

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

14 AUGUST 2013

Agenda Item	8
Report No	PED 47/13

BUILDING STANDARDS BALANCED SCORECARD 2013/14

Report by Director of Planning and Development

Summary

The Council is required to submit an annual Balanced Scorecard and a suite of new Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs) (9 in total) quarterly to Scottish Government. The scorecard for 2013/14 is attached to this report, and includes a Service Improvement Plan for 2013/14. Members are asked to approve the scorecard for submission to Scottish Government.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The verification system was launched on 1 May 2005 by Scottish Government. This new system requires local authorities to submit an annual 'balanced scorecard' to the Building Standards Division (BDS).
- 1.2 Verification is the process of providing an independent check of applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings, or to convert buildings. Verifiers are appointed by Scottish Ministers.
- 1.3 Local authorities were re-appointed as verifiers for their geographical area on 1 May 2011, for a further six-year period. The Scottish Government's re-appointment of local authorities as building standards verifiers was on the understanding that a new performance framework be put in place to improve the quality, compliance, consistency and predictability of verification activities.
- 1.4 This new performance framework for building standards builds on what has already been achieved by Councils and aims to drive forward better compliance with the building regulations, particularly during construction. The framework is supported by the introduction of:
 - A revision to the balanced scorecard format
 - A continuous improvement plan and;

- The introduction of a range of new Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs) (9 in total).

1.5 The framework has been developed by the Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government working in partnership with Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS).

2.0 The Balanced Scorecard

2.1 As part of the new performance framework, it has been agreed that all verifiers will produce and submit to Scottish Government an annual balanced scorecard on an agreed revised template. The Highland Council's scorecard is attached in the appendix for Members' information.

2.2 The new scorecard differs from the previous versions and focusses on three core perspectives which link across the public interest and continuous improvement themes. The perspectives are: -

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

2.3 The scorecard is a strategic planning and management tool that is used to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organisation, improve internal and external communications, and monitor performance against strategic goals. A critical part of the scorecard is the Service Improvement Plan, which sets out the key actions that the team will implement over the course of the year to improve performance and customer service.

2.4 Members are asked to agree the key improvement priorities set out in Section 3 and 4 of the balanced scorecard for 2013/14 (appendix).

3.0 Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

3.1 The new building standards performance framework was introduced last year and was measurable from 1 October 2012.

3.2 At the time of writing this report the Council is awaiting Scottish Government distribution of the template for reporting Quarter 1, 2013/14.

3.3 The nine new KPOs are listed below: -

Professional Expertise & Technical Processes	
KPO1	Year-on-year reduction in the average time taken to grant a building warrant
KPO2	Increased quality of assessment and compliance during the construction processes

Quality Customer Experience	
KPO3	Commitment to meeting customer expectations
KPO4	Adherence to service commitments of a National Customer Charter
KPO5	Improvement of the customer experience
Operational & Financial Efficiency	
KPO6	Financial governance
KOP7	Improved partnership working underpinned by engagement with a National Forum
KPO8	Development of and adherence to objectives outlined in balanced scorecard
KPO9	Commitment to continuous improvement

3.4 KPOs 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 are reported quarterly to the Scottish Government. KPO 8 is reported annually. KPOs 4, 5 and 7 are in place in the form of benchmarking, consortia working, and customer engagement via Focus Groups and surveying. KPO figures will be reported regularly to Committee.

4.0 Resource Implications

4.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from the report, although the improvement actions highlighted in the report will require effective resource management to deliver changes to the way particular tasks are carried out, for example the implementation of Construction Certification Notification Plans (CCNPs).

5.0 Equality and Climate Change Implications

5.1 No equality or climate change implications are anticipated.

6.0 Legal and Risk Implications

6.1 No legal or risk implications are anticipated.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Continuous improvement is a critical success factor in relation to 'raising the bar' for customer service, compliance, and in particular - consistency. KPOs have been developed with a view to embedding a culture of continuous improvement underpinned by a greater focus on peer review, benchmarking and sharing of best practice.

Recommendation

The committee is asked to approve the Balanced Scorecard for 2013/14, including the Service Improvement Plan for 2013/14, for submission to the Scottish Government.

Designation: Director of Planning and Development

Date: 26 July 2013

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Appendices:

1 - The Balanced Scorecard 2013/14



Building Standards Verification Service
Balanced Scorecard
2013 – 2014

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1.0 Introduction

The Balanced Scorecard

The balanced scorecard is a strategic planning and management tool that is used in business organisations to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organisation, improve internal and external communications, and monitor performance against strategic goals.

Building standards verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the balanced scorecard as a means to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business with a focus on the three core perspectives listed below and the public interest and continuous improvement cross-cutting themes:

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

1.1 The Highland Council - Geographical Area, Population & Employment

Geography and Statistics

The Highland Council serves a third of the land area of Scotland – including the most remote and sparsely populated parts of the UK - and it has the seventh highest population of the 32 authorities in Scotland. The total land area including all islands at low water is 26,484 square kilometres. This is 33% of Scotland and 11.4% of Great Britain. It is 10 times larger than Luxembourg, 20% larger than Wales, and nearly the size of Belgium.

The length of coastline including islands at low water is 4,905 kilometres, 21% of the Scottish total, and excluding islands is 1,900 kilometres (49% of Scotland). Argyll and Bute has the next longest coastline with 3,723 kilometres, then Western Isles with 3,716 kilometres.

Click image to enlarge (image opens in a new window)



Census Results 2011

On 17th December 2012, National Records of Scotland (NRS) announced the first results (release 1a) from the Census held in Scotland on 27th March 2011. The results show that:

- The population of Scotland was 5,295,000, an increase of 233,000, 5%, from the 2001 figure of 5,062,011.
- The population of Highland was 232,000, an increase of around 23,000, 11%, from the 2001 figure of 208,914.

The figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand as the final work to produce populations by age and gender for areas within Scotland has not been completed.

The 2011 Census figure for Highland is higher than the figure we were expecting, when compared with the previous mid year estimate for 2011 of 222,370, which was the last “rolled forward” figure to be produced based on the 2001 Census. We have produced a [Briefing Note \(pdf 27kb\)](#) giving some background to the Census and the reasons why the increase might be greater than we were expecting.

Release 1b published on 27 March 2013 gave more detail on the population of Highland including detail for 5 year age bands and gender. The figures show an increase of population in all age groups apart from a decrease in the 5 to 15 year group. A [briefing note \(pdf 178kb\)](#) giving more information is available.

Publication of the Census Results – the Next Steps

National Records of Scotland, the Agency responsible for the Census and results, has published the following timetable:

- Release 1A (17 December 2012) – Population estimates by five-year age bands and sex for Scotland, total population estimate for each council area.
- Release 1B (March 2013) – Population estimates by five-year age bands and sex for Scotland and each council area. Household estimates for Scotland and each council area.
- Release 1C (June/July 2013) - Population estimates by single year of age and sex for Scotland and each council area.
- Release 2 (from summer 2013) – Key and Quick statistics; Scotland level population estimates by single year of age and sex, Census Profiles; Population and Household estimates by postcode and Geography products.
- Release 3 (from autumn 2013) – Local Characteristics.
- Release 4 (from winter 2013) – Detailed Characteristics.

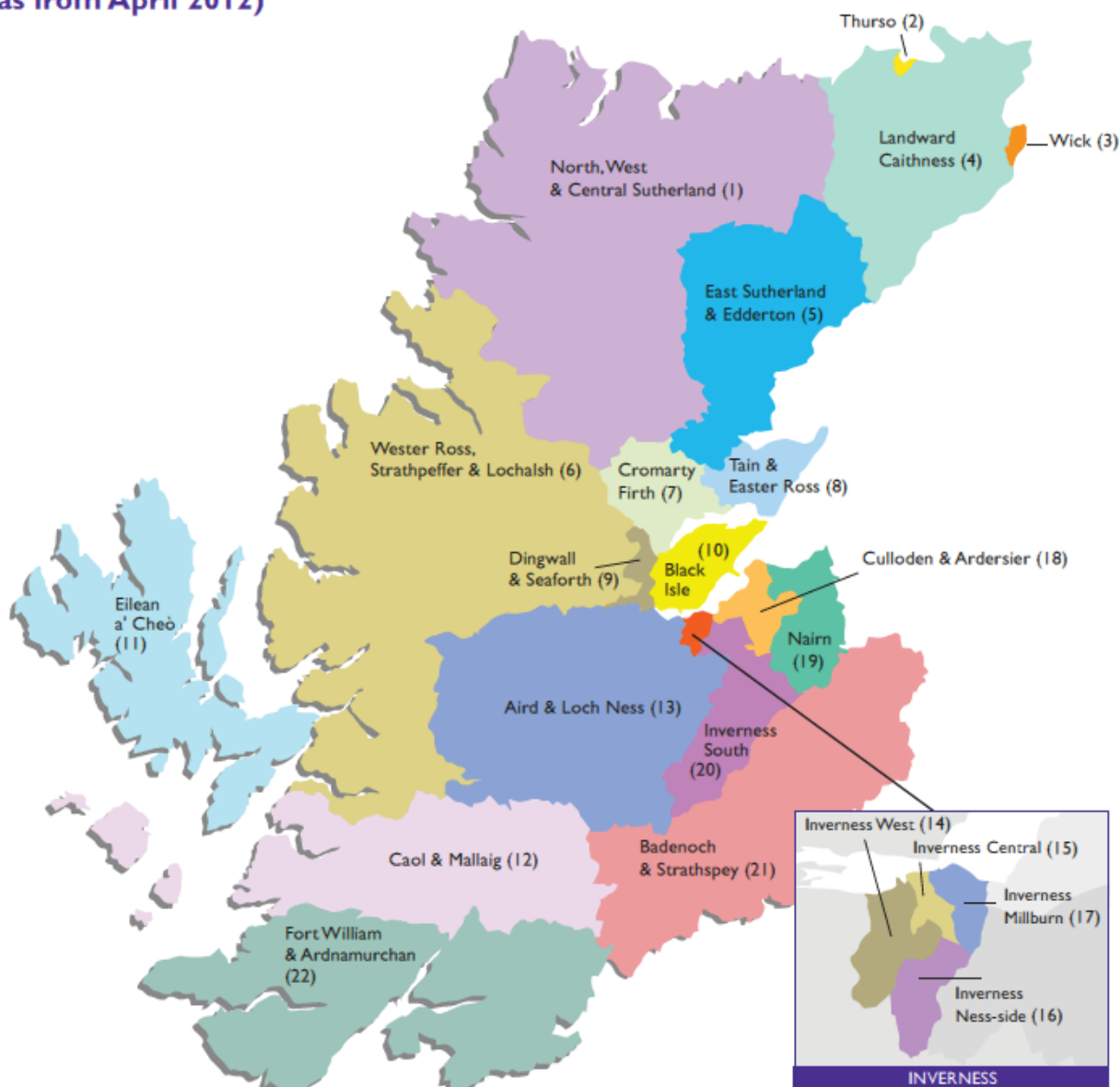
As detailed information becomes available in releases 3 and 4 we will start to publish local profiles for areas such as wards, settlement zones and Community Councils on this website.

Census Analysis 2001

You can still view Highland area analysis of the [2001 Census results](#).

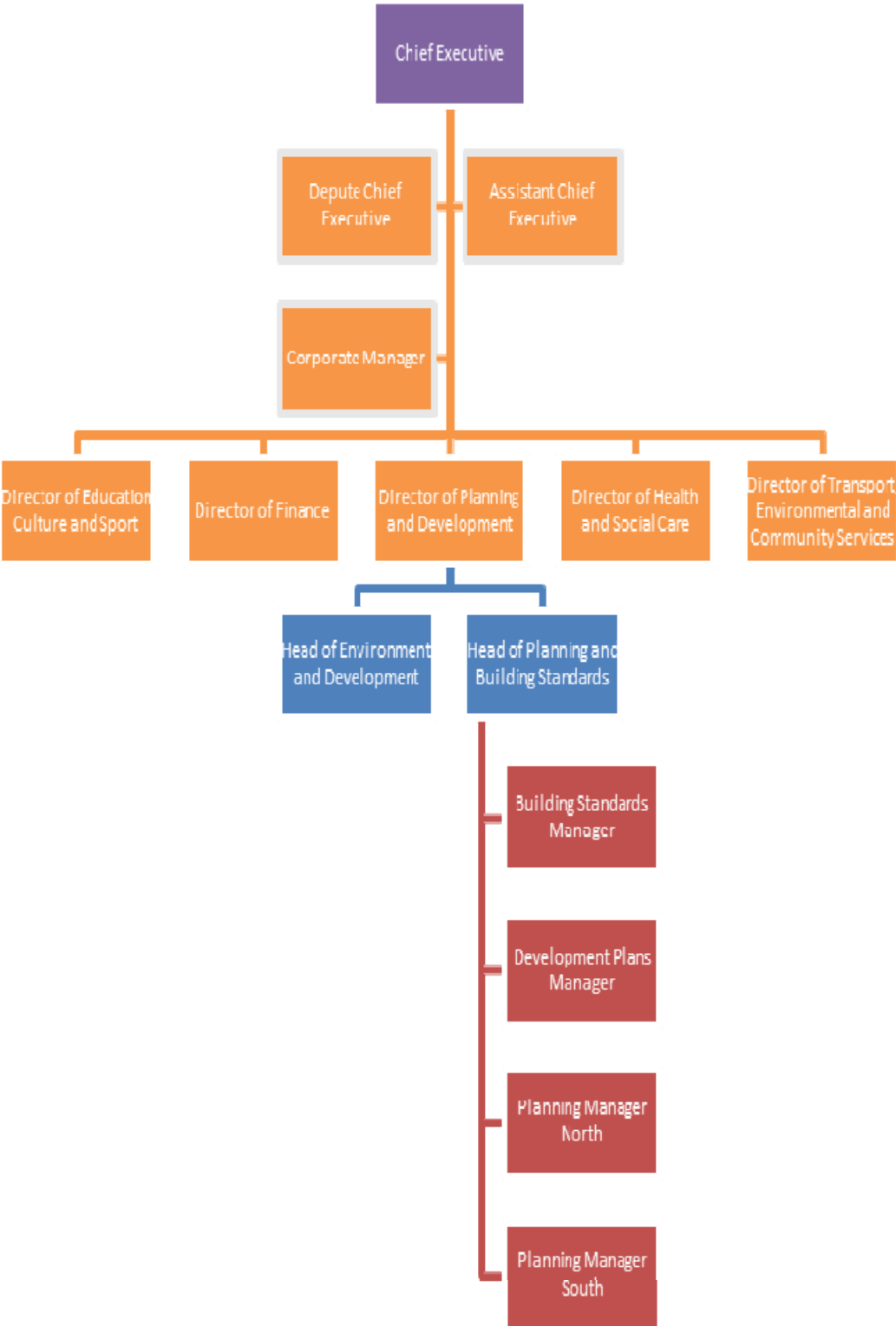
MULTI-MEMBER WARDS

(as from April 2012)



Ward No./ Ward Name	No. of Members	2011 Population	Ward No./ Ward Name	No. of Members	2011 Population	Ward No./ Ward Name	No. of Members	2011 Population
1 North, West & Central Sutherland	3	5,568	7 Cromarty Firth	4	11,748	16 Inverness Ness-Side	4	10,008
2 Thurso	3	7,218	8 Tain & Easter Ross	3	8,860	17 Inverness Millburn	3	8,050
3 Wick	3	6,587	9 Dingwall & Seaforth	4	12,399	18 Culloden & Ardersier	4	11,030
4 Landward Caithness	4	11,355	10 Black Isle	4	9,639	19 Nairn	4	11,593
5 East Sutherland & Edderton	3	7,952	11 Eilean a' Cheò	4	10,114	20 Inverness South	4	14,092
6 Wester Ross, Strathpeffer & Lochalsh	4	11,372	12 Caol & Mallaig	3	7,882	21 Badenoch & Strathspey	4	12,983
			13 Aird & Loch Ness	4	10,658	22 Ft William & Ardnamurchan	4	11,404
			14 Inverness West	3	8,204	TOTAL	80	222,370
			15 Inverness Central	4	13,654			

1.2 Strategic Organisational Structure



2.0 The Building Standards Service Verification Service

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 minimum 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.

The Building Standards Service

The Highland Council's Building Standards Service is delivered by the Planning and Development Service which has its base at Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness. The Director of Planning and Development, The Head of Planning and Building Standards and The Building Standards Manager are based at this location.

The operational activity of the service is decentralised to 7 area offices which operate under a building standards management team. Area offices are located in the following towns and city: -

- Wick – serving Caithness
- Golspie – serving Sutherland and Easter Ross
- Dingwall – serving Ross-shire
- Inverness – serving Inverness City, South and West; Ness-side; Culloden and Ardersier, and Nairn
- Portree – serving Eilean A' Cheo (Skye) and Lochalsh
- Fort William – serving Lochaber
- Kingussie – serving Badenoch & Strathspey

The Building Standards team is led by the Head of Planning and Building Standards. The Building Standards Manager is responsible for protecting the public interest by delivering a professional Building Standards and Verification service to the Highland community through managing and directing the operational teams of building standards staff in the network of area offices Highland-wide. The manager in turn is supported by three Building Standards Team Leaders who each have a responsibility for: -

- Verification – Warrant Approval;
- Verification – Reasonable Inquiry and;
- Non Verification eg, Enforcement, Licensing, Defective and Dangerous Buildings etc.

Day to day management of the area offices is the responsibility of a Principal Building Standards Surveyor based in each area office who is responsible for the delivery of work activities including the supervision of staff in providing a building standards and verification

function within an area Planning and Building Standards Office. The Principal has delegated authority and responsibility for: -

- Risk assessments and allocating workloads
- Monitoring performance and staff development against a Competency Framework
- Dealing with minor personnel issues
- Absence management and
- Dealing with all building standards operations including taking enforcement action where unauthorised building operations are being carried out or where defective or dangerous building incidents occur.

The Building Standards primary function is to protect the Public Interest by ensuring buildings meet the minimum requirements as laid down by the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 and supporting regulations and functional standards.

The Building Standards team is responsible for determining Building Warrants and Certificates of Completion; ensuring the making safe or removal of dangerous buildings. The Building Standards service is also consulted on the suitability of premises and venues before licenses are granted under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

Performance

Performance is measured through nine Key Performance Outcomes (KPO’s) contained within the new performance framework from Scottish Government. KPO’s 1 & 2 focus on improving the time taken to grant a building warrant and on improving quality and compliance during the construction process. Performance outcomes are then reported quarterly to the Scottish Government Building Standards Division (BSD) for analysis and publication.

As well as the new performance outcome measures in Highland we will continue to measure 6 separate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) three for publication and three for internal use. KPI’s 1-3 which give an indication of the response times to building warrant applications and completion certificate submissions.

During the year from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 the following Key Performance Indicators were returned: -

	Target	Actual
KPI 1 Respond to Building Warrant application within 20 days of Validation - (total apps 2628/ number within 20 days 2328)	80%	89%
KPI 2 Respond to Completion Certificate submission within 10 Working days - (total apps 2908/ number within 10 days 2600)	80%	90%
KPI 3 Issue Building Warrant approval within 6 days of receiving Information - (total apps 2583/ number within 6 days 2259)	80%	88%

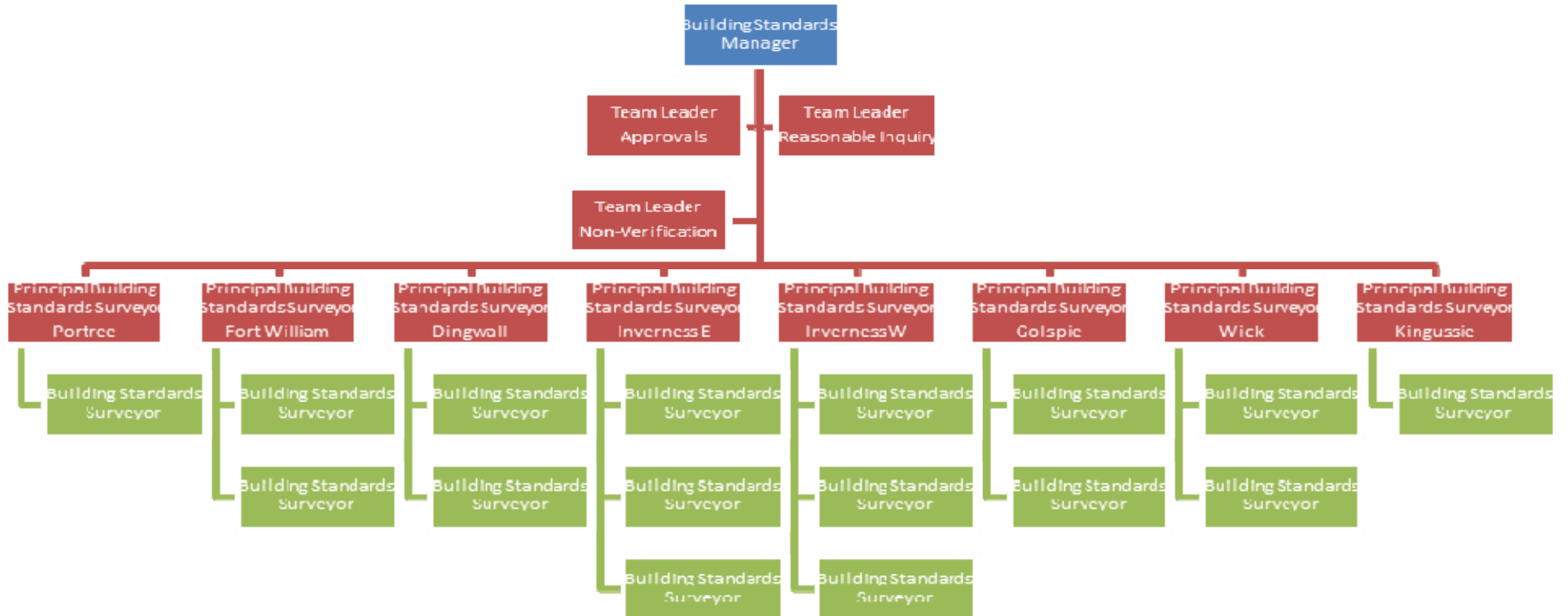
Team Structure

The building standards team comprises a full complement of 28. This comprises: -

- 1 Building Standards Manager
- 3 Team Leaders
- 8 Principal Building Standards Surveyors
- 16 Building Standards Surveyors

Currently there are two vacant positions. These will shortly be advertised as career grade Trainee Building Standards Surveyor (BSS). Filling the vacancies with trainee grade posts instead of qualified and experienced people will comply with some of the Council's 'Working Together for the Highlands' objectives of reducing youth unemployment in the Highlands and also the BS team's objective of succession management by 'growing our own'. In partnership with Inverness College – UHI it is hoped to fill the posts with recently graduated persons.

2.1 Building Standards Organisational Structure



3.0 Strategic Objectives

3.1 Vision

The overarching vision of the Planning and Development Service is: - “To be recognised as the best Planning and Development Service in Scotland.”

The P & D Service Mission Statement is:

- To promote sustainable economic growth and to safeguard the built and natural environment of the Highlands.
- Open for business – a “*can do*” approach
- Team work – support for our staff and partners to achieve excellence
- Customer focus – our customers and communities at the heart of everything
- Innovation – developing best practice
- Continuously improving everything we do.

In addition to the above it is the Building Standards Team’s objective to be a “High performing team that will provide a service for our customers that will consistently deliver and exceed the customer’s expectations in terms of service and protection of Public Interest”. To this end the following aims are to be included:

- Maintain and improve performance levels.
- Hold a position of best practice to which other BS Services and Council led services aspire.
- Maintain our culture of Continuous Improvement.
- Strive for Highland Council’s BS service to be on the top tier of performing Councils in Scotland.
- Achieve Customer Service Excellence (Government Standard) accreditation.
- Strive to provide a value for money service for the customer by balancing verification fee income against expenditure.

Essential in achieving this goal is our vision for our staff to embrace the Employee Review & Development Planning (ERDP) through realisation of training outcomes. Successful delivery of this vision will require a continued focus on our internal management capabilities in the areas of continual personal development, clear accountability and performance recognition and well managed succession planning and resourcing. Fundamental to the achievement of Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) accreditation is having a well motivated, competent and well resourced team.

3.2 Departmental issues to be addressed in the coming year are :-

- Continue to develop Enterprise – the IDOX Performance Management tool, and implement the performance management element to complement the workflow management system
- Implement to the wider team the IDOX – Document Management System (DMS) and operate a pilot scheme in an area office prior to rolling out to all area teams
- Pilot then review the electronic submission utilising Lagan, validating, plotting and assessment of building warrant applications in an area office
- Implementation of new Key Performance Framework and Reasonable Inquiry initiatives
- Revise the Building Standards Customer Care Strategy in line with customer engagement
- Customer Engagement through Focus Groups; surgeries and dissemination events; with particular regard to Verification During Construction
- Review customer feedback via Survey Monkey questionnaires
- Develop specialist teams to deliver Major Applications; including work within 'Enterprise Zones'
- Annual and six monthly reviews of the teams Employee Review & Development Plans (ERDP). Annual and quarterly reviews of the BS management teams PDPs
- Review team organisational structure – to ensure it is fit for purpose
- Appoint two trainee building standards surveyors – to meet the Council's objective of reducing Youth Unemployment and meet the teams aim to 'grow our own'
- Review protocols, procedures and policies in line with the team's commitment to continuous improvement
- Meet with developers/contractors/builders operating in the Highlands to discuss projections and ensure the BS team is prepared for an increase in construction activity

Some of the major contracts that will be submitted for BW over the next twelve months include: -

- 526 Council and Housing Association houses
- Council Offices Refurbishment & Extension – Wick
- Care Homes – Muir of Ord and Tain
- Inverness Airport extension
- Lochaber High School
- Alness, Glen Ord and Glenmorangie Distilleries
- Museum Store, Newtonmore
- Kingsmills Hotel extension and additional accommodation

- Refurb to Care Homes; Invernevis and Ach an Eas
 - Raigmore Hospital refurbishment (Tower Block)
 - Raigmore – New children’s ward
 - Bridge Point (Strathaird)
 - Ardnamurchan Distillery –
 - Ross County Stadium extensions
 - UHI Campus
 - Inverness Royal Academy
 - Wick School Campus
 - Wick (North) Primary School
 - 3 new Primary Schools in Lochaber
 - The National Nuclear Archive Centre – Energy Building (£25m)
 - Nigg and Scrabster Enterprise Zones
 - Rosehall Estate Conversion of house to Hotel and new builds (£6m)
 - Tulloch Homes - 168 private units – in different locations
 - Upland Developments – Rose Street 7 storey student accommodation
- Manage a major applications team who will target large, complex and repetitive application types to offer the customer a ‘one stop shop’. This is in partnership with planning colleagues.

3.3 Key Strategic Objectives for the coming year are: -

- Working to achieve results with the Council’s, “2012-2017: Working Together for the Highlands - A Programme for the Highland Council;” found [here](#) across the nine priorities:-

The economy
 Children and young people
 Caring communities
 Better infrastructure
 Better housing
 Empowering communities; and
 Strong and safe communities

- Participating in delivering the P & D Service Plan
- Deliver the Council’s Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP) initiatives e.g. Mobile and Flexible Working; Customer Migration etc.
- Working closely with our planning partners to support the Highland-wide, large scale employment growth opportunities (‘Enterprise Zones’) in the Cromarty Firth, Scrabster, Ardersier, Kishorn and, the UHI Campus development in Inverness
- Work with Scottish Government, Housing Associations and the private sector to help deliver 5000 new homes by 2017. This includes 600 new Council houses and affordable homes
- Promote Communities of Practice for Public Service to our consortia partners and also within LABSS

- Embrace the Council's Agile Working Framework to all staff. Also, procure the technology to allow mobile and flexible working.

4.0 Key Performance Outcomes

4.1 Professional Expertise and Technical Processes

4.1.1 Protocols for dealing with work

A range of protocols has been developed by the building standards service in recent years to provide advice and to aid consistency for both staff and customers in dealing with the verification process. The protocols cover the process from the time a building warrant application is submitted, through the validation, assessment and "verification through construction" phases culminating in the acceptance of a completion certificate.

A small team of staff has been given responsibility for developing additional areas which would benefit from a protocol and constantly reviewing existing protocols in the spirit of continuous improvement. Currently there are thirty five protocols accessible to staff via our internal Sharepoint site and of those, eighteen have been selected as being of most use and interest to the customer and are accessible via the Building Standards section of the Highland Council website.

All nationally agreed Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) protocols and policies will also be adopted and incorporated into Highland Council building standards work practices.

4.1.2 Performance management systems

The service now has a UNI-Form performance measurement and workload monitoring tool called Enterprise. This system was commissioned at the beginning of April and will now allow management to monitor workloads, transfer applications etc. between staff and area offices and produce reports on performance. This system will complement Access reports from the existing UNI-form database for interrogating the performance of its verification processes. These reports range from day-to-day analysis of office performance through to monthly, quarterly and annual reports on performance linked to the current Key Performance Indicators. Performance is currently reported on many levels including in-house at weekly area team meetings, monthly at management/team leaders meetings, quarterly at the Council's quarterly performance review and annually to the Building Standards Division. The external Key Performance figures are updated monthly on the Council's website accessible to the public.

The Building Standards Manager also reports quarterly using an electronic Performance Review Management System (PRMS) along with the Planning & Development Service Management team to the Chief Executive and other senior management team e.g. depute CE, Director of Finance etc. This reporting confirms performance, finance issues, complaints, absence returns and projections.

The BS management team work closely with the Performance & Systems Support Team (PSST). The close liaison between these two teams has seen a smooth transition in implementing the UNI-form Enterprise system.

4.1.3 Training and development/Employee Review & Development Plans (ERDPs)

Building standards staff have annual Employee Review & Development Plan (ERDP) interviews with their line manager which are used to identify and agree their main objectives and targets for the coming year based on the Council's core competencies and the service's own "Building Standards Competency Framework". A training plan for all staff is then created which is separated into training which can be done through self learning and coaching/mentoring which is the responsibility of the staff member to arrange and also into training which requires support from the service. The training plan must also take into account any constraints on the service's training budget.

Regular discussions take place between staff and their line managers throughout the year but there is a six monthly appraisal of their progress with their training/development plan. Over and above any formal training needs identified in the plan, ERDP events are regularly organised by the service and often incorporated into team meetings. Should any member of staff make the service aware of any other relevant external ERDP events every effort is made to allow them to attend.

4.1.4 Benchmarking/shared services/partnership work

Continued benchmarking with our consortium group (The Highlands and Islands Consortia) and other authorities (e.g. Fife Council) ensures our operating methods and procedures are comparable and up to date, effective and as efficient as possible. The creation of the knowledge hub has helped to break down any geographical difficulties we previously encountered with our consortium colleagues.

It is also our intention to continue discussions with the local construction industry and business community on their thoughts on the future and to discuss trends and forecasts which would be relevant to both parties. There have already been discussions with national and local architectural practices on developing Service Level Agreements for the verification process and this is to be developed further in the near future.

4.1.5 Commitment to work together on technical issues

Consistency of interpretation of the technical standards and regulations has always been crucial in ensuring customers are treated fairly and evenly during the verification process. Due to the geographical difficulties encountered by this service we have for some time had an internal dedicated Sharepoint site allowing queries and discussions on technical issues to be aired across our areas. Once the discussion is complete and a consensus reached a policy is formed where deemed necessary. A small team of staff are also responsible for ensuring these policies are constantly reviewed, amended or removed and are published on our website.

The formation of the consortia groups and the creation of a knowledge hub similar to our internal Sharepoint site now allows for the technical discussions to be across the consortia instead of just within the service and once fully utilised across the areas will allow greater

consistency. Our service has also been instrumental in rolling out the benefit of the Knowledge Hub to LABSS.

Members of staff in the service currently hold the positions of Consortium Lead and Technical Lead within the Highlands and Islands Consortium. The Technical Lead actively responds to questions of interpretation on behalf of the consortium authorities, and also takes appropriate issues to the national technical forum within LABSS. In both cases the Technical Lead seeks advice and opinion from our consortium authorities before presenting an agreed consensus opinion.

4.1.6 Succession planning

As part of our succession plan the service is committed to providing in-house development opportunities for staff who continually show willing and initiative and are prepared to move on to the next level in their career. The ERDP training plan process incorporating the Building Standards Competency Framework includes training specifically aimed at the next level or grade up which aligned with appropriate coaching and mentoring will allow staff to be ready to move onto the next level should an opportunity arise.

Succession planning within the service has already been very successful in recent years where several members of staff have progressed to the next level or grade through this process.

Two vacant building standards surveyors posts will shortly be advertised. These posts will be advertised as career grade positions where we will target young people that have recently completed studies in building related courses eg HNC/HND in construction management. Targeting a younger audience fulfils the Council's commitment to reducing youth unemployment and also the BS team's commitment to succession management. A structured training scheme will be implemented to develop the trainees into competent qualified surveyors leading to membership of the relevant professional institution/organisation.

4.2 Quality Customer Experience

4.2.1 Customer communication strategies

Within our service our customer communication strategy aligns with our Council wide [Customer Engagement Strategy](#) (which is currently being revised).

The Planning and Building Standards Services within Highland Council continue to play a leading part in piloting a Customer Migration trial which involves a dedicated call centre receiving 'first time callers' for Planning and Building Standards enquiries. To further enhance this, and ensure we communicate and respond efficiently and effectively with our customers, each member of our team uses our Customer Response Management system. This allows us to track and manage enquiries effectively.

We continue to hold customer focus groups across the Highland Council area and have completed our pilot use of Twitter, which will now be developed as our main social media tool.

Key Performance Outcomes 3, 4 and 5 are our focus moving forward. We also remain committed to assisting LABSS and BSD in designing an appropriate escape route mechanism for customers.

We continue to survey our customers on our performance and how we could improve. These survey outcomes are shared with all staff and senior management on a quarterly timetable. The addition of national customer surveys will be used to refine and improve the experience of our customers.

4.2.2 Charter (local/national)

Our Customer Charter has been revised in line with the new format provided by the Building Standards Division which takes into account the changes to our customer accessibility, methods of engagement and also the new Key Performance Outcomes. The charter is on display and available at our reception areas and also on our website.

4.2.3 Engagement (national and local forums)

Our service continues to host local focus groups with a wide range of customers to investigate customer satisfaction. The service will also advise of any changes to our protocols and processes. We will continue to provide consultation responses to Scottish Government on proposed legislation changes and continue to provide dissemination events to agents, applicants and developers where there have been significant changes to the standards. Both the focus group and dissemination event formats have been widely appreciated by our customers who have expressed a desire for them to continue.

We continue to meet separately with the major developers in the Highland Council area to discuss ways of improving and speeding up our combined processes and means of communication particularly with larger scale projects such as multi-plot housing developments or schools, care homes etc. These discussions have proven beneficial to both parties and we will continue to develop these relationships.

To assist with local economic development we will engage with Business Gateway to ensure start-up businesses are provided with the appropriate contact details and information on Building Standards processes.

We will participate in the formation and implementation of the national customer satisfaction survey being run by the Building Standards Division with the first survey taking place in Spring of 2013.

4.2.4 Customer feedback (local and national)/analysing and changing systems

Feedback from our customers is gained from various sources such as our regular customer focus groups, dissemination events, from our website and most commonly from a "Survey Monkey" questionnaire which is contained within a link on each member of staff's e-mail. The feedback is regularly reviewed and any areas of improvement can be identified and implemented wherever possible. It is important that any changes implemented as a result of customer feedback are communicated back to the customer to ensure they feel that the exercise has been worthwhile.

Feedback in relation to our new customer communications strategy forming part of the new customer migration scheme is dealt with under 4.2.5.

A Service specific Customer Services Officer has been appointed to manage all customer complaints and enquiries. These are logged and monitored in a Lagan (KANA) system to ensure responses are delivered timeously. The officer will also log and analyse customer feedback from Survey Monkey questionnaires reporting these to the Service Management team and BS management team quarterly.

4.2.5 Accessibility of service

The Planning and Development Service is available to our customers through a network of area offices. From any location within the Highlands an area Planning and Building Standards office is within reasonable travelling time. The offices are open from 9.00am to 5.00pm – Mon to Fri. Pilot schemes of opening offices on Saturday mornings and evening opening times have been tried but there does not appear to be an appetite within Highland for this additional service. Building Standards surveyors are contactable by:

- Face to face meetings (following an appointment being made)
- By telephone
- By tele-conferencing or video-conferencing
- By contacting the Service Centre
- By e-mail
- By post

4.2.6 Escape route

Any customer who is dissatisfied with the performance of our service and in particular the time taken to provide a first response to their building warrant application (comprising a full technical appraisal) will be advised of the “interim escape route” arrangement. In the first instance they should contact the Building Standards Manager but should they continue to be dissatisfied they should be advised that they should contact the Building Standards Division.

A formal “escape route” strategy is being developed by The Building Standards Division of Scottish Government in partnership with LABSS representing the local authority’s interests.

4.2.7 Recognised external accreditations

The Highland Council is committed to gaining external accreditation through the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF). The Development Management and Building Standards teams are now established within this framework with continuous improvement, performance and customer care initiatives now being an inherent part of the team’s everyday

workload/pattern. Corporately the Council is now targeting other Services e.g. Housing and Property (HAPS) and Transport, Environment and Community Services (TECS).

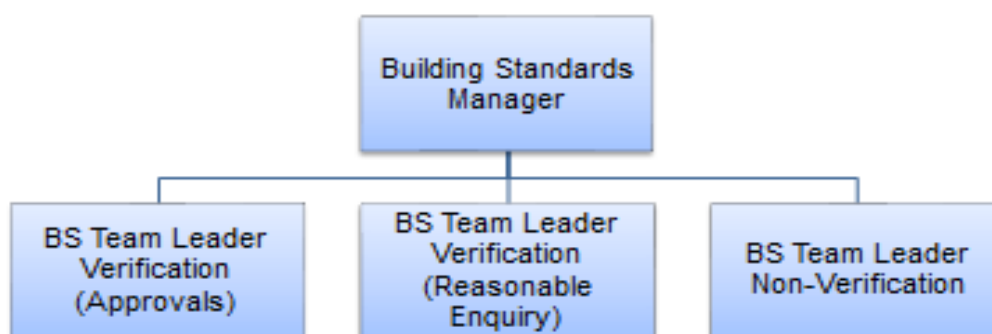
4.3 Operational and Financial Efficiency

4.3.1 Team Structures (e.g. area splits/specialist teams)

The Building Standards Manager is based at Council Headquarters in Inverness. The manager is supported by three Building Standards Team Leaders who each have a primary responsibility for Non Verification, Verification (Approvals), and Verification (Reasonable Inquiry) respectively.

Building Standards Team

BUILDING STANDARDS MANAGEMENT TEAM



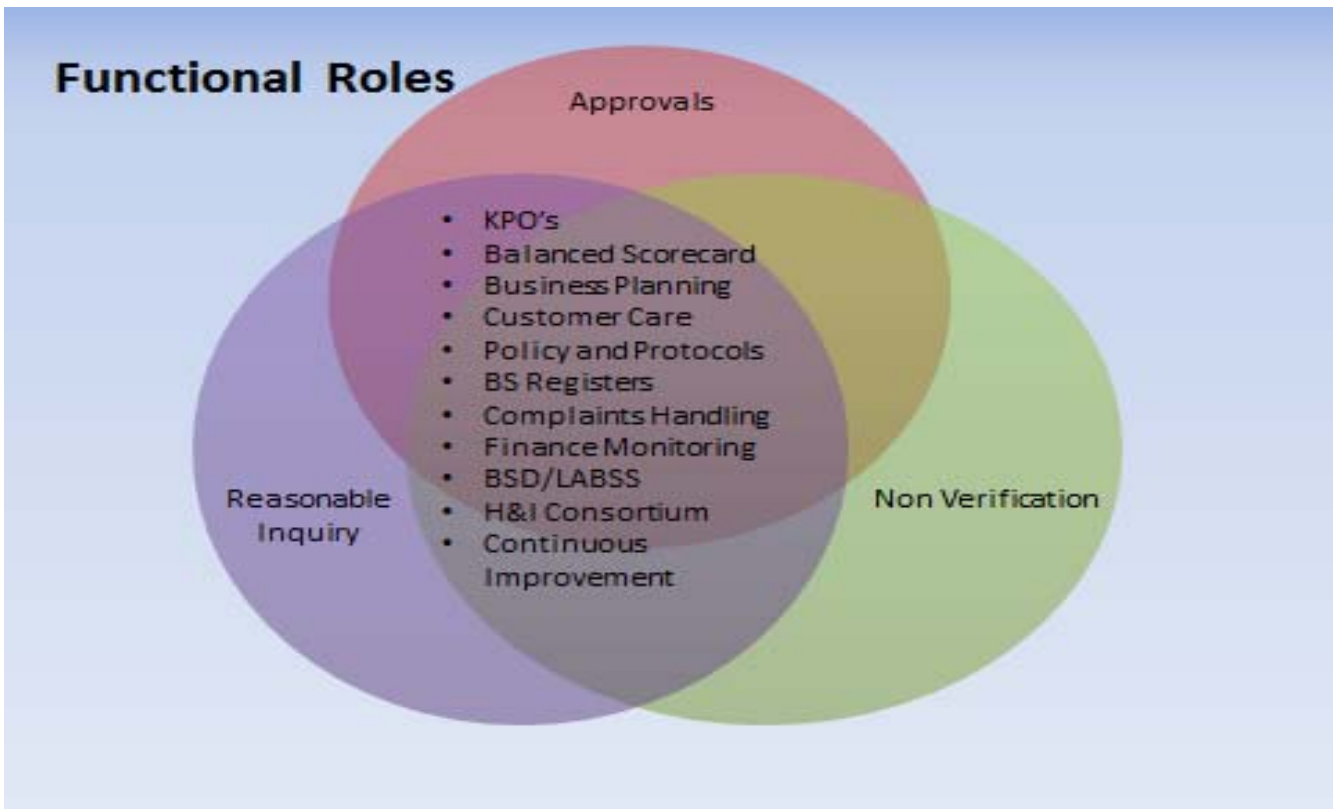
MANAGER

- overall managerial responsibility for service delivery

TEAM LEADERS

- not just area based
- Highland wide functional roles
- consistency focus
- continuous improvement responsibility

The Team Leaders have a Highland wide responsibility for consistency in these roles as well as a responsibility for more functional roles relating to matters including KPOs, Balanced Scorecard, and Business Planning etc. The table below demonstrates the overlapping roles each Team Leader is responsible for, but equally competent to offer cover for another colleague – evidence of a ‘High Performing Team’.



The Highland Council area is serviced by seven area offices, each office being led by a Principal Building Standards Surveyor with responsibility for the routine management of the area offices. The team sizes in each area office are predominately based on workload. Specialist teams for Approvals and for Reasonable Inquiry are formed and supervised by Team Leaders when required. The location and number of Building Standards Surveyors and inspectors in the area offices is proportionate to workload however a system of moving workload across the area has been developed to allow workloads and performance management to be controlled.

4.3.2 Time recording system

A time recording system is in place for monitoring time spent on Verification duties and is held within the UNI-form Database. Surveyors and clerical staff log time spent against a range of headings and this provides evidence and a break down of verification tasks.

Further to this a data collection sheet is used to record the time spent on Verification duties by other staff associated to the Verification function to provide a break down of costs attributable to these members of staff.

4.3.3 Financial Monitoring/Governance

The Building Standards Manager is provided with monthly budget reports for scrutiny. These reports are also assessed by Team Leaders and are subject to discussion at regular Building Standards Management Team meetings.

The Service's Business Support Manager is also involved in budgetary requirements and consults the Building Standards Manager on a regular basis.

In order to meet the objectives for the Building Standards Service additional spend in the following areas requires to be allowed for:

- IT support and technologies e.g. additional Uniform modules, energy assessment software, improved communications hardware
- Home and mobile working in accordance with Highland Council corporate policy
- Dangerous and Defective building enforcement work e.g. structural engineers, contractors, DLO etc.
- The cost of resupplying the BS team with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Costs associated with meeting the ERDP Training Plan.

The Business Support Manager will allocate a proportion of the verification fee income within the service budget for these items.

4.3.4 IT System

The Service makes extensive use of the IDOX UNI-form Building Control software package. This is a sophisticated workflow management and information control tool for the service. It uses the single IDOX database of textual and spatial property information to create a visual approach to location-dependent building standards processes. We are able to manage the building standards workflow effectively by:

- Structuring and streamlining our working practices, from plan checking and fee calculation through to full inspection and visit recording.
- Maximising productivity through automation and integrated mapping functions.
- Administering building regulations, dealing with contraventions and acting against dangerous structures more efficiently.

Enterprise, a UNI-form module was recently installed and commissioned. Training for all BS surveyors and shared business support staff has been carried out and the system is now in operation. Regular reviews of the functionality of the system are scheduled for the BS management team to discuss teething issues and areas needing altered with the Performance & Systems Support Team (PSST), who manage the system.

Utilising the Document Management System (DMS) to store and make available for viewing and transferring workloads through the Highland area will be piloted in the next twelve months

E-Building Standards system to enable electronic submissions of Building Warrant applications will also be investigated. A pilot system utilising Lagan is also being investigated with the Council's Corporate Improvement Programme team (CIP).

4.3.5 Internal Communication Strategy

A key part of our internal communications strategy is the use of the Building Standards Sharepoint system. This system is used to store and communicate information around the Highland Council area teams, advise of changes and to stimulate discussion. Policy and procedures are developed from the discussion forum.

A range of internal meetings are in place to ensure consistency and spread of information and understanding across the Council area. These are: -

- Building Standards Manager attends quarterly review meetings with the Chief Executive and other Service heads
- The Head of Planning and Building Standards meets with his managers, including the BS manager, every second Mon Morning
- The Director of P & D holds a diary meeting/briefing with the Service Management Team every Mon morning
- The Director holds a Service Management Team (SMT) meeting the day after every Planning, Environment and Development Committee meeting – these meeting are approx. every six weeks
- The BS Management Team, including the Head of Planning and Building Standards, meet every six weeks
- The BS Management team meet approx. every two weeks
- The BS management team and PBSSs meet every 6 week
- The whole BS team meet twice yearly. This is in addition to team training days that are held when required
- The area teams meet weekly

Highland Council is also part of the Highlands and Islands Consortium, this forum is used for discussion on all matters and feeds through to the LABSS management group.

5.0 Building Standards Additional Data

Building Standards – Additional Data (2012/13 Local Authority Annual Return)

1	Building Warrant (BW)	Number
1.1	No. of BW Applications (including "late" applications)	1982
1.2	No. of "late" BW applications (as included above)	256
1.3	No. of BW approved	2484
1.4	No. of BW refused	30
1.5	No. of amendment to BW applications	681
1.6	No. of amendment to BW applications approved	681
1.7	No. of amendment to BW applications refused	0

Comments:

2	Completion Certificates (CC)	Number
2.1	No. of CC submissions (including those where no warrant was obtained)	2704
2.2	No. of CC submissions where no warrant was obtained ("late" CCs as included above)	43
2.3	No. of CC submissions accepted	2309
2.4	No. of CC submissions rejected	0

Comments:

3	Fees	Number
3.1	Total value of works for BW applications (including "late" applications)	£227,517,209
3.2	Total value of works for amendment to warrant applications	
3.3	Total value of works for CC submissions where no warrant was obtained	
3.4	Total Value of Work	£227,517,209
3.5	Total building warrant fee income (including 'late' BW)	£1,655,688
3.6	Total amendment to warrant fee income	
3.7	Total CC fee income where no warrant was obtained	
3.8	Total Fee Income	£1,655,688

Comments:

4	Costs	Number
4.1	Total expenditure on verification	£1,403,160

Comments:

5	Certification	Number
5.1	No of certificates of design (building structures) provided	921
5.2	No of certificates of design (energy) domestic provided	80
5.3	No of certificates of design (energy) non-domestic provided	0
5.4	No of certificates of construction (electrical) provided	190
5.5	No of certificates of construction (drainage, heating and plumbing) provided	0

Comments:

6	EPCs	Number
6.1	No of copy EPCs received for domestic buildings under Standard 6.9	338
6.2	No of copy EPCs received for non-domestic buildings under Standard 6.9	7

Comments:

7	Statements of Sustainability	Number
7.1	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Bronze"	7
7.2	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Bronze +"	0
7.3	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Silver"	0
7.4	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Gold"	0
7.5	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Platinum"	0
7.6	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Bronze"	0
7.7	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Bronze +"	0
7.8*	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Silver"	N/A
7.9*	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Gold"	N/A
7.10*	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Platinum"	N/A
	<i>*7.8 to 7.10: Higher levels for Silver, Gold and Platinum are not currently possible for non-domestic.</i>	

Comments:

8	Enforcement	Number
8.1	No of section 25 notices issued	0
8.2	No of section 26 notices issued	0
8.3	No of section 27 notices issued	8
8.4	No of section 28 notices issued	1
8.5	No of instances where the local authority has taken action under Section 29	12
8.6	No of section 30 notices issued	2
8.7	No of enforcement cases reported to the Procurator Fiscal	0
8.8	No of cases from above where the local authority carried out work	3

Comments:

6.0 Risk Assessment

The risks associated with successful achievement of this scorecard have been assessed and the results shown in Appendix 1.

In summary:

Risk No. /Description	Risk Rating	Mitigating actions
BS01: Difficulty in recruiting qualified and experienced Building Standards staff	B2	"Grow our own" policy and ensure successful succession management
BS02: Ineffective management of change	C2	Careful implementation of change with full consultation and support for staff
BS03: Not providing a value for money verification service	C3	Careful monitoring of costs against fee income and investigation additional income streams
BS04: Inadequate Health and Safety protocols	C1	Review risk assessments and provide suitable staff training
BS05: Potential costs for statutory enforcement of dangerous and defective building incidents	B3	Ensure adequate budget in place to carry out statutory duties
BS06: Effect of Shared Business Support performance on Building Standards performance	C2	Effective monitoring of SBS performance and regular discussion with SBS management
BS07: Failure to follow through on Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) initiative	D2	Management buy-in to ensure successful implementation of PSIF scheme and explore other options for BS service

Appendix 1

Risk Assessments

Balanced Scorecard Id	4.1.6	
Service Risk	Difficulty in recruiting qualified and experienced Building Standards staff	
Risk Reference	BS01	
Lead Officer	Director/Head of Service	
Resource	Within service budget	
Key Performance Result	Having qualified and experienced Building Standards staff	
Risk Rating	B2	
Enabling actions		Review Date
1.0	Review recruitment trends amongst BS staff and consider opportunities for training and development of existing staff	6 monthly
1.2	Cross reference progress with leaving interviews	As required
1.3	"Grow our own" staff from school leaver/graduate level	3 monthly

Balanced Scorecard Id	4.1	
Service Risk	Ineffective management of change	
Risk Reference	BS02	
Lead Officer	Building Standards Manager	
Resource	Within service budget	
Key Performance Result	Maintaining staff morale and general well-being	
Risk Rating	C2	
Enabling actions		Review Date
2.0	Consider implementation of change dates and stagger appropriately	As required
2.1	Consult and discuss fully with all staff	As required timeously
2.2	Ensure contact with Health, Safety and Wellbeing team is available	On-going

Balanced Scorecard Id	4.3.2/4.3.3	
Service Risk	Not providing a value for money verification service	
Risk Reference	BS03	
Lead Officer	Director/Head of Service	
Resource	Within service budget	
Key Performance Result	Ensuring a value for money service is provided to the customer	
Risk Rating	C3	
Enabling actions		Review Date
3.0	Continue to monitor our verification costs against fee income	quarterly
3.1	Investigate ways of generating additional fee income	6 weekly
3.2	Examine ways of minimising/reducing costs	6 monthly

3.3	Ensure fee scales reflect changes in construction cost indices/inflation	annually
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Balanced Scorecard Id	4.1.3
Service Risk	Inadequate Health and Safety protocols
Risk Reference	BS04
Lead Officer	Director/Head of Service
Resource	Within service budget
Key Performance Result	Ensuring staff safety in the workplace
Risk Rating	C1

Enabling actions		Review Date
4.0	Ensure risk assessments completed in conjunction with the HS&W team for all work practices	Quarterly
4.1	Develop and implement lone working policies	imminent
4.2	Develop and implement policy on staff driving for work purposes	imminent
4.3	Ensure all staff are fully kitted out with appropriate PPE	On-going
4.4	Provide health and safety training to all staff	6 monthly

Balanced Scorecard Id	4.3.3
Service Risk	Potential costs for statutory enforcement of dangerous and defective building incidents
Risk Reference	BS05
Lead Officer	Director/Head of Service
Resource	Within service budget
Key Performance Result	Having a suitable budget to ensure enforcement costs can be met
Risk Rating	B3

Enabling actions		Review Date
5.0	Consult with Head of Service to discuss suitable budget arrangements	annually
5.1	Log and scrutinise all costs of statutory enforcement currently accrued	monthly

Balanced Scorecard Id	2.0
Service Risk	Effect of Shared Business Support performance on Building Standards performance
Risk Reference	BS06
Lead Officer	Director/Head of Service
Resource	Within service budget
Key Performance Result	Maintaining current performance levels
Risk Rating	C2

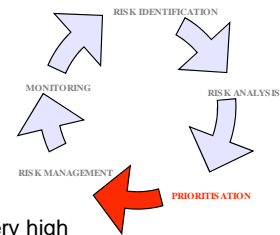
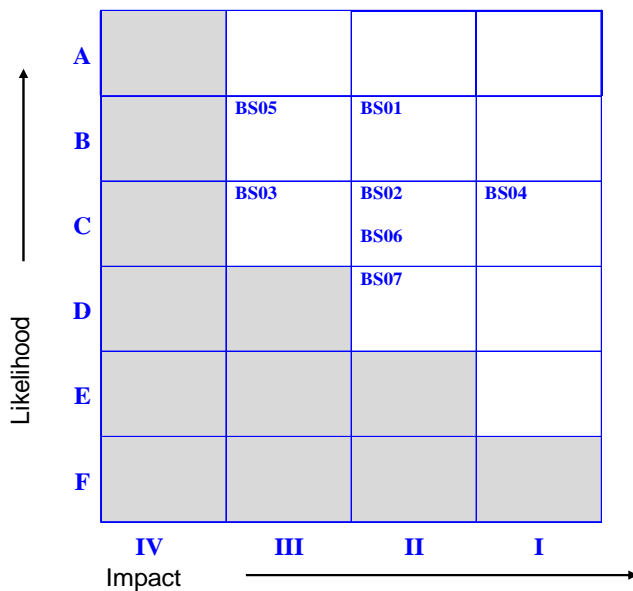
Enabling actions		Review Date
6.0	Monitoring of SBS KPI's through Idox Enterprise	weekly

6.1	Discuss resource implications with SBS Head of Service	On-going
6.2	Regularly discuss SBS performance with SBS management/team leaders	monthly

Balanced Scorecard Id	4.2.7
Service Risk	Failure to follow through on Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) initiative
Risk Reference	BS07
Lead Officer	Director/Head of Service
Resource	Within service budget
Key Performance Result	Achieving PSIF accreditation
Risk Rating	D2

Enabling actions		Review Date
7.0	Explore potential of BS service going it alone with PSIF or another accredited body e.g. Customer Service Excellence	current
7.1	Pushing on the improvement work already identified within the PSIF process	quarterly
7.2	Engage with staff on PSIF initiatives	6 monthly
7.3	Ensure senior management buy-in to move forward to achieving an outcome	On-going

Highland Council – Building Standards Service
Risk profile – April 2013



Likelihood:

- A Very high
- B High
- C Significant
- D Low
- E Very low
- F Almost impossible

Impact:

- I Catastrophic
- II Critical
- III Marginal
- IV Negligible

Glenn Campbell
Building Standards Manager
23 May 2012