

SBSH Advisory Board Meeting 6

Note of Meeting: 9th March 2026

1.0		Welcome/Apologies:	Actions:
	1.1	<p>Welcome:</p> <p>GM welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>	
	1.2	<p>Attendance:</p> <p>Gary Mees (GM) – Gary Mees Architectural Technology representing Construction Industry. (Chair)</p> <p>Stephen Garvin (SG) – Head of Building Standards Division representing BSD.</p> <p>Mark Lawler (ML) – Director MJL Consulting Engineers Ltd. representing Certifiers.</p> <p>Nigel Kerr (NK) – Head of Protective Services Fife Council representing Fife Council.</p> <p>John-Paul Breslin (JPB) – Building Standards Team Leader Stirling Council representing LABSS.</p> <p>Robert Nichol (RN) – Chief Officer Environment and Economy CoSLA representing CoSLA.</p> <p>Neil Mitchell (NM) – Head of Development Unit Building Standards Division representing BSD.</p> <p>Craig Hatton (CH) – Chief Executive North Ayrshire Council. Representing SOLACE.</p> <p>Stuart Parker (SP) – Managing Director Scotland of Morgan Sindall representing the Construction Industry.</p> <p>Alan McAulay (AMcA) – SBSH Director (Technical/Operations/Services).</p> <p>James Whiteford (JW) – SBSH Director (Business/Strategy/Transformation).</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Laura Shanks (LS) – Building Standards Team Manager City of Edinburgh Council representing LABSS. (Vice Chair)</p>	
	1.3	<p>Intimations/Conflicts of Interest:</p> <p>None.</p>	
	1.4	<p>Note of previous meeting:</p> <p>Agreed.</p>	

2.0		Previous Actions:	
	2.1	<p>Action 5.1 - Review the balance of Board members:</p> <p>GM stated this should now be looked at prior to the next Board meeting. He will discuss with JW/AMcA offline.</p>	GM/JW/AMcA
	2.2	<p>Action 5.2 – Index RAG ratings in operational reports:</p> <p>RAG ratings have now been included to give a clear indication where SBSH is with the various actions.</p>	
3.0		Update:	
	3.1	<p>Activity:</p> <p>SBSH Periodic Operational Report Q3 2025/26: The Q3 report was circulated with the meeting papers for the Advisory Board to note and consider.</p> <p>The Board’s attention was drawn to the aims that have been marked as red within the report. These actions cannot be progressed at this time as they are dependent on the outcome of the LABSS reshaping exercise.</p> <p>The 2026/27 business plan has been updated to reflect this dependency. Once the outcomes of the reshaping exercise are confirmed, any resulting actions for us can be programmed accordingly.</p> <p>Business/Strategy/Transformation/Learning Update: SBSH Regional Events: Following the 2025 SBSH Annual Event in Glasgow, a survey confirmed strong support for a series of regional events. Venues and dates confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of the West of Scotland, Ayr Campus – 30 April 2026 • Copthorne Hotel, Aberdeen – 14 May 2026 • COSLA Conference Centre, Edinburgh – 21 May 2026 <p>Transformational Matters: Mobile App: Development of the SBSH mobile app has progressed to User Acceptance Testing, involving local authority employees and industry practitioners.</p> <p>The project remains on schedule for completion by March/April 2026.</p>	

	<p>SG enquired if the development app link could be shared round the Board to review also. JW confirmed that he would arrange this for those who wished access. Post meeting note -</p> <p>Time Reporting: A quotation from Idox, the national building standards back-office system provider, has been received and accepted for the development of national time-reporting tools.</p> <p>Local authorities will be able to use either the Idox time-recording tool or new “events” tab functionality.</p> <p>Reporting tools will be created using Power BI, enabling reporting to BSD on domestic and non-domestic warrant assessment and reasonable enquiry activity.</p> <p>Learning and Development Update: Digitised Learning and Learning Management System: The digitised training material programme continues to progress with the new Overheating module now live. Additional modules currently under development are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ventilation • Introduction to Building Standards • Distance to Boundary (domestic and non-domestic) • Measurement of Escape Route Travel Distances • Firefighting Facilities <p>All modules are expected to go live between March and May 2026.</p> <p>Planning is underway for VLE Programme 3, covering compliance and compliance plans, plus additional modules on product certification and fire-related testing.</p> <p>Orders are confirmed for VLE Programmes 6 and 7; content will be informed by data gathered through various sources.</p> <p>A VLE Management Programme is being developed to support delivery of the Leaders Development Programme, focusing on Building Standards-specific management responsibilities.</p> <p>Licensed LABC modules now exceed 100 on the SBSH platform.</p> <p>A further 40 management modules have been procured from Learning Pool for leadership development.</p> <p>Planned enhancements to the Learning Management Platform</p>	
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	<p>include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager-level tools to set mandatory learning or development plans • Use of the “Events” section for direct booking of training • Links between Skills Builder and LXP content aligned to CAS-identified competency gaps • Analytics and automation to monitor user engagement and improve system interaction <p>Skills Builder (Digitised CAS): Skills Builder has now gone live, with user training modules published.</p> <p>Peer Reviewer training for managers has been delivered.</p> <p>Most managers have undertaken the CAS process and completed relevant interviews.</p> <p>Formal Training and CPD: Further formal training and CPD will continue through the year, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bespoke Low Carbon Passport training for verifiers via BE-ST • New 1-day fire engineering principles events delivered by the University of Edinburgh • Completion of Cohort 1 and commencement of Cohort 2 for Level 6 Fire Engineering Principles qualification (LABC), each supporting 35–37 professionals • Roll-out of a Level 6 management qualification for 35 leaders/future leaders, developed via LABC framework with BSD funding <p>Upcoming CPD sessions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 3 Building Warrant Fee update • Technical Handbook changes effective from April 2026 (BSD) • Water byelaws (Scottish Water) • Alternative approaches to fire spread (OFR Consultants) • Certification of Construction and 4th amendment to 18th Edition Wiring Regulations (NICEIC and SELECT) • TM59, overheating and Home Energy Model training (Elmhurst Energy) <p>Access to LABC webinars has also been secured for LABSS members through enhanced engagement.</p>	
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	<p>JPB noted that the LMS provides benefits across the Building Standards profession, and added it is a total game changer. JW confirmed the content is comprehensive and could be further structured into a programme supporting a range of capability levels.</p> <p>NK added that the LMS could also be advantageous if extended to other professional groups. Discussion took place around the possibilities for this.</p> <p>Technical/Services/Operations update.</p> <p>Technical Services:</p> <p>While LABSS reshaping work continues, SBSH will continue to host and administer the operational functions of the LABSS CTWG. This forum remains highly active, supporting verifiers and contributing significantly to SBSH’s business-as-usual technical operations.</p> <p>Detailed technical operational updates continue to be provided at other established forums, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LABSS General Meetings • LABSS Management Meetings • BSD’s Building Standards Stakeholder Group <p>Routine and ongoing stakeholder engagement has continued, including the following sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SmartMist – 9 March • GCU Lecturing – Semester 1 (Oct 2025) and Semester 2 (Jan 2026) • Cruden – STAS benefits discussion – January 2026 • Buro Happold – Overview of SBSH role – February 2026 • Barratt Redrow – Cladding remediation – 5 March • IFE Scottish Branch Meeting – 10 March • INCA Scottish Member Breakfast Meeting – 12 March • Thistle Systems – Whisky Maturation Warehouse Fire Safety – 13 March • CIOB/RICS – Section 2 Call for Evidence – 16 March • NHBC Scottish Technical Sub-Committee – 18 March • SBSH Fire Hub Collaborative Forum – 3rd Meeting, 26 March • SNIPEF TechTalk – 31 March • SELECT Electrotechnical Committee – ongoing • Collaborative group for maturation warehouse fire safety <p>A note of the most recent CTWG meeting (held last month) will be shared with the Board to illustrate the breadth of the current technical work being undertaken. Post meeting note – This was</p>	
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	<p>shared on 10.03.2026.</p> <p>STAS Process Review: Members were referred to the statement on the status of the STAS process review, which was circulated in advance of the meeting. It is considered self-explanatory, and this action can now be closed.</p> <p>Structural Engineering Expert Hub (Structural Hub): The Structural Hub remains the principal operational area under development. It will provide support to verifiers and stakeholders on structural engineering matters relevant to the building standards system.</p> <p>Development work is progressing well, with extensive engagement already held with building standards verifiers and key stakeholders, including SER.</p> <p>Further stakeholder discussions (e.g., with IstructE) are still to take place. Initial intended actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of best practice guidance for Local Authority Building Standards teams on procuring services from private structural engineering firms, including: • Defining scope and extent of required services • Guidance on reviewing responses • Provision of pro-forma documentation <p>Stakeholders engaged to date have expressed clear support for the production of this guidance</p> <p>While verifiers will still require engagement with third-party engineers, the guidance will strengthen consistency, robustness, and efficiency. This approach aligns with wider ongoing work on Certification and Scheme Provider support.</p> <p>Collaborative Forum: Arrangements will be developed for a Structural Hub collaborative forum, following a similar operational model to the Fire Hub.</p> <p>Training for Verifiers: Structural training needs under consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with third-party engineers (as outlined above) • Understanding load paths • Identifying common defects • Inspecting structural elements as part of reasonable inquiry 	
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3.2	<p>Business:</p> <p>Idox Enterprise – 2026/27 reporting onwards: Progress update – essentially Idox engaged to undertake consultation work and awaiting a date for this to commence.</p> <p>Next Q4 Operational Report to Advisory Board will be in current format to complete the years data set in a consistent manner.</p> <p>Q1 2026/27 reporting will be in a new format to reflect Enterprise reporting and new reporting outcomes as previously agreed by the Board.</p> <p>Lead Technical Support Surveyor: Initial role profile produced and engagement has taken place with HR regarding the post and its purpose.</p> <p>Intention was that this post would grade out in a similar manner to the L & D manager post at FC10, however it looks like this new post will be graded at FC9.</p> <p>The role will still do what we want it to do as that is reflected in the profile, but to acknowledge where the salary grade will sit in relation to similar roles in local authorities, we have renamed the role to ‘Lead Technical Support Officer’.</p> <p>Formal role profile grading documentation now submitted to HR.</p> <p>Next steps post grading outcome are to establish role in service structure and then advertise.</p> <p>There is budget to recruit to this post sooner than 2027/28.</p> <p>Time/Activity: Time and activity report essentially included for Advisory Board consideration. No significant changes from previous quarters.</p>	
3.3	<p>Finance:</p> <p>Current Financial Position: Essentially, although reporting on Q3 at this meeting, the following represents the position as of now, not the end of Q3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2026/27 funding support from BSD has been agreed at £1,200,000.00. • Projected year end overall income for 2025/26 is estimated at £2,996,193.00 with actual and committed spend estimated at 	

		<p>£2,552,994.06.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all of this committed spend will happen this financial year but will be carried forward and spent in 2026/27. • Noting the anticipated income and spend, current projected 2025/26 budget overrun indicates there will be a surplus of around £443,198.94. • We have recently received funding support from BSD in the sum of £799,984.00, for the verification performance improvement fund. This income and committed spend is included within these figures. • The proposed 2026/27 budget was previously presented to the Board. Whilst our committed activity and spend has not changed from that previously presented, a revised 2026/27 budget paper has been included with the meeting papers acknowledging the greater accuracy of anticipated surplus, the inclusion of the new Lead Technical Post in 2026/27 as well as the additional verification performance improvement fund. • Taking this into account, the anticipated income for 2026/27 at this time, including budgetary surplus, is now £2,779,638.26, with expenditure being estimated at £2,645,753.60, leaving a projected 2026/27 year end surplus of £133,884.66. <p>Future SBSH funding formula – 2027/28 onwards and BSD consultation work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SBSH/Fife Council do not know the outcome of the current research as yet. BSD engaging a consultant to further research what overall Hub funding was realised through the 3 year fee increases to help establish funding available. • Future funding needs to be known for forward planning. JW reminded BSD and Board that discussions around funding through the Delivery Model Development Group did not match that discussed between BSD and CoSLA when the current 3 year model was set up. JW also went on to state that it is hoped that the future funding recognises the funding levels discussed through the delivery group, taking account of inflationary rise and staffing level increases as agreed by the Board. • NM confirmed that an outcome will not be known until May due to the election period and any early recruitment of the new post would be at SBSH/Fife Council own risk. 	
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3.4	<p>Governance:</p> <p>SBSH 2026/27 Business Plan: This was presented to the Board in advance of the new financial year for their consideration, noting that current operational reporting remains at the Q3 stage. There was not comments raised on the Business Plan.</p> <p>Head of BSD Development Unit retiral – BSD Advisory Board representative replacement: NM retires the end of March, SG confirmed that an additional BSD representative will be appointed to the Advisory Board, if required, prior to NM’s replacement being formally in post.</p> <p>SBSH Learning and Development Manager – Advisory Board attendance: JW requested that Russell Watson, SBSH Learning & Development Manager, attend the Advisory Board to allow Learning and Development updates to be presented directly. This was agreed by the Board.</p>	
3.5	<p>Risk Register:</p> <p>Two risks currently remain on the register, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing 2026/27 funding. Funding support letter now received so following meeting this risk will be removed. • Securing 2027/28 budget. BSD reviewing the report from Optimal and outcome unknown at this time. Given the discussion today on this, this risk remains live. 	
4.0	<p>AOCB:</p>	
4.1	<p>SG Advised the new Technical Handbooks are now available on the website in advance of 6 April 2026.</p> <p>SG also introduced the following and input the link to the chat: Scottish Building Regulations: Fire Safety review and Compliance: Call for Evidence - Scottish Gove...</p> <p>JW advised that he would email the Board to confirm who wishes to participate in testing the Mobile App. Following this, he will speak with Skirr AI, the app developers, to arrange access for testers and provide a demonstration if required. Post meeting note – done.</p>	
4.2	<p>Next Meetings:</p> <p>Meeting 7 - Monday 15th June 2026 at 13:30 on MS Teams</p>	

		Meeting 8 – Monday 21 st September 2026 at 13:30 on MS Teams Meeting 9 – Monday 14 th December 2026 at 13:30 on MS Teams	
5.0		Actions:	
	5.1	Review the balance of Board members.	GM/JW/AMcA