



K. Miles
Chief Executive
North Devon Council

S. Walford
Chief Executive and
Director of Growth
Mid Devon District
Council

BUILDING CONTROL JOINT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Building Control Joint Committee will be held in the Exmoor Room, Brynsworthy Environment Centre, Barnstaple on **THURSDAY, 25TH APRIL, 2024 at 10.00 am.**

(NOTE: A location plan for the Brynsworthy Environment Centre is attached to the agenda front pages. There are limited car parking spaces in the Visitors parking area. If no spaces are available, please find an alternative space. Please ensure that you enter your name and car registration details in the book in front of the entrance door)

Members of the
Committee:

Representing North Devon Council

Councillors Denton and P Leaver

Representing Mid Devon District Council

Councillors Keable (Vice-Chair) and Clist

AGENDA

1. Appointment of Chair for 2023/24.

To appoint a Chair from North Devon Council to replace Councillor Walker on the Joint Committee following the meeting of Annual Council on 27th March 2024 when her membership of the Joint Committee ceased.

NOTE: This appointment will be for a period up until when the appointments for the Chair and Vice Chair will cease and new appointments will need to be made. These appointments will be considered after the 10th August 2024 when they expire and new appointments will need to be made.

2. Apologies for absence.

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2024 (attached). (Pages 7 - 14).
4. Items brought forward which in the opinion of the Chair should be considered as a matter of urgency.
5. Declarations of Interest
Please telephone the Corporate and Community Services team to prepare a form for your signature before the meeting. Interests must be re-declared when the item is called. A declaration of interest under the Code of Conduct will be a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, an Other Registrable Interest or a Non-Registrable Interest. If the item directly relates to your interest you must declare the interest and leave the room for the item, save in the case of Other Registrable Interests or Non-Registrable Interests where you may first speak on the item as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak. If the matter does not directly relate to your interest but still affects it then you must consider whether you are affected to a greater extent than most people and whether a reasonable person would consider your judgement to be clouded, if you are then you must leave the room for the item (although you may speak as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak) or, if you are not, then you can declare the interest but still take part).
6. To agree agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information)

PART 'A'

7. **Building Control Business Update. Report by Building Control Manager (attached).** (Pages 15 - 26).
8. **Dates and locations of future meetings. To agree dates and locations of future meetings of the Committee for 2024/25.**
 - Thursday 25th July 2024 at 10:00am in the Barum Room.
 - Thursday 24th October 2024 at 10:00am in the Barum Room.
 - Thursday 23rd January 2025 at 10:00am in the Barum Room.

(NOTE: Unless otherwise agreed the Joint Committee must meet at least on a quarterly basis with the meeting held at 10.00am and the offices of the Chairman's partner authority).

PART 'B' (CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED INFORMATION).

Nil.

If you have any enquiries about this agenda, please contact Corporate and Community Services, telephone 01271 388253



North Devon Council protocol on recording/filming at Council meetings

The Council is committed to openness and transparency in its decision-making. Recording is permitted at Council meetings that are open to the public. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be recorded. The Chairman of the meeting will make sure any request not to be recorded is respected.

The rules that the Council will apply are:

1. The recording must be overt (clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and must not disrupt proceedings. The Council will put signs up at any meeting where we know recording is taking place.
1. The Chairman of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.
2. We will ask for recording to stop if the meeting goes into 'part B' where the public is excluded for confidentiality reasons. In such a case, the person filming should leave the room ensuring all recording equipment is switched off.
3. Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. We ensure that agendas for, and signage at, Council meetings make it clear that recording can take place – anyone not wishing to be recorded must advise the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.
4. The recording should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording. The Council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.

Notes for guidance:

Please contact either our Corporate and Community Services team or our Communications team in advance of the meeting you wish to record at so we can make all the necessary arrangements for you on the day.

For more information contact the Corporate and Community Services team on **01271 388253** or email **memberservices@northdevon.gov.uk** or the Communications Team on **01271 388278**, email **communications@northdevon.gov.uk**.

North Devon Council offices at Brynsworthy, the full address is:
Brynsworthy Environment Centre (BEC), Roundswell,
Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 3NP.

Sat Nav postcode is EX31 3NS.

At the Roundswell roundabout take the exit onto the B3232, after about ½ mile take the first right, BEC is about ½ a mile on the right.

Drive into the site, visitors parking is in front of the main building on the left hand side.

On arrival at the main entrance, please dial 8253 for Corporate and Community Services.



NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Building Control Joint Committee held at Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Thursday, 25th January, 2024 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Members:

Representing North Devon Council:

Councillor Denton (In the Chair).

Representing Mid Devon District Council:

Councillors Keable and Clist.

Officers:

Representing North Devon Council:

Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, Building Control Manager and Finance Manager.

Representing Mid Devon District Council:

Director of Place.

Accountant (virtually).

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Walker.

Councillor Denton took the Chair.

16. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26TH OCTOBER 2023 (ATTACHED).

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 2023 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest announced.

18. 2023/24 BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP TRADING ACCOUNT QUARTER 3.

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Finance Manager (NDC) (circulated previously) regarding the 2023/24 Q2 Forecast Building Control Partnership Trading Account.

The Finance Manager gave the Committee the following summary:

- Page 11 of the agenda showed the table detailing the figures for the Partnership Trading Account.
- Column one of the trading account table, showed the annual budget for each Authority.
- Column two of the table showed the forecasted outturn for the year 2023/24 based on the total variance as at quarter 3.
- At the bottom of column two a percentage split was shown for the income for the two Authorities, which was currently showing a split of 65.62% for North Devon Council and 34.38% for Mid-Devon. This was against the original split of 60:40.
- Column three of the table set out the percentage split between the two authorities in greater detail.
- Column four of the table showed the chargeable and non-chargeable costs for North Devon Council.
- Column five of the table showed the chargeable and non-chargeable costs for Mid Devon District Council.

In response to questions, the Building Control Manager advised the following:

- The downturn in income to the partnership for the year 2023/24 could be attributed to the reduction in applications together with the type of work that the business was receiving.
- The partnership would be looking to increase its charges for applications in the new financial year 2024/25.
- The new regulations regarding high rise buildings of 18 metres or more were very complex and was now subject to regulated building safety regulations. However, the North and Mid Devon areas did not have many buildings over the regulation height.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

19. BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE.

The Committee considered a report by the Building Control Manager (circulated previously) regarding the Building Control Business update.

He outlined the main areas of the report, which were under the following headings:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2022/23.

- KPIs 2023/24.
- Resource Implications.
- Building Safety Act 2022 –Duty Holder and Processing Changes.
- Internal Audit.
- Building Control Charges.
- Validation Process.
- Training update.
- Building Safety Regulator Registration Update.
- BSR Operational Standards and Upgrade to Uniform.
- LABC ISO Framework.
- Partnership Priorities.

He drew the Joint Committee's attention to the following key points within the report:

- The table in the report showed performance in relation to decisions within two months at 98% (target 95%), plan examination response times with applications being examined within 3 weeks at 85% (target 95%) and average time to first response 17 days (target 10 days).
- Improvement in the three week and time to first response remained the partnerships long term target but with three vacant Surveying positions, inexperienced Technical Support staff, inexperienced Surveying staff and the changes to the back office systems that were required in the coming months, immediate improvement in these figures should not be anticipated.
- At the last Joint Committee, general Market Share was reported to have stabilised in the Quarter 2 2023/24 at 70 percent.
- Despite the challenges the Market Share had improved and was up by 10% in Quarter 3 and was currently 80 percent.
- The application numbers continued to reflect the general economic climate and the lack of confidence in the housing and property investment market.
- Taking public perception into account, interest rates and with property owners being risk averse to investment in their homes and businesses, despite the partnerships relatively competitive Market Share, the lack of activity in construction sector was being reflected in the number of applications being received and inevitably the our reduced levels of income.
- The Partnership was continuing the re-building process and recent recruitment had reduced vacant positions from six, down to three.
- Since the last Committee meeting the vacant Technical Support posts had been filled together with the New full time Technical Support Team Leader and Assistant employed on a 24 hour contract who joined the partnership on 6th November 2023. Both were becoming increasingly productive and an asset to the partnerships operations but were some way from completing training with partnerships part-time well established Technical Support Assistant.
- While this training continues, the Partnership was also preparing for the Building Safety Regulator Regime changes, with this in mind, the partnership would continue to access assistance from Mid Devon District Council's Planning Support team, to process Building Regulation applications and

payments with a view to maintaining acceptable management of new work flow.

- In addition, the vacant Mid Devon Principal Surveyor's position had been filled and the new recruit had been in post since 4th December 2023.
- With the recruitment successes the Partnership had reduced its reliance on expensive agency surveying staff and were now just contracting one agency Surveyor.
- The current agency Surveyors contract was due to expire at the end of March 2024.
- Due to the Building Safety Regulator registration requirements and the likely impact upon the number of available agency staff, agency costs were likely to spiral in the coming months.
- As reported at the last Joint Committee, the 1st October 2023 changes laid the ground for new duties and responsibilities for owners who were undertaking work to any building they own whether it's in scope or not.
- The changes place duties on the applicant, designer and contractor to sign declarations to confirm works were compliant with the Building Regulations. The Technical Support Team had been working on new application forms, acceptance letters, invalid letters, duty holder notification forms, decision notes and completion processes.
- The new forms and revised processes went live at the beginning of the New Year.
- The Technical Support Team had also created a Completion Declaration document for all Duty Holders to sign at completion prior to a Completion Certificate being issued.
- As reported previously, the changes also introduced additional enforcement powers for local authorities enabling Compliance and Stop Notices to be issued for work that was not compliant with the Building Regulations.
- Stop Notices were intended for the more serious contraventions which were considered to be life threatening and generally related to structural deficiencies or breaches of the fire regulations.
- It was the intention of the Building Safety Act to allow individual Registered Surveyors of the appropriate competence to issue these notices to offenders.
- New Building Control Charges would be introduced and would apply from 1st April 2024.
- The charges would increase from the current rate by 6.7 percent across the board.
- All of the current permanent six Surveying team members had now completed their Stage one validation submission. Two had sat the relevant exams for their class in December and were awaiting the results.
- The remaining four Surveyors had the examination booked in for the end of January or the end of February 2024.
- The Partnership was required to have action plans, training plans, and CPD logs in place for each employee and keep them updated for the BSR. These have just been completed but would require regular updating by individuals and monitoring by the Principal Surveyors and BCM in preparation for providing this information to BSR upon request.

- The Building Control Manager had just completed a Level 6 course in Building Control Management, submitted the course assignment and was due to receive the results in the coming weeks.
- The scoping work undertaken to complete the training /action plans had identified further courses, some of which had already been booked.
- Level 6 Legislative Compliance for the Mid Devon Assistant Surveyor who was keen to explore enforcement as a specialist. Uniform Systems Administrator course for the Technical Support Team Leader.
- These courses would commence in February and March 2024 and would be funded through the current financial year's training budget.
- Further Surveyor courses would be booked in the new financial year and would be class dependant.
- The two new Technical Support Staff would also be offered the opportunity to take the Level 3 LABC Technical Support Course in the new financial year.
- The Building Safety Regulator Register opened on the 5th October 2023 which allowed Building Control Surveyors to register their competence once they had proven it through one of the validation processes.
- In a recent release the BSR advised all Surveyors to register as Class 1 Surveyors to avoid a surge of applications towards the end of March 2024. Once registered, upon successful examination validation evidence being submitted to the BSR, individuals would be able to transfer from Class 1 (Trainee) to their proven Class free of charge and Surveyors were currently making applications to register with the BSR.
- As reported previously, the Building Safety Regulator would require the Partnership to demonstrate its operations were in line with new Operating Standards and report on performance on a quarterly and annual basis.
- The Partnership had been waiting on confirmation of when the delayed roll out of the Uniform upgrade from IDOX would be available before being able to start this work. Once installed, the upgrade should enable the Partnership to begin preparations for the additional reports required by the BSR to demonstrate performance against the new regime KPIS.
- The Mid Devon ICT team confirmed they had received the upgrade and it was proposed this would be installed on 16th and 17th January 2024.
- Initial discussions had already taken place with Mid Devon Planning System Report writers and work would start on the new reports at the earliest opportunity.
- LABC were yet to release the changes to the ISO Quality Framework System that would bring it into line with the BSR regime. Once received, the Partnership would need to re-engage with this platform, make the appropriate adjustments to our back office systems and then operate in accordance with those confirmed changes.
- To introduce the new Building Control Charges. The Partnership needed to remain competitive in the employment market to ensure recruitment and retention and that they had sufficient staff to be ready for the market upturn.
- The partnership would continue to prepare Surveyors for the validation and registration process so that they were ready to meet the Building Safety Regulatory requirements by April 2024.
- The partnership would also continue to prepare the team and their procedures for the changes the New Operational Standards would bring. This included

adapting working practices and creation of new reports to be in a position to report on the fifty new KPI's the Building Safety Regulator would require information on. They would also ensure that employees had sufficient time for training, CPD and staff development.

In response to questions, the Building Control Manager advised the following:

- The market share was higher than it had been for a long time and this was largely due to successful recruitment to long standing vacant posts within the partnership. Those newly appointed to the roles would be provided with sufficient training and with time things will continue to improve within the service.
- Looking at the market share it would appear that the partnerships competitors had not been as pro-active and with the building sector currently on a downward trend and further compounded with house building in general falling to an all-time low.
- Level six legislative compliance for surveyors, which was equivalent to degree level was a priority for the partnership and officers currently had level 4 compliance.
- Stop Notices were intended for the more serious contraventions which were considered to be life threatening and generally related to structural deficiencies or breaches of the fire regulations. It was the intention of the Building Safety Act to allow individual Registered Surveyors of the appropriate competence to issue these notices to offenders.
- However, there had been some discussion with regard to the delegation of power under the Constitution and that the current provision might not permit individual Surveyors to issue Stop and Contravention Notices.
- Advice had been sought with both legal sections it had been confirmed that as long as the delegation was declared the Constitutions allowed the Building Control Manager to delegate such powers to individual Surveyors.
- Once these delegations had been declared to each relevant legal section, the Partnership would be in a position for Surveyors to individually issue the new Stop and Contravention Notices.
- The set amount of the fines was set in legislation and also dependent on the type of notice issued together with the severity of any breach.
- There would be a 6.7% increase to Building Control charges from 1st April 2024.
- Private companies were not required to publish their charges.
- The partnership had a high percentage of repeat customers and provided that the business continued to provide the same quality of service as it had in the previous five years, it was still competitive within the open market.
- The 6.7% increase had been reviewed when the market supplement was introduced in 2023.
- However, it was difficult to determine how the partnership would manage any salary increases as whilst it had to remain competitive with private firms it also still had to remain viable as a business.

In response to a further question, the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive advised that both councils would budget for salary increases for the year

2024/25 and that both councils would everything within their gift to retain the workforce.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That the Building Control Manager investigate whether fees obtained from the issue of stop notices were payable directly to the local authorities or whether they were returned to central government.

20. **DATES AND LOCATIONS OF FUTURE MEETINGS. TO AGREE
DATES AND LOCATIONS OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE
COMMITTEE FOR 2024/25.**

The Joint Committee was advised by the Clerk that she had circulated the proposed dates for 2024/25 had been circulated via email to the members of the Joint Committee for their agreement.

RESOLVED, that the following proposed dates for the Joint Committee meetings for 2024/25 be agreed:

- a) Thursday 25th April 2024 at 10:00am.
- b) Thursday 25th July 2024 at 10:00am.
- c) Thursday 24th September 2024 at 10:00am.
- d) Thursday 23rd January 2025 at 10:00am.

Chair

The meeting ended at 10.40 am

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Building Control Joint Service Committee

Report Date: 12.04.2024

Report By: Building Control Manager

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update members regarding the progress of the Partnership and contains no recommendations.

Report

Since the last Joint Committee Meeting the Activity Reports have been updated to include figures for Q4 2023/24.

The data from 2022/23 below has been included to provide a comparison and help demonstrate the current trend for the figures for 2023/24 on the following page.

Key Performance Indicators 2022/2023

KPI	KPI	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Building Regulation Full Plan applications determined in 2 months	95%	100%	95%	96%	94%
Building Regulation Applications examined within 3 weeks	95%	81%	85%	79%	88%
Average time to first response (Days)	10	12	16	16	18
Market Share - Number of applications %	75%	75%	76%	72%	70%
Market Share - New Housing Completions %	40%	39%	40%	83%	40%
Financial Position	Breakeven	-	-180,157	-104,379	-68,843
Number of applications received	N/A	424	251	225	247



Key Performance Indicators 2023/2024

KPI	KPI	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Building Regulation Full Plan applications determined in 2 months	95%	94%	98%	98%	98%
Building Regulation Applications examined within 3 weeks	95%	75%	93%	85%	83%
Average time to first response (Days)	10	19	18	17	17
Market Share - Number of applications %	75%	72%	70%	80%	75%
Market Share - New Housing Completions %	40%	49%	16%	34%	18%
Financial Position	Breakeven	-66,396	-53,520	-91, 927	TBA
Number of applications received	N/A	253	245	275	262

The table above shows performance in relation to decisions within two months at 98% (target 95%), plan examination response times with applications being examined within 3 weeks at 83% (target 95%) and average time to first response 17 days (target 10 days).

The service continues to be supported by Mid Devon Planning Technical Team and without this support with processing applications performance would be significantly worse.

Improvement in the three week and time to first response KPIs remain our long term target but the significant additional workload being created implementing and undertaking the administration of the Building Safety Regulator regime changes mean that any improvement in our processing times are unlikely and it is anticipated performance in relation to these targets is likely to drop rather than improve in the following two quarters.



Our share of completions in the Housing Market is low at 18% and this reflects the decreased activity we have experienced in submitted new housing applications in the past two years.

It is also a reflection on the rate of development slowing on sites that the Partnership is overseeing. Developers have been scaling back building operations as they have been unable to sell completed houses in the recent economic conditions.

At the last Joint Committee, general Market Share was reported for Q3 2023/24 at 80%.

For Q4, Market Share has settled back and sits on target at 75% which gives the Partnership an average of 74% Market Share for the financial year.

It was reported at the last Committee Meeting, total application numbers were at a lower level than the total number of applications received at the same point in previous years, but having reviewed the end of year figures, applications numbers for 2023-24 appear to have recovered in the final quarter and are on a par with 2019-20; 2020-21; and an improvement on 2022-23 figures.

Total Application Numbers Comparison End of Q4

<u>Year</u>	<u>Applications Received</u>
2023/24	1303
2022/23	1149
2021/22	1358
2020/21	1303
2019/20	1306
2018/19	1353

It has also been apparent that among the applications being submitted since the New Year there has been an increase in larger domestic projects, more commercial work and increased activity in the new build housing sector. In the housing sector, the Partnership has seen two medium sized housing developments get under way in Braunton and Chivenor.



New housing development, commercial activity and more complex domestic work are all encouraging indicators that the sector is showing signs of increased confidence.

While Finance will provide the overall picture of the financial position, it's clearly evident income has been stronger and more consistent in the final quarter of the year.

As the figures below indicate the subtle changes in activity have been reflected in the level of income received in January, February and March.

Income Figures Q4

January	£50,937
February	£49,651
March	£49,651

Resources

The Partnership is continuing with its recruitment and re-building process.

Since the last Committee Meeting the vacant Trainee and Building Control Inspector posts have been advertised and candidates have been interviewed and selected.

The Partnership received 42 applications for the trainee position, with 15 of the candidates applying meeting the minimum criteria for the job and personal specification.

The successful Trainee candidate will be starting with us on 15th April and will register with the Building Safety Regulator as a Class 1 Inspector.

The Partnership will be applying for Levy funding for our new recruit to attend a distance learning Building Control Surveying Degree at Wolverhampton University with a view to them enrolling on the September 2024 intake.

The new recruit will only be allowed to perform restricted functions of plan examination and site inspection under supervision until they are able to demonstrate their competence through a validation scheme and register as a Class 2 Surveyor with the BSR.

The new recruit will spend three days a week with Technical Support learning our processes and systems. Once trained this will also provide some much needed support to the Technical Team in the short to medium term, particularly on the days when the part-time Technical Support Team members are not working.

With regard to the advertised vacant Building Control Inspector's position, the Partnership received just two applications and after shortlisting, interviewed only one.



At the time of writing this report the Partnership has verbally offered the interviewed candidate the role.

The candidate has Private Sector surveying experience and is also experienced in submitting building regulation applications for a local architects practice and has an appropriate Building Surveying Honours Degree.

Assuming references clear and the candidate accepts the offer, like the new trainee, the Building Inspector (due to the new Building Safety Regulator regime rules), will be required to register as a Class 1 Inspector and will only be able to perform restricted functions of plan examination and site inspection under supervision until they are able to demonstrate their competence through the validation process and then registering as a Class 2 Inspector.

Assuming the applicant accepts the offer of employment this will leave the Partnership with just one senior vacant post in the Mid Devon Team.

With the challenges we have experienced recruiting to the senior vacant positions it is unlikely we will be able to attract a Registered Senior Inspector.

Given the shortage of available Registered Building Inspectors, consideration is being given with regard to possible further internal promotions or career grade posts being explored with Mid Devon HR. If this proves acceptable the Partnership may then consider backfilling the vacant post with a more junior position with either a mature industry candidate with transferable skills or another trainee given the recent success in attracting so many candidates meeting the minimum criteria for the recently appointed trainee position.

The Partnership is currently still reliant on a sole agency Surveyor to provide support to the Mid Devon area which has approval until the end of Q1 2024/25

This temporary provision is in part to cover for an impending Hip Operation for the Mid Devon Principal.

Market Supplements for Mid Devon staff will stop at the end of June 2024 but may continue for the North Devon Inspectors.

The Partnership is undertaking a re-evaluation process with new BSR regime Job Descriptions and Personal Specification with a view to closing the 10% gap for the Mid Devon Staff.

Recent research shows the Partnership's salaries would be in the bottom quartile when compared to the other South West Authorities. If the Partnership is unable to find a way to replace the 10% Market Supplement for Mid Devon staff, clearly this will leave the Partnership vulnerable to future departures.



Internal Audit

Since the last meeting, the Partnership has now received the final report from the internal audit team. The report found the Service to be compliant and recognised the significant effort made by the remaining team to maintain a service through an extremely challenging period.

The Audit Team made a number of recommendations, these include; to reinstate the marketing strategy to write to successful planning application applicants to offer advice and a bespoke quotation; to reinstate the Completion Survey via Survey Monkey; to review the Partnership Agreement; reduce reliance on Agency Staff; and increase the resilience of Technical Support Team.

Building Control Charges

New Building Control Charges were introduced and applied from 1st April 2024.

Charges were increased from the 2023-24 rate by 6.7% across the board.

Building Safety Regulator Hourly Rate

Applications for in-scope building work, which applies to buildings that contain two or more residential units with a floor height above 18m; or a Care Home or Hospital with a floor height of over 18 metres must now be submitted through the Building Safety Regulator.

From 6th April 2024, Class 3 Registered Inspectors maybe required by the Building Safety Regulator to become part of a multi-disciplined team to check in-scope buildings and where required to do so the employing Local Authority will be able to recover costs based on an hourly rate.

The Partnership has recently reviewed its BSR hourly rate and this has now been submitted to them and for this financial year will be set at £83.52 an hour.



Validation Process & BSR Registration

The Partnership's Inspectors were all registered as Class 1 Inspectors prior to the original 6th April Building Safety Regulator deadline.

All the Partnership Inspectors have taken the appropriate exams for their stage one assessed validation competence and to date we have received five out of six results, which are as follows;

One Class 3 (Specialist) and Class 4 (Technical Manager) Pass
One Class 2 (General) Pass
Three Class 2 (Domestic) Passes

With one result pending for a further Class 2 (General).

The Inspectors are now in the process of updating their registration details with the BSR to change from Class 1 to their proven Class.

The Partnership does remain vulnerable at audit, due to the loss of significant numbers two years ago, as we have not yet fully recovered from that situation and are still not fully staffed.

However, in comparison to other authorities the Partnership does have significant numbers of suitability qualified and Registered Building Inspectors to manage the work profile within its catchment area.

Training Logs and Plans

Now the Partnership's Inspectors have largely received their validation results their individual action plans and training plans will require updating.

In the intervening three years until the next registration cycle in 2028, individuals will be required to maintain a portfolio of work relevant to their Class and anticipate an audit from the BSR annually.

Individuals will need to maintain CPD logs recording topics that are relevant to their Registered Class for annual scrutiny by the BSR.

The Building Control Manager has now received the results of the Level 6 qualification in Public Service Building Control Management and achieved a Merit.

The Mid Devon Building Inspector is still working through the Level 6 Legislative Compliance qualification and the result should be known by the second quarter Joint Committee Meeting.



The Uniform Systems Administrator courses for the Technical Support Team Leader were delayed by IDOX. These courses are now in progress and will be completed by 19th April 2024.

Building Safety Regulator Registration Deadline Delayed

While the Partnership has been successful in being able to validate five out of six Inspectors with one result pending, the picture across the industry is not so positive.

The validation bodies have been overwhelmed by the volume and submissions from Building Inspectors and there are reports that many professionals have not engaged with the Registration process at all.

As a result, just days before the 6th April Deadline the BSR announced a delay to the Registration deadline with transitional arrangements being introduced. The new deadline date for Registration is 6th July 2024.

Upgrade to Uniform BSR Module

It has been frustrating the Partnership did not receive the IDOX BSR Module upgrade until the third week in March leaving precious time to make the required changes to our back office systems to be ready for the 6th April Deadline.

While the required changes have been communicated to the team, with such little time to prepare, it is inevitable data will not be recorded as consistently and as accurately as it could have been with a longer lead-in time for the team to become familiar with what is required.

The last minute changes made have included a further amendment to the Partnerships application form to capture construction type and re-submissions.

The changes to Uniform and the BSR Module allow the Partnership to now enter Duty Holder information and building height which we have been recording to DMS since the 1st October 2023, under the phase one changes introduced.

The most recent changes to the back office processes are significant and the Partnership has created and distributed guidance notes to both the Technical Support Team and the Building Inspectors to assist with them with entering data at the appropriate time and in the correct place.

Guidance has been issued for the following Uniform processes;

- Validation
- Plan Examination
- Decisions
- Inspections
- Completions
- Enforcement
- Complaints
- Initial Notice Processing

Performance Standard Reporting

Despite extending the Registration deadline for Inspectors the BSR has not announced a delay in the requirement for Building Control Bodies to submit the required new KPI data at the end of Q1 for 2024/25.

The BSR are also currently advising, shared services will be required to submit data individually for each of the Partnership authorities, in the same way authorities are required to do so for P2 Housing returns.

It has been formally reported to Members by the LABC that the BSR does not yet have a reporting system in place and that they are unlikely to have it ready in time for the end of June 2024.

However, as it stands, the BSR still expect Building Control Bodies to capture and submit the new KPI data in early July.

There is currently no in-house service or authority wide expertise to provide the required reports to submit this data.

The Technical Support Team leader is in the process of completing the Uniform Administrator and Microsoft Access training but it is not anticipated that knowledge gained from this training will be sufficient to complete the report writing requirements without the further support or a consultant.

Having approached IDOX, the Partnership has been advised that while they have given the BSR an undertaking to prepare reports, IDOX have not yet written them themselves to enable authorities to report on the new information now being captured.

The Partnership has requested and is waiting on a quotation from IDOX to produce these reports in a consulting capacity.



Until an automated reporting system is in place the Partnership staff will manually record the data required to spreadsheets so that it is in a position to submit information at the end of June assuming the deadline is not extended.

The data capture requirements are significant and will require all team members to spend a significant amount of time recording the new information to Uniform and to spreadsheets for the time being.

As a result, the team will require up to an additional five hours a week per employee to capture this data. Therefore additional hours have been agreed in the form of overtime until an automated system is in place or confirmation the data capture deadline has been delayed.

Spreadsheets have been created for the individual authorities, for staff to record data as they process with various activities being captured at the following stages of Partnership processing;

- Validation
- Plan Examination
- Decisions
- Inspections
- Completions
- Enforcement
- Complaints
- Initial Notice Processing

LABC ISO Framework

LABC released the changes to the ISO Quality Framework System on the 5th April to bring this accreditation in line with the BSR regime.

The Partnership will need to review and re-engage with this platform, make any further appropriate adjustments to our back office systems and then operate in accordance with those confirmed changes.

Partnership Priorities

The Partnership needs to remain competitive in the employment market to ensure recruitment and retention and have sufficient staff to be ready for the market upturn.

Support Inspectors in continuing to train and maintain Registered Class. Ensure employees have sufficient time for training, CPD and staff development

Implement an automated KPI reporting system.

Agenda Item 7



Continue to adapt the office procedures for the changes the New Operational Standards bring.

To maintain, monitor and audit our Quality Management System.

Review of the facilities at Woodlands is to be considered, given our increased agile working since the pandemic, and may provide a 10K annual saving if we no longer operate from this base.

Consider a more permanent hybrid working system and hot desk arrangements for both the Surveying and Technical Support Team.

Develop a more agile and pro-active relationship that enables the Partnership to respond to change.

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