

**Building Standards Verification
Annual Performance Report
2019-2020**



Contents

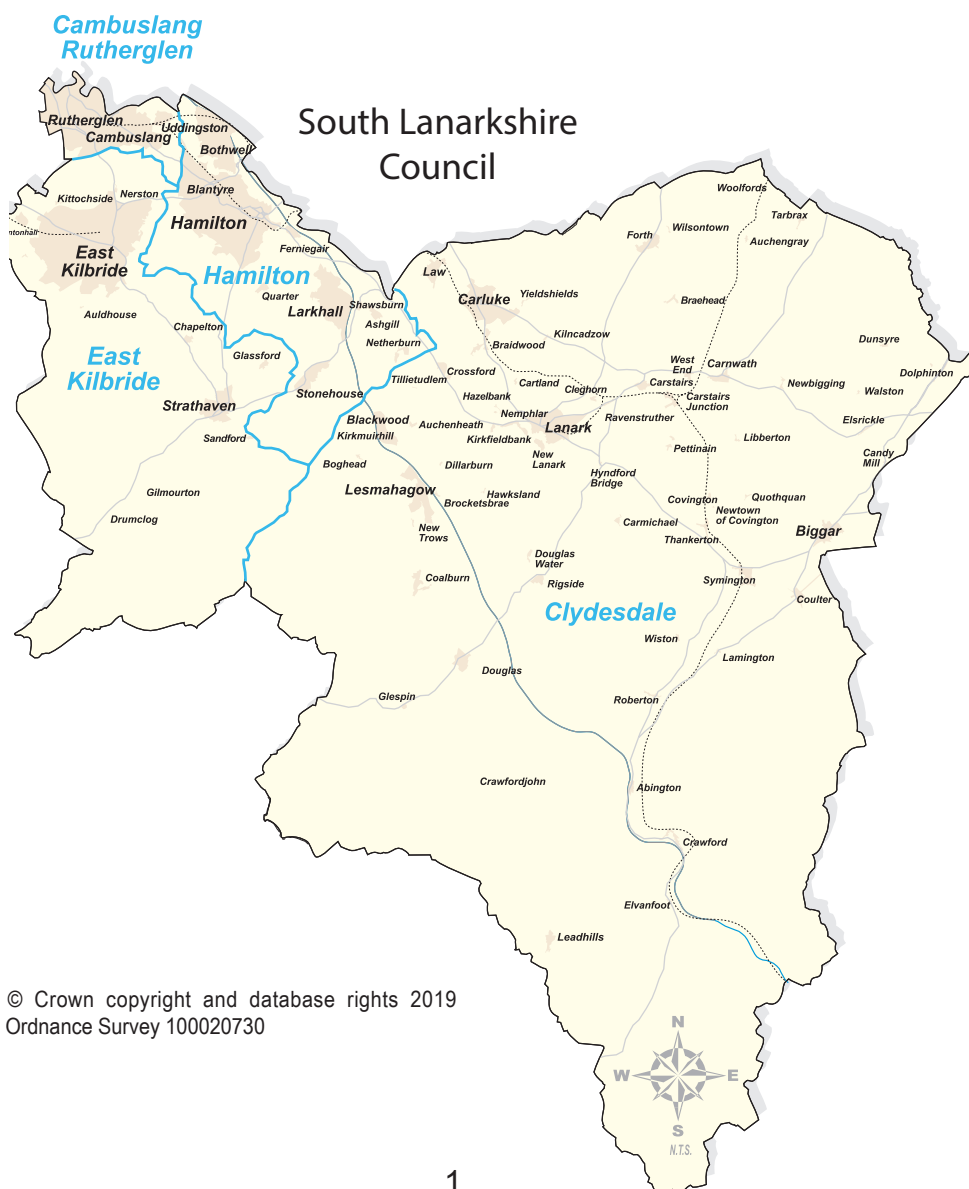
	Page
1. Introduction to South Lanarkshire Council as verifier	1
2. Building Standards Verification Service Information	3
3. Strategic Objectives	6
4. Key Performance Outcomes and Targets	7
5. Performance Data	9
6. Service Improvement and Partnership Working	14
7. Building Standards – Additional Data	18



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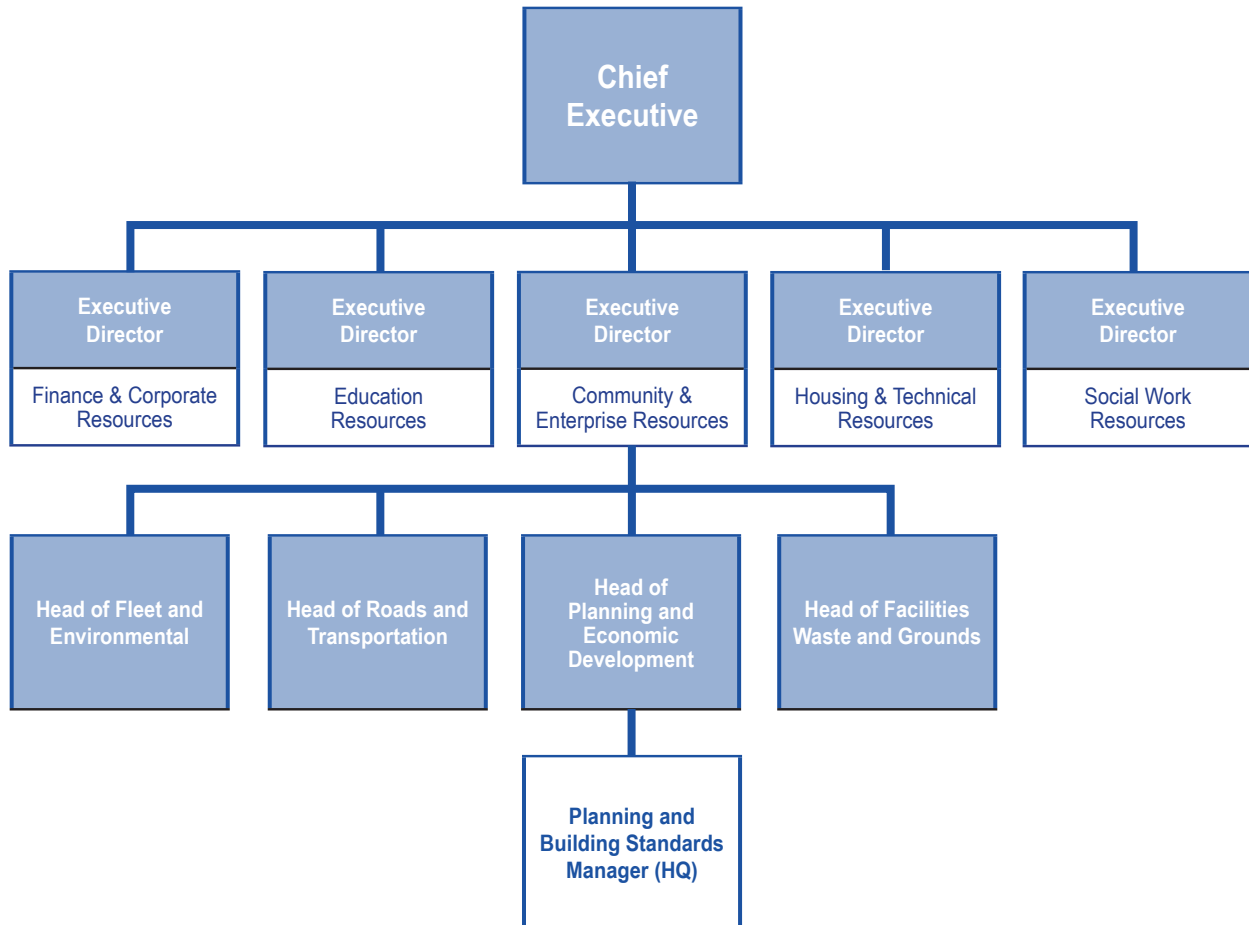
1.0 Introduction to South Lanarkshire Council as verifier

- 1.1 The verification performance report is a strategic planning and management tool that provides information about the local authority building standards service, communicates the vision and strategy, and sets out performance against strategic goals and targets.
- 1.2 Building standards verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the performance report to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business, and should focus on the performance framework's core perspectives and cross-cutting themes.
- 1.3 South Lanarkshire is home to more than 316,000 people and is one of the largest and most diverse areas of Scotland. The Council covers 180,000 hectares of land stretching from close to the centre of Glasgow to near the Scottish Borders. The area has a mix of urban, rural and former mining environments – almost 80% is classed as agricultural but 70% of the population live in the major settlements in the north.
- 1.4 There are four towns in South Lanarkshire with a population of more than 20,000 (East Kilbride, Hamilton, Rutherglen and Cambuslang) and a further 23 towns and settlements with a population of more than 1,000.



- 1.5 South Lanarkshire's Building Standards Service is part of Community and Enterprise Resources. The Resource comprises four service areas – Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services; Roads and Transportation Services; Fleet and Environmental Services and Planning and Economic Development Services. Building Standards is part of the Planning and Economic Development Service.
- 1.6 The Resource is supported by a Performance and Development Team and Support Team. The Resource employs over 3,000 people who together provide a wide range of services for local communities.

High Level Organisational Structure



2.0 Building Standards Verification Service Information

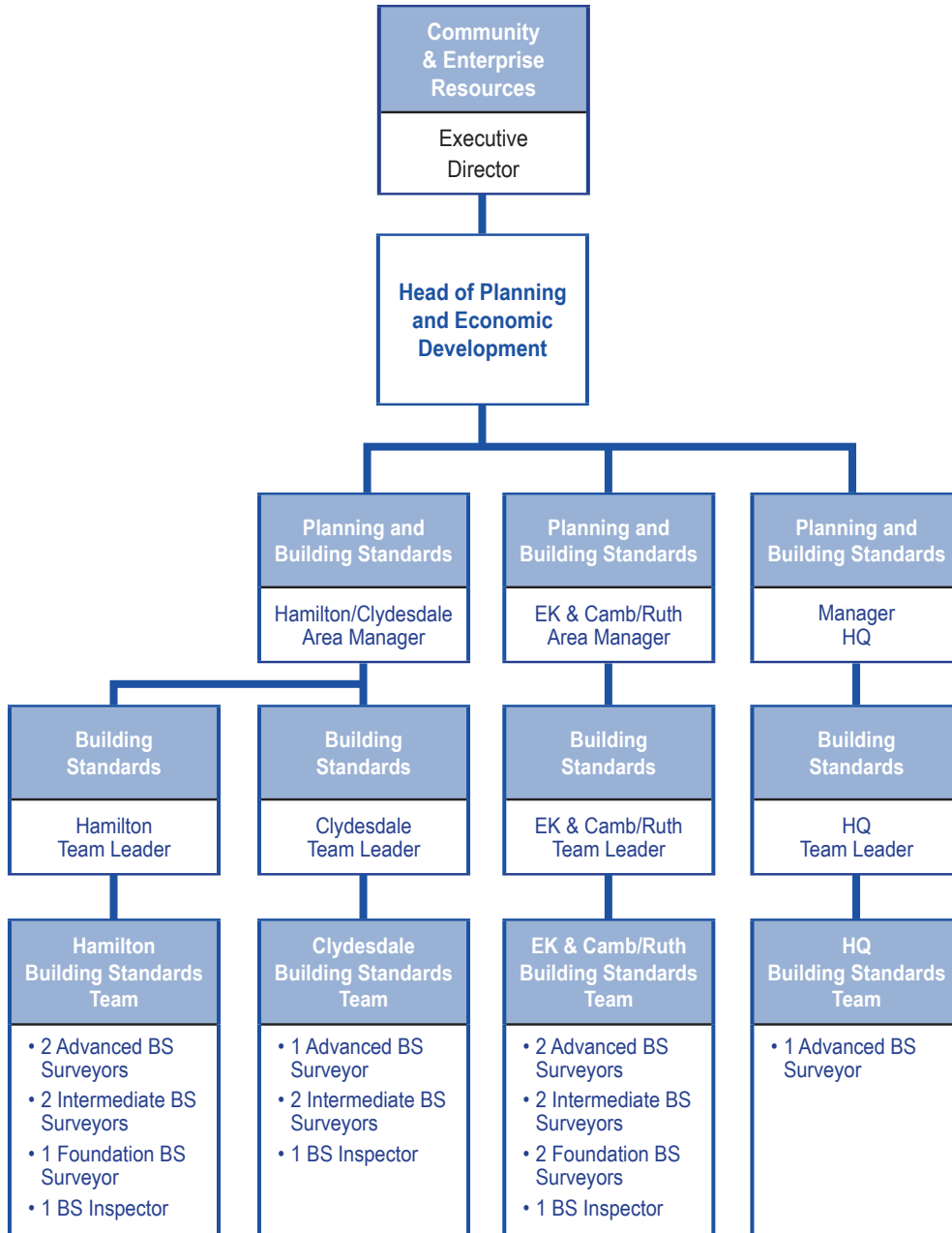
- 2.1. The Council's Building Standards Service work is undertaken by four teams comprising a Headquarters team and three Area Office teams. The total number of staff is 21.8 full time officers.
- 2.2 All four teams are located in the Community and Enterprise Resources HQ building in Hamilton. Each team is managed by a Planning and Building Standards Area Manager and each Building Standards Team is led operationally by a Building Standards Team Leader. The HQ Team deals with the strategic aspects of service delivery including setting policy, publishing guidance and monitoring performance. It also liaises with the Scottish Government, other Councils and stakeholders as required.
- 2.3 The three area teams handle all the building warrant applications submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Building (Scotland) Acts, regulations and other associated legislation. The area teams are also responsible for other functions in addition to that of verifier including enforcement of matters in respect of dangerous buildings and unauthorised works, provisions relating to Energy Performance Certificates, licensing, houses in multiple occupation, safety at sports grounds, letters of comfort and document searches as part of the house conveyancing process. The Planning and Building Standards service is supported by a joint administration team.
- 2.4 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 the 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.

- 2.5 In his letter of 30th March 2017, the Minister for Local Government and Housing, Kevin Stewart MSP, appointed South Lanarkshire Council as verifier for a period of six years. This appointment for the maximum period of time recognised the strong performance of the Council's Building Standards service.
- 2.6 This reporting period means that the impacts of Coronavirus (COVID-19) did not significantly affect performance for 2019-20. The impact of COVID-19 will be fully covered in the Annual Performance Report for 2020-2021.

Planning and Economic Development Structure



Annual Performance Report 2019-2020

2.6 The information provide below gives a snapshot of the staffing position on 31 March 2020.

	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

Tier posts	Managers		Main grade posts (Surveyors)		Technician posts		Office support (shared with planning)		Totals
	No. of posts	Vacant	No. of posts	Vacant	No. of posts	Vacant	No. of posts	Vacant	
Building Standards Verification Service	4	0	14.8	0	3	0	6*	0	27.8

Note: for the purposes of the above table, 'managers' are listed as the four area office Building Standards Team Leaders. Each area team is managed by a Planning and Building Standards Manager.

* Shared with Planning.

Note: a case will be made later in 2020 to make the current temporary inspector post full time from April 2021.

Staff Age Profile	Number
Under 30	3
30-39	3.8
40-49	9
50 and Over	6
Total	21.8

Note: age profile information does not include support/clerical officers.

3.0 Strategic Objectives

3.1 The Council’s vision to ‘improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire’ remains at the heart of the Council Plan ‘Connect’. The vision and values of the Plan link to the key objectives of each Resource.

Community and Enterprise Resources is responsible for a wide range of services that enhance our quality of life within the Council area. The Planning and Economic Development Service directly contribute to the work of the Resource through a number of objectives, key of which is to provide Planning and Building Standards services which guide and control physical development and land use in the area.

3.2 Specific actions for the Building Standards service are included within the Planning and Economic Development Service Action Plan 2020-21 (draft). These actions are noted in the table below along with associated measure and timescales.

<p>Resource objective: Physical development and land use in the area is enabled, guided and controlled to help facilitate economic growth.</p>	
<p>Action - Promote continued growth and regeneration through sustainable economic and social development within a low carbon economy, and guide decision making on the location of new development and regeneration.</p>	<p>Measure/Timescale - Review and update guidance for building standards surveyors in relation to climate change mitigation in new buildings and the adaptation of existing buildings, and develop service specific actions.</p>
<p>Action - Provide effective and efficient Planning and Building Standards service.</p>	<p>Measure/Timescale</p> <p>Percentage of Building Warrant applications receiving initial assessment within 20 working days (Target 95%).</p> <p>Number of Certificate of Completion submissions responded to within 3 working days (Target 80%).</p> <p>Retain Customer Service Excellence awards for both the Planning service and Building Standards service.</p> <p>Review and update local surveys and other forms of customer engagement carried out to measure customer satisfaction with both the Planning and Building Standards services and preparation of action plan to address procedural and performance issues raised.</p> <p>Maintain or improve the rating of the Building Standards service as reported through the annual national Scottish Government Customer Satisfaction Survey to Support the Building Standards Verification Performance Framework.</p> <p>Annual focus group event held for customers of both the Planning and Building Standards services and preparation of action plan to address procedural and performance issues raised.</p>

4.0 Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

4.1 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).
KOP2 Targets	
2.1	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2.
KOP3 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.
KOP4 Targets	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
KOP5 Targets	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
KOP6 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
KOP7 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



5.1 Professional Expertise and Technical Processes

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes		RAG
KPO1	Minimise time taken to issue a first report or issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant.	
1.1	Target - 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).	
	SLC result – 90%.	
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The overall figure for 2018-19 of 75% was significantly impacted by a three week period of system downtime in February 2018 associated with the introduction of IDOX systems. Performance has been improving since and continues to do so into the period 2020-21.</p>		
1.2	Target - 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).	
	SLC Result – 78%.	
<p>Comment:</p> <p>The overall figure for 2018-19 of 70% was significantly impacted by a three week period of system downtime in February 2018 associated with the introduction of IDOX systems. Performance has been improving since, however resources are concentrated on the first assessment and the extent to which this measure will further improve is not known.</p>		
KPO2	Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes.	
	<p>It is noted the performance measure for this KPO is still under review.</p> <p>Reporting for this measure shows that during 2019-20, 44% of CCNP's were complied with. The main reason for non-compliance was non notification of commencement and other stages outlined in the CCNP document by the applicant/relevant person.</p>	
<p>Comment:</p> <p>None.</p>		

5.2 Quality Customer Experience

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes		RAG
KPO3	Commit to the building standards customer charter.	
3.1	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).	
	SLC Result – our charter remains published prominently on the Council's website.	
Comment: None.		
3.2	Target - 95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days.	
	SLC Result – No requests received.	
Comment: None.		
KPO4	Understand and respond to the customer experience.	
4.1	Target - Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.	
	SLC Result – overall average satisfaction rating of 8.0 out of 10.	
Comment: In December 2019 South Lanarkshire Council was awarded Customer Service Excellence for the 7th year.		

5.3 Operational and Financial Efficiency

Operational and Financial Efficiency		RAG
KPO5	Maintain financial governance	
5.1	Target - Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).	
	SLC Result – Total verification service costs for 2019-20 were £1,530,008. Total verification fee income for 2019-20 was £1,431,593.	
Comment: None.		
KPO6	Commitment to eBuilding Standards	
6.1	Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.	
	SLC Result – the options open to customers are fully detailed in the Councils website. In addition, staff are encouraged to recommend that customers use the national portal for the submission of applications and application related mail. Currently around 70% of applications are submitted online.	
6.2	Target - 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 	
	SLC Result: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Checking – electronic plan checking is undertaken for all applications with minor exceptions. • Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued – electronic approval via email is in place for all applications containing 10 plans or less. • Verification during construction – no electronic work being undertaken • Completion certificates being accepted – all completion certificate acceptances are being issued electronically where an email address is provided for the relevant person. 	
Comment: The ongoing absence of a national plan sharing solution continues to frustrate our ability to approve larger applications electronically. Work is underway to establish processes related to the acceptance of remote verification evidence, this is limited to photographic evidence at this time.		

Annual Performance Report 2019-2020

Operational and Financial Efficiency		RAG
KPO7	Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report.	
7.1	Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).	
	SLC Result – The Annual Performance Report for 2019-20 is published on the Council website and will be reviewed each quarter throughout 2020-21.	
Comment: None.		
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).	
	SLC Result – This report includes comprehensive performance data for the period April 2019 to March 2020.	
Comment: None.		



6.0 Service Improvement and Partnership Working

6.1 In the previous 12 months (2019-20) we:

Number	Continuous improvement action	Status
1	Continue to develop IDOX software solutions for the management of building warrant applications and associated processes. Specifically, upgrades to DMS 5 and Uniform 10.4.1.	Complete
2	Retained Customer Service Excellence award for 7th year.	Complete
3	Undertook annual local customer satisfaction survey process.	Complete
4	Submitted all quarterly KPO reporting.	Complete
5	Responded to SG information requests including significant consultations on compliance and fire safety.	Complete
6	Continued a review of the Planning and Building Standards structure.	Ongoing
7	Delivery of local training and dissemination events for staff and agents related to the introduction of new technical standards in October 2019.	Complete
8	Undertook Building Standards customer engagement exercise.	Complete

Annual Performance Report 2019-2020

6.2 In the next 12 months (2020-21) we will:

Number	Continuous improvement action	Timescale
1	Introduce revised processes, protocols and guidance as related to the delivery of building standards services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.	Ongoing
2	Continue to develop IDOX software solutions for the management of building warrant applications and associated processes.	Ongoing
3	Retained Customer Service Excellence award for 7th year and undertaken customer engagement exercise.	December 2020
4	Review annual local customer satisfaction survey process.	September 2020
5	Submit all quarterly KPO reporting and update Annual Performance Report.	Ongoing
6.	Respond to SG information requests and consultations.	As required
7.	Continue the review of the Planning and Building Standards structure.	August 2020
8.	Process local actions outlined within the National Building Standards Workforce Strategy. Work in this respect has already commenced, this sees a commitment in training and development of younger members of staff through undertaking further education to degree level.	From September 2020
9.	Progress actions associated with the national program for digital transformation.	From Summer 2020
10.	Achieve targets as highlighted in the Planning and Economic Development Service Action Plan for 2020-21.	March 2021
11.	Contribute to the work of LABSS as required to ensure the delivery of a robust verification service nationally.	Ongoing

- 6.3 In the previous 12 months (2019-20) we worked with:
- 6.3.1 **Care and Repair in SLC** – recent liaison with Care and Repair in South Lanarkshire has sought to confirm lines of communication for customer enquiries and also the Services’ expectation in terms of assessment times and quality of warrant submission.
 - 6.3.2 **Care Inspectorate** – SLC staff are leading in the introduction of better communication between the Care Inspectorate and Local Authority Building Standards. Liaison meetings have taken place including a presentation to the national Care Inspectorate Team.
 - 6.3.3 **Multi-agency Tactical Group** – this forum re-established for 2019 allows local agency’s such as Police, SFRS and local authority departments to discuss matter of mutual interest.
 - 6.3.4 **Safety Advisory Group** – the SLC forum, was established in 2019 to provide a more joined-up approach to the consideration of application for live events.
 - 6.3.5 **SLC Housing and Technical Resources** – we coordinate Scottish Government consultation responses with colleagues in H&T. We also agreed a single point of contact for H&T for building warrant applications related to a programme of nursery school development work.
 - 6.3.6 **IDOX casework and DMS system** – system development is ongoing and includes consultation with customers, suppliers and internal colleagues.
 - 6.3.7 **STAS and Registered Details** – these services are provided by LABSS to allow for pre-approval nationally of standard building designs. South Lanarkshire remains the lead partner for Bellway, Keepmoat Homes and Barratt Homes West.
 - 6.3.8 **Sharing house completion data with Waste services** – monthly reports are provided to the Councils’ Waste Services section to allow for a quicker and more effective consideration of customer needs with regards to bin collection services.
 - 6.3.9 **Operation Doric** – Our work in relation to this initiative remains ongoing. Promotion of this partnership has been presented as corporate evidence as part of the Councils Best Value Audit.
 - 6.3.10 **Adaptation fast tracking process** – the existing standard warrant submission package continues to provide a template for the submission of disability adaptation applications. This allows for a quicker processing time which in turn benefits homeowners.
 - 6.3.11 **Alternative view process** – a number of alternative view applications were considered and approved during 2019-2020.
 - 6.3.12 **Building Standards Division of Scottish Government** – SLC Building Standards continue to be engaged with the BSD in a number of ways namely:
 - Through LABSS/BSD liaison;
 - Providing assistance to the BSD’s research partners; and
 - Lead officer for Compliance Plan work stream.

6.3.13 **Local Authority Building Standards Scotland** – In a similar way to the BSD, SLC are represented within LABSS in many strategic areas namely:

- Member of Executive;
- Technical Director; and
- Consortia technical representative.

Involvement with both BSD and LABSS gives SLC a unique understanding of the principles behind guidance and legislation and we aim to make this understanding of benefit to customers as opposed to just following the words on a page passed down by the legislators.

6.3.14 **Central Authorities Consortia** – while linked with LABSS activities, this forum allows for discussion at a more local level, partners are North Lanarkshire, Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils.

6.3.15 **South Ayrshire Council** – SAC engineers are used as a backstop for checking structural calculations which are out-with the scope of our own in-house engineers, thus providing customers with certainty of service response.

6.3.16 **Climate Change and Sustainable Development** – Planning and Building Standards work closely and agree joint actions with Council colleagues in respect of our role in achieving wider climate change and sustainable development targets for the Council as a whole.

6.3.17 **Environmental Health** – Building Standards respond to weekly consultation requests from EH on building warrant application submissions thereby ensuring any applicant is aware of legislative requirements stemming from EH regulations.

6.3.18 **Planning Service** – Extensive joint working is undertaken on a daily basis through the cross checking process.

6.4 In the next 12 months (2020-21) we will continue to engage with our partners outlined above, including strengthening partnership working where necessary and consider new partnerships where opportunities exist.

7.0 Building Standards – Additional Data

7.1 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.

Building warrants and amendments to building warrant	2364 Applications 2189 Decisions
Completion certificates	2404 Applications 2550 Decisions
Certification	979 Certificates of design submitted 44 Certificates of construction submitted
Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)	1176 Copy certificates received (domestic) 5 Copy certificates received (non-domestic)
Statements of Sustainability	870 Copy certificates received (domestic) 4 Copy certificates received (non-domestic)
Enforcement	3 Notices served under sections 25 to 30 0 Cases referred to procurator fiscal 0 Cases where LA has undertaken work 9 Cases of direct action under S29







**South Lanarkshire
Building Standards Annual Performance
Framework 2019-20**

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