

**Argyll and Bute Council: Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
Revised April 2022**

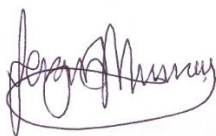
Section 1: About the proposal

Title of Proposal
Removal of 0.5 FTE building standards surveyors post from building standards establishment as part of the Councils budget savings for 2023-24 annual budget saving

Intended outcome of proposal
1. To reduce the professional compliment of building standard surveyors from 15 FTE to 14.5 FTE

Description of proposal
<p>1. The proposed saving is a long-term vacancy within the building standards team which arose from an employee-generated request to reduce the working hours of a current employee. The 0.5 post has been vacant for two years.</p> <p>2. Building standards service continues to operate and provide services, despite this vacancy. The changes arising from the Covid pandemic (e.g virtual inspections, new ways of working etc.) and the reduction in building warrants/downturn in the building sector/cost of living crisis have assisted in managing workloads within available resource.</p>

Business Outcome(s) / Corporate Outcome(s) to which the proposal contributes
Applies to all corporate outcomes

Lead officer details:	
Name of lead officer	Alan Morrison
Job title	Regulatory Services Manager
Department	Development and Economic Growth
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Fergus Murray
Job title	Head of Development and Economic Growth
Department	Development and Infrastructure
Sign off of EqSEIA	
Date of sign off	09/01/23

Document	Revision date	Authorised by	Date
V1	09/01/23		

Who will deliver the proposal?
If this budget saving is approved by the Council, the Regulatory Services and Building Standards Manager will deliver this saving. This 0.5 post is currently vacant and there are no compulsory or voluntary redundancies expected from this option.

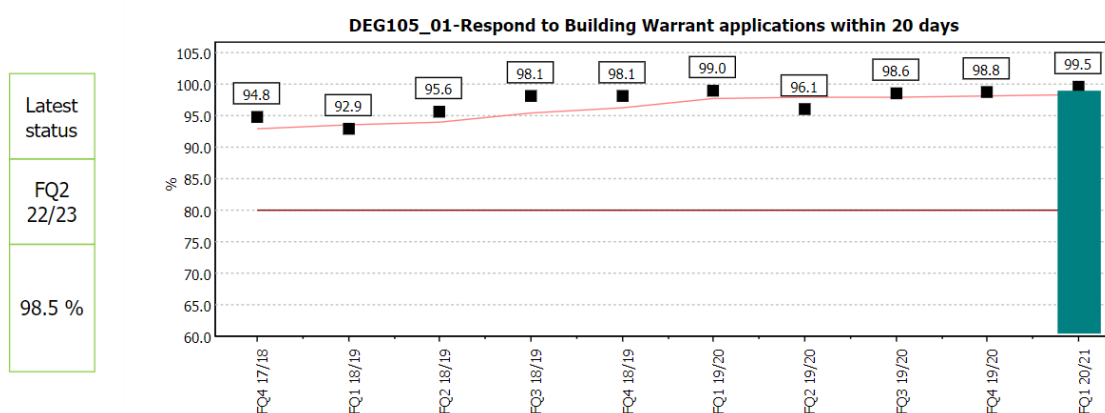
Section 2: Evidence used in the course of carrying out EqSEIA

Consultation / engagement

The saving was developed as part of the Councils budget strategy for 2023/24. The option was developed through discussions with the building standard team in identifying potential savings options.

Data

Despite the post being vacant, building standards are meeting all key national performance measures. This has been achieved by operating as a virtual team, staff commitment, monitoring performance and revised operating procedures including the introduction of remote verification inspections.



Other information

1. The 0.5 FTE post has been vacant for over 2 years and there is no potential to recruit to the 0.5 FTE. There is a shortage of qualified building standard surveyors in Scotland and the Council have been unsuccessful in attracting qualified applicants for a building standards post three times in 2022.
2. A strong customer focus remains in building standards and they were awarded the Scottish award for customer care in 2022 for all 32 LA's, and retained their Customer Excellence Award, increasing the number of compliance plus criteria to 23.

Gaps in evidence

Future demand on building standard services is unknown but there has been a reduction in building warrant applications nationally post pandemic and due to the high costs of building materials and cost of living.

Section 3: Impact of proposal

Impact on service users:

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Age		x		
Disability		x		
Ethnicity		x		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population		X		
Island populations		x		
Low income		X		
Low wealth		X		
Material deprivation		X		
Area deprivation		X		
Socio-economic background		X		
Communities of place				x
Communities of interest		X		

If you have identified any impacts on service users, explain what these will be.

No negative impacts identified to protected characteristics and groups

If any 'don't know's have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

Presently the service is able to undertake its statutory and verification work, together with some commercial work from other local authorities, with this vacancy. Workload levels are being constantly monitored and corrective actions taken, to ensure that targets are met and to protect the wellbeing of our teams and our communities.

Future levels of building warrant numbers are unknown and will be kept under review. In the event of increasing numbers, remedial action may be to reduce to cease commercial work.

Impact on service deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc):

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		x		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population		X		
Island populations		X		

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Low income		X		
Low wealth		X		
Material deprivation		X		
Area deprivation		X		
Socio-economic background		X		
Communities of place		X		
Communities of interest		X		

If you have identified any impacts on service users, explain what these will be.

There are no negative impacts.

If any 'do not know's have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

N/A

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

N/A

Section 4: Interdependencies

Is this proposal likely to have any knock-on effects for any other activities carried out by or on behalf of the council?

No

Details of knock-on effects identified

Section 5: Monitoring and review

How will you monitor and evaluate the equality impacts of your proposal?

The Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment will be kept under regular review depending on the Councils budget decision.