

# Audit Committee

10 July 2025



<b>Title</b>	Update on Building Control
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To inform
<b>Report Author</b>	Heather Morgan, Group Head Place, Protection and Prosperity
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Services
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Committee is asked to:</b> To note the information in Appendices 1 and 2
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	At the last committee, members asked for more information to be provided around the challenges faced by the building control service and proposed actions to mitigate

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>At its last meeting, the committee asked for a more detailed verbal update on the building control service and the challenges that it is facing (which is replicated in large parts of the UK)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The building control industry is undergoing a fundamental change post the Grenfell tragedy which is causing significant challenge</li><li>We are losing a number of key staff to the private sector (higher salary)</li></ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This report sets out the actions to date to try and ensure we have a resilient service These have been within existing budgetary constraints</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A report will come back to committee once we receive the final audit from the Building Safety Regulator, and we have more certainty around LGR in terms of further collaborative working with partners</li></ul>

1.1 This report seeks to inform the committee of the challenges faced by the building control service and proposed actions to mitigate.

## **2. Key issues**

2.1 The key issues facing the service are set out Appendix 1 but in short:

- (a) The rigorous new regime brought about as a result of the Grenfell tragedy requires the construction and building control industry to take a completely different approach
- (b) The building control industry nationally is in a challenging situation with a significant loss of professional expertise. The lack of qualified resource means developments are being stalled, which is significantly impacting on housing delivery. On 30 June 2025 MHCLG took decisive action and announced it was setting up a board to take on the functions of the BSR as part of initial steps to creating a single construction regulator (to be headed up by a previous Commissioner of the London Fire Brigade).
- (c) We, alongside other Councils in Surrey, are losing staff to more highly paid agency roles who can secure £100 – 120k pa
- (d) The size of the professional team has dropped from 5 to 2 (resilience being provided by Elmbridge Building Control Services). This is reducing our ability to take on income generating work whilst still having to undertake enforcement functions (for which we cannot charge a fee).
- (e) There has been a delay in the BSR providing their external audit response, but we know the likely direction of travel.
- (f) We are taking proactive steps (within existing budgets) to enhance the QA and KPI monitoring of the service, as well as boosting management oversight
- (g) We are looking to focus on the necessary work only
- (h) We are looking to improve salaries in the hope that this will, assist with staff retention and recruitment
- (i) LGR offers the opportunity to work with other Councils to create more resilient service. Discussions are already taking place at service manager level.

## **3. Options analysis and proposal**

There are no options in this report as it is an update. A report will be come to committee once the BSR audit is received which will have an options analysis and proposals for consideration.

## **4. Financial management comments**

4.1 There are no options in this report as it is an update. A report will be come to committee once the BSR audit is received.

4.2 Committee should note that all the actions outlined in **Appendix 1** are within existing budgets. Should the situation change, and more resource is required, an in-year growth bid would need to come to this committee for decision.

## **5. Risk management comments**

5.1 A risk register has been developed in line with the requirements of Local Authority Building Control (LABC) to enable us to apply for and secure access to their QM system. This is attached at **Appendix 2**.

## **6. Procurement comments**

- 6.1 N/A as an update report.
- 7. Legal comments**
- 7.1 N/A as an update report.
- 8. Other considerations**
- 8.1 N/A as an update report.
- 9. Equality and Diversity**
- 9.1 N/A as an update report.
- 10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**
- 10.1 N/A as an update report.
- 11. Timetable for implementation**
- 11.1 A report will come to committee once the final external audit from the BSR has been received.
- 12. Contact**
- 12.1 Heather Morgan, Group Head Place, Protection and Prosperity.  
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**Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer  
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.**

**Background papers:** *(These are unpublished papers upon which you have relied in preparing this report). If none state, There are none.*

**Appendices:**

- 1 – Update on Building Control
- 2 – Local Authority Building Control QMS Risk Register April 2025 – April 2026