Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 12 December 2018

Planning and Building Standards Improvement Plan

Item number	8.1
Report number	
Executive	
Wards	**All**
Council Commitments	1,4,10-15,18,28

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the Planning Improvement Plan 2018 – 2021 for approval and to provide an update on progress on actions relating to the Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021.

Report

Planning and Building Standards Improvement Plans

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

1.1.1 Approves the Planning Improvement Plan 2018 – 2021; and

1.1.2 Notes the progress update on actions relating to the Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021.

2. Background

2.1 At its meeting on 30 May 2018, Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Place on Planning and Building Standards Service Improvement Action Plans for 2018/2019 and Review of Customer Service Charter. Action plans had been prepared for both Planning and Building Standards Improvement and the Customer Service Charter updated. That report provides a context for the changes being made in Planning and Building Standards.

2.2 In May 2018, Committee approved the Planning Service Improvement Action Plan and the changes to the Charter. It also noted the Building Standards Improvement Action Plan and that broader three year improvement plans would be prepared for both Planning and Building Standards.

2.3 At its meeting on 22 August 2018, Committee considered the three year improvement plan for Building Standards. This report seeks approval of the Planning Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021. It also provides a progress update on actions in the Building Standards Improvement Plan.

3. Main report

Planning

3.1 In preparing the Planning Improvement Plan, consideration has been given to the needs and views of customers of the Planning Service, Members of the Planning Committee and employees. It builds on previous improvement plans and the current Building Standards Improvement Plan and is set within the context of wider Council objectives and priorities.

3.2 The improvements are structured around four key themes (similar to those in the Building Standards Improvement Plan) – Leadership and Management; Customer;

Continuous Improvement and Performance. Theme 1 Leadership and Management focusses on supporting and developing our staff to improve performance and reduce work related stress; Theme 2 Customer seeks to identify and meet the needs of our customers; Theme 3 Continuous Improvement looks at potential changes to our processes and procedures and Theme 4 Performance focusses on how we measure the progress we are making.

3.3   The Plan sets an overarching vision for the service. Our aim is to be a great organisation to work for and with because we are making a better Edinburgh and providing excellent service. Each year, an action plan will be prepared and used to support the Planning Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021. It will set out the detailed tasks to be undertaken to deliver improvements to the Planning Service.

3.4   The Planning Service Improvement Action Plan 2018/2019, approved in May 2018, contained 17 actions under three headings – Resources, Processes and Engagement. Actions 1 - 3 in relation to staffing and recruitment have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. Work on actions 4 – 11 in relation to processes is ongoing and will be incorporated into the relevant theme under the new Planning Improvement Plan. Action 12 in relation to sharing information on staff changes and Action 14 in relation to the computer systems upgrade have been implemented. The Council has been working with Scottish Government on the national Digital Planning Strategy (Action 17). It is envisaged that work on the other three engagement related actions will be taken forward in the new Planning Improvement Plan under Theme 2 Customer.

3.5   Work has already started on implementing the identified actions. An improvement group has been established for each of the four themes, led by a Service Manager and involving Team Managers from across the Planning Service, to drive forward the changes needed to improve performance. This work will build on existing good practice, including the Council's recent success at the Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning. On 21 November 2018, the Convener collected two awards from Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, one for the Edinburgh Local Development Plan Action Programme and Financial Assessment (Plans category) and one for the Housing Land Audit And Delivery Programme (Process category).

3.6   In implementing the identified actions, consideration will be given to lessons learnt from the Building Standards Improvement project, good practice in other local authorities and the potential to bring in external advice and support to help deliver the required outcomes.

Building Standards

3.7   Progress has continued to be made on the implementation of the Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018-2021. An update was provided to the Scottish Government on 31 October 2018 (see Appendix 2). This sets out the progress made in Quarter 2, 2018/19 and highlights what is planned for Quarter 3. Activities are focussed around the improvement themes of Leadership and Management,

Performance, Continuous Improvement and Customer Improvements. Each of these themes has a plan and project leads in place to ensure delivery of the actions.

3.8   During the last quarter, performance has continued to improve. The percentage of first reports being issued within the 20 working day target was 72% while 62% of building warrants were granted within the 10 day target. Both these figures are the highest they have been over the previous 12 month period. It is encouraging to note that during Quarter 2, 97% of applications received since 1 July 2018 were progressed within the 20 working day target. In addition, the backlog of applications awaiting first reports for more than 20 working days was reduced from 320 to 50.

3.9   While progress on both the improvement plan and performance has been good, sustaining the changes and the improved performance is a significant challenge. The service is therefore taking practical steps to ensure that these changes are embedded. These steps include: developing the skills and capacity of the service's management team, involving staff across the service in designing the new ways of working and adjusting the staffing levels within the teams to ensure work is shared more evenly.

4.   Measures of success

4.1   A Planning and Building Standards Service which performs well when benchmarked against other Scottish Local Authorities and embeds a culture of continuous improvement.

5.   Financial impact

5.1   The costs associated with implementing the proposed improvements will be met from the Planning and Building Standards Service budget.

6.   Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1   There are no risks to the Council associated with this report.

7.   Equalities impact

7.1   The Planning and Building Standards Improvement Plans will benefit all customers of the Planning and Building Standards Service and improve the wellbeing of staff. However, they will not have a significant impact on equality, the economy or the environment and therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment has not been carried out.

8. Sustainability impact

8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes are as follows:

8.1.1 The proposals in this report will reduce carbon emissions because an efficient digital Planning and Building Standards service will reduce the need to travel and use paper;

8.1.2 The need to build resilience to climate change impacts is not relevant to the proposals in this report because they focus on improving performance and customer service; and

8.1.3 The proposals in this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because they will improve the well-being of staff, enhance the service for all customers and reduce the need to travel and use paper.

9. Consultation and engagement

9.1 The Planning and Building Standard Service seeks feedback from customers in a number of ways. This includes an annual Customer Forum, the most recent took place in June 2018.

10. Background reading/external references

10.1 Planning and Building Standards Service Improvement Action Plans for 2018/19 and Review of Customer Service Charter 30 May 2018

10.2 Planning and Building Standards Improvement Plans 22 August 2018

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11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 – Planning Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021

11.2 Appendix 2 – Building Standards Improvement Plan Update on Progress, October 2018.

Appendix 1 Planning Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021

Contents

1. Introduction

> **Vision**
> To be a great organisation to work for and with because we are making a better Edinburgh and providing excellent service.

This Planning Improvement Plan (PIP) sets out how we will achieve our vision for the service over the next three years.

It builds on previous improvement plans and the current Building Standards Improvement Plan and is set within the context of wider Council objectives and priorities. In preparing the PIP, consideration has been given to the needs and views of customers of the Planning Service, Members of the Planning Committee and employees.

City Growth
Edinburgh is a city of growth, both economically and demographically. Meeting the demand for new homes, commercial floorspace and infrastructure creates a busy and complex workload for the planning service. In addressing the challenges of growth, we also continue to value and protect the key heritage assets of the city and listen to the views of people who live, work and socialise in the city.

Measuring our Performance
There are a number of ways that we can measure how well we are performing as a Planning Authority. These include how quickly we determine applications, the quality of development on the ground, how well we are meeting our customers' expectations and whether our staff feel valued and supported.

We are not currently performing as well we want to and the purpose of this PIP is to highlight our commitment to improve our Planning Service. In taking a more strategic approach over a three year time period, we recognise that quick fixes are not the answer to the challenges we face.
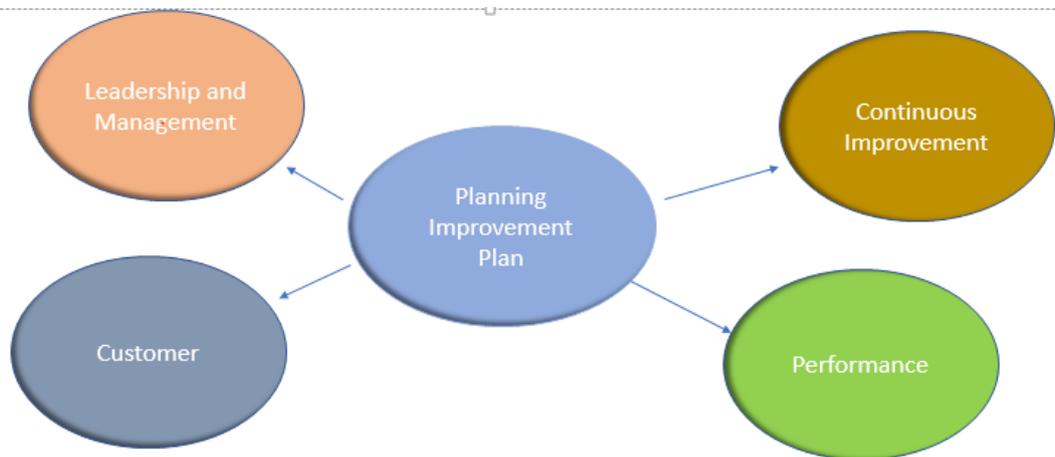
2   Strategy for Improvement

> **Vision**
>
> To be a great organisation to work for and with because we are making a better Edinburgh and providing excellent service.

Our strategy for improvement is based on four themes

- leadership and management;
- customer
- continuous improvement; and
- performance.

We aim to enhance our performance in relation to both quality and timescale, improve our relationship with customers and ensure that employees are fully engaged and motivated in driving forward the changes needed.

This section sets out our one and three year objectives within the context of the Council business plan and commitments. Each year, a more detailed action plan will be prepared to accompany the PIP which sets out the tasks, priorities and timescales being progressed.

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

The strategic aims of the left hand column in the table below are accompanied by 20 outcomes in on the right hand columns. The Planning Service will:

- assist economic growth;
- support the housing programme;

- help ensure our built and natural environment is protected and enhanced;
- ensure value for money while meeting the needs of our citizens; and,
- deliver excellent customer service.

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

Council Commitments

The improvement plan will support the following Council Commitments :

1 Deliver a programme to build at least 10,000 social and affordable homes over the next 5 years, with a plan to build 20,000 by 2027

4 Direct development to growth corridors as the best way to accommodate the extra housing needed for Edinburgh's growth and allowing the city to manage and protect green belt

10 Prioritise the use of brownfield sites and work with public sector and private landowners to develop and for affordable housing

11 Ensure that Council policies on planning, licensing and sale of Council land give substantial weight to the needs of residents while still encouraging business and tourism.

12 Review the Council's policy on promoting mixed communities. The review should be completed by summer of 2018 and should include homes of multiple occupancy, short term temporary lets and student housing

13 Improve planning enforcement to ensure that all developers, large or small, conform to Edinburgh's policies and developer's commitments

14 Work with the Scottish Government to review planning policy and overhaul the planning appeal system to make it shorter, more independent and give communities the right to appeal

15 Protect Edinburgh World Heritage Status and make sure developments maintain the vibrancy of our city in terms of placemaking, design and diversity of use

18   Improve Edinburgh's air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Explore the implementation of low emission zones

28   Create a first-class education estate – building 2 new secondary schools and 10 new primaries by 2021.

One and Three Year Strategic Objectives

We have divided our objectives into one and three year periods as follows:

Improvement Themes	Year 1	Years 2 and 3
Theme 1 Leadership And Management:	A successful planning service requires strong leadership and employees who are fully committed to working together to deliver improvements. Priority will be given to actions which promote a positive and inclusive culture: create an environment that encourages effective engagement, open communication, empowerment and high performance. In year 1, the focus will be on the following people related priorities • Recruitment and Resources Strategy • Performance Management • Staff Communications and Relations • Quality Assurance	All staff have the potential to develop leadership qualities. We will continue to empower and invest in our employees to ensure they are fully engaged and take a proactive role in the continuous improvement of the planning Service.

Improvement Themes	Year 1	Years 2 and 3
Theme 2 Customer	Feedback from customers indicates that we are not meeting their expectations in terms of how we communicate with them. We aim to bring forward improvements which enable us to communicate more effectively with customers but still allows us to meet timescale targets. The following aspects of customer service have been identified as priorities in year 1. • Communicating with Customers • Pre-application advice • Complaints Procedure • Planning input to Council projects • Working with External Partners.	The Planning Service has a wide range of customers with sometimes competing needs. We will continue to work with customer groups to explore different options for how we can improve the level of service we provide.
Theme 3 Continuous Improvement	We will review our processes and procedures in relation to the following areas and bring forward actions to improve performance in the following areas. • Development Management Sub Committee and Local Review Body • Delegated Decisions • Legal Agreements and Developer Contributions • Internal Consultations on Planning Applications • Business and ICT Support	We will continue to improve our Service by introducing gradual changes over time. This will help increase efficiency in processes and improve the quality of outcomes.
Theme 4 Performance	Delivering the actions identified under themes 1-3 will improve our performance. We will also review how we measure and monitor key indicators and agreed priorities to ensure we address all aspects of our performance. We want to improve the speed and efficiency of our service but also the quality of development resulting from our decisions. In year 1 we will focus on the following areas of performance: • Quality of Development/Place • Timescale indicators for planning applications and enforcement cases • Quality of Decisions	We will continue to review how we measure and improve our performance within the context of wider Council objectives and changes to planning legislation and national policy.

3   Improvement Approach

In order to improve our Service, we will work collaboratively with other Council services and our customers. We will review and evaluate our business processes for efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. But we may also ask others to make changes in the way they interact with us.

A project group has been set up for each of the four themes, led by a Service Manager and involving team managers from the Planning Service and officers from the Service Development and Appeals team. The project groups will be the driving force to deliver change but all Planning staff will be involved.

We will identify actions under each of the four themes, being clear from the outset what improvements the action is intended to achieve and how we will measure success. At regular intervals, we will review progress including seeking the views of our customers.

The actions set out in the Planning Improvement Action Plan approved by Committee on 30 May 2018 will be revisited and those still to be implemented will be progressed through this PIP and its associated action plan.

The delivery of the improvement plan will generally be progressed using existing staff resources. This includes some recently approved additional posts which have been created as a result of an increase in Council budget provision and an increase in planning application fees. Consideration will be given to the potential to bring in external advice and support to help deliver the required outcomes.

4   Measures of Success

This sets out the key measures of success against which we will assess our performance in relation to this improvement plan.

Scottish Government Planning Performance Markers
The Scottish Government assesses the Council's annual Planning Performance Framework against a set of performance markers. Red, amber and green ratings are given based on the evidence provided within the Planning Performance Framework.

City of Edinburgh Council Performance Framework
Following the approval of the Council Business Plan 2017-22, a revised internal performance framework was developed to monitor delivery of the Business Plan's five Strategic Aims. This sits alongside, and in addition, to the monitoring of Commitments, which was reported to the City of Edinburgh Council on 28 June 2018. There are a number of indictors directly related to the work of the Planning Service.

Improved Customer Satisfaction
We will continue to engage with our customers, including our annual Customer Forum and monitor complaints and compliments, as a measure of customer satisfaction. We will consider a range of methods to gather customer survey information.

Improve Employee Satisfaction
To address this, an employee satisfaction survey will be developed and conducted. The results will be used to track the progress of the employee satisfaction over time.

Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018-2021
Update on Progress – October 18

Version Control Information

Version	Date approved	Comments	Date for next review
V1.0	27 September 18	Draft document created	
V1.1		Draft issued for review	wk. 8 October
V1.2		Draft issued to Board	wk. 15 October
V1.2		Draft	Mid October 18 for end October submission.
V1.3	29 October 18	Draft	
V1.4	30 October 18	Draft	
V2.0	Final version	Submission to SG	Mid January 19 for end January submission.
V2.1	Committee Version	Risk key added	Mid January 19 for end January submission.

1 Introduction

This is the second quarterly report (2018-2019) on progress made on the Council's Building Standards Improvement Plan 2018-2021. It sets out progress on actions and outcomes, and provides a commentary on our Performance Framework data returns. It also includes our revised programme risk register.

The Building Standards Improvement Plan documents the objectives for this year (2018/19) and for the following two years to 2021. These objectives are structured around the Improvement Plan's core themes which are:

- Improve Leadership and Management

- Improve Strategic Planning and create a culture of Continuous Improvement

- Improve Performance

- Improve Customer Engagement

Following the appointment of the Programme Manager, on 1st August 2018, the Improvement Programme has been reviewed and refreshed and now sets out detailed action plans. Given their clear interrelationship, this has resulted in the continuous improvement and performance themes being combined. The following detailed action plans were presented to the Building Standard Improvement Board on 18th September 2018 for their consideration and were approved:

- People Plan;

- Performance and Continuous Improvement Plan; and,

- Customer Improvement Plan.

This report will be followed by updated quarterly reports on 31 January 2019 and 30 April 2019.

2 Sustainability and Quality Assurance

Sustainability of improvements

Early indications and evidence for this quarter, show that there has been an increase in the pace and rate of improvements, underpinned and supported by greater clarity on the detailed actions. However, it is acknowledged that adopted improvements, require to be rigorously tested and monitored over time to ensure they are robust, fit for purpose, sustainable and can be embedded across the service.

Improvements to communications and staff performance within the Building Standards team and its supporting services are critical to delivering a consistent and evolving service. In order to ensure that all staff are engaged on the journey and are signed up to the future development of the service, we are working in partnership with the Council's Organisational Development and Communication services to develop a series of staff workshops and training events.

The "Leadership and Management" development programme work, is underway for the Building Standards management team and will be critical in driving forward the Continuous Improvement and Change agenda. We further recognise the potential impact that rapid change can have on an organisation's morale and operating culture. As such support, engagement, involvement and training of staff across all levels of the service is critical in delivering sustainable and long lasting improvements.

Whilst acceptance and enthusiasm for improving the service and delivering change is being demonstrated by members of the team, it is accepted that the rate of buy-in across staff members is varied. Therefore this will require resources to train, mentor and motivate change. In delivering and driving forward the improvement programme, we must not lose sight of the need to ensure that all staff are empowered to provide value and contribute to the process by developing ideas and solutions. This approach will promote ownership of new ways of working, which in turn will encourage and strengthen the team ethos and deliver a more productive culture.

The Corporate support from Human Resources [HR] / Organisational Development [OD] and the Project Board has been invaluable in driving forward improvements. Prioritisation of resources, aligned to the service needs has been critical in removing blockages and delivering improvements. An example of this is the collective approach of the recent recruitment campaign.

Confidence in a sustainable, robust, resilient quality service that is forward looking and geared to meet customer needs and expectations requires to be supported by a suite of core elements. These are being designed to be inter-dependant and collectively drive forward a series of lasting improvements. The Improvement Plan embraces these key factors including, resources, structure, processes, procedures, customers, training and development, ICT and partnerships. Structural changes cannot alone deliver the required improvements and investment in the management of performance is crucial.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance within Building Standards is being designed to deliver an overarching framework to:

- ✓ facilitate identification of actions for continuous improvement;
- ✓ facilitate evaluation of progress with improvement plans;
- ✓ provide an approach to both internal reviews (either by members of the Building Standards service themselves or review by another service) and external Quality Assessment reviews which are not "tick box" exercises and which go beyond the minimum compliance requirements; and
- ✓ provide a customer focused service.

With support and guidance from the Councils Internal Audit team, a draft framework will be presented to the Building Standards Service Improvement Programme Board in December.

3   Challenges and opportunities

Recruitment

We have taken an innovative approach to our recruitment campaign through Social Media by utilising Twitter, Facebook, Google Ads, in addition to a micro website. This has allowed the recruitment campaign's reach to be as wide as possible. Despite this, it has proven difficult to recruit experience surveying staff, which indicates a limited pool of suitable candidates. This is an issue common to other local authorities in Scotland.

As a result, this continues to place significant challenges and pressures on service delivery and resources as we drive forward our Improvement Plans. As a direct result, a review of our delivery model and team structure is underway. This is likely to result in less experienced staff being brought into the service but with a clear plan to ensure their skills, knowledge and capabilities are developed rapidly. This will enable us to better align our resources, while taking account of emerging thinking in relation to compliance assurance. Additionally, it will provide greater resilience in addressing a sustainable delivery model for the future.

The recent investment and recruitment to three new posts of Apprentice Building Standards Surveyors, in partnership with Heriot Watt also presents an exciting longer-term opportunity to grow our future talent. However, the short-term challenges this presents means deploying experienced resources (staff and time) to train and develop these new team members. Whilst this is placing additional pressures on short-term performance, we are confident that the future benefits in nurturing and developing home grown Surveyors outweigh these pressures.

Performance

There has been significant progress in the last three months in driving down the backlog of applications awaiting first reports. This has reduced from 320 to 50 applications during quarter 2. (The backlog is defined as those applications which are over 20 working days and awaiting a report.)

The focus on driving down the backlog has not been to the detriment of performance on new applications: during the same period 97% of new applications (received since 1 July) were issued first reports within the 20 day target timescale. When taking account of both new and backlog applications, the overall figure for the quarter was 72%. This indicates that once the backlog is cleared, performance on first reports can be sustained at a high level. Therefore, it remains a priority to reduce the backlog further.

This improved performance has not been without its challenges: until the systems upgrade in November, ICT has continued to affect performance; the challenges around recruitment mean that employee resource is not at maximum level; and, new and less experienced staff have required training and mentoring which has been a draw on existing staff resource.

These challenges have been mitigated by improved management performance protocols. We have aligned resource to focus on known pressure points. These are being monitored daily to ensure we are addressing the areas of greatest need and better meeting customers' expectations. New communication methods have been introduced to increase staff awareness of goals and performance, including Visual Boards and a suite of Performance Reports that allow us to examine where progress is not being made and where pressure points may arise. It is anticipated that the embedding of a stronger management performance system and a

strong culture of performance awareness will take time. Development work being done with the management team has begun to address the strong need for new ways of thinking and a significant change to the culture of management and leadership within the service.

Looking ahead, the computer systems upgrade in early November will have a temporary impact on performance during and immediately after the installation downtime. This will be careful monitored during this period and in Quarter 3.

Creating a Customer Culture

Work has commenced to engage with our core customers to ensure that there is a clear understanding of customer needs and expectations. This is the first step towards becoming the customer focused service that we wish to be. It is recognised that the transformational change needed in our approach to customer, will take time to fully embed in all areas of the service. While there has been a major focus on performance and developing work-streams around continuous improvement and leadership and management in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, looking forward, there will be an increased emphasis on developing and implementing actions from the customer work-stream in the months ahead.

The service has begun the journey of becoming Customer Service Excellence accredited, and again this will take time. Actions from this journey will appear in future quarterly reports.

This quarterly report shows various actions being undertaken, including the first Stakeholder Panel. We will develop a full partnership approach in order that we can better understand and fulfil our customers' needs.

4 Progress on actions

Since the last quarter there has been an increase in the pace of improvements within Building Standards these include:

Leadership / Management	
Delivered last quarter	**Planned next quarter**
Leadership and Management Action Plan ✓ A clear set of actions to drive forward improvements have been developed and included in the Leadership and Management Plan. **Leadership/Management Skills** ✓ Dedicated appointment of Service Manager to Building Standards ✓ Building skills and capacity in the senior managers is a priority. The Service Manager and four Team Managers have commenced a series of work related initiatives designed to build confidence, enhance their skills, and tackle the challenges that come with delivering robust improvements. This work is supported by Building Standards Improvement team, Programme Manager and the Council's Organisational Development team. ✓ Project Leads and teams are now appointed to each improvement strand. The teams are made up from various grades at all levels within the Building Standards Service, Transactions Team, ICT, HR as well as the Building Standards Improvement Team. ✓ Weekly Management Teams taking place with structured agendas and action logs. ✓ 360° review with Service Manager and support from Building Standards Improvement Team. A series of improvement activities for have been identified as a result. **Attendance Management** ✓ Training has been provided to managers to help support them in ensuring that absence is managed. Managers are monitoring and managing absence cases on a weekly basis with	**Engaging all staff in the Improvement Plan** ✓ A series of workshops is planned early November to share and ensure full engagement with all staff in driving forward the improvement actions. **Networking** ✓ Visits to Fife Council and Perth and Kinross Council to examine the use of Enterprise Module for reporting and discuss their approach to customer engagement and Quality Assurance **Structure** ✓ A further review of the structure will take place in December as a means to ensuring the balance of staff numbers and skill sets are aligned appropriately to the teams. **Internal communication Strategy** ✓ Ensuring a structured approach to Team Briefings and programme of all staff meetings. **Procedures and Quality Assurance checks** ✓ In addition to their building standards duties, staff are taking forward additional tasks such as developing the procedures and the quality assurance around these. **Embedding new practices** ✓ Carrying out a first quality assurance assessment of the newly deployed procedures to check their effectiveness and to enable updates to them / learning to be developed as appropriate. **Staff Survey and Focus Groups** ✓ Analysis of the staff survey and a series of focus groups with staff to enable solutions to be developed in relation to the issues that are identified from the

support from HR and Occupational health. This is helping to ensure the available resources within the current structure are deployed appropriately. This approach is helping resolve long term absences where these arise.

Workforce Planning
- ✓ A review of the current structure took place with the realignment of resources in some areas. A further review of the structure will take place at end of December 2018.

- ✓ The appointment of a new Team Manager to the South East Area.

- ✓ Recruitment of 3 apprentices to the team. This is the first time Building Standards have taken on apprentices. Meeting with Heriot Watt University in diary to ensure a joint approach to development.

Staff Survey
- ✓ It is important to capture the current thinking of all the staff during this period of change/improvements. A staff survey will run for two weeks from 17 October until 31 October 2018. The findings from the survey will help set out further improvements.

survey.

Training and development
- ✓ Robust training and development programmes for all staff arebeing developed.

- ✓ Training packages will be developed for the Apprentice Building Standards Surveyors in conjunction with Heriot Watt University.

- ✓ Training for assistant building standards surveyors will be developed taking account of their individual requirements.

Performance and Continuous Improvement	
Delivered last quarter	**Planned next quarter**
Continuous Improvement Action Plan ✓ A clear set of actions to drive forward improvements have been developed and included in the Continuous Improvement Plan. **Backlog** ✓ Significant progress in clearing the backlog since last quarter whilst improving statistics for all new cases coming in. However, It is also recognised that progress is required to further reduce the backlog of revised plans. ✓ A review of the performance figures takes place on a daily basis. **Cleansing of Data** ✓ Daily reports are run from Uniform system to performance manage the daily workflow and allow exceptions to be identified. **Review of Programme Risk Register** ✓ A review of the Programme Risk Register now complete (see section 6 of this report). This will continue to be reviewed monthly. **Standard Report Templates** ✓ Standard report templates for applications of low risk, eg, Conservatories, Sun Rooms, Patio Doors and Domestic Garages, have been developed and are being used by staff. This is effective in helping develop more junior members of the team.	**Embed procedures across Building Standards** ✓ Include revised/ new procedures as part of scheduled staff briefings **Launch of Uniform IT upgrade** ✓ Ensure all staff are trained on the use of Uniform in the new upgrade. Schedule of training briefings **Standard Letter Templates** ✓ A review of the standard letter templates will be carried out. The first phase of revised letters will be prepared and this will ensure they are much more customer focused. **Review of flow of work for Building Standards Call Centre** ✓ Introduce a customer focussed triage service to ensure calls are dealt with efficiently and effectively. **Standardised messages for Voicemail** ✓ Introduce robust protocols for voicemail handling consistently across Building Standards. **Standard Report Templates** ✓ Additional standardised report templates will be created to include additional building types.

Customer Improvements	
Delivered last quarter	**Planned next quarter**
Customer Improvement Plan ✓ A clear set of actions to drive forward improvements have been developed and included in the Customer Improvement Plan. ✓ Early consideration of mapping our customer improvements against Customer Service Excellence criteria is underway. **Stakeholder Panel** ✓ First meeting of the stakeholder panel took place on 1 October, with a broad range of attendees across commercial and residential organisations. A partnership approach to working together going forward was agreed, with areas of activity to include a shared understanding of the issues and how these can be addressed by all parties. **Website** ✓ Customer Journey mapped. ✓ Web publishers identified and are being trained on putting Building Standards content onto website to ensure real time information/updates	**Website** ✓ The website will be restructured to reflect the needs of customers with a particular focus on ensuring it is helpful for those least familiar with the Building Standards processes. **Embedding a Customer Culture** ✓ Workshop will be held early December with all staff on the Customer Improvements and discussion on challenges of embedding an excellent customer experience throughout Building Standards **Complaints Analysis and handling** ✓ Work underway to ensure the information captured on customer complaints is accurate and more importantly dealt with in accordance with agreed Council protocols. This work will be a key activity over the next few months and use trends and analysis of complaints to drive improvements. **Building Standards News** ✓ As part of key communications with our customers, a model will be developed to provide news and updates to customers. **Stakeholder Panel** ✓ The next Stakeholder Panel meeting is planned for January 19. Feedback will be given on the progress made on the Panel's recommendations.

5 Performance Data Returns

The following table sets out the commentary on the quarterly data returns that the Council provides to the Scottish Government.

KPO1 Targets - Minimise time taken to issue a first report or issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant	
1.1	**Quarter of year 2018/19** **% of 1st reports and grants of warrant with no 1st report within 20 day target** 1 66% 2 72% 3 4 The Council is working towards achieving the target of 95%. Therefore, the figure of 72% requires to be improved upon. This figure does however include the backlog of applications that are more than 20 working days old and are awaiting first reports. During Q2, this backlog was reduced from 320 to 50 applications. At the same time, 97% of applications received since 1 July 18 and subsequently reported on during Q2 were progressed within the 20 working day target. To achieve this improved performance new ways of working were put in place from July 18. It was decided to roll out a plan reporting approach whereby applications are reported without the assessment necessarily being done by a surveyor within that application's area's team. As well as being more efficient it creates greater resilience as the progress of an individual application is much less dependent on a particular surveyor progressing it from beginning to end. This change accompanies a new approach to site inspection, whereby there is now a dedicated team of surveyors in place. This team is taking a risk based approach to assessment of compliance on site. Greater efficiency is achieved by this approach with less time spent on travelling from site to site as well as reduced disruption to plan assessment. The new approach to plan reporting and site inspection continue to be monitored closely to ensure that the benefits realised so far, continue to be achieved.
1.2	**Quarter of year 2018/19** **% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days** 1 58% 2 62% 3 4 The Council is working towards the target of 90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information. The 62% figure above is above that for each quarter of last year. A focus for this coming year is to improve performance. The service change outlined in 1.1 above will help ensure that performance (in relation to turn around times once satisfactory information is received) is improved.

	KPO3 Targets – Commit to the Building Standards Customer Charter
3.1	The National Customer Charter is displayed prominently on the website. This document was updated in May 2018 to ensure it reflects current targets.
3.2	All BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case area responded to by the Council within 5 days.

	KPO4 Targets - Understand and respond to the customer experience
4.1	The performance of the service has resulted in an overall satisfaction rating of 5.6 / 10. This was recorded via the annual national survey conducted by the Building Standards Division in Q3 2017/18. The 2018/19 national survey is currently underway.

It is a priority to improve customer satisfaction with the service. A range of measures are being developed to help ensure this. These include the development and implementation of a customer improvement plan. A Building Standards Stakeholder Panel has been established. This includes customers who represent the range of those using the service. After its initial meeting in October 2018, it will meet quarterly. It will provide constructive advice which will be used by the Council to help it improve its Building Standards service and will hold the Council to account on the delivery of its Building Standards improvements.

A review of the Council's Building Standards web-pages is underway.

The performance improvement outlined in 1.1 and 1.2 above are further help in improving customer satisfaction levels. |

	KPO5 Targets - Maintain financial governance

5.1		**Quarter 1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**
	Fee income	£973,462	£988,039		
	Expenditure	£544,599	£591,931		
	Staffing costs:	£501,031	£502,286		
	Non staff costs:	£33,126	£28,625		
	Other investment:	£53,508	£61,020		

Building standards verification fee income is to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%). The figures for expenditure plus 30% are currently below the income level. This is due to income having exceeded projected levels for the first two quarters. This is being monitored closely.

While overall, staff costs plus 30% are below the annual income, other non-staff costs includes sums for shared services whereby plans are assessed by partner local authorities. Expenditure on other investment will rise later this year due to the implementation of the new computer system.

KPO6 Targets - Commit to eBuilding Standards	
6.1	Full details of the Building Standards Service in Edinburgh is available on the Council website at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards This includes a link to the e.Building Standards website.
6.2	Plan checking of both building warrants and amendments are in excess of the 75% target and over 82% were processed electronically during quarter 2 of 2018/19. A comprehensive update of the case management and document management systems is underway and will be delivered for December 2018. This is a major investment involving the upgrade of associated software and hardware. Mobile technology is being piloted for on-site work including inspections with Microsoft Surface computers being trialled. Completion certificates are submitted online and processed electronically in many cases.
KPO7 Targets - Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report	
7.1	The annual verification performance report for 2018-19 is on the Council website at: http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20212/property_planning_and_housing/587/building_standards_customer_service_charter
7.2	The annual verification performance report for 2019/19 includes performance data.

6   Building Standards Board Risk Register

The following table sets out the commentary the revised programme risks which are monitored on a monthly basis:

Key		
I	Impact – scored between 1 and 5	Note Inherent and current risks are the result of multiplying the Impact by the likelihood and therefore the values can range between 1 and 25 with 1 being the lowest level or risk and 25 being the highest
L	Likelihood – scored between 1 and 5	
	High level of risk – (overall score between 15 and 25)	
	Medium level of risk – (overall score between 8 and 12)	
	Low Level of risk – (overall score between 1 and 6)	

Ref	Category	Key Risks	Risk Owner	I	L	Inherent Risk	Key Controls in place	I	L	Current Risk	Approach to Risk	Further Actions	Action Owner	Due Date
1	Compliance	**Risk of verification not being awarded** Risk of losing appointment as local authority verifier of building warrant applications for this Council's geographic area (Scottish Government Decision)– resulting in the closure of the service, possible redundancies, disruption to construction programmes, reputational damage. Financial loss of income to the Council	MT	5	5	25	• Robust Improvement Programme in place • Robust monitoring in place • Monthly reporting to Building Standards Board Meetings • Update to Change Board • Fortnightly meetings with Scottish Government Senior Staff • Argyll and Bute supporting service (shared services) • Current Use of overtime/agency staff • Process Improvements ("Virtual plan reporting team) • KPI's monitored on a regular basis • Work allocation monitored on a weekly basis • Improvement Team appointed	5	4	20	Treat	Respond to IA recommendations	DG	End March 2019
												Focusing on Leadership skills and capacity to deliver and sustain improvements	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring
												Ensuring current structure fit for purpose	DG	Review in December 2018
												Improvement Programme Delivery	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring
												Review of the use of overtime / agency staff	DG	Review in December 2018
6	Sustainability	**Risk that improvements are not sustained** Risk that improvements are not sustained following the withdrawal of Scottish Government PM / Support resulting in a negative impact if	MT	4	5	20	• Improvement Programme • Monitoring in place • Transfer programme project management skills	4	4	16	Treat	Quality assurance framework finalised	DG	December 2018
												Self-assessment model needs to be built into QA – consideration of timeline for sampling consistency/benchmark for improvements	DG	March 2019

No	Category	Risk	Owner	L	I	Score	Controls	L	I	Score	Response	Action	Owner	Timeline
		standards begin to deteriorate. This would have a negative impact on service delivery and subsequently risking the Council's verification / reputational / loss of income.										More effective engagement with Scottish Government BSD	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring
												(Attendance at Consortia and LABSS)	RG	quarterly
2	Infrastructure	**Software not implemented on time** Risk of new case and document management systems not being implemented (uniform) in a timely way to meet objectives resulting in negative impact on service delivery and staff morale. Issue with Database connections not working has been raised by eDevelopment Board.	CGI / ICT	5	4	20	• Commitment to make major investment in upgrade • Project board established which involves service, ICT and CGI representatives • Post campaign • UAT underway for uniform upgrade • Training developed for staff • Agreed timeline for implementation • Decision on addition eDevelopment Board meeting to be taken on 9 August 18	4	3	12	Treat	Networking other LA's use of system	Team Managers	30 December
												Training for all staff being scheduled	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring
												Manuals/Procedures being designed	Team Managers	Ongoing as part of QA
5	Service Delivery	**Loss of essential ICT** Risk of losing essential IT staff due to lack of succession planning resulting in negative impact to service delivery / morale / reputation	DG	4	4	16	• Regular monitoring of system issues (where staff make errors) • Management information used to drive training needs	4	3	12	Treat	N Harvey looking at up- skilling other members of ICT team to create succession planning.	DG	30 December
												Procedures being developed to reflect the new processes arising from the ne computer system. Clear processes will help reduce the demand on ICT support.	DG	31 January 19
7	Service Delivery	**Embedding culture within a timeline that meets objectives** Risk that that the length of time it may take to embed culture change does not happen quickly enough to create the changes required to meet objectives which would impact the Council's ability to ensure accreditation is sustained resulting in financial/reputational	MT	4	4	16	• Regular management team meetings • Monthly board meetings • Fortnightly meetings with Head of Service (Michael Thain)	4	3	12	Treat	Development work (leadership team)	DG	June 2019
												Workforce structure sustainability (building the profile)	DG	Next review December 2018
												Creating a clearer understanding of how we support and work with customer/internal/external (stakeholders) apply cause and effect	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring under Customer Improvement Plan

#	Category	Risk					Controls					Action	Owner	Timescale
		damage to the Council.										Customer service training	DG	January 2019
												Map towards Customer Service Excellence (this could take 18 months to 2 years)	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring within
												Continual development of team building	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring under the leadership and
												Training development (grades 6-7)	Team Managers	Ongoing with monthly monitoring under the leadership and management
3	Service Delivery	**Staff health and wellbeing (stress)** High levels of stress within the team's due to lack of employee resources workload leading to employee absenteeism/ adverse effect on productivity/ service delivery	DG	5	3	15	• 1 to 1s • Health and Safety policy (Council wide) (application of policy) • Regular conversations • Regular "Team Talks" • Redeploying resources • One to one support for team members • Temporary agency employees • Employee assistance programme • Stress risk assessment	4	3	12	Treat	Leadership Development workgroups (ongoing)	DG	Ongoing with monthly monitoring under the leadership and management Plan
												OD Support (ongoing)	DG/OD	Ongoing with monthly monitoring under the leadership and management Plan
												Regular team briefings (Structured agenda's)	DG	Now in place and monitored monthly
4	Service Delivery	**Workforce supply** Risk that due to ageing workforce, and difficulties in gaining new recruits due to workforce supply results in service not having correct staff ratios to provide efficient / effective service	DG	4	4	16	• Rolling recruitment campaign • Additional employees being brought in are being developed with training sessions and 'on the job' raining • Knowledge on existing employees is being passed on via in work training • Social media advertising • 3x Heriot Watt Graduate apprentices	3	3	9	Treat	Recruiting	DG	Ongoing with review monthly management team
												Considering structure – regular basis	MT/DG	Review December 2018

| | | | | | | | | | L & D plans for each grades | DG/OD | March 2019 |
| | | | | | | | | | Workforce profile to be looked at | MT/DG | Review December 2018 |

Building Standards Risk Heat Map at 24 October 18

1	Risk of verification not being awarded
2	Software not implemented on time
3	Staff health and wellbeing (stress)
4	Workforce supply
5	Loss of essential ICT
6	Risk that improvements are not sustained
7	Embedding culture within a timeline that meets objectives

Impact

Likelihood

● 1 Residual risk   ○ 1 Inherent risk