



Building Standards Service Verification role

Balanced Scorecard Progress to date 2008 - 2009

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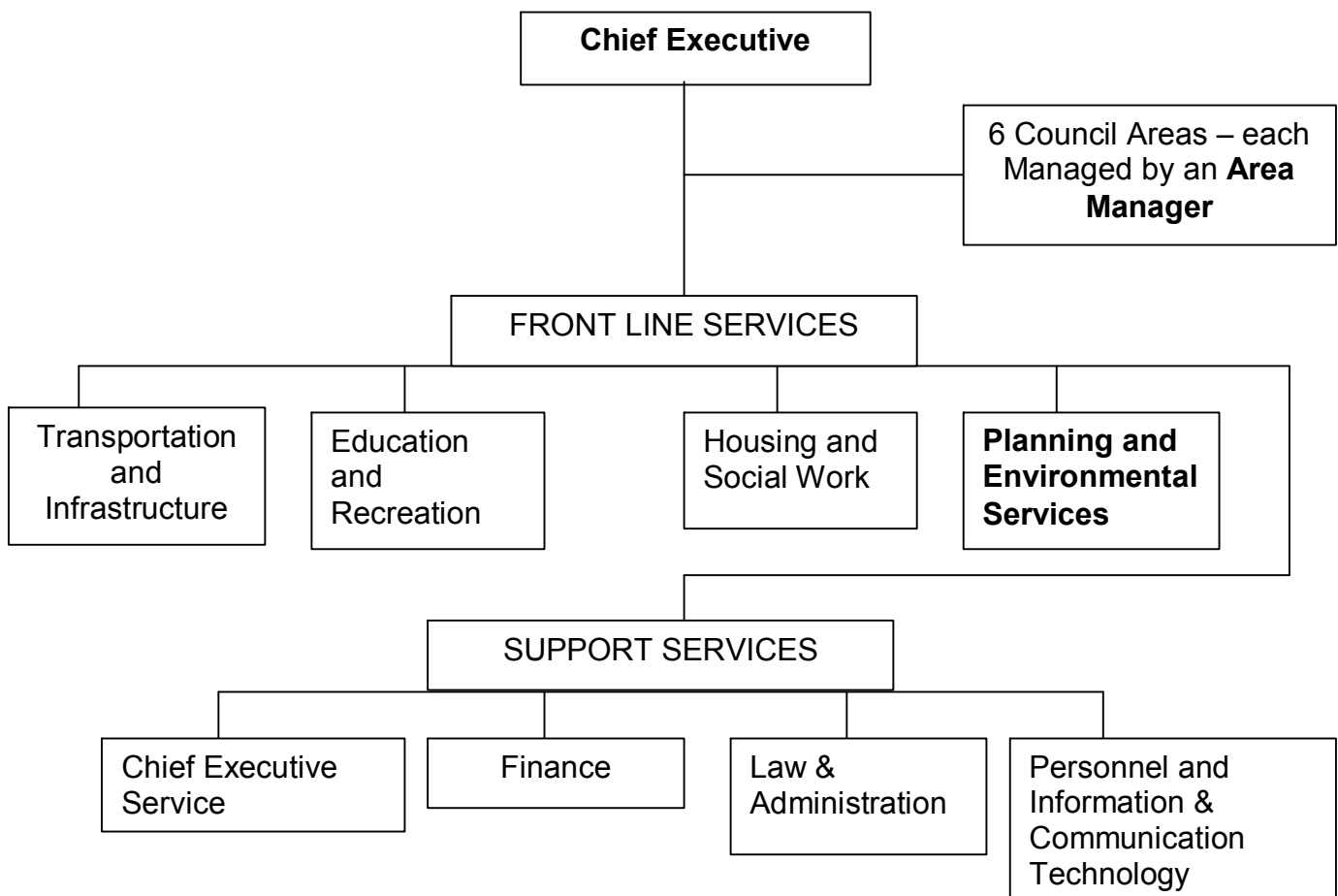


Aberdeenshire Council –Structure of Aberdeenshire Council

Aberdeenshire Council is 6,300 square kilometres of rich farmland, towns, coastline and mountains in northeast Scotland accounting for 8% of Scotland's total land mass. There are approximately 230,000 people who reside in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire Council spends over £500m each year on services and has over 11,000 employees. The Council's spending per head of population is amongst the lowest in Scotland, and 11.5% below the Scottish average.

Aberdeenshire's grant per head of population is 13.4% below the Scottish average (equal to £62m each year) and our Council Tax is the 15th lowest in Scotland.



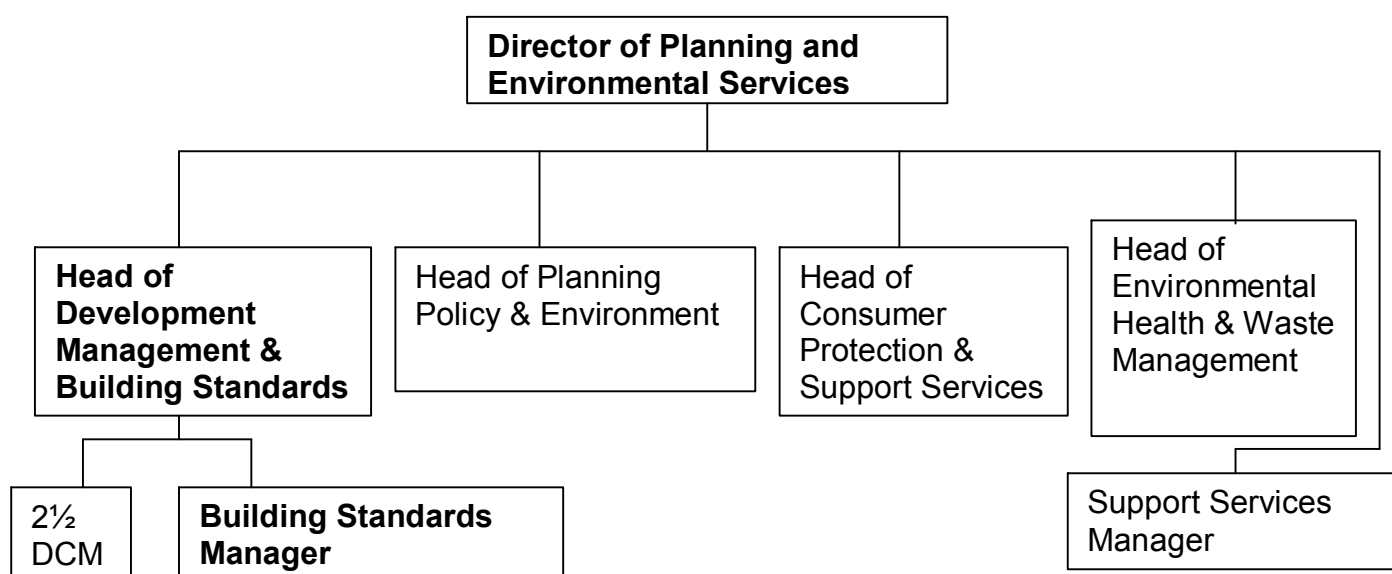
Aberdeenshire Councils Building Standards Service

Aberdeenshire Council's Building Standards service is located within Planning and Environmental Services. Planning and Environmental Services has four core functions which it administers, these are:

Environmental Health,
Consumer Protection and Support services,
Waste Management, and
Planning (Policy & Environment and **Development Management & Building Standards**).

Structure of the Planning & Environmental Service – Key-reporting lines

The following organisational chart shows the key reporting relationships within Planning and Environmental Services.



Key Staff and Resources

The Building Standards manager is responsible for the delegated function of Building Standards, and is supported by three Team Leaders, each taking responsibility for two Building Standards Teams.

The Service is delivered at present via Area focus to the public and customers from the following administrative Areas:

• Kincardine & Mearns	• Marr
• Garioch	• Formartine
• Banff & Buchan	• Buchan

The areas of Aberdeenshire Council vary greatly in population density, industry and social economic issues. As a result of this, Aberdeenshire Council Building Standards delivers its service to these very different and diverse areas via our 11 area based offices.

Aberdeenshire Council : Our Vision

Aberdeenshire Council has been providing services and leadership to the people of Aberdeenshire since 1996. The Council has clear aspirations for the future of Aberdeenshire, and these are reflected in the Council's vision.

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland

The best area

Helping to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through . . .

- happy, healthy and confident people
- safe, friendly and lively communities
- an enterprising and adaptable economy
- our special environment and diverse culture

The best council

Aiming to provide excellent services for all by . . .

- involving, responding and enabling
- finding new and more efficient ways of doing things
- providing elected leadership for our area
- working with our partners in the North East and beyond
- always looking to the future

Planning and Environmental Services

Supporting Aberdeenshire Council's vision

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Planning and Environmental Services -

“Supporting Aberdeenshire Council’s vision to be the best area and the best council by providing high quality local services to residents, communities, businesses and visitors”

We will work to enhance quality of life by:

- protecting the health, welfare and safety of people and the environment
- managing Aberdeenshire’s unique environment in the interests of current and future generations
- enhancing the economic welfare of the area by supporting fair and legal trading
- encouraging healthy lifestyle options
- managing construction and the use of land
- providing advice, information and support in all areas of work

serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea -
the very best of Scotland.

Building Standards

The principle objective of Building Standards is to secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings, further the conservation of fuel and power, and further the achievement of sustainable development.

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

Staff Establishment

Aberdeenshire Council Building Standards has an establishment of 28 professional staff and supported at each location by administrative assistants provided by the Support Services section.

The three Team Leaders are located in Inverurie, Banff and Stonehaven. In addition to this the composition of each team is as follows:

- Kincardine & Mearns 4 Building Standards Surveyors
- Marr 4 Building Standards Surveyors
- Garioch 4 Building Standards Surveyors
 1 Building Standards Technical Assistant
- Formartine 3 Building Standards Surveyors
 1 Building Standards Technical Assistant
- Banff & Buchan 2 Building Standards Surveyors
 2 Building Standards Technical Assistants
- Buchan 1 Senior Building Standards Surveyor
 1 Building Standards Surveyor
 1 Building Standards Technical Assistants

Perspective 1 – Public Interest

Verifiers will have in place risk management protocols that will determine the management of work on building warrants and completion certificates.

Action	Description	Position to date 06/07	Position to date 07/08	Action 08/09	Target
1	Develop a risk management protocol for allocation and processing warrant applications.	Protocol developed and implemented on 01/04/2006.	Protocols reviewed, flow charts developed in conjunction with supplementary information and implemented.	Monitor existing revised protocols and flow charts to maintain consistent service delivery.	Oct 08
2	Develop a risk management protocol for acceptance of certificates of completion.	Protocol developed and implemented on 01/04/2006.	Protocols reviewed, flow charts developed in conjunction with supplementary information and implemented.	Monitor existing revised protocols and flow charts to maintain consistent service delivery.	Oct 08
3	Develop a risk management protocol for structural design criteria for building warrant applications. (New objective 08/09)	N/A	N/A	Protocol to be developed and implemented.	Jan/Feb 09
4	Develop a risk management protocol for Building Warrant site inspections. (New objective 08/09)	N/A	N/A	Protocol to be developed and implemented.	Mar 09

Perspective 2 – Private Customer

Verifiers will have in place by 30 September 2006 a customer charter which encompasses:

- Guidance to stakeholders
- Accessibility of service
- Measurable performance targets, and
- Customer views

Action	Description	Position to date 06/07	Position to date 07/08	Action 08/09	Target
1	Production of a Building Standards Charter.	Since the introduction of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 Aberdeenshire Building Standards Charter was never fully amended and updated, this work is presently being developed. A Working Group is currently reviewing the complete document.	Building Standards Charter developed in draft form. Implementation of final document imminent.	Amended Customer Charter Publication	Aug/Sept 08

2	Production of meaningful performance indicator in relation to the Building Warrant application process.	The 2006/07 Balanced Scorecard identified the need for a robust indicator to demonstrate both performance and quality of service. This indicator was dependant on national negotiations and agreement. This has yet to be ratified. Aberdeenshire has, however, established performance measurement which is recorded and produced quarterly for the Building Warrant Verification process.	Building Warrant processing performance statistics are recorded and reported on a 1/4ly basis.	Maintain current method of recording performance measurement. Seek customer views via questionnaire survey.	Oct 08
3	Establish Agent Focus Group to seek customer views. (New objective 07/08)	N/A	A Building Standards Focus Group has been established with the inaugural meeting held in March 07, attended by a cross-section of customers.	Continuation of agreed Focus Group format.	Sept 08 (with ongoing agreed dates)
4	Consult customers with regard to service provision. (New objective 07/08)	N/A	Questionnaire developed to gauge customer feedback.	Evaluate customer feedback and identify any pertinent issues.	Dec 08

5	Develop questionnaire to ascertain requirement of Building Warrant application. (Pre-warrant enquiry) (New 07/08 objective)	N/A	Questionnaire developed. Objective implemented following pilot exercise.	Review questionnaire in light of customer feedback.	Feb 09
6	Production of information relative to the Verifier function.	The Building Standards website is continually updated and developed. Information on 'Making a Building Warrant application' is available at all area offices and is also published online.	The Building Standards website is updated periodically to ensure information accuracy. All new publications issued through BSD and SABSM are available to customers through external links on our web pages.	Monitoring of website to ensure information accuracy. Further development of 'hard copy' information leaflets for display and distribution purpose.	Monitored 6 monthly Mar 09

Perspective 3 – Internal Business

Verifiers will have prepared a formal plan for the internal business perspective for future financial years.

Action	Description	Position to date 06/07	Position to date 07/08	Action 08/09	Target
1	Production of an annual Internal Business plan.	An Internal Business plan (IBP) for 2006 – 2007 was produced as draft in September 2005. The finalised plan agreed and implemented on 01/04/06.	Reviewed IBP developed for year 07/08. Work progressing on development of IBP for 2008/09.	Complete IBP for 08/09 to identifying core business needs.	Dec 08
2	Maintain the staff establishment of 28 posts filled out of 29 posts over the period 2005-2006.	Due to budget pressures one post has been removed from Service establishment reducing this to 28. In the last 12 months there has been a number of vacancies arisen through promotions and resignations. In this period two new members of staff have been recruited. There is currently one staff vacancies. Difficulties have been encountered in relation to recruiting suitable candidates for these vacancies.	Staff establishment re-instated to 29 in number. Vacancies have arisen over the last 12 months. These vacancies have successfully been filled with the exception of one. It is accepted that there are training issues for these new members of staff and this has been actioned accordingly.	Objective achieved and completed.	Objective closed.

3	Appraise all staff in accordance with EDRS each year.	The Employee Development and Review Scheme (EDRS) which identifies specific training needs are carried out annually and training plans submitted to Service Management Team (SMT).	The Employee Development and Review Scheme (EDRS) which identifies specific training needs are carried out annually and training plans submitted to Service Management Team (SMT).	Maintain established process to identify training needs.	Dec 08
4	Establish alternative routes to employment. (New 07/08 objective)	N/A	The current Professional Development Scheme (PDS) is under review with the potential to introduce trainee/assistant BSS to the establishment. A draft report has been submitted to Service Management Team for further consideration.	Awaiting outcome of report.	To be identified.
5	Map existing process of registering a Building Warrant.	A process map for the registration of Building Warrants has been developed and in place. This has resulted in a standardised, efficient building warrant registration procedure.	An administration working group was established to develop robust database user guidance. This enhances uniformity of processes across Aberdeenshire, with the aim to improve Service delivery.	Publication of finalised user manual. Continuous development within the database working group.	Nov 08 Continuous

6	Up date and implement the Sx3 system. (Back office database)	The Aberdeenshire Building Standards Register development is nearing completion. 'Go-live' put on hold until detailed information received through SBSA/SABSM Building Standards Register working group.	The back office database was established in 2002 and is continually monitored and reviewed by the service Information Officer.	The back office database was established in 2002 and is continually monitored and reviewed by the service Information Officer. An Administration User Group is established and meet 1/4ly to develop advice, guidance and implement procedural changes where necessary.	Continuous 1/4ly meeting programme
7	Publish Building Standards Register on-line New 07/08 objective	N/A	Dynamic on-line Building Standards Register went live June 07. Objective achieved	Further develop the on-line facility to meet customer needs.	July 08

Perspective 4 – Continuous Improvement

Verifiers will have prepared a 3 year strategy for 2006 – 2009 for continuous improvement by 30 September 2005.

Action	Description	Position to date 06/07	Position to date 07/08	Action 08/09	Target
1	Production of a Continuous Improvement strategy for the period 2006 – 2009.	Service delivery Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2006 – 2009 published and in place. Continuous Improvement is embedded within the Councils vision.	Targets identified in the CIP achieved to date.	Identify future core activity improvements through established Senior Management and Continuous improvement working group. Three year rolling CIP in place.	Jan 09
2	Awareness seminars to be held throughout Aberdeenshire.	Seminars have been provided to developers relating specifically to submission of Completion Certificates to the Verifier. This gave an overview of the required method of completing of forms and general procedures.	September 07, 200 Agents attended a Building Standards Seminar hosted by Aberdeenshire Council in conjunction with two of our neighbouring local authority verifiers.	Maintain format established with Grampian Building Standards Liaison Group Identify fresh initiatives established via customer feedback.	Oct/Nov 08
3	Standardise site inspection process.	The Kaizen process (continuous improvement management tool) in relation to standardisation of the site inspection procedures has been implemented.	Monitoring of the kaizen targets takes place on a regular basis and issued to SMT.	Ensure established processes are maintained across the Building Standards Service.	6 monthly

Perspective 5 – Finance

Verifiers shall have a system in place to record costs and the management of costs against income streams for the verification process by March 2007.

Action	Description	Position to date 06/07	Position to date 07/08	Action 08/09	Target
1	Time recording system to be established for warrant applications.	The Sx3 (back office software) system possibly has the potential to be further developed to record time taken for the verification role. At present this has not been fully developed due to recent critical upgrades to the system. The Councils information officer is in discussions with the software provider to enhance the system to provide such a function.	A time recording system is established and implemented as of 1 st April 08.	Monitor newly adopted time recording system and amend if required.	Aug 08
2	Management system put in place to monitor budget for Verification.	Meetings on quarterly basis with Service accountants to monitor budget and discuss trends.	Meetings on quarterly basis with Service accountants to monitor budget and discuss trends.	Meetings on quarterly basis with Service accountants to monitor budget and discuss trends.	Quarterly.
3	Split budget to show Verification role separate from Public Interest.	Continued discussions to establish the accurate sub-division of costs in terms of verification and non-verification work.	System in place.	Service accountant provides information as required.	