

NOTE TO: JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE: 04/11/2021
TOPIC: BUILDING CONTROL BUSINESS UPDATE
REPORT BY: MIKE TUCKER (BUILDING CONTROL MANAGER)

1 INTRODUCTION

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

2 REPORT

2.1 Workload

Despite the decrease in applications in July and August workloads have remained high for individuals as this takes time to filter through to impact day to day activity and the impact of the holiday season.

2.2 Enforcement

The Magistrates Court application for an order under Section 77 for the building Act regarding Rowan Cottage, Chittlehampton was heard and granted by the Magistrate on 28 September 2021.

We are now waiting to see if the owner takes any action.

2.3 Staffing

We still have a member of our Technical Support Team on maternity leave who anticipates returning to work after the Christmas break. As previously reported we have created a permanent vacancy in the team by appointing one of our current Technical Support Officers to fill the team Leader post that becomes available in December due to retirement. However, after two attempts to recruit into the post it remains vacant due to a lack of applicants. The post is now being advertised a third time.

One of our Surveyors retired on 22/10/2021 and I am happy to say that this vacancy has been filled through the appointment of our trainee, who has just completed his apprenticeship with confirmation of the award of a first class honours degree in Public Service Building Control.

The business case has been approved for recruitment of a new trainee which is currently being recruited.

This does leave us with less resource as it takes time to bring a new trainee to the point where they can make a useful contribution and we have taken the opportunity to shuffle the areas to better balance workloads based on geographic allocation.

We have has some staffing issues due to sickness with four Surveyors in total now having to take time off due to COVID and the Building Control Manager has also been on sick leave for two weeks

2.4 Approved Inspectors

As anticipated with the transition to the new regime for Building Control under the Building Safety Regulator Approved Inspectors are reviewing their operations and cleaning up their books. As a result we are experiencing an increase in Initial Notice cancellations and reversions as Approved Inspectors return projects to the Local Authority that they have lost control of and are unable to bring to a satisfactory completion.

In addition CICAIR (Construction Industry Council Approved Inspector Register) who are currently responsible for monitoring Approved Inspectors have withdrawn approval of Celtech Consultancy Ltd and Campagna Ltd following their failure to meet the required standards during re-approval audit of their systems and processes.

Their licences remain valid until April 2022 in order to provide them the opportunity to wind down their operations in an orderly manner. However, we have already received Initial Notice cancellations from Celtech Consultancy Ltd who have some projects in this area.