

Building Standards Verification Service

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

2019 - 2020



moray
council



Moray Council Building Standards

Annual Performance Report

Record of Document Revisions

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Moray Sports Centre

Introduction to Moray Council as verifier

1.1 Introduction

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 targets/outcomes 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 carrying out their day to day business, and should focus on the performance framework's core perspectives and cross-cutting themes.

1.2 Moray

Moray is located midway between the cities of Aberdeen and Inverness and borders the Moray Firth. The geographical area of Moray extends to 861 square miles with a population of some 96,000. The principal towns within Moray are Elgin, (population 23,100); Forres, (population 12,500); Buckie, (population 8,000); Lossiemouth, (population 7,000) and Keith, (population 4,700).

Moray is principally rural, the main industries being distilling, farming and tourism. One half of all the distilleries in Scotland are located in Moray along with the major air base of RAF Lossiemouth and Kinloss Army Barracks as well as being home to the world famous family run companies Baxters of Speyside and Walkers Shortbread. Moray also is the home of two major construction companies, Robertson Group and Springfield.

Moray Council comprises of 26 Members, employs over 4000 staff and has an annual budget for the period 2019/20 of £199m.

1.3 Responsibilities

The Building Standards service has responsibility to secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings. It also aims to further the conservation of fuel, energy and achieve sustainable development.



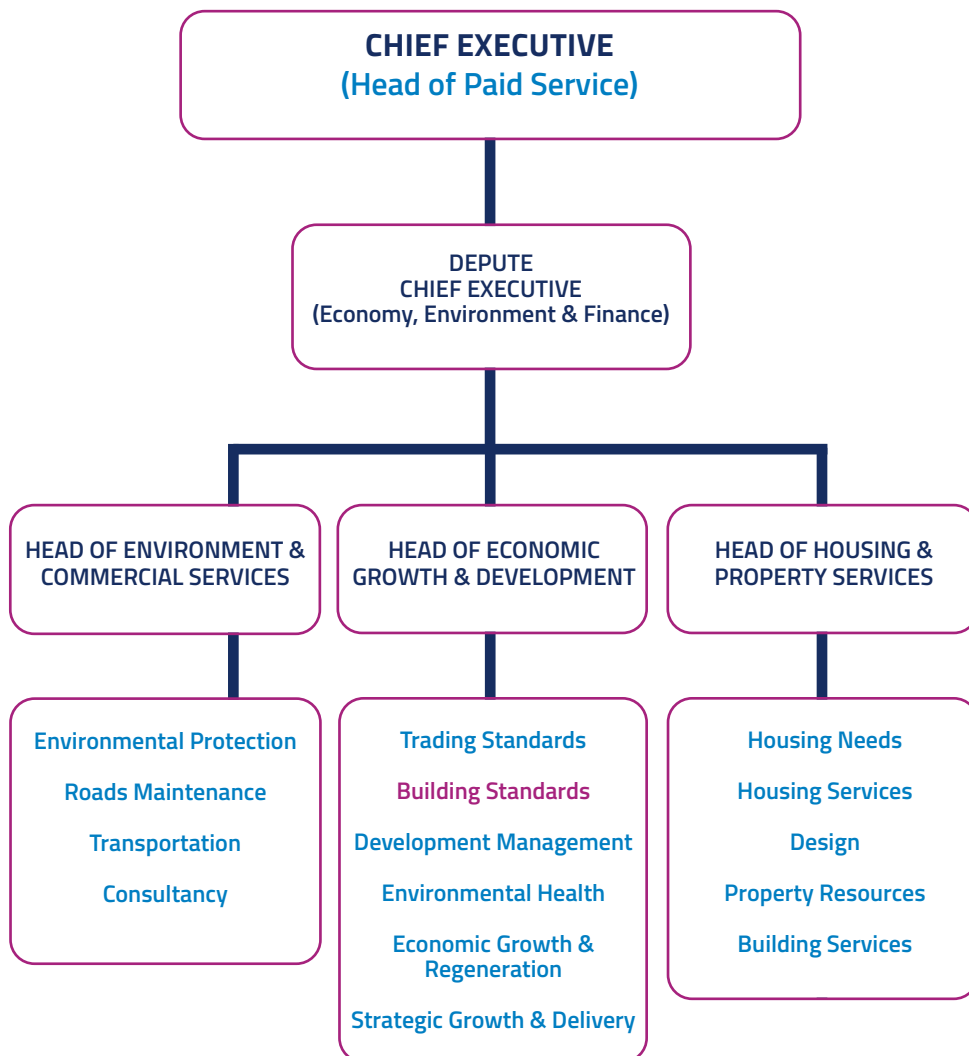
1.4 Moray Council – Organisational Structure

Moray Council’s Building Standard’s service is located within the Economic Growth & Development section of Economy, Environment & Finance.

- Trading Standards
- Building Standards
- Development Management
- Environmental Health
- Strategic Growth & Delivery
- Economic Growth & Regeneration

Economic Growth & Development consists of six service areas and is supported by administration and systems support teams.

The following organisational chart shows the reporting relationship within the Authority and where Building Standards is placed within it.



2.0 Building Standards Verification Service Information

2.1 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.

2.2 Location and Accessibility of Service

The Building Standards Service is delivered from the Moray Council Headquarters in Elgin. The office facilities promote a close working relationship between all services and in particular Development Management. The facilities provide an accessible facility for applicants and agents to visit.

The Council Offices are open to the public from 8.45am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday however, Building Standards Officers can be available between 7.00am and 7.00pm by appointment. In addition, a Duty Officer is available 2.00 - 4.00pm each day for general enquiries.

All forms and guidance documents are also available on our website which is kept up to date.

2.3 Services and Function

Building Standards has two distinct roles, verification and enforcement. Verification is principally achieved through the application of the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2004 when considering applications for Building Warrant and the submission of Completion Certificates.

The verification role includes:

- The verification of applications for Building Warrant.
- The verification of completed works on site - accepting or rejecting completion certificates.
- The verification of completion certificates with no building warrant.
- The verification of building operations during construction

Letter of Comfort Applications for works prior to May 2005 can also be applied for.

Enforcement Role

The service also deals with unauthorised works and dangerous and defective buildings under sections 25-30 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. These being:

- Unauthorised works
- Defective buildings
- Dangerous buildings
- Building regulation compliance
- Continuing requirement enforcement

The Building Standards team provides a dangerous building and structure call-out service 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

Over the 2018-19 period the service dealt with 47 dangerous building and enforcement cases.

Advisory Role

The service has an advisory role relating to:

- The Licensing (Scotland) Acts 1976 and 2005
- The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
- The Safety at Sports Ground Act 1976
- The Building (Scotland) Act 2003 – maintenance of the Building Standards Register.
- The Cinema Act 1985;
- The Theatres Act 1968;
- The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005;
- The Building (Scotland) Act 1959
- The Building (Scotland) Act 2003
Pre application discussions

Pre-application advice

We encourage and welcome requests for guidance in advance of submitting any building warrant applications. As mentioned in 2.2 above a duty officer is available each day for general enquiries in person or by telephone. Written enquiries are also encouraged and we have an eForm available for this purpose on our website.

In addition, we promote a more formal service for pre-submission advice for larger projects. This is a chargeable service at £124 per hour but offers substantial benefits for the applicant/agent. Agreement could be reached in the way forward in terms of the Technical Standards and also to determine what information may be required to process the warrant such as fire engineer reports, structural certification, site investigations etc. Information on the service is available on our website.

Statutory Service

The statutory services role covers:

The provision of a two part Building Standards Register:

Part 1 web based and to be maintained for all time;

Part 2 to be in any format and to be maintained for a minimum of 25 years or until the building is demolished; and

Energy Performance of Building (Scotland) Regulations 2008.

Non Statutory

The non-statutory services role covers:

- Provision of a Letter of Comfort scheme;
- Provision of copy documents;
- Provision of copy plans;
- Pre-application discussions.

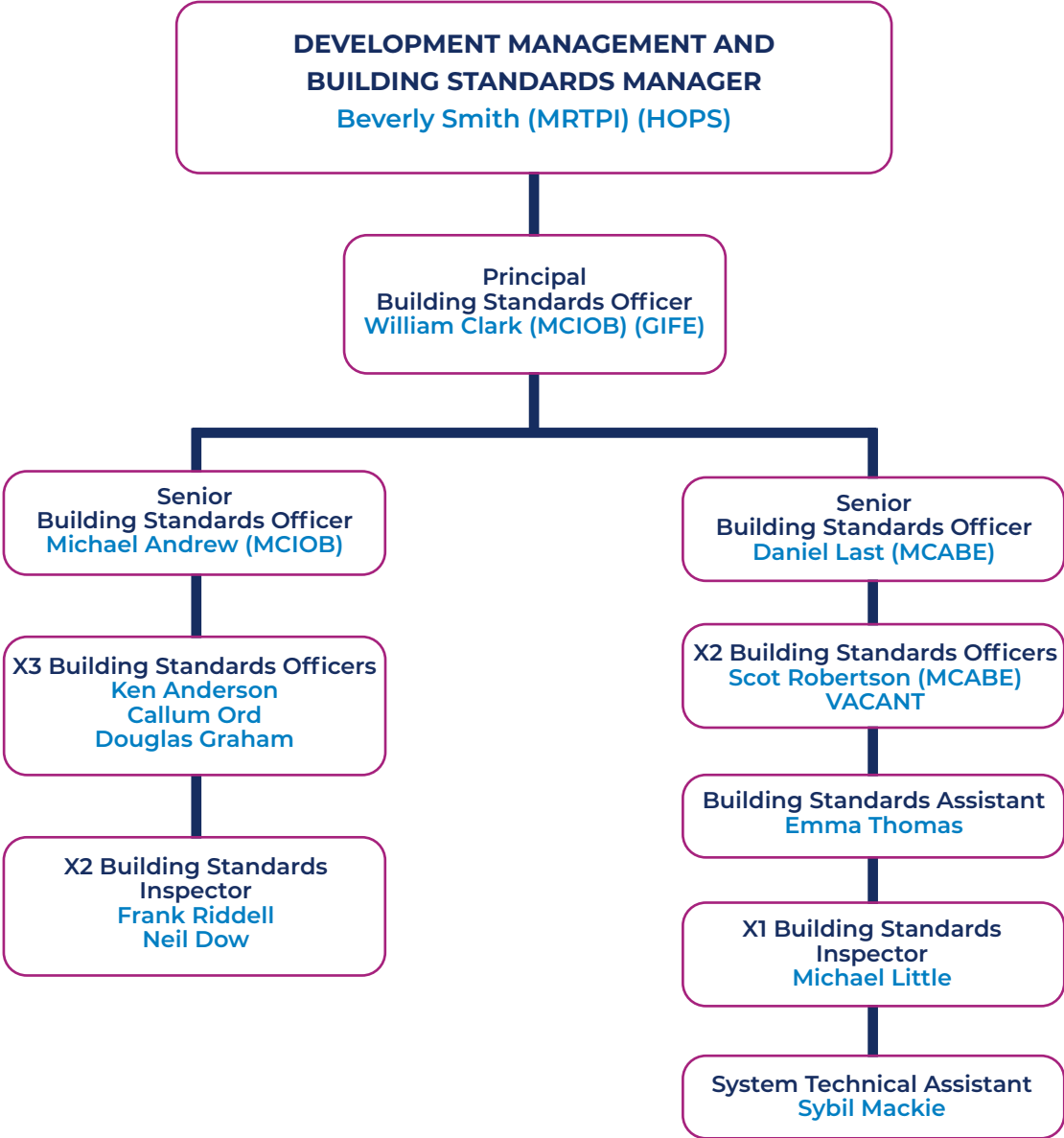


2.4 Staffing

Following a restructure and internal promotions the team structure has been revised to provide a two team arrangement. The structure for Building Standards is indicated below.

The service operates a career grade scheme which provides details of the qualifications and experience required for each stage.

This resourcing structure is the minimum required to provide the Building Standards Service in Moray.



The table below shows the staffing position on 01 July 2019.

	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3	TIER 4
Head of Building Standards Verification Service			X	

Note: Tier 1 = Chief Executive, Tier 2 = Directors, Tier 3 = Heads of Service, Tier 4 = Managers

		BUILDING STANDARDS VERIFICATION SERVICE	OTHERS
Principal Officers	No. posts Vacant	4 0	
Main grade posts (surveyors)	No. posts Vacant	3 1	
Main grade posts (inspectors)	No. posts Vacant	3 0	
Technician/Assistant	No. posts Vacant	2 0	
Office support/ clerical	No. posts Vacant	2 0	
TOTAL		14	

Note: Managers are those staff responsible for the operational management of a team/division. They are not necessarily line managers.

STAFF AGE PROFILE	HEADCOUNT
Under 30	2
30-39	2
40-49	2
50 and over	7

3.0 Strategic Objectives

3.1 Moray Council: Moray 10 Year Plan

Our Vision for Moray – Raising Aspirations through Expanded Choices, Improved Livelihoods and Wellbeing

The vision of the Moray 10 Year Plan is raising aspirations which we will do by creating an enabling environment where our residents can achieve expanded choices, improved livelihoods and wellbeing.

The plan identifies four main priority areas to guide this work and deliver the vision:

- 1) Growing, diverse and sustainable economy -** by the year 2030 Moray will be a destination of choice, the area being known and recognised as an outward facing and ambitious community with a thriving and well connected commercial base and as environment in which quality of life is valued and supported.
- 2) Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray –** Moray will be a place where children and young people thrive; a place where they have a voice, have opportunities to learn and can get around; a place where they have a home, feel secure, healthy and nurtured; and a place where they are able to reach their full potential.
- 3) Empowering and connecting communities -** Moray will be a thriving and well connected place, where more people live well in their communities, Confident, skilled and self-reliant communities where expectations and aspirations are raised and achieved.

- 4) Changing our relationship with alcohol -** People are healthier and experience fewer harms as a result of alcohol use.

For each of the 4 priorities a range of targets have been identified which aim to provide measurements of the outcomes we are seeking to achieve. The community planning partners will monitor performance against these targets and report on progress to the public.

Our activities to achieve these outcomes are supported within the corporate framework across human resources, financial management, procurement, risk management, health and safety, business continuity and performance management.

3.2 Departmental Priorities

The Development Services priority in the Corporate Plan is to achieve Sustainable Economic Development. The priorities to meet this outcome are:

- Promote Economic development and growth and maintain and promote Moray’s landscape and bio diversity/healthier children.
- Work towards a financially stable council that provides valued services to our communities.

3.3 Key Service Objectives

The Building Standards key strategic objectives for the coming year are: Ensure that the terms of the Verification Operating Framework are met and/or implemented.

Work to achieve the targets set out in the National Performance Framework ensuring no red markers.

Address the actions for improvement set out in the Appointment of Verifiers in order to achieve the full 6-year period of appointment. Implement key directives from an Improvement Framework session Review processes and procedures following restructure of service.

4.0 Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

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

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

There are also three cross-cutting themes, comprising:

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



Summary of Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

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

Summary of Key Performance Targets

KPO1 Targets	
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
KPO2 Targets	
	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2.
KPO3 Targets	
3.1	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).
3.2	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days.
KPO4 Targets	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
KPO5 Targets	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
KPO6 Targets	
6.1	Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.
6.2	75% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan checking ▪ Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued ▪ Verification during construction ▪ Completion certificates being accepted
KPO7 Targets	
7.1	Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).
7.2	Annual performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2016 – March 2017).

5.0 Performance Data

Moray Council requires to satisfy the requirements of the verification Operating Framework 2019 and the verification Performance Framework 2019.

This section includes a summary of performance against both frameworks and provides an accompanying narrative.

5.1 SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE AND TECHNICAL PROCESSES

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK KPO 1:

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

Requirements of the verifier:

- Maintain records of applications for building warrant and amendment to building warrant with breakdowns for reporting work categories and value of work categories.
- Maintain records of the time taken from receipt of a valid application to issue a 'first report'.
- Maintain records of the time taken from receipt of all satisfactory information to issue a building warrant or amendment to a building warrant.
- Maintain records of the overall time taken from receipt of a valid application to the time to issue a building warrant, or amendment to a building warrant.
- Seek to minimise the time taken to issue a building warrant whilst maintaining high standards of verification.
- Maintain records of applications for building warrants that utilised customer agreements.

In 2018-19 we...

Ensured all requirements to maintain records were achieved and these are demonstrated through the quarterly return.

Performance management systems

A suite of reports are run weekly and monthly to monitor performance and individual workloads. These are used to provide reports to the Planning and Development Committee and quarterly information to the Building Standards Division of Scottish Government.

We continued to develop the Enterprise Workflow Management system from Idox and this has proven to be an essential tool in the daily operations of the service including allocation of work.

The average time to determine a building warrant over the period was 68 days.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Review and develop processes to minimise the time taken to issue a first report and to issue a building warrant or amendment of warrant whilst maintaining high standards of verification. This was an area which was highlighted for attention following a verification service visit by the Building Standards Division in December 2018.

Develop a system and proforma for records of applications for building warrants that utilised customer agreements and promote their use.

Targets:

- 95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including building warrants and amendments issued without a first report).
- 90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrant and amendments issued without a first report).

In 2018-19 we.....

Provided 98.40% of first reports within 20 days and issued 94.34% of building warrants and amendment of warrants within 10 days.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Maintain performance targets and continue to develop the service. In March 2019 the Building Standards Manager and Development Management Manager posts were merged. The team looks forward to how the service can develop and continue to meet and exceed the performance targets whilst providing a service which develop alongside the Development Management service.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK KPO 2:

Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction process

Requirements of the verifier:

- Embed risk assessment methodologies into normal working practices for undertaking reasonable inquiry before accepting a completion certificate.
- Issue Construction Compliance Notification Plans (CCNP) with a building warrant issued.
- Maintain records of CCNPs for 'accepted' completion certificates with breakdown into reporting work categories and value of work categories.
- Maintain records of number of CCNPs that were fully achieved in terms of notification by the relevant person and inspection by the verifier.
- Maintain records of construction non-compliance locally and report trends and issues with a national impact to drive forward improvements in verification. Escalate national issues through Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (Local Authority Building Standards Scotland)) for further discussion.

In 2018-19 we...

- Provided a Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP) with all building warrants issued.
- We maintained records of CCNPs for 'accepted' completion certificates with breakdown into reporting work categories and value of work categories.
- We maintained records of number of CCNPs that were fully achieved in terms of notification by the relevant person and inspection by the verifier.
- We are aware of the route to escalate national issues through Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) for further discussion.

In 2019-20 we will.....

- Develop a strategy to seek increase in the number of CCNP's complied with the outcome of improving the performance relating to KPO2.
- Review the quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes.
- Introduce methods of collating compliance trends and review at team meetings.
- Develop our processes for maintaining records of construction non-compliance locally and report trends and issues with a national impact to drive forward improvements in verification.

Operating Framework 1.2 - Resourcing

Function:

Verifiers must have staff with appropriate building standards related qualifications and experience, and have contingencies for when resourcing is not available in-house.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must demonstrate that they have the appropriate staff and record their qualifications, experience and training.
- Staff qualifications, experience and training must be maintained through CPD records, which are maintained and available for inspection.
- Verifiers must demonstrate they have measures in place for resourcing staff when specialisms are not available in-house, for example for checking structural designs and fire engineered designs.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Continued to provide information relating to staffing, qualifications and experience.
- Continual Professional Development is recorded by the team and collated by the service. These records are maintained and available for inspection
- The Building Standards Service in Moray has agreements in place with external consultants for use when expertise is not available in-house. These are Structural Engineers and Fire Engineers. If on occasion there are reduced resources in-house due to long-term absences or a sudden increase in applications submitted etc. arrangements are in place with our Consortium group and beyond via LABSS to assist with the verification of warrant applications. Links are also in place with a recruitment agency should it be necessary to engage staff for a short-term contract.

Training and development/CPD

All staff take part in Employee Review and Development Programme (ERDP) on an annual basis. Training plans are being developed and various CPD events and staff training days are attended and provided throughout the year.

Benchmarking/shared services

Moray Council is actively involved in the Grampian Consortium alongside Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils. The Consortium meets three times a year and provides the opportunity to exchange information and develop joint initiatives to improve service delivery with Benchmarking being a standing item on our agenda. The group also aim to establish a consistent approach to interpretation of policies and technical guidance, share best practice and facilitate training. Moray Council and the Grampian Consortium Group are actively involved with national policy and working groups via LABSS.

Moray Council have also been instrumental in setting up a benchmarking group using the SOLACE group of Authorities. These include, East Ayrshire, East Lothian, Fife, North Ayrshire, Perth & Kinross, South Ayrshire and Stirling Councils. Information is collated on a quarterly basis and comparison charts produced. It is hoped to progress the group with a view to sharing best practice.

Succession planning

Moray Council has a corporate succession planning policy in place but in addition Building Standards supports the following:

- The service supports staff to progress through their career grade and encourages them to obtain professional qualifications.
- A Technical Group has been developed within the Grampian Consortium Group. Joint Agent seminars and staff training days are held with the consortium members as required.
- We participate in the Scottish Type Approval Scheme (STAS).

The Building Standards Service provides workforce data to the Building Standards Division. The data provided on 30 June 2019 is listed below:

WORKFORCE SUPPLY - LENGTH OF BS SERVICE (the current workforce)	CURRENT EMPLOYEES (as at 30 June 2019)
0-5	3
06-10	2
11-15	1
16-20	2
21-25	2
26-30	2
31-35	1
36-40	0
40+	0

WORKFORCE SUPPLY - QUALIFICATION (the current workforce) - see guidance note 11	CURRENT EMPLOYEES (as at 30 June 2019)
SCQF Level 7 – Higher National Certificate	2
SCQF Level 8 – Higher National Diploma	1
SCQF Level 9 – Ordinary Degree	1
SCQF Level 10 – Honours Degree	4
SCQF Level 11 – Masters Degree, Post Graduate Certificate	2

WORKFORCE SUPPLY - PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP (the current workforce)	CURRENT EMPLOYEES (as at 30 June 2019)
Member of the Association of Building Engineers (CABE)	2
Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)	2
Graduate of the Institute of Fire Engineers (iFire)	1
Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)	1

In 2019-20 we will.....

Develop our training strategy with the key focus against competencies for grade of post. We will continue to promote Continuing Professional Development opportunities. Development will be supported by the senior BSO posts.

Operating Framework 1.3 - Business management and operational resilience

Function:

Verifiers must have business planning in place and have embedded risk management and continuous improvement in their service. Verifiers must have provisions in place to minimise disruption to service operation as a result of unforeseen circumstances.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must demonstrate that they meet their appointment criteria, have business planning in place and have embedded risk management and continuous improvement in their service. Verifiers must demonstrate measures are in place:
- to fulfil their appointment criteria and meet the performance framework for the proportionate risk management of processes which enable identification, management and mitigation of risks that may prevent verification services, threaten sustainability of the business and the reputation of buildings standards compliance generally
- to ensure operational continuity in the face of events such as the loss of key staff, staff illness, fire and flood damage
- to protect data from unrecoverable loss, unauthorised access or theft
- to ensure that, in the case of ceasing to trade, core information and resources have been maintained in such a way that a successor organisation can be appointed to take over responsibility for ongoing operation of verification services
- Desk instructions must be provided for essential processes to support operational integrity should changes to staff or systems occur.
- Desk instructions must be regularly maintained and reflect current practices.

In 2018-19 we...

- Published our Annual Performance Return and it was identified operations would continue.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome following changes to the building standards service structure.

Operating Framework 2.1 - Risk management of applications for building warrants

Function:
Verifiers must have risk assessment protocols in place for dealing with applications for building warrants.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must demonstrate a risk-based approach to dealing with applications for building warrants.
- Verifiers must integrate 'local' project and process related risks to 'local authority' operational and strategic risks.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Had risk management protocols in place for dealing with building warrant applications.

In 2019-20 we will.....

We will review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome following the revision to our team structure.

Review complaints received and these will be fed back into the Improvement Plan.

Operating Framework 2.2 - Risk management of completion certificate submissions (including inspection regimes)

Function:
Verifiers must have risk assessment protocols in place for dealing with completion certificate submissions and determining inspection regimes.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must demonstrate a risk-based approach to determining and undertaking inspection regimes and dealing with completion certificate submissions.
- Verifiers must integrate 'local' project and process related risks to 'local authority' operational and strategic risks.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Had risk assessment protocols are in place for dealing with completion certificate submissions.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Carry out a full review of protocols as part of the current update of procedures relating to the new structure.

Operating Framework 2.3 - Quality assurance of building warrant and completion certificate decisions

Function:

Verifiers must have quality assurance procedures in place for building warrant decisions (granted/refused) and completion certificate submission decisions (accepted/rejected), and to undertake appropriate corrective action where the required standard is not met.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must ensure that a minimum sample (5%) of the total number of building warrant applications decided and completion certificate submissions decided are checked for accuracy.
- Verifiers must ensure that samples are checked regularly, and sampling considers risk profiles of applications and submissions and staff competencies.
- The sample should be based upon a random sample, augmented by any identified need for targeted audit as a result of complaints or requests from other organisations identified by the Scottish Government.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Ensured quality assurance of building warrant and completion certificate decisions were in place.

In 2019-20 we will.....

We will review the current processes to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.

We will review the training strategies we have in place with emphasis on the competencies required for the grade and level of supervision and sampling required for the individual post.

Operating Framework 2.4 - Adherence to legislative procedures, appeals and complaints

Function:

Verifiers must adhere to legislative procedures and deadlines, appeals processes and complaints processes.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must have processes and controls in place to meet legislative procedures and deadlines.
- Verifiers must demonstrate they have measures in place for managing decisions and non-compliance, and must record compliance with legislation and other processes. Details of key legislative procedures are set out in Annex B.
- Verifiers must pro-actively communicate with applicants at relevant times regarding key decisions and implications.
- These measures must be applied in a fair and open way, including that those carrying out the assessment of applications and complaints declare any conflict of interest.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Had a complaints procedure in place.
- Ensured we had no conflict of interest between operation as a verifier and any other activities – corporately and individual staff. All team members were requested to confirm this during this period.

In 2019-20 we will.....

We will review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.

Operating Framework 3.1 - Provision of information for business and performance management (including minimum requirements for review and record keeping)**Function:**

Verifier must maintain and review all procedures, documentations and systems to ensure they remain relevant to their role as a Verifier.

Prescription:

This must include local and national policies, technical and procedural guidance, and management information systems (casework and documents). Reviews must address changes:

- to meet amended requirements issued by Scottish Government
- arising from changes in national or local policy and
- where improvements are identified by internal review or examples of wider good practice
- Verifiers must advise staff and ensure they are adequately trained in changes to procedures, documents and software requirements, and changes should be clearly identified.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Ensured a review was carried out on an annual basis by the Building Standards Manager.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Following the restructure of the service we will review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.

QUALITY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

KPO 3: COMMIT TO THE BUILDING STANDARDS CUSTOMER CHARTER

Requirements of the verifier:

- Maintain their customer charter and incorporate national performance targets and national and local information into the template.
- Publish their customer charter prominently on the verifier website.
- Ensure the facility for online applications through the Scottish Government eBuilding standards system is detailed in the customer charter.
- Ensure the customer charter includes details of customer dispute resolution, complaints and performance procedures (e.g. Local Authority Building Standards Scotland Dispute Resolution Process, local authority complaints procedures, Scottish Government Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers).
- Review the National Customer Charter regularly (at least quarterly) maintaining localised information to ensure contact details and appropriate website links are kept up-to-date.
- Apply national building standards verification policies and interpretations.

What we did in 2018-19...

- The customer charter was provided and reviewed the Building Standards Manager quarterly. The facility for online applications through the Scottish Government eBuilding standards system is detailed in the customer charter and it includes details of customer dispute resolution, complaints and performance procedures.
- Ensured Policies were updated accordingly and information relayed at weekly and monthly team meetings

In 2019-20 we will.....

- We will ensure that the customer charter is updated in line with the above requirements and that the team are aware of the content.
- Ensured Policies were updated accordingly and information relayed at weekly and monthly team meeting following alerts to updated national building standards policies and interpretations.

Targets:

- National Customer Charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).
- 95% of Building Standards Division (BSD) requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days - Not Currently Operational

In 2018-19 we.....

Published the National Customer Charter prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews. This document was reviewed at least quarterly. [LINK](#)

In 2019-20 we will.....

Continue to review and update the customer charter

KPO 4: UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Requirements of the verifier:

- To assist the Scottish Government Building Standards Division to supply customer data for research purposes.
- Promote the Scottish Customer Survey and inform customers that they may be contacted for research purposes.
- Use findings from the Scottish Customer Survey for the purpose of customer segmentation.
- Use findings from the Scottish Customer Survey and local engagement to identify and make improvements to the customer experience.
- Incorporate actions to improve the customer experience into the continuous improvement plan and monitor progress.

In 2018 19 we.....

- Provided data to Scottish Government to assist in the research process. We provided the details of 774 customer email addresses. 596 of these were unique to Moray. The total Number of survey response attributed to Moray was 108. The response rate for Moray was 14% compared to the response rate for Scotland was 16.9%.
- Information relevant to the Building Standards service is available on our website. In addition, eNews bulletins are sent to agents with service updates and other important developments. This form of communication also provides a vehicle for the transfer of information back to the Building Standards team by promoting feedback on the service we provide.
- Provided a link to a questionnaire within all emails, paper correspondence and on our website.
- Internal communication strategies. Regular communications between staff are undertaken face to face and by e-mail and informal discussions are held on a daily basis.
- Our meeting structure consists of weekly workload briefings and technical meetings. More formal meetings are held quarterly and although the focus is on performance opportunities exist to cover other areas as required.

In 2019-20 we will.....

- Develop a communication strategy.
- Engage further with customers to inform them of the process in advance through newsletters and interactions with customers.
- Set up focus groups and hold seminars with our regular agents.
- Any improvements made to be advertised on our website.
- Use findings of the Scottish government to promote the industry. Analyse results and provide an action plan for areas to focus on.
- Use findings from the Scottish Customer Survey for the purpose of customer segmentation.
- Use findings from the Scottish Customer Survey and local engagement to identify and make improvements to the customer experience. We will consider all suggestions on service development within our resources.

Target:

- Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.

In 2018-19 we.....

- In 2018 we achieved an overall average customer satisfaction rating of 7.6. The national average was 7.0. In 2017 Moray's rating was 7.2 and in 2016 it was 6.6.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Continue to support the national customer survey and look to developing a robust communication strategy over this period with the aim to improve customer satisfaction with the service.

Operating Framework 1.5 - Conflict of interest**Function:**

Verifiers must operate to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between operation as a Verifier and any other activities they undertake (corporately and individual staff).

Prescription:

- Verifiers must assess and record such risks and record activities and measures put in place to demonstrate that any conflict of interest is resolved.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Ensured no conflict of interest between operation as a verifier and any other activities – corporately and individual staff. All team members requested to confirm this during this period.
- Ensured a complaints procedure was in place
- Held a register for declaring interests

In 2019-20 we will.....

We will review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.



Operating Framework 2.4 - Adherence to legislative procedures, appeals and complaints

Function:

Verifiers must adhere to legislative procedures and deadlines, appeals processes and complaints processes.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must have processes and controls in place to meet legislative procedures and deadlines.
- Verifiers must demonstrate they have measures in place for managing decisions and non-compliance, and must record compliance with legislation and other processes. Details of key legislative procedures are set out in Annex B.
- Verifiers must pro-actively communicate with applicants at relevant times regarding key decisions and implications.
- These measures must be applied in a fair and open way, including that those carrying out the assessment of applications and complaints declare any conflict of interest.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Had a complaints procedure in place.
- Ensured we had no conflict of interest between operation as a verifier and any other activities – corporately and individual staff. All team members were requested to confirm this during this period.

In 2019-20 we will.....

We will review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.



Operating Framework 3.2 - Provision of information for members of the public (including minimum requirements for review and record keeping)

Function:

Verifier must maintain their Building Standards Register and maintain and review verification related information for easy access by members of the public.

Prescription:

- Verifier must maintain Part I and Part II of the Building Standards Register (BSR) in accordance with legislative requirements.
- Verifier must provide appropriate guidance and advice to members of the public, which must be reviewed and updated as necessary. Published guidance and advice must be readily accessible to members of the public. This must include at least the following information:
- Part I of the BSR published on-line (data) and Part II of the BSD available at all reasonable hours (copy documents)
- National Customer Charter, Balanced Scorecard, Continuous Improvement Plan summary published on-line
- Appeals and complaints procedures
- General information about the building standards system
- Information on the performance of the Verifier

Verifier must ensure that the requirements of the Data Protection Act and other legislation relevant to the form and content of data stored are met.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Ensured the above information is available on the Moray Council website.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.

We will ensure that access to the LABSS dispute resolution process is provided on the Moray Council website.



OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY

KPO 5: MAINTAIN FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

Requirements of the verifier:

- Maintain records of the income received from building warrant and related statutory fees and the expenditure incurred (staff costs, non-staff costs and other verification-related investments) to run Building Standards verification services.
- Maintain records of the value of work for building warrant and amendment applications and completion certificate submissions where no building warrant granted.
- Have systems in place to identify time spent on verification activity, and thus enable direct staff costs required to run the verification system to be calculated.
- Undertake regular reviews of income and cost streams in order to inform and embed efficiency savings where possible.
- Adhere to the national approach to identifying costs.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Maintained records of the value of work, income received from building warrant and related statutory fees and the expenditure incurred (staff costs, non-staff costs and other verification-related investments) to run Building Standards verification services was carried out throughout the year through our financial management system. This was all in line with the national approach to identifying costs.
- Ensured timesheets were completed by the team and verification and non-verification data recorded.
- Held quarterly budget meetings between the Building Standards Manager and finance in order to review income and cost streams in order to inform and embed efficiency savings where possible.
- Provided monthly electronic budget monitoring statements are to the Building Standards Manager.
- Ensured the National Approach to identifying costs is embedded in our service.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Continue with the above approach and review to ensure the approach is fit for purpose and being reported and acted upon appropriately.

Target:

- Building Standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).

In 2018-19 we.....

- Narrative on costs over period to be provided with general discussion.
- Corporate Intranet based Financial Management systems are in place which can be accessed by the Building Standards Manager at any time.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Record and monitor finances on a monthly basis.

KPO 6: COMMIT TO EBUILDING STANDARDS

Requirements of the verifier:

- eBuilding Standards details are published prominently on the website.
- Maintain records of building warrant related applications and submissions through the eBuilding Standards portal.
- Maintain records of the extent of digital processing of verification activities i.e. the key activities from receipt of a building warrant application or amendment through to acceptance of a completion certificate.

In 2018 -19 we....

- Ensured ebuilding Standards details were published prominently on the website.
- We maintained records of building warrant related applications and submissions through the eBuilding Standards portal.
- We maintained records of the extent of digital processing of verification activities i.e. the key activities from receipt of a building warrant application or amendment through to acceptance of a completion certificate. Within Moray all applications are dealt with digitally.

IT systems

- Building Standards utilise the IDOX Uniform system. This system provides reporting and letter generation facilities. The Enterprise workflow package has recently been purchased. Development of the system and staff training is complete and the system went live in January 2018.
- IDOX Uniform also provides information to our public access system which is available from our website. This facilitates the Building Standards Register.
- We also use the IDOX Document Management System and all files and papers are now either produced/saved electronically or scanned on receipt. Since the introduction of the national eBuilding Standards system documents received via the web portal are saved directly into the back office systems. Over time this will considerably reduce the amount of storage space required for files as well providing an efficient mechanism to view files and documents.
- The Building Standards section also make use of Microsoft SharePoint.
- All telephone calls for Building Standards are received by our Contact Centre and the Lagan workflow system for the transfer of calls and recording of data is being used.
- Our IT systems are supported by Moray Councils ICT team and System Support personnel within Development Services.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Continue to follow the above and look for any areas through the process which can be improved and strengthened.

Targets:

- Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.
- 5% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically: plan checking; building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued; verification during construction; and completion certificates being accepted

In 2018-19 we...

- We received 82% of our applications online during this period.
- All correspondence within our service is dealt with electronically. Should paper be submitted to the service then it is scanned and saved to the document management system. All building warrant, amendment of warrant, verification during construction, completion certificates are dealt with digitally. Should the applicant request that they have correspondence in paper we will fulfil this request.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Continue to ensure details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.

Continue to promote the use of ebuilding standards and will work towards increasing the usage of the eBuilding Standards portal for customers submitting paper based applications.

Review technology and processes in use to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose and being utilised to best of ability to enhance eBuilding Standards delivery.

KPO 7: COMMIT TO OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Requirements of the verifier:

- Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).
- Annual performance report to include data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year). The report is to include adherence to the National Customer Charter (KPO3), appropriate actions to respond to customer feedback (KPO4), financial performance (KPO5); and commitment to digital services (KPO6)

In 2018-19 we...

- Published the Annual performance report prominently on The Moray Council website.
- The annual performance report includes:
 - Adherence to the National Customer Charter (KPO3)
 - Appropriate actions to respond to customer feedback (KPO4)
 - Financial performance (KPO5)
 - Commitment to digital services (KPO6)

In 2019-20 we will.....

Continue to review and update this document on a quarterly basis.

Submit the Annual Performance Report to Committee, a first for the service.

Targets:

- Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).
- Annual performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2016 - March 2017).

In 2018-19 we...

- Publish the Annual performance report prominently on The Moray Council website.

In 2019-20 we will.....

Ensure the report includes performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets - covering previous year April 2018 - March 2019. We will also update the document quarterly within the year April 2019 – March 2020 with the latest data.

Operating Framework 1.4 - Financial integrity

Function:

Verifiers must demonstrate that they have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure financial integrity and continued operation.

Prescription:

- Verifiers must submit performance returns and financial reports to the Scottish Government to demonstrate the ongoing viability of the appointment.
- Verifiers must provide evidence of compliance with corporate policies on anti-bribery and corruption.

In 2018-19 we.....

- Held quarterly budget meetings
- Ensured quarterly Performance Framework returns and reports of on-going viability were submitted.
- Compliance with corporate policies on anti-bribery corruption

In 2019-20 we will.....

We will maintain the above and review the current processes in place to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements of this outcome.



2018/19 Performance Figures

KPO	2018/19 Q1	2018/19 Q2	2018/19 Q3	2018/19 Q4
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).	96.90%	98.54%	98.66%	99.49%
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).	81.02%	97.37%	100%	99.14%
3.1 National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)
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.	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'
4.1 Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10	7.2	7.2	7.6	7.6
5.1 Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).	159.09%	95.30%	101.74%	94.17%
6.1 Details of eBuilding Standards are published prominently on the verifier's website.	Published prominently	Published prominently	Published prominently	Published prominently
6.2 75% of each key building warrant related processes being done electronically (Plan checking; BWs and amendments (and plans) issue; Verification during construction; CC acceptance)	4 of 4 done	4 of 4 done	4 of 4 done	4 of 4 done
7.1 Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)
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 2017).	Includes all performance data	Includes all performance data	Includes all performance data	Includes all performance data

2019/20 Performance Figures

KPO	2019/20 Q1	2019/20 Q2	2019/20 Q3	2019/20 Q4
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).	97.83%	98.65%		
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).	96.88%	98.99%		
3.1 National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)		
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.	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'		
4.1 Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10	7.6	7.6		
5.1 Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).	97.84%	118.38%		
6.1 Details of eBuilding Standards are published prominently on the verifier's website.	Published prominently	Published prominently		
6.2 75% of each key building warrant related processes being done electronically (Plan checking; BWs and amendments (and plans) issue; Verification during construction; CC acceptance)	4 of 4 done	4 of 4 done		
7.1 Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).	Published prominently (with review)	Published prominently (with review)		
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 2017).	Includes all performance data	Includes all performance data		

6.0 Service Improvements and Partnership Working

In the previous 12 months (2018/2019) we –

Number	Continuous improvement action	Timescale
1	Create record management process and database for training records	Complete
2	Review customer satisfaction methods	Complete
3	Create operation desktop manual for staff	Ongoing
4	Continue and improve benchmarking leading to service improvements	Quarterly
5	Work to achieve targets set out in National Performance Framework	Ongoing



In the next 12 months (2019/2020) we will –

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes			
Key actions	Relevant to KPO1-2 (from list):	Target completion date	Status
Seek to Minimise Time Taken to issue first report and to issue a building warrant	KPO1	Ongoing	
Develop a system to maintain records of customer agreements	KPO1	June 2020	
Develop a strategy to increase number of CCNP's complied with	KPO2	June 2020	
Review quality of compliance assessment during construction process	KPO2	June 2020	
Introduce methods of collating compliance trends and review at team meetings	KPO2	June 2020	
Develop our processes for maintaining records of construction of non-compliance locally and report trends and issues with a national impact.	KPO2	June 2020	
Develop Training Strategy with key emphasis on competency and post grades/experience	KPO2	June 2020	
All protocols to be reviewed to align with new structure and working practices	KPO1	June 2020	
All protocols to be reviewed to align with new structure and working practices	KPO2	June 2020	

QUALITY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Key actions	Relevant to KPO3-5 (from list):	Target completion date:	Status (from list):
Ensure Customer Charter is updated and reviewed	KPO3	Ongoing	
Explore service delivery with Development Management	KPO3	Ongoing	
Develop our communication strategy	KPO4	April 2020	
Engage further with customers to inform them through newsletters and social media	KPO4	November 2020	
Set up focus group and hold seminars with regular agents	KPO4	April 2020	
Consider and monitor finances on a monthly basis	KPO5	Ongoing	

OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY

Key actions	Relevant to KPO6-9 (from list):	Target completion date	Status (from list):
Promote further the use of ebuilding standards	KPO6	Ongoing	
Continue to review and update Charter, annual performance return, financial performance, commitment to digital services on a monthly basis	KPO7	Ongoing	

In the previous 12 months (2018/19) we worked with:

- **Grampian Consortium Group**

Moray Council's Building Standards Service works closely with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council in the Grampian Consortium Group. The aim of the group is to develop and maintain consistency in the delivery of the Building Standards Service across the three Councils

- **Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS)**

Moray Council attend General meetings of LABSS on a regular basis. We also have representation on the Management Board with the service currently being the Consortium Lead for Grampian. The Principal Officer was also the Administration Convenor for the organisation for a 3 year period.

- **SOLACE group of Authorities as a benchmarking group**

Moray has the key role in gathering and distributing the data to the group.

- **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

The service works well with SFRS to deliver a consultation service. We have also engaged on training over this period.

- **External Structural Engineers**

Building Standards use a consultant Engineer to check structural calculations which are outwith the scope of our own team.

- **External Fire Engineers**

Building Standards use a consultant Fire Engineer to check Fire Engineered solutions which are outwith the scope of our own team. This is in a partnering arrangement with Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Highland Councils.

- **Scottish Type Approval Scheme**

This service is provided by LABSS. Moray Council have delivered STAS services local for Springfield Properties.

- **Building Standards Division of Scottish Government**

The BSD is seen as a key partner to the building standards service.

In the next 12 months (2019/20) we will:

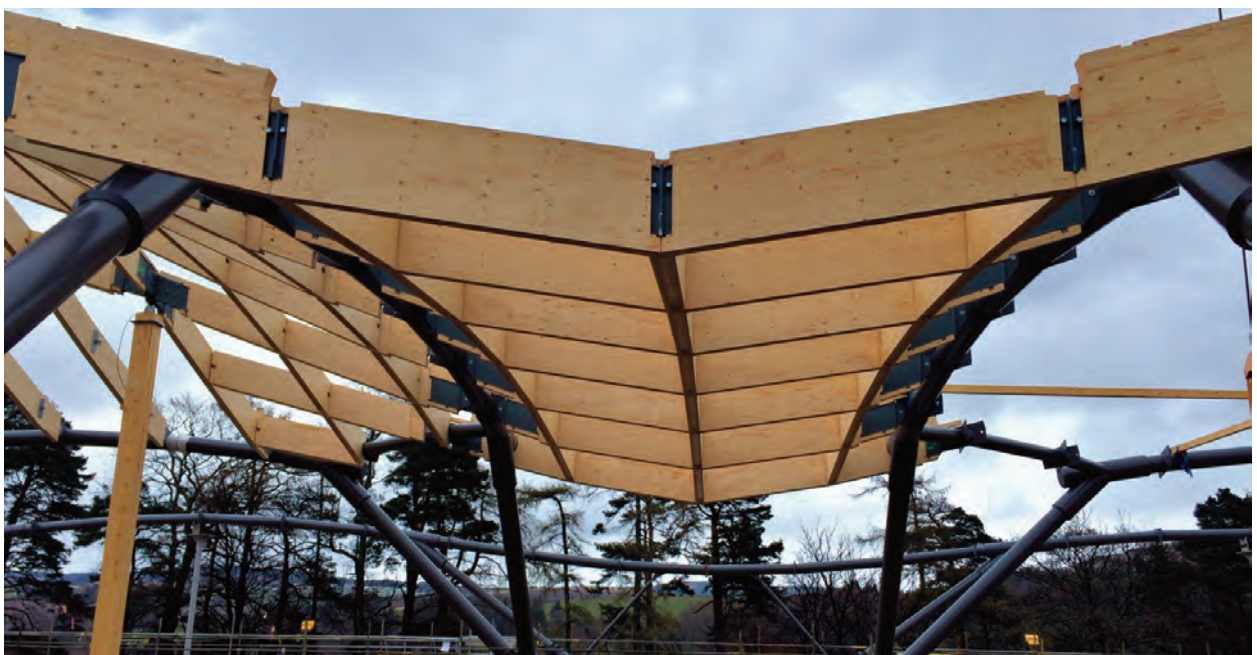
Continue to engage with the partners indicated above and strengthen where necessary. The service will also look to new partnerships where opportunity exists.

7.0 Building Standards – Additional Data

Verifiers provide returns to Scottish Government on their verification performance and workload. The performance data relates to the building standards verification performance framework and the workload data relates to the numbers of building warrant applications; completion certificates; fees; costs; certificates (certification, energy performance; sustainability); enforcement cases.

The information in the table relates to 2018/19.

Building warrants and amendments to building warrant	881 Applications 958 Decisions
Completion certificates	1055 Submissions 888 Decisions
Certification	437 Certificates of design submitted 73 Certificates of construction submitted
Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)	234 Copy certificates received (domestic) 0 Copy certificates received (non-domestic)
Statements of Sustainability	219 Copy certificates received (domestic) 2 Copy certificates received (non-domestic)
Enforcement	3 Notices served under sections 25 to 30 0 Cases referred to procurator fiscal 1 Cases where LA has undertaken work



8.0 LINKS

Performance Information

Building Standards performance information is issued quarterly and provides various response times which you may find useful.

- Performance Figures
- Customer Charter
- Annual Performance Report
- Customer Satisfaction

OTHER LINKS

Current Applications and Public Register
Dangerous Buildings and Structures
Building Standards Portal
Local Authority Building Standards Scotland
Scottish Government Building Standards Division
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Complaints Procedure
Scottish Type Approval Scheme (STAS)

9.0 FEEDBACK

We aim to continually improve our service. Should you wish to provide feedback on any aspect of this report then please contact:

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Principal Building Standards Officer

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