

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director - Place  
to Leadership Panel  
of 24 November 2020**

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**Subject: Planning and Building Standards Service Proposed  
Restructure**

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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline proposals to amend the 4th tier management arrangements within the Planning and Building Standards Service and implement a revised operating model.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Panel**

- 2.1.1 approves the implementation of a revised operating model for the Planning and Building Standards Service;**
- 2.1.2 notes the savings identified at 6.2; and**
- 2.1.3 notes that the associated voluntary severance cost can be met from the workforce Change Fund.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Since the merger of the Planning and Building Standards Services in 2017, there has been no evaluation of the impact on performance or assessment of how well the current structure meets the needs of the Service, customers and the Council. In recognition of this, the Council's Leadership Panel committed to a review of the service, with the expectation it be concluded by January 2020.
- 3.2 A new Planning and Building Standards Service Lead was appointed in October 2019 and the relocation of the Service from Burns House to County Buildings is now complete. A delay in reporting the proposed restructure has occurred as a consequence of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 3.3 The proposed restructure has been informed by a number of key considerations including feedback from stakeholders, staff and customers. These highlighted issues in relation to how the Service tackled key areas such as digital transformation and business development and whilst considerable progress has been made in relation to eDevelopment during the Covid 19 pandemic, opportunity now exists to

develop this further. In addition to this, more co-ordinated and wide reaching communication, member engagement and collaborative working would help to raise the profile of the service and contribute to the successful delivery of the Council's ambitions and key priorities.

3.4 The Service has separate business support functions, with distinct administrative teams for both Planning and Building Standards and no centralised point of contact in relation to complaints and FOI's.

3.5 The Planning and Building Standards functions operate within a legislative framework and a further consideration in the restructure is the implication of the recently enacted Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. This is subject to further guidance and regulation but includes the creation of a Chief Planning Officer role and an additional 49 planning related duties on local authorities which aim to deliver:

- strong and flexible development plans;
- more high quality homes;
- infrastructure first approach;
- efficient/ transparent development management;
- stronger leadership, smarter resourcing and sharing of skills; and
- collaboration rather than conflict- inclusion and community empowerment.

3.6 The structure must respond to this. It must support placemaking and inclusive economic growth, infrastructure delivery and help to create successful and sustainable places in collaboration with our key stakeholders.

3.7 The current organisational structure as set out in [Appendix 1](#) does not provide the best opportunity to fulfil these requirements or to deliver a more efficient and collaborative service which is responsive to change.

## **4. Proposals**

4.1 To address the issues raised it is proposed to introduce four new functions and an operating model that is:

- customer focused;
- responsive not reactive;
- promotes strategic coordination of the service;
- puts technology first;
- focusses on continuous improvement and self-evaluation; and
- ensures resources are prioritised where they are needed.

4.2 This would be achieved through the revision of the 4th tier management structure to ensure the functions within the new operating model and delivery teams are supported effectively. Each new function would have a Coordinator aligned to it:

- Coordinator – Planning Strategy (L13);
- Coordinator – Place Planning (L13);

- Coordinator – Business Development (L13); and
- Coordinator – Building Standards (L13).

- 4.3 A further two 5th tier posts will be created as part of this current restructure to allow the Service to be managed effectively at the lower level and support succession planning.
- 4.4 The proposed operating model as set out in [Appendix 2](#) shows separation of functions between Planning Strategy, Place Planning and Building Standards, supported by a Business Development team which will drive eDevelopment, provide dedicated administrative support, provide a customer face and facilitate performance management and reporting.
- 4.5 The delivery of the Planning function has been revised to specifically address key areas mentioned earlier in this report, including elected member training, infrastructure and planning obligations. Responsibility for these would sit under the new Place Planning team which would also administer the Council's development management function.
- 4.6 The Planning Strategy team would have responsibility for the Local Development Plan and Regional Spatial Plan, development of the open space strategy (as required by the new planning Act) as well as a range of environmental planning work including outdoor access and Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 4.7 Collaborative working and stakeholder engagement will underpin the functions and will contribute towards the delivery of key Council priorities and an enhanced customer service and profile.
- 4.8 The proposed organisational structure is set out in [Appendix 3](#).

## **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The proposed restructure reduces the overall number of FTE within the service by 1 from the 4th Tier as shown in [Appendix 4](#).
- 6.2 The cost saving associated with this will be £74,406.00. £30,000.00 of this will meet budget savings required from the 2019/20 financial year and the remaining £44,406.00 is a new saving for 2020/21.
- 6.3 Voluntary redundancy will apply and the estimated cost of this is within the maximum 24 month payback period criteria contained in the Financial Regulations and therefore the cost can be met from the Workforce Change Fund.
- 6.4 The service review costings are shown in [Appendix 5](#).

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

- 7.1 There are human resource implications associated with this report.

7.2 There is a proposed loss of 1 FTE as detailed above. In addition, there would be some impact on other employees who may be re-aligned to sit under a new function or Coordinator without any material impact or changes to employee terms and conditions. Voluntary severance will meet the overall reduction of 1 FTE.

7.3 The terms of the Council's Managing Change policy will apply, as appropriate, including the matching of employees to new posts.

## **8. Risk**

### **8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

### **8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***

8.2.1 The current operating model is ineffective, poses a number of issues and presents barriers to future development. If the new structure is not implemented, the Planning and Building Standards Service will not be able to fulfil its obligations in helping to meet the aspirations and objectives of the Council contained within the Council plan and will be less equipped to fully address future statutory requirements.

## **9. Equalities**

9.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment Scoping process. There are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as [Appendix 6](#).

## **10. Sustainable Development Implications**

10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

## **11. Options Appraisal**

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## **12. Link to Council Plan**

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Commitment 1 of the Council Plan: Fair and Effective Leadership/ Leadership that promotes fairness.

## **13. Results of Consultation**

13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

13.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Ian Cochrane, Portfolio Holder for Environment, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

13.3 Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions and the feedback provided has informed this report. Consultation has also taken place with all staff affected within the service areas through a series of one to one meetings.

**14. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes**

14.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director - Place will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Leadership Panel in the 'Council and Leadership Panel Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

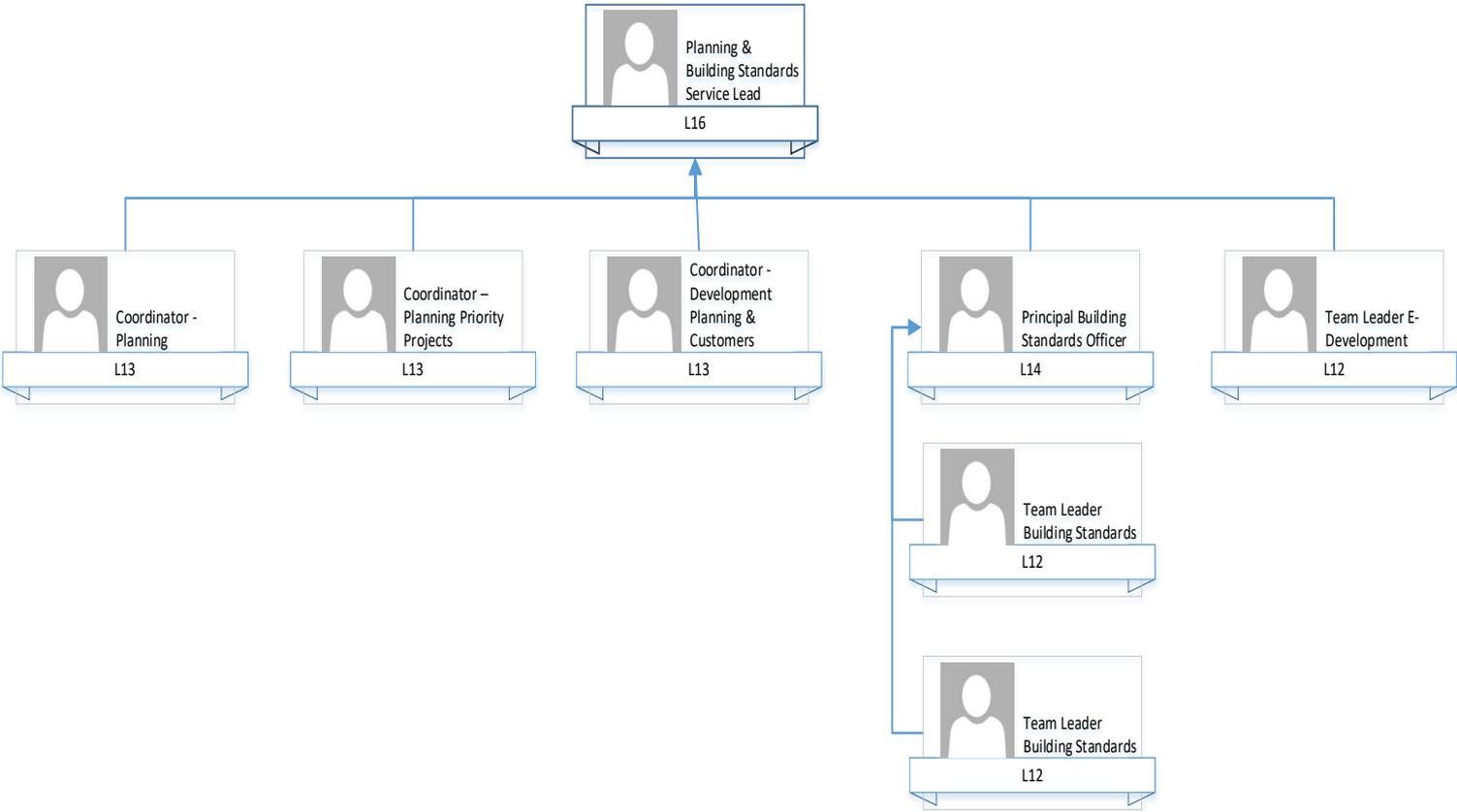
<i><b>Implementation</b></i>	<i><b>Due date</b></i>	<i><b>Managed by</b></i>
New service model in operation	26 February 2021	Director - Place

**Background Papers**    **None**

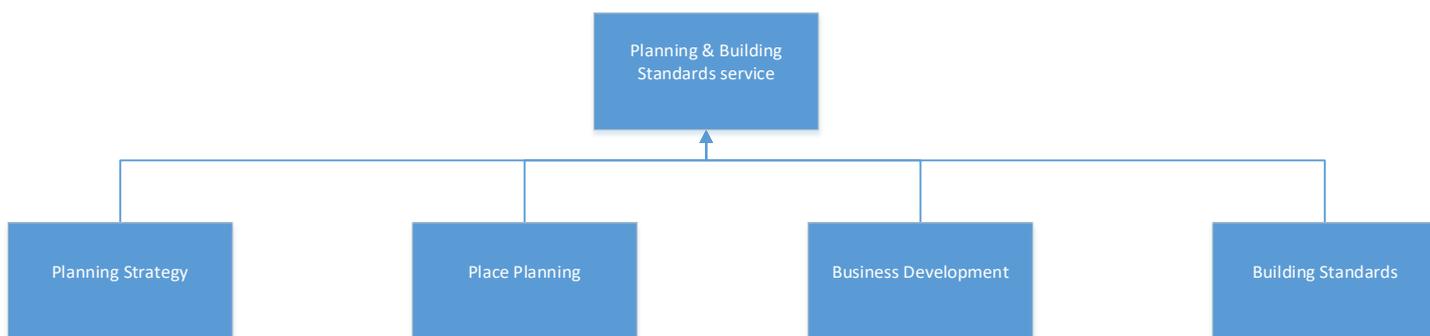
**Person to Contact**    **Julie Nicol, Service Lead – Planning and Building Standards  
County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr KA7 1DR  
Phone 01292 612963  
Email [Julie.nicol@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.nicol@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)**

**Date:** 19 November 2020

Current Organisational Structure



Proposed Operating Model



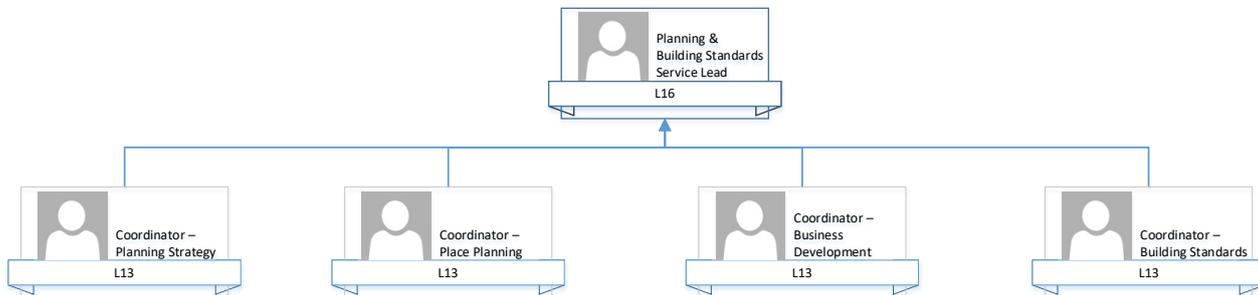
- Develops and oversees the Council's Planning and related strategy development
- Develops, implements and monitors the Local Development Plan
- Fulfils the requirements of the 2019 Planning Act (incl. NPF4, Regional and Local Spatial Planning, Open Space Strategies, Local Place Plans)
- Provides Planning policy advice and guidance to the Council and stakeholders
- Provides Planning Adviser role to the Local Review Body
- Delivers the Council's Access Authority functions
- Ensures compliance with other environmental statutory requirements including SEA and HRA and manages key relationships with regulatory stakeholder bodies
- Manages planning matters relating to conservation and environment planning
- Contributes to the Council's wider corporate Plans, Programmes and Strategies
- Undertakes collaborative working with other Services, key agencies and stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to strategy development

- Ensures the Council's planning function supports local Placemaking and inclusive economic growth agendas
- Develops planning advice and provides expertise to other Council Services and stakeholders in relation to project planning, master planning and delivery
- Delivers the Council's Development Management function
- Fulfils the requirements of the 2019 Planning Act (incl. member training, infrastructure levy, planning obligations, master planning).
- Secures the delivery of development contributions and assesses development viability in collaboration with other services and stakeholders
- Delivers the Council's planning enforcement and compliance role
- Builds and implements a programme of positive and proactive stakeholder engagement
- Develops and provides a programme of training and development opportunities for Elected Members and officers involved in planning related matters
- Develops the Planning Performance Framework

- Provides the customer facing point of contact for the Planning & Building Standards Service
- Ensures processes and systems are effectively designed and delivered to support the customer experience and delivery of the statutory Planning and Building Standards function
- Provides and manages all technical and ICT requirements for the Service including IDOX and E-Development
- Manages staff, customer, stakeholders and Elected Members communications, complaints and feedback
- Evaluates Service effectiveness and implements continuous improvement for Planning & Building Standards in line with Scottish Government and other requirements
- Manages the gathering of information for performance reporting in relation to Planning & Building Standards in liaison with those teams
- Supports the preparation of materials and administration in relation to review boards and Regulatory Panels
- Provides a highly responsive customer experience in relation to all Planning & Building Standards Service requests

- Ensures the health and safety of the public in relation to the built environment across South Ayrshire
- Provides a civil engineering capacity which supports the work of the team and other Council Services
- Provides an emergency call out service for dangerous buildings and liaises with stakeholders in relation to civil emergencies
- Provides Building Standards technical input to other matters including licensing, safety at sports grounds and events
- Ensures the Council's continued appointment as Building Standards verifier for South Ayrshire
- Liaises with Scottish Government, private sector organisations and other local authorities on building standards best practice and guidelines
- Liaises with other parties including the Police, Fire Authority and Environmental Health.
- Provides Building Standards advice and guidance to the Council and other stakeholders
- Manages the Building Standards Performance Framework reporting process

Proposed Organisational Structure



Current and Proposed Structures

Planning and Building Standards

Current Budgeted Structure			Proposed Structure			
Grade	Job Title	FTE	Narrative	Job Title	FTE	Narrative
Level 16	Service Lead Planning and Building Standards	1.0	No Change	Service Lead Planning and Building Standards	1.0	No Change
Level 14	Principal Building Standards Officer	1.0	Delete			
Level 13	Coordinator Planning	1.0	Delete			
	Coordinator Planning Priority Projects	1.0	Delete			
	Coordinator Development Planning & Customers	1.0	Delete			
				Coordinator Building Standards	1.0	New FTE post
				Coordinator Place Planning	1.0	New FTE post
				Coordinator Business Development	1.0	New FTE post
Level 12	Team Leader Building Standards (Lead Surveyor)	1.0	Delete			
	Team Leader Building Standards (Lead Engineer)	1.0	Delete			
	Team Leader E Development	1.0	Delete			
Level 11				Lead Building Surveyor	2.0	New FTE
	<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>8.0</b>		<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>7.0</b>	

## Appendix 5

### Service Review Costings

Level	Title	Current		Proposed				Change	
		FTE	Gross Salary	Delete	New Post	FTE	Gross Salary	FTE	Gross Salary
3	Clerical Assistant - Building Standards	0.50	12,947			0.50	12,947	0.00	0
5	Administration Assistant	2.71	73,857			2.71	73,857	0.00	0
6	Information Assistant	1.00	32,524			1.00	32,524	0.00	0
7	Administration Officer - Build Stds	1.00	36,658			1.00	36,658	(0.00)	0
7	Assistant Building Standards Surveyor	2.00	66,739			2.00	66,739	(0.00)	0
7	Assistant Planner	2.00	71,130			2.00	71,130	(0.00)	0
7	Enforcement Officer	1.00	36,658			1.00	36,658	(0.00)	0
7		6.00	211,185	0.00	0.00	6.00	211,185	(0.00)	0
8	Building Standards Technician	2.00	82,918			2.00	82,918	(0.00)	0
8	Compliance Supervisor	1.00	41,459			1.00	41,459	(0.00)	0
8	Outdoor Access Officer	1.00	41,459			1.00	41,459	(0.00)	0
8	Planner	1.00	41,459			1.00	41,459	(0.00)	0
8	Technician - Planning	1.00	41,459			1.00	41,459	(0.00)	0
8		6.00	248,754	0.00	0.00	6.00	248,754	(0.00)	0
9	Assistant Engineer	1.00	46,729			0.00	46,729		
9	Planner	1.00	46,729			1.00	46,729		0
9		2.00	93,458	0.00	0.00	1.00	93,458		
10	Building Standards Surveyor	8.00	410,024			8.00	410,024	(0.00)	0
10	Civil Engineer	1.00	51,253			1.00	51,253	(0.00)	0
10	Planner	3.00	51,253			3.00	51,253	(0.00)	0
10		12.00	512,530	0.00	0.00	12.00	512,530	(0.00)	0
11	Lead Conservation Officer	1.00	56,110			1.00	56,110	(0.00)	0
11	Lead Development Plan Officer	1.00	56,110			1.00	56,110	(0.00)	0
11	Local Planner	1.00	56,110			1.00	56,110	(0.00)	0
11	Supervisory Planner	5.00	280,550			5.00	280,550	(0.00)	0
11	Lead Building Standards Surveyor	0.00	-		1.00	1.00	56,110	1.00	56,110
11	Lead Building Standards Surveyor	0.00	-		1.00	1.00	56,110	1.00	56,110
11		8.00	448,880	0.00	2.00	10.00	561,100	2.00	112,220
12	Team Leader - Building Standards	2.00	121,010	(2.00)		0.00	-	(2.00)	(121,010)
12	Team Leader - E-Development (Building Standards)	1.00	60,505	(1.00)		0.00	-	(1.00)	(60,505)
12		3.00	181,515	(3.00)	0.00	0.00	-	(3.00)	(181,515)
13	Co-ordinator (Planning)	3.00	195,930	(3.00)		0.00	-	(3.00)	(195,930)
13	Co-ordinator Planning Strategy	0.00	-		1.00	1.00	65,310	1.00	65,310
13	Co-ordinator Place Planning	0.00	-		1.00	1.00	65,310	1.00	65,310
13	Co-ordinator Business Development	0.00	-		1.00	1.00	65,310	1.00	65,310
13	Co-ordinator Building Standards	0.00	-		1.00	1.00	65,310	1.00	65,310
13		3.00	195,930	(3.00)	4.00	4.00	261,240	1.00	65,310
14	Building Standards Manager	1.00	70,421	(1.00)		0.00	-	(1.00)	(70,421)
16	Planning Manager	1.00	80,675			1.00	80,675	(0.00)	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>46.21</b>	<b>2,162,676</b>	<b>(7.00)</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>44.21</b>	<b>2,088,270</b>	<b>(1.00)</b>	<b>(74,406)</b>

## 1. Proposal details

Proposal Title <b>Planning and Building Standards Service Proposed Restructure</b>	Lead Officer <b>Julie Nicol</b>
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2. Which communities, groups of people, employees or thematic groups do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this proposal? Please indicate whether these would be positive or negative impacts

Community, Groups of People or Themes	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
The whole community of South Ayrshire	No	No
People from different racial groups, ethnic or national origin.	No	No
Women and/ or men (boys and girls)	No	No
People with disabilities	No	No
People from particular age groups for example Older people, children and young people	No	No
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people	No	No
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process to change sex	No	No
Pregnant women and new mothers	No	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	No
People who share a particular religion or belief	No	No
Thematic Groups: Health, Human Rights, Rurality and Deprivation	No	No

3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that the proposal will support the Council to:

General Duty and other Equality Themes	Level of Negative and/ or Positive Impact (high, medium or low)
Eliminate discrimination and harassment faced by particular communities or groups	-
Promote equality of opportunity between particular communities or groups	-
Foster good relations between particular communities or groups	-
Promote positive attitudes towards different communities or groups	-
Increase participation of particular communities or groups in public life	-
Improve the health and wellbeing of particular communities or groups	-
Promote the human rights of particular communities or groups	-
Tackle deprivation faced by particular communities or groups	-

## 4. Summary Assessment

<b>Is a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) required?</b> (A full EQIA must be carried out on all high and medium impact proposals)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Rationale for decision:</b> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The proposal does not have a significant negative or positive impact on any particular group.</b></p>	
Signed : <b>Donald Gillies</b> Director	
Date: <b>19 October 2020</b>	Copy to <a href="mailto:equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk">equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk</a>