



Glasgow City Council

**Economy, Housing, Transport and
Regeneration City Policy Committee**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of Neighbourhoods,
Regeneration and Sustainability**

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Item 4

20th August 2024

BUILDING STANDARDS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Purpose of Report:

To report on the Building Standards Annual Performance Report 2023-24 published to meet the appointment criteria set by the Scottish Ministers

Recommendations:

Committee is asked to:

- Consider the contents of the annual Building Standards Performance Report 2023-24.
- Note the challenges within the service in terms of staff recruitment locally (and nationally) and the efforts that are being put forward to improve the performance of the Glasgow City Council Building Standards Service.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1. Background

- 1.1 In Scotland, all 32 local authorities operate and administer the building warrant function for their geographical area. Whilst it is a statutory function the local authorities are appointed by the Scottish Ministers to undertake this arising from the background legislation of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 the administration of the building warrant function is called “verification” and each authority is therefore known as a verifier for this purpose.
- 1.2 In each local authority the function is undertaken by their Building Standards service which in Glasgow is part of City Development in Neighbourhoods Regeneration & Sustainability.
- 1.3 The operation of the verification system is the predominant function of Building Standards & Public Safety (BS&PS), however it also has responsibilities for, or related to:
 - Dangerous Buildings,
 - Reports of Unauthorised Works,
 - Safety at Sports Grounds,
 - Temporary Raised Structures,
 - Liquor Licencing, and
 - Public Entertainment Licencing for concerts and events.
 - The latter four being part of reporting and liaison with the Licencing team within Legal Services.
 - Whilst this report relates to the Annual Performance Report a short presentation will be given to committee on at the end on these other BS&PS functions
- 1.4 The Scottish Ministers set appointment criteria for verifiers and this is usually for a 6 year period. The current period being from the 01 May 2023 to 30 April 2029.
- 1.5 As part of the conditions of appointment each authority is required to meet the Performance Framework set by the Scottish Ministers
- 1.6 As part of this authorities are required to submit quarterly performance reporting to the Ministers and publish an Annual Performance report at the end of each financial year.
- 1.7 The format Annual Performance Report broadly follows a template in the Performance Framework and which is based around three themes: 1) Professional Expertise and Technical Processes, 2) Quality Customer Experience and 3) Operational and Financial Efficiency.
- 1.8 Against these themes there are seven Key Performance Outcomes (KPO's) which form the basis of the quarterly reporting.
- 1.9 The report requires to be published online and is available here [Building Standards Annual Performance Report](#)

2. Building Standards Annual Performance Report 2023-24

- 2.1 As headline statistics, the report outlines that we received 2,846 building warrant applications and issued 4,980 Completion Certificate Acceptances. The value of works that the building warrants represent was in excess of £600m.
- 2.2 Of the 10 KPO's we are assessed against, 7 as listed below, are meeting target. For the remaining 3 we have been assessed as a combination of amber and red through the quarterly reporting periods.
- Publishing our Customer Charter on our website
 - 95% of requests are replied to within 5 days to the Government for their customer Verifier Performance Reporting service
 - Fee income covers verification costs
 - Details of the use of the governments eBuilding Standards Portal are published
 - 75% of key processes are processed electronically – plan assessment, warrant approvals, completion certificate acceptances at the end of a project
 - Maintaining the publication of the Annual Performance Reports and secondly the publication of the performance data therein.
- 2.3 For the remaining three criteria, we have been assessed as a combination of Amber and Red through the quarterly reporting periods:
- 95% of first responses to applications within 20 working days – this criteria was Amber at the beginning of the year at 89%, however dropped into Red for the last three quarters at 80 to 81%
 - 90% of applications issued with 10 working days once all information is received – this criteria was Amber at the beginning of the year at 81.7%, however it dropped into Red for the last three quarters ranging from 76 to 79%
 - Customer Satisfaction rating ranged from 6.9 to 3.1 in the final quarter. It is noted these are based on a small amount of customer returns
- 2.4 The year proved challenging from a resourcing perspective and this has continued to affect performance. The service has re-advertised posts throughout the year with minimal success and continues to try and fill vacancies. The challenging resourcing picture is repeated nationally for Building Standards, where there are concerns over capacity within the system and a lack of candidates with the appropriate qualifications or experience.
- 2.5 Each authority is part of Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) where we use the forum to liaise with the Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government. This covers all matters of national and local interest, service delivery and performance issues. As a sub-division of this we operate in local consortia. The Clyde Valley Consortia is chaired by Glasgow and its other members are East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Argyll & Bute.

3. Additional Contextual Information and Conclusion

- 3.1 The Scottish Ministers recognise the challenges in the Building Standards system and have been in discussion with Local Authorities on the future direction. This is also within the context of other factors that have created the need to improve the quality of construction more generally. For example the lessons learned from the Grenfell tragedy and other projects that have demonstrated quality related issues.
- 3.2 Through work with LABSS a central Hub has been created and is hosted by Fife Council. This seeks to enhance previous work of LABSS for sharing information, expertise, and processes that can bring further consistencies and efficiencies in the system.
- 3.3 There is a renewed focus by the Ministers on what they term High Risk Buildings (HRB) and which they typically define as higher rise (both residential and commercial), schools, colleges, universities, sports centres, hospitals and care homes. As Scotland's largest city, Glasgow receives a greater proportion of these types of developments.
- 3.4 Members may also be aware of the ongoing work in relation to "tall buildings" in the city. A number of these will be of a height which exceeds the current tall building guidance for the Scottish Building Regulations and pose additional challenges. Whilst dealing with such tall buildings is not an entirely new concept for Building Standards staff in Glasgow, there are various working groups considering how the enhanced scrutiny of HRB types will be best undertaken and of which GCC Building Standards is part.
- 3.5 Ministers approved an increase in building standards fees from April 2024, the main purpose of which is to assist with creating greater capacity in the system. Local authorities are working with the relevant government department on how this is taken forward.
- 3.6 The 2023-24 Annual Performance Report for GCC was published on time. Quarterly performance submissions to the Scottish Government continue in 24/25 whilst work continues at a national level on enhancements to the system

4. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	None presently. As noted in Section 3.5
<i>Legal:</i>	None
<i>Personnel:</i>	None
<i>Procurement:</i>	None

Council Strategic Plan: The Building Standards Performance Framework reports on delivery of our statutory function. The Performance Report is considered to support the following Grand Challenge(s) and Mission(s).

GRAND CHALLENGE FOUR

Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities.

MISSION 1

Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. None

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? No significant impact

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage. No significant impact

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: No

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? None

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? None

**Privacy and Data
Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N None

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

5 Recommendations

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