
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:	11
DATE OF MEETING:	10 th JULY 2003	CATEGORY:	OPEN
REPORT FROM:	PLANNING SERVICES MANAGER	DOC. NO.	
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	STEVE POWELL EXTENSION 5730	TERMS OF REFERENCE - ES05	
SUBJECT:	UPDATING OF BUILDING CONTROL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS		
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL		

1.0 Recommendations

Members are advised to adopt the revised National Building Control Performance Standards set out at Appendix A

1.0 Purpose of Report

To consider formal adoption of revised National Building Control Performance Standards

2.0 Detail

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has recently updated the National Building Control Performance Standards for Building Control Bodies. The Standards were first published in July 1999. They set out levels of performance for Building Control Bodies (public and private) to meet and offer guidance on the means to achieve them.

The standards are written against a background of the provisions of the Building Act 1984 and the Regulations made under it. There are different procedural frameworks applicable to Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and Approved Inspectors (AI's). The standards and supporting guidance establish the minimum level of performance considered necessary to enable the Council to adequately discharge its duties and responsibilities under the Act.

It is the ODPM's view that competition between (LABC) and private (AI's) provides a stimulus to greater efficiency and higher standards of service to the customer. However, it has been recognised that these same market forces have the potential to drive down Building Control standards, thereby threatening the health and safety of building users. It is to avoid this possibility that Standards have been formulated and recently updated, for both LABC and AI's. The standards including the revisions (*in italics*) are set out at appendix A.

The main change requires a complaints procedure to be in place. It is considered that the council's own complaints procedure fulfils this requirement. In addition a formal

policy for the provision of the Building control service is required to be published. A policy document is to be prepared and brought to a future committee for consideration.

Because of recent recruitment problems a number of the previously adopted performance standards have been aspired to rather than fulfilled. However when newly recruited officers are in post it is anticipated that in normal circumstances, the performance standards can be met

3.0 Financial Implications

None envisaged at this stage but periodic reviews should provide information to consider charge levels and resources needed to fulfil stated commitments.

4.0 Corporate Implications

The adoption and fulfilment of the standards is likely to be a consideration in the forthcoming Best Value review of the service.

5.0 Community Implications

With the adoption and publication of the Standards, the public will have greater clarity of what they can expect from the service provided by the Council.

6.0 Conclusions

The National Building Control Performance Standards have been initiated and endorsed by the ODPM as a means of trying to establish common standards for both the public and private sectors of Building Control. They should help to ensure that minimum levels of service are maintained and that competitive pricing will not drive down standards to a point where health and safety provisions are threatened. The standards have been recommended for adoption by both the ODPM and the LGA

7.0 Background Papers

ODPM Building Control Performance Standards - July 1999 (revised 20 May 2003)

LGA circular 752/99 The Building Control Performance Standards Document - November 1999