



Building Standards Service

Team Plan

(incorporating the Balanced Scorecard for Scottish
Government performance monitoring)

2015 - 2018

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

VERIFIER

Building Standards Service

South Ayrshire Council

Burns House

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Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

2. SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL'S BUILDING STANDARDS VERIFICATION SERVICE

3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

5. ADDITIONAL DATA

Appendix 1. Council Strategic Outcomes

Appendix 2. Risk register for Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard

Appendix 3. Continuous improvement plan - summary

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Building Standards in Scotland

The purpose of the building standards system in Scotland is to protect the public interest, by setting out 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 dependant on 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. South Ayrshire Council is currently appointed until 2017 as the sole verifier for its own geographical area.

1.2 South Ayrshire



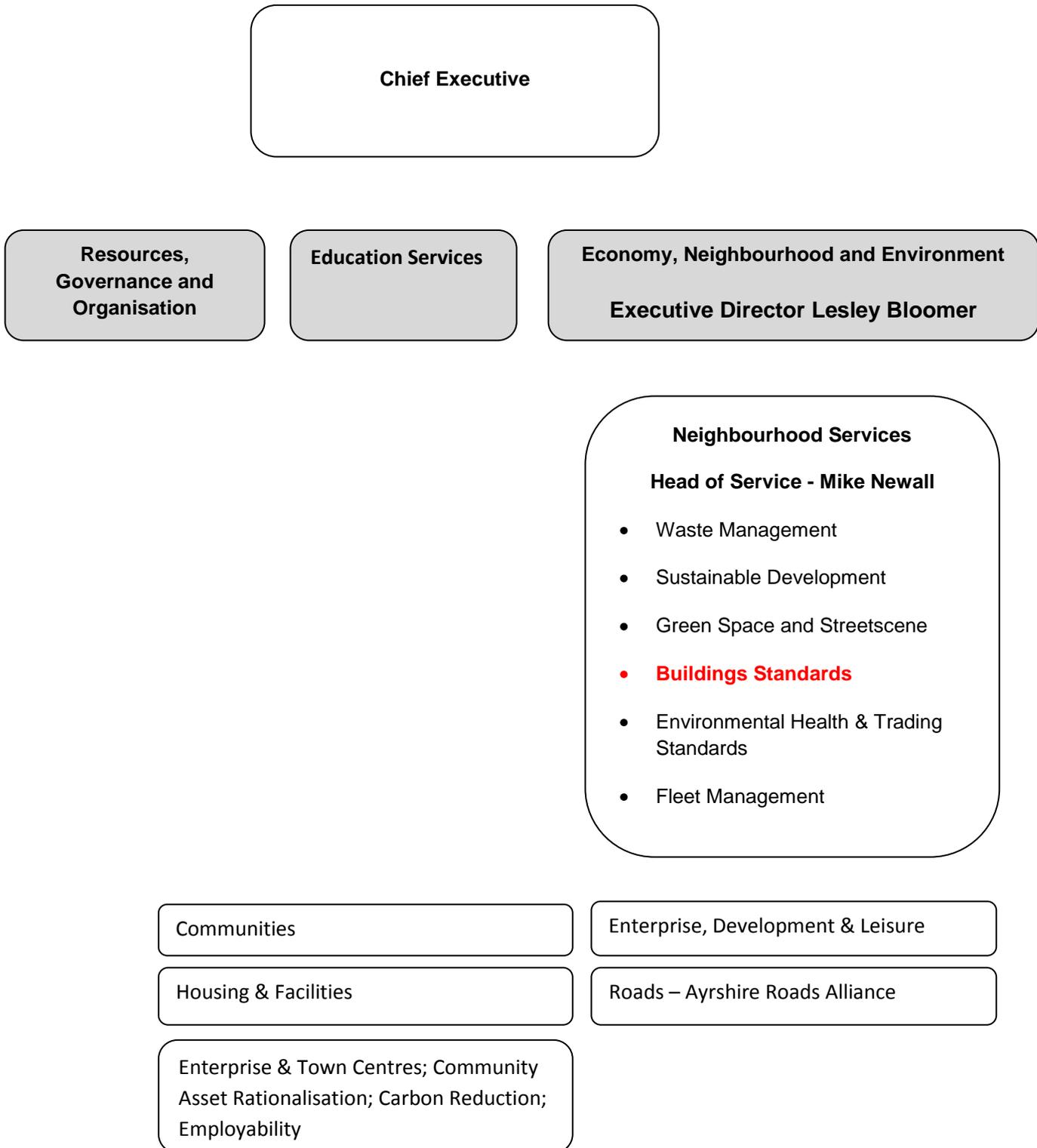
South Ayrshire is situated in the south west of Scotland, and covers an area of 1,222 square kilometres, extending from Troon and Symington in the north to Ballantrae and Loch Ryan in the south. Seventy per cent of the 111,600 inhabitants live in the towns of Troon, Prestwick and Ayr. The rest of the area is predominantly rural, including the smaller towns of Maybole and Girvan, and many small villages. The southern third of the area is fairly remote, with average travel time being in excess of 30 minutes.

The population of South Ayrshire declined by just under 1% in the 10 years between 1991 and 2001 and is projected to decline by a further 2% by 2021. In spite of this, the demand for housing is expected to increase by more than 5% in the period up to 2021.

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1.3 South Ayrshire Council's Corporate Structure

The Chief Executive is supported by 3 Executive Directors with 3 Departments and the Building Standards service is part of the Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment Directorate is shown below -

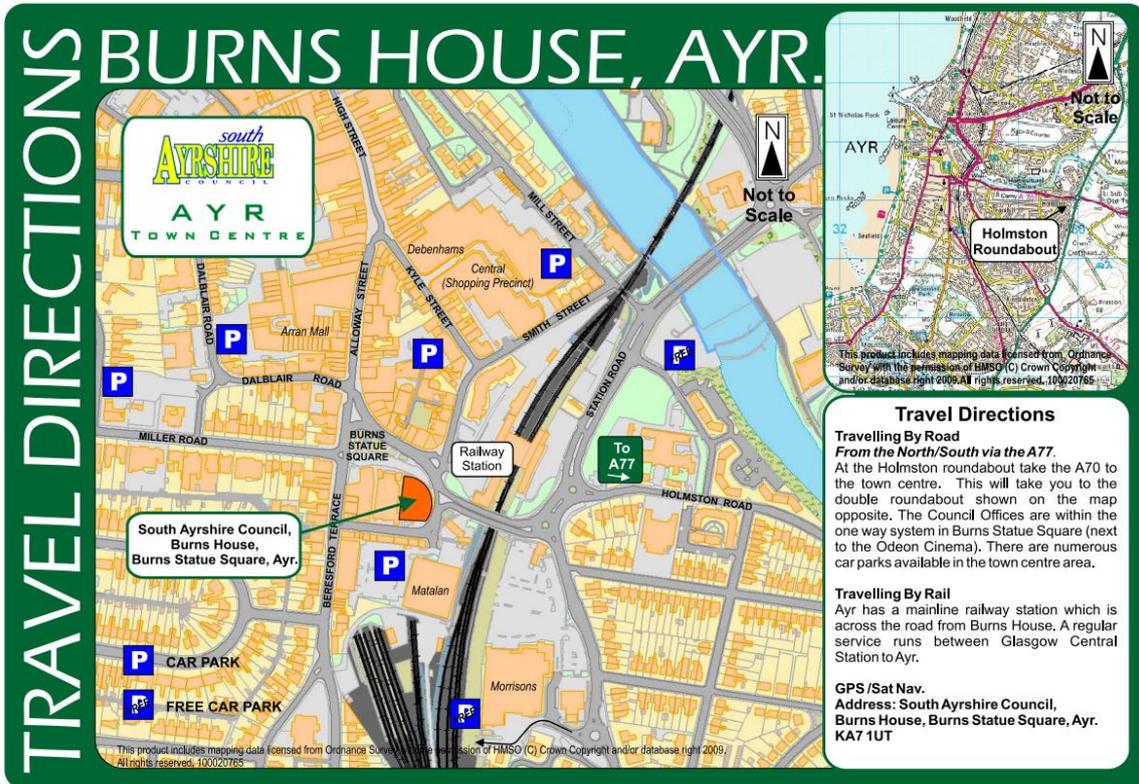


Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

2. SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL'S BUILDING STANDARDS VERIFICATION SERVICE

2.1 General

The building standards service is based in one office located in Burns House, Ayr -



2.2 This Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard Plan identifies anticipated challenges for the coming three years and how we aim to meet them. It sets out the vision, strategic objectives and service objectives for building standards. We have also considered PI data, customer feedback, feedback from staff and complaints in our analysis. This information is then used to formulate actions and measures to track both service delivery and improvement. Where appropriate, we have agreed challenging targets for the building standards service in order to continuously improve the way we work and to take account of the views and needs of our customers, consequently this Plan will be revised regularly and reviewed annually. The Plan forms the Balanced Scorecard submission to the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division in relation to monitoring performance of the Council as the appointed verifier for building standards in South Ayrshire.

2.3 Although the next three years will present challenges, by planning and monitoring our progress we aim to contribute to the achievement of the Council's Plan 2014-17 and the Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23.

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2.4 Our key areas of focus for the lifecycle of this Plan will be the following:

- continue to deliver high quality customer service in the core verifier function of assessing applications for Building Warrants and issuing Completion Certificates
- facilitate the successful re-appointment by the Scottish Government in 2017 as Verifier for Building Warrants and Completion Certificates in South Ayrshire
- extend the performance reports for the Scottish Government to include non-domestic categories and upgrade systems to report performance online to the new BSD web platform
- take appropriate action to make safe dangerous buildings throughout South Ayrshire, including the possible demolition of the former Zest nightclub building in Burns Statue Square, Ayr,
- manage staffing levels to meet economic upturn, budget efficiencies/savings, combined with succession planning
- introduce E-Building Standards to enhance service delivery and meet Scottish Government improvements
- develop new notices module for monitoring and recording dangerous/ defective buildings, non-compliant buildings and enforcement
- set up section 63 Climate Change (Scotland) 2009 enforcement procedures to upgrade existing non-domestic buildings to improve energy efficiency

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2.5 The building standards service has the following responsibilities:

Verification of Building Warrants and Completion Certificates

Building Standards deal with approximately 1000 Building Warrant applications and 700 applications for Completion Certificates per annum. The value of this work is over £100m and this currently generates a fee income of some £600,000 per annum.

Dangerous Buildings, Engineering Services and other services

Building Standards deal with 80 dangerous building incidents per annum along with 200 structural design projects, 300 certificate checks, 90 structural checks for other Councils, 108 Licensing reports, Safety Certificates at two Sports venues (Somerset Park and Ayr Racecourse), 35 reports for the Planning service and 116 requests for property enquiry reports/street nameplates.

Housing Grants

Building Standards deal with part of the administration, and the inspection of, housing grants for approx. 200 disabled occupants per annum, with a total expenditure of £600k.

2.6 Building Standards staff provide key front line services directly to the community. The main functions and responsibilities of building standards include: Verifying Building Warrants; Dangerous Buildings; Housing Grants; Licensing; Street Naming and Numbering; Safety of Sports Grounds; Engineering Services; Disability Issues, and Property Enquiries.

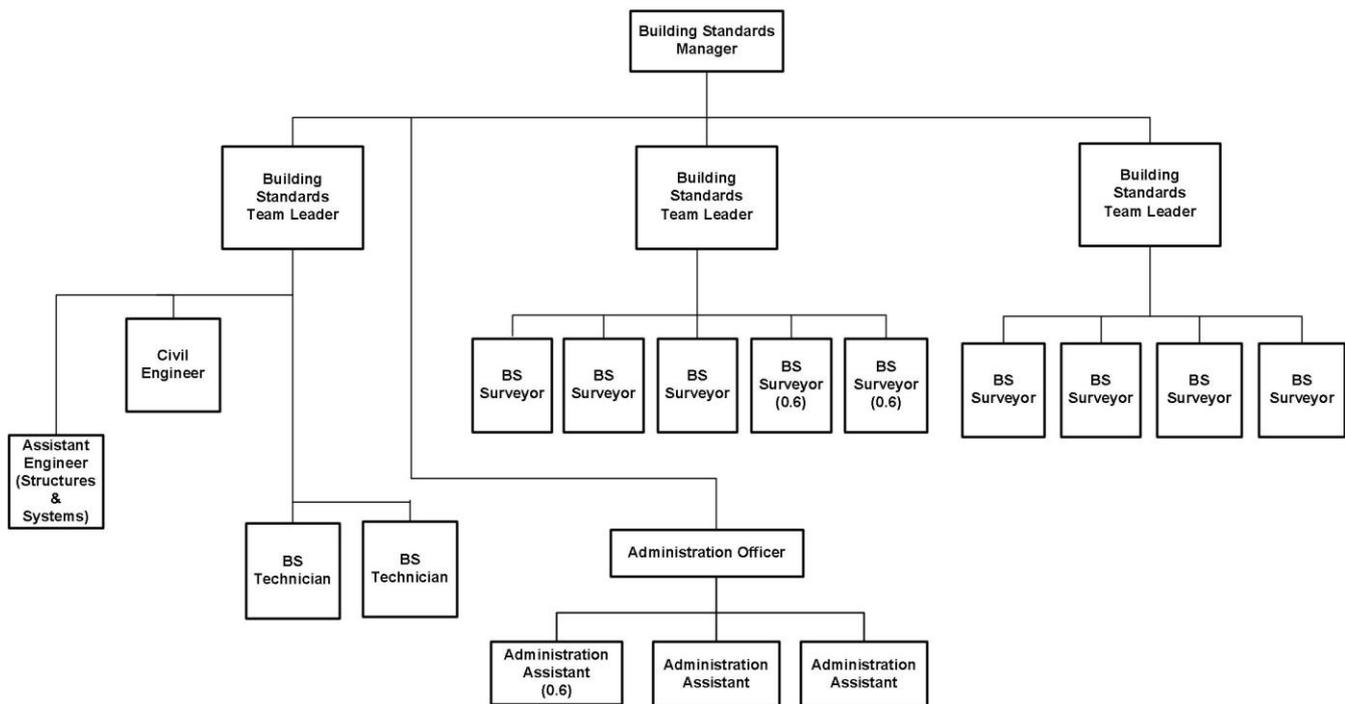
2.7 The Building Standards service consisted of a workforce of 19 FTE (including Professional, Technical & Administration staff), as at 1st June 2015. Two new full time Building Standards surveyors were appointed in February 2015. In 2015/16 it is intended to fill one admin assistant post, while a second Building Standards surveyor's working week will be reduced to 0.6 FTE.

2.8 The responsibility for management of the service rests with the Building Standards Manager supported by senior staff comprising 3 Team Leaders. The Building Standards Surveyors are organised into two geographically based teams, North and South of the River Ayr. Within each team the surveyors are allocated their individual workloads on the basis of current and future workloads. A third team comprises engineering staff and technicians supporting the Building Standards Surveyor, and there is also an Admin team.

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2.9 The following structure chart shows the job titles of professional, technical and admin staff, as at 1st August 2015.

BUILDING STANDARDS STAFF STRUCTURE



2.8 Following a successful audit, by the Scottish Government, South Ayrshire Council was re-appointed in 2011 as the Building Standards verifier for the South Ayrshire area for 6 years until 30th April 2017. This re-appointment requires the Building Standards service to verify the design and construction of building work for compliance with Building Regulations and the technical standards and to satisfy the demands of the Scottish Government's performance framework for verifiers.

2.9 The Scottish Government is determined to ensure that verifiers in local authorities continue to improve their services. This is being achieved by the development and implementation of a new performance framework and E-Building Standards with a focus on improving performance and predictability, while enhancing the customer experience. The "balanced scorecard" management tool is the approach to be used to provide a framework and monitoring. 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. 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

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2.10 The current verifier appointment from the Scottish Government expires in 2017 when Scottish Ministers will decide whether or not to re-appoint South Ayrshire Council as the Building Standards verifier for the South Ayrshire area and this decision will take into consideration the Council's ability to meet the Scottish Government's performance framework for verifiers

2.11 The following table illustrate the relative workloads for the verifier function for the last 3 years -

Verifier activity			
Work Outputs	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Number of Building Warrant applications received	1124	960	1089
Building Warrant Fee Income	£419,129	£434,675	£614,195
Value of Developments enabled through the Building Warrant Process	£52.4m	£61.3m	£106.5m
Completion Certificates accepted	676	911	698

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

3.1 South Ayrshire Council's Strategic Goals

As a Council we are committed to our vision “**to establish South Ayrshire as the most dynamic, inclusive and sustainable community in Scotland**”. This is shared by our Community Planning Partners and is at the heart of our Single Outcome Agreement for 2013-23, which combines and focuses our joint resources towards achieving this.

3.2 The Council's strategic objectives are that **we will work to maximise the potential of:**

- **Our local economy**
- **Our children and families**
- **Our adults and older people**
- **Our communities**
- **Our environment**

and improve the way that we work as a Council.

3.3 In pursuit of these, we will directly contribute towards the achievement of the following strategic outcomes and improvement themes:

- **People are safer**
- **Businesses and social enterprises are supported to set up, thrive and expand**
- **Ensuring that our assets are fit for purpose**
- **Developing our workforce**
- **Using performance management to drive improvement**

More information on these workstreams is given in Appendix 1- Detailed Team Plan.

3.4 The Aim of the Building Standards Service

The principal aim of the building standards service is:-

to ensure building work in South Ayrshire is checked to make sure suitable standards of construction are followed, and the health and safety of people in and around buildings is properly considered.

The standards of construction come from the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, the Building Regulations and supporting technical documents.

This is principally achieved through the application of the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations in considering applications for building warrant.

3.5 Challenges facing the Building Standards Service

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The challenges we face as a Council and a Partnership have been explored in detail within the Council's Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement.

The principal challenges we face as a service over the course of this Plan are:

- manage staffing levels to meet economic upturn, budget efficiencies/savings, combined with succession planning
- the introduction of E-Building Standards
- facilitate the Scottish Government re-appointment in 2017 as verifier for Building Warrants and Completion Certificates in South Ayrshire
- actions to make safe dangerous buildings including the demolition of the former Zest nightclub in Burns Statue Square, Ayr
- implement the new energy standards
- prepare, and train staff for the Amendments to Technical Standards due in October 2015
- extend performance reports to include non-domestic categories and upgrade systems to report performance online
- develop notices module for monitoring and recording dangerous/ defective buildings, non-compliant buildings and enforcement
- set up section 63 Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 enforcement procedures to upgrade existing non-domestic buildings to improve energy efficiency

Our responses to these challenges and our review of how we are currently doing are reflected in our detailed planning to deliver on the Council's Strategic Outcomes.

3.6 Contribution to the Council Strategic Outcomes

How we intend to contribute to the Council Strategic Outcomes is set out in the detail in appendix 1 at the end of this document, where we set out the key actions that we intend to take forward and the performance measures and targets that we will use to evaluate our progress. The speed and efficiency of this service can have significant impacts on the Council's corporate objectives.

These have been specified and sequenced in a manner that will allow us to work effectively and efficiently, making the best use of the resources available to us. They include the improvement activities we have identified from our self-evaluation and the review activity that we are committed to as part of the Council's systematic review of all services.

They have also taken account of the following aspects that inform our decision making and help ensure that we take account of the context in which we operate, reflecting what could impact on our plans and what could enrich and add value to how we take them forward:

- **Risk Management** – Risk registers underpin the achievement of the Council's strategic outcomes and the pursuit of service specific issues. These help to evaluate and assess the risks we face in delivering our plans, and help us to identify and progress mitigating actions to help ensure their successful delivery. We update these on a quarterly basis. See appendix 2 for further details.
- **Equalities** – In pursuing our strategies, plans and policies, we undertake Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that we are aware of the equalities impacts, seeking to optimise them and identifying mitigations and further research and actions where necessary.
- **Sustainability** - In pursuing our strategies, plans and policies, we consider the extent to which what we wish to pursue is sustainable and undertake Strategic Environmental Assessments where required.
- **Consultation** – We look to engage with the community and service users in developing our services and plans, and are committed to following best practice as identified within the Council's Community Engagement Strategy.

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

In addition our work supports the following strategic outcomes:

- **Review the needs / demands of service users and realign our processes accordingly.** This will be achieved by responding to the continuing local customer survey, the new national customer survey and regular meetings with stakeholders.
- **People live in warm, well maintained, energy efficient homes and we work towards a sustainable, low carbon future.** Competent verification of design and construction to meet building standards will mean that effective measures for the conservation of fuel and power are incorporated in new housing. In addition to limiting energy demand, by addressing the performance of the building fabric and fixed building services, a carbon dioxide emissions standard obliges a designer of new buildings to consider buildings that are more energy efficient and have fewer carbon dioxide emissions. Although the focus is primarily on lowering carbon dioxide emissions from dwellings in use, the current building standards also reduce energy demand and continue to ensure that, for new homes and new building work, the use of energy and fuel costs are both minimised.

From October 2015, new building standards will improve energy efficiency of new homes by reducing carbon dioxide emissions by around 21% when compared to the current levels. These measures will also affect new non-domestic buildings such as shops and offices where the improvement will be greater with an average reduction in emissions of around 43%.

4. KEY PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES (KPO's)

4.1 Continuous Improvement Plan

National KPO's form part of the new performance framework and focus on the three core perspectives –

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

Public interest and continuous improvement are cross-cutting themes and the work to achieve the KPO's is monitored using a Continuous Improvement Plan and a summarised version is shown in Appendix 3.

4.2 How Good Is Our Council?

South Ayrshire Council is introducing the How Good is our Council (HGIOC) framework across all Council services. High Level scans have been produced under 5 main headings:-

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

What key outcomes have we achieved?

- A new advanced performance framework for Building Standards was introduced by the Scottish Government in 2012, which builds on what had been achieved and aims to drive forward better compliance with the building regulations
- Building Standards has achieved significant improvements in performance, as measured by our Key Performance Indicators (KPOs). New KPOs, nine in total, have been introduced, as developed by the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division (BSD) and Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS)
- Building Standards has been operating a balanced scorecard performance framework approach since 2005
- A SAC Building Standards Team Plan 2014-2017 has been produced, setting out what we intend to achieve over the next three years based on financial and other resources
- Building Standards has shown adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties
- Building Standards has continued to meet the requirements of the Departmental Plan, and the Council's overall plan, improving the built environment and reducing the risk to public safety

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

- Measure customer satisfaction by the use of customer surveys. Two surveys have been undertaken – questionnaires are sent out with all SAC building warrants to agents and applicants, and Pye Tait, Consultants have undertaken a national customer satisfaction survey on behalf of the BSD. We respond by letter to those customers who provide negative comments, and review service given. We also provide responses to surveys from internal customers.
- "Fast tracking" of building warrant applications is available for priority work.
- Pre-warrant discussions between Building Standards staff and customers are made available for both Domestic and Non-Domestic work

How good is our delivery of key processes?

- Key Performance Indicators (KPOs), nine in total, have been introduced, as developed by the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division (BSD) and Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS).regular returns to the BSD allow comparisons to be made and performance measured
- The Council's "Covalent" performance reporting system contains a substantial number of Building Standards reports. Again this allows for monitoring of performance.

How good is our management?

- We ensure strong financial management, in particular we try to target resources to meet the upturn in the construction industry
- The Building Standards service uses staff and team meetings, Council Communication circulars, ENE Briefings and emails, to regularly disseminate information

How good is our leadership?

- We maintain a culture of risk awareness
- We develop leadership capacity by sharing responsibility with senior staff

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

5. ADDITIONAL DATA – SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL’S ANNUAL RETURN 2014/15

1	Building Warrant (BW)	Annual Total
1.1	No. of BW Applications (including “late” applications)	939
1.2	No. of “late” BW applications (as included above)	43
1.3	No. of BW approved	901
1.4	No. of BW refused	0
1.5	No. of amendment to BW applications	188
6	No. of amendment to BW applications approved	168
1.7	No. of amendment to BW applications refused	0
2	Completion Certificates (CC)	Number
2.1	No. of CC submissions (including those where no warrant was obtained)	701
2.2	No. of CC submissions where no warrant was obtained (“late” CCs as included above)	0
2.3	No. of CC submissions accepted	608
2.4	No. of CC submissions rejected	0
3	Fees	Number
3.1	Total value of works for BW applications (including “late” applications)	£106,222,104.00
3.2	Total value of works for amendment to warrant applications	£481,062.00
3.3	Total value of works for CC submissions where no warrant was obtained	£0.00
3.4	Total Value of Work	£106,703,166.00
3.5	Total building warrant fee income (including 'late' BW)	£603,269.00
3.6	Total amendment to warrant fee income	£15,335.00
3.7	Total CC fee income where no warrant was obtained	£0.00
3.8	Total Fee Income	£618,604.00
Comments: The total fee income is taken from the Uniform system and not the financial ledger		

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

4	Costs	Number
4.1	Total expenditure on verification	£621,593
<p>Comments: This expenditure includes central support costs of £219,500</p>		
5	Certification	Number
5.1	No of certificates of design (building structures) provided	288
5.2	No of certificates of design (energy) domestic provided	11
5.3	No of certificates of design (energy) non-domestic provided	0
5.4	No of certificates of construction (electrical) provided	0
5.5	No of certificates of construction (drainage, heating and plumbing) provided	0
6	EPCs	Number
6.1	No of copy EPCs received for domestic buildings under Standard 6.9	83
6.2	No of copy EPCs received for non-domestic buildings under Standard 6.9	1

Building Standards Team Plan/Balanced Scorecard 2015 – 2018

7	Statements of Sustainability	Number
7.1	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Bronze"	31
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"	1 Silver Active
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"	2
7.7	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Bronze +"	1
7.8 *	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Silver"	0
7.9*	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Gold"	0
7.10*	No of copy Statements of Sustainability for non-domestic buildings under Standard 7.1 "Platinum"	0
	<i>*7.8 to 7.10: Higher levels for Silver, Gold and Platinum are not currently possible for non-domestic.</i>	
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	1
8.4	No of section 28 notices issued	0
8.5	No of instances where the local authority has taken action under Section 29	0
8.6	No of section 30 notices issued	1
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	1