

Terms of Reference for the Scottish Building Standards Hub

Vision

The vision is for the Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH) (the Hub) to play a key role in **supporting transformation and quality in building standards services across Scotland**.

The SBSH is an operational Hub that strives to support the delivery and further development of the building standards system in Scotland by working with verifiers, certifiers, and the wider construction sector.

The Hub does not have any political, legislative or verification role within the Building Standards system but recognising the key role the Hub has in sustaining and supporting the delivery of verification services throughout Scotland, Scottish Ministers have agreed that the Hub should be funded through building warrant fees.

Introduction

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017 a [Ministerial Working Group](#) was set up to review building and fire safety regulatory frameworks. The Group commissioned two review panels for building standards; [Compliance and Enforcement](#) and [Fire Safety](#) that subsequently published their own recommendations.

Recommendations by the Review Panel on Compliance and Enforcement concluded that, whilst the core elements of the current building standards system should be maintained, some reshaping of the system was necessary to ensure that it addresses identified weaknesses. The verification delivery model was identified as one area that required some reshaping. Both Review panels identified the potential for a 'national or central hub' that would provide expertise in specialist and safety critical areas of design of complex buildings.

The Building Standards Futures Programme Board is providing guidance and direction on the development and implementation of the [Compliance and Enforcement](#) and [Fire Safety](#) Review Panels recommendations.

The Board is strategically advising and directing a broad programme of work aimed at improving the performance, expertise, resilience and sustainability of the Scottish building standards system and services across Scotland.

Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH)

The Hub will be hosted in Fife Council. Staff and related HR matters will be governed by the host authority (Fife Council).

Governance, Performance Setting and Performance Monitoring

As detailed in the Strategic Business Case for the SBSH, an Advisory Board will provide the governance and oversight of the Hub. The Board will be representative of key stakeholders in the building standards system and will consist of around 10 – 12 members. The limit may be altered through agreement of the Board.

The Board will report to the Minister through Scottish Government officials supported by annual and other reporting. Its remit will cover the strategic and operational elements of the Hub's work including business planning, delivery, finances, relationships, and risks. It will also be responsible for ensuring the SBSH meets and delivers its aims, this includes the responsibility for performance setting and performance monitoring to ensure the SBSH is meeting the interests of its stakeholders.

Operational and Performance Reporting

Operational and Performance Reporting will include preparing quarterly operational reports showing progress on the implementation of the Business Plan. Develop and implement plans to address any issues highlighted by operational monitoring. Prepare an Annual Report on Hub activity.

The Hub will comply with Fife Council policies and procedures on IT, procurement, human resources, data protection and freedom of information.

Reporting will cover impact on measures to support the national building standards system (Annex A) as well as specific Hub measures (Annex B). Measures to be discussed and agreed have been identified in annexes A and B.

Range of Services and Activities

The SBSH will offer a range of services and activities that will support local authorities, Scottish Government, and the wider construction industry. It will develop, enhance, and extend a range of building standards system services previously provided by LABSS such as:

- STAS
- Dispute Resolution
- Information Papers

The Hub will also:

- develop and convene expert groups to provide specialist advice and support on fire safety and structural matters
- provide advice on specialist matters relating to the environment and energy
- provide advice on specialist matters relating to fire
- facilitate resource sharing in relation to building warrant application assessment
- operate and support regional partnerships through LABSS Consortia Technical Working Group and the Digital Delivery Group
- operate and support digital and transformational matters
- support local authorities & BSD in the delivery of the Futures Board work streams and future activities

- support the delivery of learning and development through the facilitation of the Competency Assessment Scheme (CAS) system and targeted training.

Certification

To support Certification Scheme Providers through development and maintenance of relationships between certifiers and verifiers in delivering the building standards system. Including facilitating a regular forum to discuss verification and certification (use in practice).

Learning and Development

The Hub will support the delivery of training and education material, either directly or organised with an external provider. It will support the development of a digitalised Competency Assessment System (CAS) and run a digital learning and management system containing digitised training material. It will maintain and operate an independent website to promote building standards advice, information, recent activity, and support the building standards system services it delivers.

Complaints

Any complaints received regarding the SBSH will be dealt with in accordance with 'Fife Council Complaints Handling Procedure (Version 3 / valid from May 2023)' which reflects Fife Council's, and the SBSH's, commitment to valuing complaints. It seeks to resolve customer dissatisfaction as close as possible to the point of service delivery and to conduct thorough, impartial, and fair investigations of customer complaints so that, where appropriate, evidence-based decisions are made on the facts of the case.

Annex A

Table 1: National Outputs and Measures supported by the Hub

Objectives	National Outcomes	National Measures (or Verification Indicators)	Outputs for SBSH	Indicators for SBSH
Drive Efficiencies	All users of the building standards system will receive an efficient, consistent, and predictable service which offers value for money.	All verifiers meeting their performance targets, particularly KPO1 or any revised equivalent.	Number of STAS applications and number assessed within target timeframe.	Number of STAS applications. Number within target timeframe. Number of general technical enquiries. Application of STAS approvals to support BW applications.
Ensure Investment in Skills and Technology	Building standards staff with appropriate qualifications and levels of competence. A building standards service using new technology and innovation to deliver an efficient service.	Number of staff and vacancies Level of investment in training Level of investment in technology Use of new processes/technologies.	Number of learning and development modules developed.	Number of modules developed. Number people completing modules.
Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work	All local authorities will have access to appropriate technical expertise on safety critical areas. All local authorities will achieve the same level of performance.	Number of requests for specialist advice Customer satisfaction with service, particularly KPO4.	Advice on specialist services. Brokering introductions between authorities looking for assistance and those able to provide it.	Number of requests for advice – fire, structures, energy/environmental. Number of introductions made between authorities.

<p>Increased Consistency</p>	<p>All local authority services will interpret applications in a consistent manner in terms of process and information requirements.</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction with service, particularly KPO4.</p>	<p>Information papers produced and disseminated. Provision of dispute resolution service</p>	<p>Number of papers produced. Number produced within specified timeframe. Number of DRS cases. Number resolved within target timeframe.</p>
<p>Increased Resilience</p>	<p>The building standards service across Scotland has the capacity to provide a continuous, consistent and reliable service.</p>	<p>All authorities meeting their performance targets, KPO1 Customer satisfaction Workload monitoring and planning Investment in workforce and training.</p>	<p>Brokering workload sharing introductions Provision of learning and development opportunities.</p>	<p>Number of introductions between authorities.</p>

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Annex B

Hub Measures: Building Standards System Services:

Scottish Type Approval Scheme:

- Total number of valid STAS Certificates
- Number of new STAS applications
- Average time taken to respond to STAS applications from receipt of valid application
- Average time to issue STAS certificate from receipt of last piece of competent information
- Number of STAS enquiries
- Average time taken to respond to STAS enquiries
- Key reported outcomes from STAS customers

Information Papers:

- Total number of live information papers
- Number of new information papers produced
- Number of information papers revised
- Key reported outcomes from information paper customers

Dispute Resolution Scheme:

- Number of disputes received
- Number of disputes considered and resolved at a regional level
- Number of disputes referred to and resolved at Consortia Technical Working Group (CTWG) level
- Average time taken to establish the outcome from a dispute resolution case reviewed at national level
- Key reported outcomes from dispute resolution customers

Scottish Building Standards Hubs of Expertise and Advice:

Fire Engineering Expert Hub:

- Number of panels held. (Scheduled for 4 annually)
- Number of projects considered by the fire engineering expert hub
- Number of matters of national interest considered by the fire engineering expert hub
- Average time taken to respond to projects referred to the Fire Engineering Expert Hub
- Average time taken to respond to matters of national interest referred to the Fire Engineering Expert Hub

Structural Engineering Expert Hub:

- Number of panels held. (Scheduled for 4 annually)
- Number of projects considered by the Structural Engineering Expert Hub
- Number of matters of national interest considered by the Structural Engineering Expert Hub

- Average time taken to respond to projects referred to the Structural Engineering Expert Hub
- Average time taken to respond to matters of national interest referred to the Structural Engineering Expert Hub

Scottish Building Standards Hub – Fire Expert Advice:

- Number of SBSH Fire Expert enquires/peer reviews
- Average time taken to respond to a SBSH Fire Expert enquiry/peer review

Scottish Building Standards Hub – Energy/Environment Expert Advice:

- Number of SBSH Energy/Environment Expert enquires/peer reviews
- Average time taken to respond to a SBSH Energy/Environment Expert enquiry/peer review

Building Standards Hub - General Technical/Procedural Advice:

- Number of SBSH Technical Expert enquires/peer reviews
- Average time taken to respond to a SBSH Technical Expert enquiry

Operational Partnerships:

Consortia Technical Working Group (CTWG):

- Number of CTWG meetings supported by the SBSH. (Scheduled for 4 annually)
- Number of projects/matters considered by the CTWG
- Number of stakeholders engaged with through the CTWG

Digital Delivery Group (DDG):

- Number of DDG meetings supported by the SBSH. (Scheduled for 4 annually)
- Number of projects/matters considered by the Digital Hub/DDG.
- Number of stakeholders engaged with through the Digital Hub/DDG

Workload Sharing:

- Number of workload sharing introductions brokered

Learning and Development:

- Number of live digital training modules developed
- Number of SBSH direct training events delivered
- Number of SBSH organised, externally presented training events delivered
- Number of SBSH delivered lectures