and our fourth team (improvement team) is run by a Senior Building Standards Surveyor. These six employees make up the Building Standards Management Team.

The department is split into 4 key teams:

- Site Inspection/Compliance
- Plan Reporting (all applications up to £250k)
- Major Applications (all applications £250k and above and multi-plot housing sites)
- Improvement Team

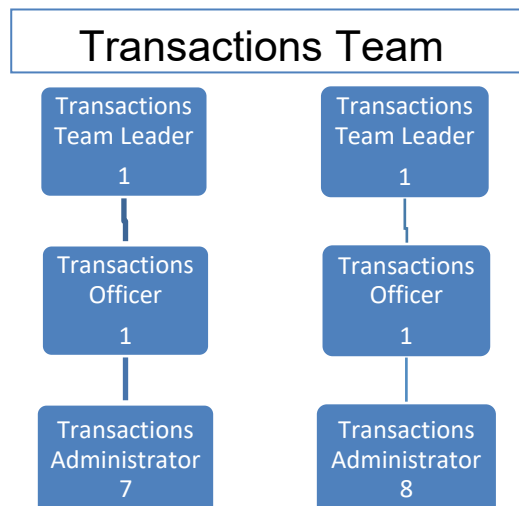
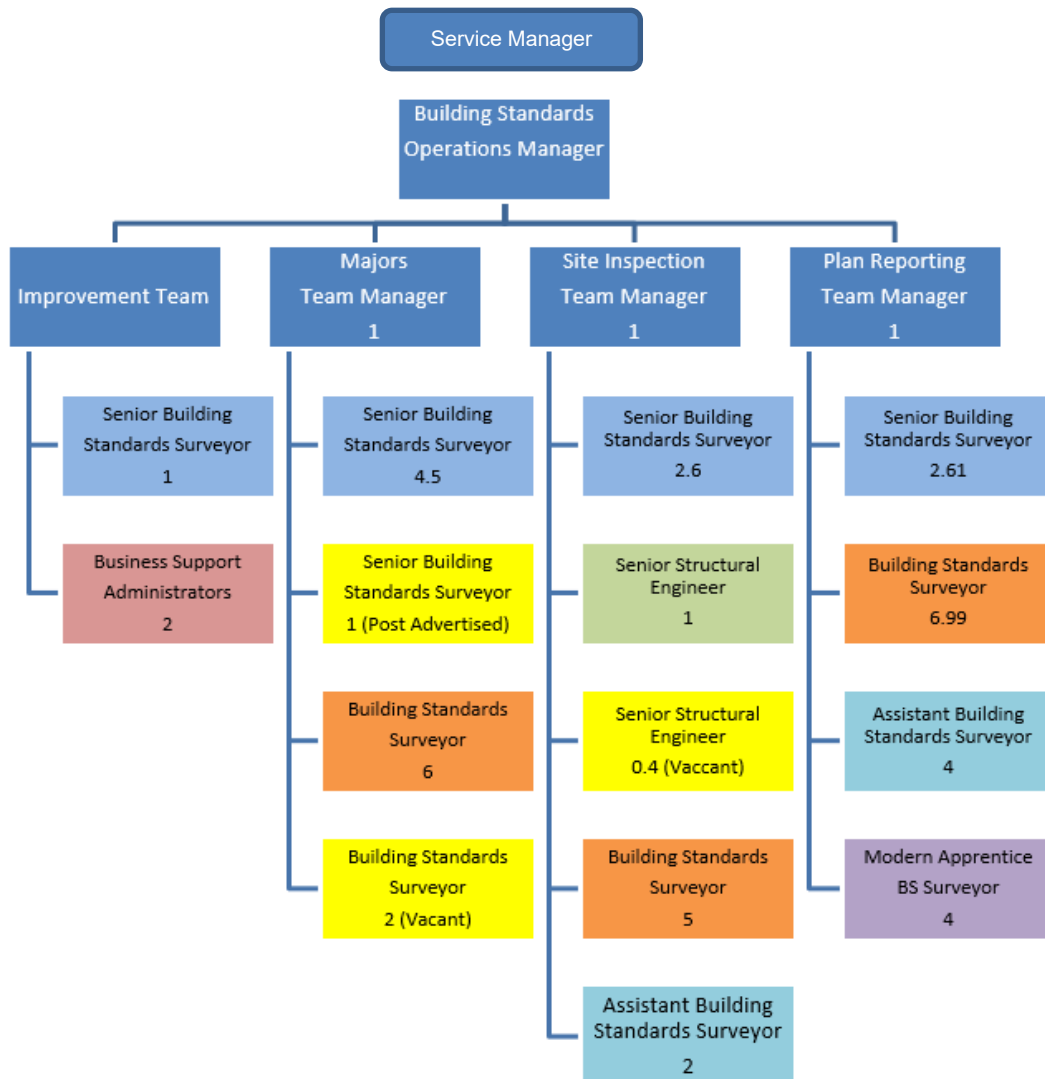
The indications continue to show that the structure is proving to be successful and fit for purpose. Sustained high performance and an ever-increasing customer satisfaction rating show this. However, a recent change over the last year saw the introduction of more cross working between the teams, which allowed the opportunity for more shadowing and mentoring which has proven to be very successful. There are weekly reviews with the Management Team and subsequent reviews with the Team Managers and their own teams.

The Improvement Team has become a permanent feature within the service (using resource from the current budget envelope). Ensuring improvements are sustained and continuous improvement is embedded, are a priority. The Improvement Team share tools/techniques with colleagues across the Planning Service and other areas within the Place directorate.

## **Transactions Team**

The efficient and effective delivery of the building standards service relies heavily on input from the Council's Transactions team. Whilst the line management responsibilities for this team sit out with the direct control of Building Standards management, the team are included in all team briefings, training, and improvement initiatives.

## Building Standards Organisational Structure



## Building Standards Staff Profile

Building Standards Full Time Equivalent Posts	Number of posts (FTE at 31 Mar 25)	Vacancies (not included in no. of posts)
Head of Building Standards (Tier 3)	1	
Operations Manager	1	
Team Managers	3	
Senior Building Standards Surveyors	9.71	1.0
Senior Structural Engineers	1	0.4
Building Standards Surveyors	17	3.0
Assistant Building Standards Surveyors	6	
Modern Apprentice Building Standards Surveyors	4	
ICT Lead Officer	1	
Business Support Officer	1	
Business Support Administrators	2	
<b>Total employees (FTE within service area)</b>	<b>46.71</b>	<b>4.4</b>
Transactions Team Manager (FTE)	1	
Transactions staff (FTE)	6	

Staff age profile (at 31 Mar 25)	Number of posts
61 and over	5
56 - 60	7
50 - 55	3
40 - 49	9
30 - 39	13
25 - 29	6
16 - 24	4

It is evident from the table above that our age profile is continuing to change for the better. It is more resilient and our succession planning for a more sustainable service is developing well. Nearly 50% of our staff are below the age of 40 and nearly 70% of staff are under the age of 50. We have worked hard over the last few years to adjust this profile, employing and training new inexperienced staff, now resulting in nearly 80% of our workforce having 5+ years' experience within Building Standards.

## 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.

## Section 3. Strategic Objectives

### City of Edinburgh Council Strategic Goals

City of Edinburgh Council have three strategic priorities which shape our work during 2023 to 2027. We will

1. Create good places to live and work in Edinburgh
2. Take all the local actions needed to end poverty in Edinburgh
3. Work to deliver a net zero city by 2030.

Our three priorities are interlinked and interdependent. They connect all the major strategies and Council policies agreed in the past few years, through the shared goals and commitments of the Edinburgh Partnership and towards our long-term ambitions for Edinburgh to be a fair, welcoming, pioneering, and thriving city, as expressed by the 2050 Edinburgh City Vision.

To meet these priorities, our Business Plan identifies the outcomes, objectives, and actions that our services need to deliver in the next few years. The actions will ensure:

1. Core services for people in need of care and support are improved
2. People can access fair work and the support they need to prevent and stay out of poverty and homelessness
3. Edinburgh is a cleaner, better maintained city that we can all be proud of
4. People can access public services locally and digitally in ways that meet their needs and expectations and contribute to a greener net zero city
5. People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in
6. Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty
7. People use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get round the city
8. Edinburgh is a climate adapted city, with biodiverse green spaces, and cheaper cleaner networks for energy use
9. Edinburgh has a stronger, greener, fairer economy and remains a world leading cultural capital, and
10. We have the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver our priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost.

Through this outcome framework, our Business Plan is the golden thread linking and driving the priorities for delivery across all our key Council wide strategies and plans.

## Vision of the Service

### Vision

**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.**

We strive to improve our service to:

- Deliver an excellent Verification service that fulfils the requirements of Scottish Government Ministers as set out in the Operating Framework,
- Be customer focused, taking account of customers' needs, and deliver best practice in terms of consistency of interpretation and predictability of service,
- Deliver sustained high levels of performance in terms of meeting the targets set in the Building Standards Performance Framework,
- Review service delivery practices as required to address any issues identified through national customer surveys, and
- Deliver targeted, cost effective, value for money services that meet operational needs and customer demand.

## Departmental issues to be addressed in the coming year

We continue to learn and reflect on our experiences during the last few years to ensure we build on our successes and quickly rectify any non-successes. There is much to be positive about within the service but still many areas for continuous improvement.

### Continuing to invest in staff wellbeing

The wellbeing of all our staff will always be a top priority for our Service. We have recognised the importance of face-to-face interactions with colleagues, and this has been one of the main drivers for our successful return to the office in a current hybrid model.

A staff wellbeing annual survey has been introduced with results and trends analysed in full by the management team. A full feedback session is done with staff informed of results and given the opportunity to discuss and feedback. Further, an annual staff away day for all staff to meet and interact has successfully be trialled and is now embedded in the calendar. This gives staff some time away from the computer to interact and bond with colleagues whilst also giving the opportunity for some key continuous professional development through a range of exciting and interesting seminars.

Staff now have minimum quarterly official check-ins with their team manager to ensure regular contact and the protected time for development opportunities and any issues to be fully discussed. Annual conversations are also in place to reflect on the previous year's events whilst looking forward to agree a development plan for the year ahead.

### Operational plans during this period

We constantly monitor our processes and procedures, to check performance and involve staff in the development of any improvements. We have managed to play our part in addressing the nationwide shortage of building standards surveyors. Our four Modern Apprentices have previously successfully completed their HNC studies and are now attending Robert Gordon University in pursuit of a degree. A large proportion of staff resources goes into the development of our MA's and junior staff as part of our succession plan. Recent recruitment is currently at a 50/50 ratio between internal promotion and external candidates. This gives the department a healthy relationship between providing a clear pathway for existing staff whilst augmenting the department with new and fresh skills and experiences from external sources. Recruitment is likely to be an ongoing pressure for the department but with targeted staff training and development planned over the coming year, we will continue to build on the strong foundations the department has laid down over previous years.

We will continue to work with Scottish Government and partners to explore innovative ways to improve the efficiencies of our service, along with colleagues in our Planning service, locally and nationally.

### Explore ICT opportunities

The refresh of our ICT hardware has been finalised with the department completely refreshed with new surface pro computers. However, to ensure we remain resilient and able to maintain the delivery of service in a manner that meets the ever-changing expectations of our customers, the department will explore opportunities with our ICT lead officer to investigate the use of products such as Power BI and IDOX Insights. The use of IDOX's Building Standards app will also be investigated and a show and tell for all three noted software packages is already set-up. The management team are acutely aware that in a more informed and tech-savvy age, we must ensure we are providing services that are fit for purpose, adaptable and which meet the needs of our customers.

### Implement Time Recording system

Working collaboratively with Scottish Government and LABSS, we will look to implement a suitable time recording system. The benefits of time recording as a business activity should allow our department to accurately understand the actual levels of time (resources) taken by our employees across different verification and compliance tasks.

Time recording data will also be reported back to Scottish Government to help assure Scottish Ministers that any increased building warrants fees, result in changes to improve the overall building standards services and in particular strengthens compliance.

The system will require to meet the minimum requirements noted below:

- Recording of time spent on key activities which make up the warrant assessment, approval, inspection, and completion certificate acceptance/rejection stages up to individual application level.
- An ability to report on time spent on individual application types such as HRB's, volume housebuilding, and the project work types described in the VDC guidance.

### Enhance staff competence portfolios

Working collaboratively with Scottish Government and LABSS, we will look to implement a suitable model for the recording and validation of staff competence. This will require a clear and well thought out programme of events to ensure our staff are appropriately prepared to undertake this validation process. We will support staff throughout the process and offer guidance on the use of appropriate systems to record competence. Training will be given at all stages to ensure staff know what outcomes are required. The benefits of an independent competence model should lead to:

- recognition for the profession giving independent assessment against risk-based competency requirements
- accredited competent individuals undertaking the verification role which would give confidence to customers and the general public
- robust competency assessment to align the profession with the approach for other built environment professions

### **Building Standards Strategic Objectives**

For the forthcoming year, the primary objectives for Building Standards are: -

- To continue to deliver timeous and consistent service to our customers.
- To maintain our current levels of performance.
- To undertake a series of customer service improvements.
- To ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of our employees.

The role of Building Standards within the Councils strategic goals is to:

- Assist economic growth,
- Support the housing programme,
- Help ensure our built environment is protected and enhanced,
- Ensure compliance and resilience across the construction industry,
- Ensure value for money while meeting the needs of our citizens; and,
- Deliver excellent customer service.

## Section 4. Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

### Introduction

Continuous improvement is recognised as key in ‘raising the bar’ for quality, compliance, consistency, and predictability of verification activities. This principle was at the core of the introduction of a best value Balanced Scorecard for verifiers in 2005. This approach was assessed by the Scottish Government when the appointment of verifiers was reviewed in 2011. As a result, a Building Standards Performance Framework (BSPF) which set out 9 Key Performance Outcomes (KPO's) that Verifiers were required to achieve was introduced. In 2017, following a further Scottish Government review, the framework was updated to bring it more in line with current practice and to reduce the KPOs in number from 9 down to 7. The Performance Framework has gone through two subsequent reviews, in 2021 and 2024, to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The verifier is required to complete and submit performance reports quarterly to the Scottish Government. The national verification performance framework is based on three core perspectives:

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

There are also three cross-cutting themes, comprising:

- Public Interest
- Continuous Improvement
- Partnership Working

### Summary of Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

The table below sets out the current list of KPO's for which targets are set by the Scottish Government. In Section 5 more detailed information on these KPO's is provided to explain the targets that have been set.

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 digital services
KPO7	Commit to objectives outlined in the annual verification performance report

## Summary of Key Performance Targets

The table below summarises the 7 KPO's including, where appropriate, the targets against which verifiers are assessed by the Scottish Government.

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 annually).
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"> <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>
KPO7 Targets	
7.1	Annual verification performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least annually).
7.2	Annual verification performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024).

## Section 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="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter of year 2024/25</th><th>% of 1<sup>st</sup> reports and granting of warrant with no 1<sup>st</sup> report within 20 day target</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>95%</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>94%</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>95%</td></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>90%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The service has maintained a very high level of performance throughout the year whilst facing resourcing and financial challenges. The new management team is now fully embedded and working effectively. Regular monitoring and re-allocation of work takes place on a daily basis to best use resources and to continually develop and upskill staff in all areas of the job.</p>	Quarter of year 2024/25	% of 1 <sup>st</sup> reports and granting of warrant with no 1 <sup>st</sup> report within 20 day target	1	95%	2	94%	3	95%	4	90%
Quarter of year 2024/25	% of 1 <sup>st</sup> reports and granting of warrant with no 1 <sup>st</sup> report within 20 day target										
1	95%										
2	94%										
3	95%										
4	90%										
1.2	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter of year 2024/25</th><th>% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>93%</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>94%</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>95%</td></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>95%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The figures show that for all 4 quarters, the department was above the national KPO target. This will remain an ongoing priority for next year as we strive to ensure that the figures remain at as high a level as possible.</p>	Quarter of year 2024/25	% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days	1	93%	2	94%	3	95%	4	95%
Quarter of year 2024/25	% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days										
1	93%										
2	94%										
3	95%										
4	95%										
KPO3 Targets – Commit to the Building Standards Customer Charter											
3.1	The National Customer Charter is displayed prominently on the website. This document was reviewed annually to ensure it reflects current targets.										
3.2	All BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' cases are responded to by the Council within 5 days.										

#### KPO4 Targets - Understand and respond to the customer experience

4.1	<p>The overall satisfaction with the Building Standards service from the 2024/25 National Customer Survey conducted by the Building Standards Division was 7.8, up from 7.0 last year and the first time the department has ever achieved this national KPO. This is an excellent result and testimony to the work we have put in over not only last year, but for the last 8 years.</p> <p>However, we recognise we cannot be satisfied with this result and must maintain the drive to continuously improve with the key issues arising from our customer feedback still factored around two main themes – communication and consistency.</p> <p>There are several measures underway to address the communication aspect, examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifying which staff have issues with customer communication. Staff sharing their knowledge and experiences of what good communication looks like through mentoring and best practice guides/workshops.</li><li>• We issue a regular newsletter to over 1500 customers, and our Councillors. It contains latest developments both within the department and the wider industry. Sets out progress we are making on improvements and provides information to assist customers in understanding all our roles and responsibilities.</li><li>• Promotion of the Scottish Government’s guidance on how to make a good building warrant application.</li><li>• Enhanced monitoring of each of our workstream generic email inboxes and our general enquiry responses to ensure all queries are answered timeously.</li><li>• Surveyors’ individual mobile numbers and email addresses detailed on all correspondence. Given the hybrid nature of our work, landline numbers have been disconnected to give a single point of contact for customers via staff mobile numbers.</li><li>• Surveyors have now returned to headquarters a minimum of one day a week – this will help to facilitate more face to face interactions with customers. This is hoped to be enhanced in the coming year with the introduction of a new customer HUB on the ground floor of our building.</li></ul> <p>Likewise, there are several measures underway to address the consistency aspect, examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The current structure and workstreams have provided a greater degree of consistency throughout all tasks but there is still much to be done. Additionally, a number of measures have now been embedded which will further aid consistency throughout the Section.</li><li>• These include regular reviews and updates of our procedures, training and mentoring for staff and template checklists for smaller applications such as conservatories and extensions.</li><li>• Our quality assurance process has also been developed to ensure that procedures are followed and kept up to date.</li></ul> <p>Overall, customer satisfaction remains a priority for the department with focus sessions occurring every month to review all feedback received through the national customer survey. Any areas highlighted for improvement are acted upon to ensure old ways of working do not creep back in and the focus is always on new ideas and ways of working to continuously improve.</p>
-----	---

KPO5 Targets - Maintain financial governance					
5.1		<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
	<b>Fee income</b>	£1,145,556	£1,090,848	£1,097,254	£1,145,652
	Staffing costs:	£729,841	£752,960	£815,647	£781,648
	Non staff costs:	£67,167	£25,352	£117,768	£61,254
	Other investment:	£62,000	£39,440	£43,127	£40,955
	<p>Building standards verification fee income is to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).</p> <p>The service continues to generate sufficient income overall, to cover staff costs plus 30%.</p>				
KPO6 Targets - Commit to digital services					
6.1	<p>Full details of the Building Standards Service in Edinburgh are 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 100% being processed electronically during 2024/25.</p> <p>Completion certificates are submitted online and processed electronically in all cases.</p>				
KPO7 Targets - Commit to objectives outlined in the annual verification performance report					
7.1	<p>The annual verification performance report for 2024-25 is on the Council website at: <a href="https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/download/13185/building-standards-performance-and-plans">https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/download/13185/building-standards-performance-and-plans</a></p>				
7.2	<p>The annual verification performance report for 2024/25 includes performance data.</p>				

## ***Professional Expertise and Technical Processes***

### **Protocols for dealing with work –**

A fundamental review of our procedures was undertaken in 2020. Since then, this remains an ongoing area of activity to ensure we continually change and improve and that our procedures are amended to reflect these changes. All staff briefing sessions and workshops are held to discuss and test the procedures and to ensure that they are fully understood. We have a robust Quality Assurance Framework in place that includes a quarterly audit of procedures with full involvement from all members of the team. Results are feedback to the management team who fully review, and any action points are implemented and feedback to staff.

We have a skills matrix that is used to ensure applications are allocated to staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to deal with them. In addition, a minimum of 5% of building warrants are checked to ensure consistency. A peer review system is used for staff during development of opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge. This allows staff to be constantly challenged but with a robust checking process to ensure the department fulfils its duty as responsible verifier with staff not acting above or out with their competency.

### **Performance management systems –**

At divisional level, Building Standards Senior Managers meet with colleagues across Sustainable Development to discuss a range of current issues, with performance management being a standing monthly agenda item. At service level, we have a dedicated Improvement Team that develops an ongoing programme of improvements, including details of the work and performance of the service. At team level, staff utilise the Enterprise workflow management system; this uses a traffic light system to prioritise workloads to ensure key performance outcomes are achieved. Weekly management team meetings have a structured agenda which always begins with a further review of service performance across the teams. Moreover, staff have the opportunity to participate in regular one to one sessions with their team manager so any performance issues can be discussed and addressed. They also take part in the Councils' Annual Performance Framework where individual discussions take place on "looking back" at performance in the last 12 months and "looking forward" for the next 12 months. The Enterprise Reporting Tool provides a clear view of workload allocation for every surveyor. It is flexible and allows reallocation of work during periods of staff absence.

### **Training and development/CPD –**

The organisation recognises that staff are the number one factor to efficient and effective service delivery. Their continual development is always a priority for the service. On this basis, we seek to ensure they receive regular training on all aspects of the role, be it procedural or technical.

A key focus for the upcoming year will be the competency of staff and helping them to create a portfolio on the skills builder platform (currently under development). We will support staff throughout the process and offer guidance on the use of the system and on the types of evidence to be provided. Training will be given at all stages to ensure staff know what outcomes are required. Further, we will utilise all aspects of the Scottish Building Standards Hub and Learning Management System to assist us in this regard.

Formal training is provided internally to aid surveyors pursuing a professional membership (CABE/RICS/CIOB). A formal training partnership with the CIOB also provides surveyors a platform to pursue a professional membership to aid the individual and ensure the service has suitably qualified professionals.

A specific staff training forum was recently established, which has proven to be hugely successful. This was initiated to allow staff to have open and detailed discussions on what training they wish to receive and to give ownership by organising both internal and external training themselves. Membership is rotated yearly to give all staff the opportunity to be part of the forum. Bitesize seminars over lunchtimes have been extremely well received with an entire year of programme events in the calendar. The training forum is also responsible for organising the now annual staff away day where external speakers attend for a morning focused on technical aspects and then team building workshops organised for the afternoon to increase effective team working amongst colleagues and help build and develop good relationships.

Generally speaking, the service aims to provide between 30-40 hours of training per year per member of staff. In addition to this, other centralised training is given which concentrates on health and safety requirements and changes to legislation. This helps to meet chartership professional training requirements. Moreover, staff are encouraged to attend meetings of LABSS to keep abreast of national issues affecting the Building Standards profession and to attend any national training sessions facilitated by LABSS or the SBSH.

### **Benchmarking –**

We recognise the benefit of active participation in benchmarking and closer collaborative working. To this end we continue benchmarking with: -

- Southeast Scotland Consortium which comprises colleagues from Fife, Midlothian, East Lothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders and ourselves. This is one of 7 consortia set up by LABSS. The consortia aims are: -
  - Developing best practice in the application of procedures.
  - Improving uniformity of interpretation and application of the technical standards.
  - Feeding into the work of the Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS).
- The Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government (BSD)
- The 32 Scottish Local Authorities through the work of Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS).
- The SOLACE group of authorities which share data to allow us to compare ourselves against a variety of similar authorities (with a mix of urban and large rural areas)
- The Scottish Building Standards Hub which supports transformation and improvement in building standards in Scotland.

### **Shared Services –**

CEC Building Standards previously provided structural engineering resource to another local authority (Midlothian) but have had to cease this relationship due to resourcing issues. Further, the department is actively engaging with industry through a procurement framework to ascertain the services of a consultant for structural engineering services. This is in the early stages of a trial with a private structural engineering firm as the

department looks to increase its conversations with private industry as it is essential we continue to look at ways to augment our existing workforce with the expertise required to run an efficient service. However, this requires careful thought and planning to ensure that the cost of any external partners fit within a sustainable business model.

Likewise, the department is currently reviewing both its in-house and external expertise in aspects of fire engineering to ensure adequate and robust practices and procedures are in place. This includes looking at sharing fire engineering expertise with neighbouring authorities and linked departments within the council. We have also had discussions with the Scottish Building Standards Hub around these areas and will continue our dialogue on such matters in the future.

### **Succession planning –**

The age profile has changed significantly within the service over the last 5 years with a good mix of ages now throughout the entire team and over the various roles contained within our structure. Although the department still has a number of junior staff, their experience and knowledge are ever increasing and setting us up for future seamless progression. An example of this was a recent promotion off both an Assistant Building Standards Surveyor to a Building Standards Surveyor and a Building Standards Surveyor to a Senior Building Standards Surveyor. Both of these promoted posts were achieved by “home grown” talent.

Our ongoing commitment to graduate and modern apprentices for the sector continues with our four current Modern Apprentices employed within the service. All four have recently successfully completed an HNC and SVQ level 2 accreditation and are currently completing year two of university studies. The department has a relationship with both Robert Gordon University and Heriot Watt University with current staff studying at both universities to achieve a degree in a construction related subject. All staff currently studying, have a work placed mentor to help with their studies and regular meetings with their team managers to monitor academic progression and results.

## ***Quality Customer Experience***

### **Customer communication strategies –**

Ongoing reviews of the feedback from our National Customer Survey (NCS) is carried out and continues to reveal that one of the main issues is communication. The information disclosed that the problem is not service wide and there are many examples of good communication and excellent customer service. Our ongoing strategy will:

- Focus and build on the examples of good communications and service provided by the majority of staff. Staff sharing their approach through workshops and setting out the aims and ambitions to improve the customer experience across the entire service.
- Use the more immediate feedback from the NCS to identify problems and areas of improvement and react in a timelier manner.
- A customer newsletter continues to be issued on a quarterly basis.
- We will further investigate possible enhancements of our website and ensure up-to-date information is available both on our website and social media platforms.

Although great work has been done on our communication strategy as shown by our recent survey scores, it will continue to be an ongoing aspect of focus for the department as we understand the importance of clear and concise communication to our customers.

### **Customer Charter –**

The Building Standards Customer Charter is reviewed annually in line with the updated performance framework. This document is published on the Council website and clearly sets out the level of service the Council will provide for the Building Standards service in Edinburgh.

### **Customer Engagement and feedback –**

The service has fully embraced the NCS with the aim of obtaining timely and meaningful customer feedback from more customers. We actively promote this and achieve hundreds of completed surveys every year which gives a true reflection of performance and a wide and varied range of feedback. Complaints are monitored and lessons learned are used to make changes to the service. Refresher training is rolled out to staff annually on all aspects of complaints, councillor enquiries, FOI's etc. to ensure compliance and best practice is followed. The service has also re-established meetings with national housebuilders with our operations manager visiting various companies bi-annually to discuss industry wide issues, performance issues and how closer working practices and process can be developed. Further, the service continues to engage with industry partners such as Edinburgh university, Heriot Watt university and Napier university to create strong working relationships for the local area.

### **Customer Advice –**

General advice is available through our general enquiry email service which staff cover on a rota basis. Customers are also directed to self-serve from the information on the Council website where possible. Our phone service is available from 9am to 1pm every weekday for all general enquiries.

### **Accessibility of Service –**

As a customer focussed service, we aim to make the service as accessible as possible which we do through the following methods: -

- The customer contact centre is operated by staff who are specifically trained to deal with general enquiries at first point of contact.
- We publicise on our website generic e-mail addresses for our three workstreams to which enquiries can be sent. These are monitored daily to ensure there are no delays in responding.
- A return to Waverley Court will allow for more face-to-face meetings within our offices.
- We are prepared to meet locally with agents to discuss proposed warrants, although more and more 'discussions' now take place through virtual means to assist our customers where travel is an issue.

### **Pre-Application Service –**

We actively encourage pre-application discussions for all applications with a construction cost of £250,000 or greater and other complex developments incorporating new or innovative design. This helps to pre-empt any major technical matters applicable to the proposals and to also agree critical procedural elements such as the staging of the warrant. We advise that this service can be undertaken at the designer's office, if attending our offices is inconvenient. Virtual meetings for pre-warrant discussions also take place on a regular non-formal basis for smaller development proposals.

### **Customer Agreements –**

A customer agreement is offered for an application which falls within the service's Major Applications Team with a construction cost of £250,000 or greater. The customer is contacted as soon as reasonably practicable after an application has been received, to

open dialogue around the design and programming of works, thus aiding the appropriate allocation of resources.

#### **Customer Dissatisfaction (procedural or technical) –**

The technical standards are presented as guidance in contrast to the regulations which are mandatory. On occasion there can be differences in opinions over a technical or procedural matter, or a perceived lack of consistency with another verifier. To address this, we will firstly try to resolve matters through sensible discussions or through the use of our in-house alternative means of compliance service where an applicant/agent can put their evidence to us which will be reviewed in-house and a decision given. If that does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, we will escalate to Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) who have in place a dispute resolution service administered by the Scottish Building Standards Hub (SHBS). This can involve the verifier escalating the enquiry to LABSS who then seek a national view before publishing their interpretation.

The Council has a robust complaints procedure for dealing with all forms of complaint and staff are regularly updated on the procedures and practices for dealing with these.

#### **Recognised External Customer Service Accreditations –**

City of Edinburgh Council Building Standards department, in conjunction with the Planning Department, is UKAS accredited with ISO 9001:2015. This is a globally recognised standard for quality management systems that helps organisations improve their performance, meet customer expectations, and demonstrate commitment to quality. A recent audit for the department was successfully passed with zero non-conformities noted. The department constantly reviews the benefits of an external customer service accreditation to ensure it is fit for purpose.

### ***Operational and Financial Efficiency***

#### **Team Structures –**

The Building Standards teams are based on a workstream structure and have been in place now for several years. The current structure offers various economies of scale and suits a workforce that has changed profile significantly over the last 5 years and offers a great framework for its junior and less experienced members to learn and thrive. Over the last year especially, a key element implemented by the new management team was a greater emphasises on cross team working via mentoring, joint inspections and shadowing opportunities. This has proved a great success with noticeable changes and improvements in junior staff as they learn from their more experienced colleagues.

#### **Time Recording System –**

The council operates a flexible working policy which is based on trust between managers and staff. No core times are mandatory but to suit the needs of the service, as a customer facing department, the majority of staff work within a 7am to 7pm window. Staff are encouraged to record times to ensure that not only are they working sufficient hours, but equally to ensure they do not work too many hours for their own wellbeing and work/life balance. Constant and open communication between managers and staff is required for this to be a successful system. Staff also work from the main office at least one day a week.

#### **Financial Monitoring/Governance –**

Monthly monitoring of fee income, warrant numbers and expenditure across all aspects is undertaken, and verification costs and income are reported on a quarterly basis to the BSD. We have monthly meetings with finance colleagues across the Planning & Building

Standards service as well as quarterly meetings with the wider Place Directorate. These are supported with regular financial monitoring meetings with the Senior Accountants (allocated to BS) and the BS Management team.

### **IT Systems –**

We have continued to develop the use of Uniform Enterprise to help workflow through the service. The system is linked to the IDOX document management system, which in turn links in to the Scottish Government eDevelopment Portal. This permits customers to lodge applications electronically and submit additional supporting documentation directly into their building warrant file. The recent migration of our data to the Cloud, hosted by Idox Solutions, has brought benefits but has not been without its challenges. Issues remain on the useability of IDOX viewer and discussions are ongoing with IDOX to ensure we have a fit for purpose system.

Further, we have invested significant capital in upgrading all staff members with brand new surface pro computers which has brought about efficiency in speed of processing.

### **Digital Services –**

A full range of digital services including online applications and website information is available. We are seeking to continually look at a channel shift and increase the levels of business conducted electronically. A recent investment in the appointment of an Assistant ICT Officer, who will be dedicated to aligning our improvement programme with digital opportunities, is an important step in terms of available resources and robustness.

### **Finance Systems –**

The Building Standards service adheres to the Council's financial policies and budgets whilst spending is kept under constant review. At a team level, all monies received in respect of building warrant fees are logged. This permits money received and budgets to be monitored by our finance colleagues.

### **Internal communication strategies –**

The Council recognises the importance of having clear lines of communications to ensure staff are kept motivated and feel involved. There are regular corporate updates, including a blog from the Chief Executive. Our internal intranet (the ORB) provides excellent updates on all news, vacancies, wellbeing, and self-service. The Building Standard service hold regular team briefs (usually monthly) and make a point to follow up any large scale training or team events with feedback surveys to ensure staff feel their opinions are valid and welcome. Each team has monthly in-person team meetings which are very interactive and encourage participation of staff across all levels. The management team meet twice a week with an action log completed and regularly reviewed.

## *Section 6. Service Improvement and Partnership Working*

The Building Standards service has made significant improvement since the audit of November 2017, where the Scottish Government identified a range of areas for improvement. These included: -

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

Although we have now had several years of sustained high performance, we continuously look to improve our service and develop fresh, innovative ways of working. This includes looking at what currently works well and analysing how we can develop further in these aspects. Looking at what we need to do better and identifying a strategic plan to implement the changes required. We also thoroughly investigate all other avenues including benchmarking against consortium partners and similar size authorities, speaking with industry to stay up to date with latest best practise and liaising with Scottish Government so we can ensure we are fully aware of future plans at a national level.

The Service reports to the Building Standards Division, annually on key deliverables achieved, and key objectives planned for next year.

### Continuous Improvement Actions delivered for 2024/25: -

The Service has delivered significant improvement over the past 12 months: -

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Workforce profile</b> ✓ The workforce profile is a key factor in sustaining our performance and ensuring a balance of experience and attracting new talent to the service. During the course of the next year, it will be reviewed regularly, taking cognition of any new initiatives.	<b>Complete</b>	<p>The department has sustained some significant personnel loses over the last year due primarily to retirement. We have lost a very experienced part-time engineer, our most experienced senior surveyor, and a surveyor with many years' service. However, the department, through its succession plan, was prepared and able to successfully promote existing staff into the positions of senior surveyor and surveyor. We were unable to recruit to the engineer's post due to the bespoke nature of that particular role and alternatives are currently being considered.</p> <p>Further to the above, the department lost one of its assistant surveyors to a promoted role within a neighbouring authority. Recruitment remains ongoing for vacant roles as a priority. Our succession planning continues to progress with our four apprentices continuing their university studies and on course to graduate in summer of 26.</p>
	<b>Stress/Wellbeing</b> ✓ Regular meetings will be held throughout the year via 1 to 1 in person meetings, team meetings and drop-in sessions to help assess the Stress levels/wellbeing of staff.	<b>Complete</b>	<p>Managers completed their program of quarterly 1 to 1s with staff to ensure development and wellbeing are continuously monitored. This progress is tracked on a management spreadsheet to allow the operations manager oversight and as a visual aid to ensure completion.</p>
	<b>Lone Working</b> ✓ Investigate the use of Shifts within Teams as a means of checking in/out for lone workers on site.	<b>Complete</b>	<p>The use of Shifts has been successfully implemented with buy in from all staff. This was trialled via a small working group, with lessons learned implemented in the process before being rolled out to the wider team. All staff members were trained in the operation of Shifts and an accompanying procedure was produced to ensure consistency. Following implementation, an intensive period of care</p>

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	✓ Annual wellbeing survey now embedded in program of yearly events.		was provided to staff to ensure they were comfortable with the system. We also carried out our new department wellbeing survey to ensure staff have the opportunity to raise any concerns, feel valued and listened to. Managers meticulously reviewed results and any improvements were logged on an action plan with full feedback sessions provided to staff.
	<b>Staff Training</b> ✓ Staff to be trained on all updated procedures and legislation.	<b>Complete</b>	Ongoing training sessions have taken place with all staff on Procedural and Technical Handbook updates. A training register has also been maintained.
	<b>Future Service Delivery Model – Review</b> ✓ It is important to ensure the existing model of operation is efficient and effective. Ongoing review will take place during 2024/2025 to ensure the model is not only affordable but flexible and offers a collaborative approach with key internal services and wider Council pressures.	<b>Complete</b>	The model was reviewed regularly throughout the year with resource redistributed where and when required to meet demands in workload.
<b>Performance and Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>Internal Quality Audit –</b> ✓ A running programme of quarterly Quality Audits will be undertaken by all staff members.	<b>Complete</b>	This process is now fully embedded and various successful quarterly audits have taken place. This continues to be extremely worthwhile and of great benefit in helping to identify both individual and whole team training needs. As an added benefit, it also helps highlight if any procedures require amending or updating.

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	✓ Outcomes of the audits will be fed back to the Management Team and appropriate actions implemented.		
	<b>ISO 9001 Certification</b> ✓ Current certification to be maintained.	<b>Complete</b>	External Audit carried out and passed.
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Sustain performance - above 95% of warrants being issued first reports within 20 day target and 90% of warrants being granted within 10 days of receiving satisfactory info.	<b>Ongoing</b>	Across the whole year, 94% of warrants were issued first reports within 20 day target and 94% of warrants were granted within 10 days of receiving satisfactory info. Although we did not fully meet the 95% target, extremely high performance continues to be generally maintained.
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Error reports to be produced detailing data input errors within Uniform.	<b>Complete</b>	Error reports have been successfully operating throughout the year. Further reports will be established as new Enterprise tasks are launched.
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Rollout the use of Graphs within Uniform to help with workload monitoring.	<b>Delayed</b>	Due to delays in updating data warehouses and a lack of available IT resources, this objective has been delayed. Initial work has been completed, and we hope to advance this objective next year.
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Rationalise all drop down menus and letters within	<b>Delayed</b>	Initial work started on this objective, but other Uniform priorities overtook this aspect. Further, the scale of the task was fully recognised during the initial work and as such, a much greater

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	Uniform.		resource will be required to complete this task.
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Train additional members of staff on the use of the back of house Uniform and Enterprise system to help succession planning.	Complete	A new member of staff has been recruited into our service improvement team to help with IT resource with the early signs looking positive. The staff member has recently undergone uniform template training and further training is planned in the near future.
	<b>Efficient/Effective working</b> ✓ We will continue to look at the use of ICT to drive forward efficiencies and streamline the service.	Complete	This is a continual process and throughout the year we have made further advances in our use of Enterprise and Uniform. Examples of new enterprise tasks include customer agreement notification to officers and an improved task for the passing of documents between officers and transactions colleagues with regard certification registration.
	<b>ICT</b> ✓ Rationalise our training, file management system.	Complete	All files and folders on shared drives has been rationalised with data archived where required.
	<b>Efficient/Effective working</b> ✓ We will continue to look at the use of ICT in the form of upgraded software and hardware.	Complete	We invested significant capital in refreshing the entire department with brand new surface pro computers which has helped with processing speed, time and general performance.
	<b>Training</b> ✓ Implement a new staff training forum to continue the up skilling of all surveyors.	Complete	Our staff training forum has been implemented with great success. Volunteers were sought from each team to ensure equal representation. A team manager oversaw the group but ideas and responsibility for implementation fell to staff. Monthly lunchtime bitesize sessions were facilitated over the course of the year with a digital library created to store these recorded sessions. The groups work culminated in successfully promoting and implementing a staff away day. The program of events and organising of speakers was

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
			entirely undertaken by the group.
	<b>Training</b> ✓ Implement a structured programme of staff rotation around workstreams to enhance surveyor skills and knowledge.	Complete	We have successfully implemented this program with several staff rotating teams on a twice-yearly basis. We have further implemented more general cross team working to ensure staff are upskilled in all aspects of the role. This has brought great benefits across all surveyor grades but particularly for junior staff who are able to learn and develop at an accelerated rate due to being exposed to greater complexity of work but in a controlled environment.
	<b>Transactions Procedures</b> ✓ Review the Procedure for registering Certificates of Design and Schedule 1's.	Delayed	Due to pressures both within our service and within the transactions service, this planned action has had to be delayed.
	<b>BS Admin Procedures</b> ✓ All Procedures associated with our Internal Admin team tasks, to be reviewed and re-written in the approved format.	Complete	Procedures have been reviewed and written in the approved format.
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ Review Procedure for Scottish Fire & Rescue Service consultation.	Delayed	This process was delayed due to communication from SBSH that a national review and best practice guide was to be produced. We await the publication of such guidance to inform our next steps.
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ New Procedures required for processing Structural Engineers information.	Delayed	This aspect of improvement was delayed due to the delays experienced with recruiting to backfill a structural engineer retirement. As the department is likely to pursue alternative routes (i.e. consultant), the decision was taking to postpone this element.

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	✓ New Enterprise tasks linked to the above to be created.		
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ Review the Procedure for Site Inspections and associated Risk Assessments.	Complete	All risk assessments were fully reviewed and an updated procedure for site inspections completed. Staff were trained on both aspects to ensure they fully understood their role and responsibilities. Annual review of risk assessments added to improvement teams yearly task list.
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ All staff to be re-trained on the updated CCNP Procedure.	Delayed	Due to national rollout of time recording and increased compliance requirements, the decision was taken by management to postpone until the full direction of travel is known.
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ Complete the Peer Review trial and rollout to all staff with training.	Complete	Our updated procedure has been written and staff trained accordingly.
	<b>Enforcement</b> ✓ Review current Procedures around Enforcement of Works without Warrant, Occupation without Completion, Dangerous and Defective Buildings. ✓ Investigate the use of Enterprise tasks to align with the Procedure updates.	Delayed	Further work has been carried out with draft procedures written for various elements. Further works required to ensure procedures are complete and associated templates and tasks completed alongside staff training.

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
<b>Customer Improvements</b>	<b>Customer Satisfaction on change activities</b> ✓ Undertake a programme of face-to-face engagement with all major housebuilders, to analyse recent changes, and future improvements within the service.	<b>Complete</b>	All major housebuilders are offered the opportunity for an engagement meeting with the operations manager. Uptake has been very encouraging with twice-yearly meetings now embedded with several major housebuilders. This allows a culture of collaborative working to take place but clear boundaries and expectations are set to ensure the regulatory role of the department is maintained. Feedback has been very encouraging to date.
	<b>National Customer Survey</b> ✓ Analyse feedback from the National Customer Survey to target improvements and training needs.	<b>Complete</b>	The National Customer Survey results are reviewed on a rolling monthly basis and all feedback is presented to managers for consideration. This has permitted us to target improvements and training needs, and instantly feedback to staff on not only negative but also positive comments. This approach continues to be paying dividends, as our survey score has continued to rise to its highest ever figure with KPO4 target achieved for the first time.
	<b>Customer Engagement</b> ✓ Increasing our partnership working and engagement with National Housebuilders and Architectural and Construction Associations.	<b>Complete</b>	Work continues in this aspect with collaborative working taken place between the department and ECAN (Edinburgh Chartered Architects Network) to put on a successful CPD event and share a best practice guide around making a quality building warrant submission.
	<b>Review of Contact Centre call provision</b> ✓ We will review the use of an automated Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system to improve our customer journey.	<b>Not Carried Out</b>	Corporate approach has changed and it has been decided to no longer pursue this improvement option.

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	<b>Review of Website Content</b> ✓ Continually review and update the website content to help improve the customer journey.	Complete	Regular reviews and updates have been carried out to our website content, in line with the corporate requirements for all documentation to be reviewed 6 monthly.
	<b>Customer Insight / Satisfaction</b> ✓ Continue to develop insight on customer experiences, needs and preferences and make positive changes as a result of analysing these.	Complete	This is an ongoing process through customer feedback and is helping to shape our future improvements and communication strategy.

### **Continuous Improvement Actions planned for 2025/26: -**

The Service has a number of improvement actions planned for the year ahead: -

<b>Improvement Theme</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Timescale / Rating</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Workforce profile</b> ✓ The workforce profile is a key factor in sustaining our performance and ensuring a balance of experience and attracting new talent to the service. During the course of the next year, it will be reviewed regularly, taking cognition of any new initiatives.	Ongoing	
	<b>Stress/Wellbeing</b> ✓ Regular meetings will be held throughout the year via 1 to 1 in person meetings, team meetings and drop-in sessions to help assess the Stress levels/Wellbeing of staff. ✓ Annual wellbeing survey now embedded in program of yearly events.	Ongoing	
	<b>Lone Working</b> ✓ Embed the use of Shifts within Teams as a means of checking in/out for lone workers on site.	Oct 25	

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	✓ Carry out analysis to consider if the use of Shifts should be rolled out further including aspects such as Home Working.		
	<b>General Staff Training</b> ✓ Staff to be trained on all updated procedures and legislation.	Ongoing	
	<b>Future Service Delivery Model – Review</b> ✓ It is important to ensure the existing model of operation is efficient and effective. Ongoing review will take place during 2025/2026 to ensure the model is not only affordable but flexible and offers a collaborative approach with key internal services and wider Council pressures.	Ongoing	
	<b>Formal Management Training</b> ✓ Routes for managers to have formal management qualification to be investigated. Possible courses to be considered both from SBSH and other	Jan 26	

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	providers.		
<b>Performance and Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>Internal Quality Audit –</b> ✓ A running programme of quarterly Quality Audits will be undertaken by all staff members. ✓ Outcomes of the audits will be fed back to the Management Team and appropriate actions implemented.	Ongoing	
	<b>ISO 9001 Certification</b> ✓ Current certification to be maintained. ✓ Cost/benefit analysis of this particular certification to be carried out to ensure best value.	Ongoing  Sept 25	
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Sustain performance - above 95% of warrants being issued first reports within 20 day target and 90% of warrants being granted within 10 days of receiving satisfactory info.	Ongoing	
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Error reports to be produced	Ongoing	

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	detailing data input errors within Uniform.		
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Rollout the use of Graphs within Uniform to help with workload monitoring.	Nov 25	
	<b>Performance</b> ✓ Rationalise all drop down menus and letters within Uniform.	Mar 26	
	<b>Efficient/Effective working</b> ✓ We will continue to look at the use of ICT to drive forward efficiencies and streamline the service.	Ongoing	
	<b>Efficient/Effective working</b> ✓ We will continue to look at the use of ICT in the form of upgraded software and hardware.	Ongoing	
	<b>Training</b> ✓ Embed the staff training forum to continue the up skilling of all surveyors. ✓ Investigate resurrecting the staff technical forum to help with technical policies and interpretation of regulations	Feb 26	

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	<b>Training</b> ✓ Embed the structured programme of staff rotation around workstreams to enhance surveyor skills and knowledge.	Ongoing	
	<b>Transactions Procedures</b> ✓ Review the Procedure for registering Certificates of Design and Schedule 1's.	Aug 25	
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ Review Procedure for Scottish Fire & Rescue Service consultation.	June 25	
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ New Procedures required for processing Structural Engineers information. ✓ New Enterprise tasks linked to the above to be created.	Dec 25	
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ All staff to be re-trained on the updated CCNP Procedure.	Jan 25	
	<b>Procedures</b> ✓ Complete process and procedure for producing assessment reports directly	Dec 25	

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	from uniform.		
	<b>Enforcement</b> ✓ Review current Procedures around Enforcement of Works without Warrant, Occupation without Completion, Dangerous and Defective Buildings. ✓ Investigate the use of Enterprise tasks to align with the Procedure updates.	Dec 25	
<b>Customer Improvements</b>	<b>Customer Satisfaction on change activities</b> ✓ Undertake a programme of face-to-face engagement with all major housebuilders, to analyse recent changes, and future improvements withing the service.	Ongoing	
	<b>National Customer Survey</b> ✓ Analyse feedback from the National Customer Survey to target improvements and training needs.	Ongoing	
	<b>Customer Engagement</b> ✓ Increasing our partnership working and engagement with National Housebuilders	Ongoing	

Improvement Theme	Objective	Timescale / Rating	Evidence
	and Architectural and Construction Associations.		
	<b>Review of Website Content</b> ✓ Continually review and update the website content to help improve the customer journey.	Ongoing	
	<b>Customer Insight / Satisfaction</b> ✓ Continue to develop insight on customer experiences, needs and preferences and make positive changes as a result of analysing these.	Ongoing	

## Partnership working

Building Standards does not and cannot operate effectively and efficiently by working in isolation. The following are examples of how partnership working has and will drive collaboration and improved service delivery.

<b><i>Within the Council</i></b>	
Planning Services	Working collaboratively to encourage development within the city.
Legal Services	Consult and discuss matters of legislative interpretation with our solicitors and progress applications. Consultation on enforcement.
Licensing	Consultee for applications in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation and Liquor Licensing.
Housing Services	Work with colleagues to ensure the delivery of the Council's commitment to social housing.
Economic Development /Inclusive Growth	Collaborative working on building warrants that have significant impact for inward investment, ensuring early engagement & efficient progression through the process.
<b><i>Outwith the Council</i></b>	
Southeast Scotland Consortium (comprising colleagues from Fife, Midlothian, East Lothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders)	Identifying best practice; improving consistency in the application and interpretation of technical standards.
LABSS	Participate in consultations and attend meetings.
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Consultation as and when required on buildings warrants, dangerous buildings and other specified applications.
Scottish Government	Participation in strategy forums, working groups, benchmarking and sharing of best practice.
NHS Lothian	Regular discussions and updates took place during the Covid-19 Pandemic. More recently, discussions ongoing around streamlining new warrant applications.
BSD	Work with the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division, to meet the fundamental overarching principles of driving forward the future of building standards throughout Scotland.
Engagement with external stakeholder organisations and groups	Regular engagement with key stakeholders which includes various national house builders, Edinburgh Chartered Architect Network, Edinburgh University etc.

## Section 7. Building Standards – Additional Data

In 2024/25, Building Standards performance was as follows:

Building warrants and amendments to building warrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4338 building warrant and associated applications received including amendment to warrants.</li><li>• 4181 decisions made on building warrant applications.</li></ul>
Completion certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4836 completion certificates submitted.</li><li>• 6165 decisions made.</li></ul>
Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 940 certificates of design submitted.</li><li>• 29 certificates of construction submitted.</li></ul>
Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1379 copy certificates received (domestic).</li><li>• 467 copy certificates received (non-domestic).</li></ul>
Statements of Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1145 copy certificates received (domestic).</li><li>• 255 copy certificates received (non-domestic).</li></ul>
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 24 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>