

SUBJECT:	Building Control Service Update
REPORT OF:	Portfolio holder for Sustainable Development portfolio – Councillor Nick Naylor
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Peter Beckford Head of Sustainable Development
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WARD/S AFFECTED	N/A

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide a general update on building control.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members to note the report

3. Content of Report

- 3.1 Building Control has been a shared service since April 2014. The FTE has been reduced from 15.81 to 13.69 as agreed in the recruitment and retention package that was introduced in December 2015. One trainee and one assistant Building Control Surveyor were appointed in January 2015 and are training to gain full membership of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. To maintain the staffing levels we are using an agency surveyor. There are two temporary part time surveyors covering one post.
- 3.2 Currently building control is advertising for two Building Control Surveyors to replace the agency surveyor and the temporary part time surveyors.
- 3.3 The market share of the business is being maintained at approximately 82%. This indicates that we have not lost or gained market share since the shared services began in April 2014. As building control is in direct competition with the private sector this is excellent because in recent years the market share has been dropping. Five extra partners have been acquired since April 2014 i.e. 36 from 31 original partners. A partner is where an agent or architect chooses to partner with a local authority to carry out the building control services for all of their projects whether it is within the Chiltern or South Bucks area. The service is being pro-active in bringing in new business, by marketing itself and providing competitive quotes.
- 3.4 Building control has continued to provide training and interesting seminars to their customers. The numbers of people attending have greatly improved. At the last seminar on the CDM Regulations there were over 80 attendees. These have been excellent opportunities to market the service and successfully gain more partners.

- 3.5 The customer panel was suspended last December to enable a fresh approach, with a new term of reference later in 2016
- 3.6 The performance has improved from 63% in April 2014 to 91.5% in January 2016 of plan checking applications within 10 working days. The time taken to deal with the applications in April 2014 was average of 10.7 days; currently we are taking an average of 3.75 days.
- 3.7 The processes have been further streamlined with the implementation of a new software system, Enterprise, enabling us to have on line processes. It is easy to manage workload and track applications. This will enable mobile working in the future. Hard copies of the building regulation applications have been scanned to make them easily accessible. We currently receive over 60% of the applications electronically.
- 3.8 The building control service customer satisfactory survey, sent to owners when they are issued with a completion certificate, in April 2014 initially commenced at 84.6% of the customers fairly/very satisfied with the building control service. It is currently 92.6%
- 3.9 The income for the service is on budget for 2015/6 an improvement on the previous year's budget where it was just under.
- 3.10 The planning department consult building control on the access for the fire brigade for larger projects and new houses.
- 3.11 Building control have had numerous call outs for potential dangerous structures through the day and out of hours by the emergency services.
- 3.12 A building control surveyor attends the Burnham Access meetings to give advice on disabled issues.
- 3.13 It was concluded, after some investigation, that carrying out risk assessments for external companies was not practicable.

4. Consultation

Not applicable.

5. Links to Council Policy Objectives

To support the safe delivery of services covered in the Council's policy and objectives, and our people management policies.

Background	None
Papers:	

