



# MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

## INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - FINAL

BUILDING CONTROL  
JULY 2019

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	
Design	Operational Effectiveness
Limited	Moderate

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**DISTRIBUTION**

Paul Dodson	Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance
Matt Leigh	Group Manager Planning Services

**REPORT STATUS LIST**

Auditors:	Nemisha Patel - Internal auditor
Dates work performed:	9 April 2019 - 1 May 2019 (closing meeting)
Draft report issued:	
Management response received:	
Final report issued:	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**LEVEL OF ASSURANCE: (SEE APPENDIX I FOR DEFINITIONS)**

Design	Limited	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.
Effectiveness	Moderate	Evidence of non-compliance with some controls that may put some of the system objectives at risk.

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS: (SEE APPENDIX I)**

High	2
Medium	3
Low	-

**TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS: 5****BACKGROUND:**

Local authorities are under a duty to provide an at-cost building control service to the public under the Building Act 1984. This includes a duty to enforce the Act in their jurisdiction and retain ultimate responsibility for decision-making with regard to enforcement action. However, unlike other statutory services, Local Government building control services compete with the private sector (Approved Inspectors).

The Service has two elements, which are described as fee earning and non-fee earning work. The building regulation aspect of the service is income generating and in accordance with The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 and CIPFA accounting requirements. This aspect of the business must be self-financing over a continuous three-year rolling period. The non-fee earning part of the service is funded by the council tax payer and includes dangerous structures, enforcement, demolitions, support for the safety advisory group and consultancy to other council services.

When the review was undertaken this was during a period of reorganisation within the council. We have recognised this throughout the fieldwork and have made recommendations that should be implemented prospectively as the Building Control team recruit staff to fill the vacant roles.

**ADDED VALUE**

We undertook benchmarking on the Council's building control standard charges 2018/19 against other district councils. For charges for new dwellings, we identified that the planning fees, building notices and regularisation fees are below the average, however the inspection fee is above the average. Additionally, for works relating to a single dwelling and all other domestic works the majority of planning, inspection, building notices and regularisation charges are above the averages. (See Appendix II)

**GOOD PRACTICE:**

- Monthly reconciliations are undertaken to ensure revenue from the service has been collected and is sent to finance to ensure any debts are collected.
- There is sufficient information available on the Council's website on the Building Control applications/notices, inspection services and further regulatory information that the team provides and the necessary charges.

**KEY FINDINGS:**

- The Building Control team have two vacant roles, which is impacting on the management of their workload. There is no evidence of training and development needs being monitored and formal team meetings are not taking place. (Finding 1)
- There are no policies or procedures in place outlining the Building Control role, responsibilities and function. We identified non-compliance with the process for reporting and recording two dangerous structures, such as lack of evidence that inspections had taken place. (Finding 2)
- Through sample testing we identified some instances where fees have been incorrectly charged and an extension to the deadline that had been made without appropriate evidence on file. Where underpayments and overpayments are made there is no guidance outlining the process to be followed. (Finding 3)

- There is insufficient information held on file and on Uniform to indicate the date that inspections are requested and completed. (Finding 4)
- No management information is produced or reported in order to monitor performance of the service. (Finding 5)

#### CONCLUSION:

Overall, we are able to provide limited assurance over the design and moderate assurance on the effectiveness of the controls the Council have in place. We have raised two high level recommendations around no policies or procedures being in place and management information on performance of the service area not being produced. We have raised three medium recommendations. We recognise that staffing levels has been an issue, therefore once the team are at full capacity, implementing the recommendations outlined in this report will improve the Building Control service and performance.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### RISK 1: STAFF CAPACITY AND/OR TRAINING IS INADEQUATE TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

Ref	Significance	Finding
1	Medium	<p><u>Staff capacity</u></p> <p>The Building Control team currently consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle Building Control Surveyor (Qualified as Chartered Surveyor (MICS) and member of the Chartered Association of Building engineers)</li> <li>• Building Control officer (Member of the Chartered Institute of builders and Chartered Association of Building engineers)</li> <li>• Support from a Business Analyst whom is currently supporting the team with admin in order to manage the workload.</li> </ul> <p>The Council are currently going through a reorganisation, the team structure should comprise of 3 Building Control Officers, as well as Caseworkers responsible for the admin functions.</p> <p>From discussions with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and support Business Analyst staff turnover has been consistently high and the Building Control Surveyor felt that he had not been provided with sufficient support. The team have utilised external contractors but they have not provided value for money.</p> <p>We confirmed that Human Resources are currently advertising two roles internally. We undertook benchmarking (see Appendix II) and identified salaries for Building Control Officers range between £30,000 - £35,000 which is consistent with the council offering a median average of L1 = £30,676 and L2 £36,427 respectively. For Senior Building Control roles salaries exceeded £40,000 consistent with the Council offering a median average salary of £41,904.</p> <p><u>Training and development:</u></p> <p>From discussions with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and Business Analyst currently team meetings do not occur. Often issues will be raised and addressed through informal discussions. The Principle Building Control Surveyor has monthly meetings with the Group Manager Planning Services to raise issues however, since the restructuring this has not been consistent. There are no records produced from the meetings.</p> <p>If the team do not have sufficient staff capacity or are not provided with training and development required to undertake their role there is risk of poor performance from the service resulting in excess charges and ultimately a loss of income.</p>

#### RECOMMENDATION:

##### Staff capacity

Review the jobs roles on offer and consider promoting the roles externally in order to generate more uptake and interest.

##### Training and development:

The team should hold monthly meetings or as required in line with good practice. In addition, formal meetings with managers should be recorded with personal development plans being produced to monitor performance in addition to identifying staff training requirements.

#### MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

Agreed at the closing meeting held on 1 May 2019 with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and Group Manager Planning Services.

The council are planning to undertake a council-wide skills gap analysis exercise in order to identify staff training and development needs within each service area.

Responsible Officer:  
Hannah Wheatley

Implementation Date:  
30<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**RISK 2: POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES ARE NOT FIT-FOR-PURPOSE AND/OR EFFECTIVE & RISK 5: INEFFECTIVE PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE DANGEROUS STRUCTURES, DEMOLITIONS AND STREET NAMING/NUMBERING TO ENSURE REFERRALS ARE IDENTIFIED AND ASSESSED PROPERLY**

Ref	Significance	Finding
2	High	<p>The team do not have any policies or procedures to outline the service area's role, responsibilities and function within the Council.</p> <p>The team follow Building Regulations 2010 and the Building Act 1984. There is a Uniform user guide dated April 2017 which provides guidance on creating records, calculating charges, validating applications, recording payments and decisions, monitoring building works and the dangerous structure module.</p> <p><u>Dangerous structures:</u> We identified two dangerous structures reported to the Council since April 2018. The Council receive notifications of dangerous structures by phone/email/letter, this is treated as an emergency and would need to be inspected urgently. It was explained by the Principle Building Surveyor that the structures were inspected and were not classified as dangerous. From the two dangerous structures reviewed we found no evidence of the date the notification was received, the inspection being completed or notes recorded in Uniform.</p> <p>The team have started to put plans in place to implement policies and procedures covering the building control service (both applications and notices), demolitions and damages structures. This is anticipated to be implemented in October 2019.</p> <p>If there are no policies or procedures in place or adhered to, there is a risk of non-compliance with key processes, fees have not been paid and building regulations are not adhered to resulting in threats to the public and loss of income.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- a) Implement adequate policies and procedures providing guidance on the Building Control service function, requirements and deadlines. This should cover the process once notification of planning applications, building notices, demolitions and dangerous structures are received. The timeframes that need to be met including the fees/charges requirement, the process for dealing with under/overpayments and refunds. Once completed and approved this should be made available to all staff.
- b) Remind staff of the importance of recording the date notifications received, inspections completed, supporting notes and implement the requirement of inspectors to take photographic evidence of dangerous structures and uploaded onto Uniform.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:**

Agreed at the closing meeting held on 1 May 2019 with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and Group Manager Planning Services.

The Council will be implementing a new CRM system (Firmstep) in October 2019, which will provide a date and time stamp for all incoming customer requests, including building inspections. The CRM system provides workflow from the Customer Solutions team through to back office Specialists and will evidence when site inspections are completed to close the loop. Inspections will be indexed in Civica and Uniform with photographs taken on site. Process maps have been produced for Building Control processes, and these will be used to inform knowledge base articles and procedural documents to outline the service function, fees and charges, requirements and SLAs.

The knowledge base articles may not be completed until December 2019 depending on the amount of work involved and resources required.

Responsible Officer: Hannah Wheatley

Implementation Date: 30 October 2019

**RISK 3: APPLICATION AND/OR NOTICES RECEIVED ARE NOT SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH BUILDING REGULATIONS & RISK 6: REVENUE RELATING TO THE SERVICE IS NOT SET APPROPRIATELY, NOT RAISED IN LINE WITH SCALE FEES AGREED AND/OR NOT MONITORED APPROPRIATELY**

Ref	Significance	Finding
3	Medium	<p>Once an applicant has submitted a planning application or building notice, the admin team will update Uniform. A qualified building control individual will review the submission and confirm the correct fee has been charged and has been paid therefore, an acknowledgement letter will be sent to the applicant and recorded on Uniform. If this is satisfactory the application/notice will be validated and approved, this decision must be completed within the 5 week statutory period and can be extended up to 2 months at the applicant's request for an extension.</p> <p>We selected a sample of 15 planning applications and notices from April 2018 to March 2019 and identified the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In one case (Reference 18/00337/WSDBN) the applicant had incorrectly paid for a building notice relating to an <i>'Exiting Dwelling/Building - where the whole of the work is solely for the purpose of providing access for the disabled person to, from and within their residence, or for the purpose of providing accommodation or facilities designed to secure the greater health, safety, welfare or convenience of the disabled person, no charge shall be payable.'</i> This is exempt from fees and therefore the amount paid by the applicant £86.40 needs to be refunded.</li> <li>• In one case (Reference 18/00314/WSDFP) the time taken for validating and reviewing a planning application had exceeded the 5 week statutory period. At the applicant's request this was extended however, the team were awaiting further information in order to validate the application. No further correspondence or evidence was provided to the applicant.</li> <li>• In one case (Reference 18/00559/MLTFP) the applicant had made an overpayment of £115.20 and another case (Reference 18/00550/WSDFP) there was an underpayment of £1.40 of the charge. It was explained by the Principle Building Control Surveyor that the excess would be deducted or added to the inspection fees that would be charged. However this is not documented that this is the procedure that should be followed in these circumstances.</li> </ul> <p>It was explained by the Group Manager of Planning Services that during the period from April 2018 to March 2019 the team had a number of temporary staff and due a reduction in staff capacity there was a lack of oversight of temporary staff. If planning applications and building notices are not reviewed or updated and statutory deadlines are not met, there is a risk that incorrect fees are charged and possible legal fines due to applications being deemed as approved resulting in a financial loss.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- The team should complete monthly spot checks of planning applications and building notices to ensure the correct fees have been charged.
- Where statutory deadlines are not met, the council should gain consent from the

applicants to agree an extension of the decision making process. This should be regularly reported in order to monitor the performance of the service area (Finding 5)

- c) If applicants make overpayments or underpayments of fees, the process for dealing with these should be documented on the Building Control Charges 2018/19 document so that the applicant is aware of their responsibilities and the Council's obligations.

#### MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

Agreed at the closing meeting held on 1 May 2019 with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and Group Manager Planning Services.

A list of the Councils 'Discretionary Fees and Charges for 2019-2020' has been provided.

Responsible Officer: Matt Leigh

Implementation Date: 30 October 2019

**RISK 4: INEFFECTIVE INSPECTIONS ARE CONDUCTED TO VALIDATE WHETHER BUILDING REGULATIONS ARE BEING ADHERED TO**

Ref	Significance	Finding
4	Medium	<p>Applicants must request inspections through phone calls, emails or online. Inspections undertaken are recorded on files or on the Uniform system and must be completed by a qualified individual (Building Control officer/Principle Building Control Surveyor). The current process involves the individuals going on-site to undertake the inspection and then updating the file or Uniform on their return. The team are in the process of developing remote working in order to make the process more efficient.</p> <p>In the sample selected (Finding 3) of 15 planning applications and notices we identified the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In one case an inspection had been undertaken on the file but was neither signed or dated by the building control officer. This was not recorded on the Uniform system either.</li> </ul> <p>We selected a sample of 10 inspections which had been completed and in all cases the date requested was not recorded on Uniform. It was explained by the Principle Building Control Surveyor that requests are received through various individuals, sources (phone, email, online) or prearrangements.</p> <p>If the inspections requested and undertaken have not been recorded there is a risk requests for inspections are not completed and have not been undertaken by appropriate staff and that building regulations are not being adhered to.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- The date inspections are requested should be recorded in Uniform in order for the team to monitor that all inspections have been completed.
- Once inspections are completed ensure they have been adequately recorded on file or Uniform. Spot checks should be undertaken on a monthly basis.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:**

Agreed at the closing meeting held on 1 May 2019 with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and Group Manager Planning Services.

The Council will be implementing a new service delivery model in October 2019, where the majority of customer interactions will be received via the Customer Solutions team. These interactions will be recorded on a new CRM system (Firmstep) which will provide a date and time stamp for all incoming customer requests, including building inspections. The CRM system provides workflow from the Customer Solutions team through to back office Specialists and will evidence when site inspections are completed to close the loop. Inspections will be indexed in Civica and Uniform with photographs taken on site. Monthly quality checks will be completed to ensure all site inspections have been completed within agreed timescales and with all relevant information recorded within Uniform.

Responsible Officer: Hannah Wheatley

Implementation Date: 30 October 2019

**RISK 7: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND/OR OVERSIGHT IS INEFFECTIVE TO MONITOR THE RISKS SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING POST GRENFELL RISKS AND/OR PERFORMANCE OF THE SERVICE**

Ref	Significance	Finding
5	High	<p>From discussions with the Group Manager Planning services and Principle Building Control Surveyor it was explained the team had performance objectives prior to October 2016, however since staffing levels have reduced this information is no longer collected.</p> <p>There is no management information on the overall Building Control service area. It was explained that informal team meetings or discussions will take place when required. However, no formal meetings or discussions take place within the team or the wider Council to review performance of the service area. There are no key performance indicators or internal targets in place across the Building Control service area in order to monitor performance against targets and objectives.</p> <p>If performance of the Building Control service is not monitored there is a risk of non-compliance with key activities and of underperformance and that fee charging services are unprofitable resulting in financial loss for the Council.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The team should outline key performance indicators or internal targets should cover the following areas for example:

- On submission of applications decisions are completed within the 5 week statutory timeframe
- The number of inspections requested and completed on time
- Dangerous structures are responded to and inspected within 24 hours
- Timeframe for acknowledgement of applications and notices received

Performance should be reviewed and monitored during monthly team meetings and reported to the Council.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:**

Agreed at the closing meeting held on 1 May 2019 with the Principle Building Control Surveyor and Group Manager Planning Services.

The Council is implementing a new CRM system (Firmstep) in October 2019, and this will provide management information relating to enquiry types, volumes, SLAs and performance measures. KPIs are being reviewed to ensure they align to corporate objectives and evidence how these are delivered through activities detailed within the Service Plan. Firmstep will produce dashboard reports (frequency to be confirmed) to illustrate performance against KPIs and highlight where targets/SLAs have not been achieved. In these instances, reports will be escalated to Senior Management and Director level along with an action plan to show how the service intends to bring performance back on-track.

Responsible Officer: Hannah Wheatley

Implementation Date: 30 October 2019

**STAFF INTERVIEWED**

BDO LLP APPRECIATES THE TIME PROVIDED BY ALL THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THIS REVIEW AND WOULD LIKE TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>
Gary Martindill	Principle Building Control Surveyor
Robyn Chandler	Business Analyst

APPENDIX I - BENCHMARKING BUILDING CONTROL ROLES

BUILDING CONTROL ROLES ADVERTISED AT OTHER COUNCILS, SALARY ON OFFER, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

Council	Role	Salary per annum (based on 37 hours per week)	Responsibilities	Experience/Qualifications
Maldon	Specialist - Building Control L1 and L2	L1 = £28,485 - £32,866  L2 = £33,961 - £38,892  <u>Median:</u> L1 = £30,676 L2 = £36,427	<p><u>L1:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver customer-focused specialist advice and services for one area of specialism, keeping up to date with current and emerging legislation, best practice and policy to ensure continuous development and improvement in services</li> <li>• Manage complex or contentious applications, cases and inspections that will require an understanding of one specialist area, processes and compliance, regulations and legislation, acting as the single point of contact for customers on those cases, attending court or appeals as appropriate</li> <li>• Support, guide and advise multi-skilled service delivery teams (Customer Solutions, Community Engagement and Case Management) on less complex cases related to the specialism</li> <li>• Ensure personal and professional development is maintained to the required standards</li> <li>• Working collaboratively with colleagues across the organisation, Members and managing key relationships e.g. with Members, partners and other stakeholders</li> <li>• Access and accurately update all relevant information systems, both customer and back office ensuring that the master customer record is updated and maintained through verification and validation, and in accordance with Data Protection principles</li> <li>• Prepare and present reports to Planning Area committees and other internal and external meetings</li> </ul> <p><u>L2:</u> (in addition to the above):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting as member of corporate or community project teams - providing specialist advice and input</li> <li>• Owning key professional and technical stakeholder relationships on behalf of the Council relevant to day-to-day delivery of services or projects</li> </ul>	Educated to degree level in a relevant subject (e.g. Planning, Building Surveying), Member of a relevant professional body (e.g. Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), RICS, ABE, Institution of Structural Engineers) and Evidence of CPD.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage a broad range of complex cases, applications and inspections and providing resilience and flexibility within the Specialist team</li> <li>• Deputise, as appropriate, for the Senior Specialists</li> </ul>	
	Senior Specialist - Building Control L3	<p>£39,438 - £44,369</p> <p>Median: £41,904</p>	<p>L1 &amp; L2 as stated above in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a deep understanding of Development Management, enabling resolution of a broader range of more complex cases, applications and inspections and providing resilience and flexibility within the Specialist team</li> <li>• Provide functional leadership for a team of specialists ensuring the provision of professional services that meet customers' needs</li> <li>• Prepare and present reports to non-planning Council committees</li> <li>• Assisting the development of the community of practice across the organisation including mentoring staff in order to improve delivery of the specialism and support career development.</li> </ul>	
Milton Keynes	Building Control Surveyor	<p>£43,757 - £48,331</p> <p>Median: £46,044</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal checking of Building Regulations applications and carrying out inspections on site, for an extensive range of projects, at key stages of building work to ensure the requirements of the regulations are being followed</li> <li>• Investigating reports of unauthorised building work and providing evidence for potential enforcement</li> <li>• Providing support to the Helpline by providing advice and guidance in relation to technical enquiries</li> <li>• Promoting the local authority building control service and supporting the LABC Partnering Scheme</li> <li>• Investigating reports of dangerous structures to determine action required to ensure that structures are safe</li> <li>• Liaising, by face to face, verbal and written communications, with construction professionals, builders, members of the public, Councillors, other Council departments and other local authority building control teams in relation to the duties above.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive experience of working in a Building Control team</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of the Building Regulations and Building Act 1984</li> <li>• Professional qualification or equivalent demonstrable knowledge in relevant specialist areas OR full membership of relevant professional body.</li> </ul>
Lewes District Council	Specialist Advisor	<p>£28,221- £42,806</p> <p>Median: £35,514</p>	<p>An experienced and qualified / nearly qualified Building Control professional to assume responsibility for allocated Building Control applications working as part of our specialist team.</p> <p>The applicant will have an ethos of excellent customer focussed service and the main duties of the post will include examination of plans, site inspection visits, enforcement of</p>	<p>will ideally be professionally qualified (e.g. RICS/CABE/CIQB) with significant experience working within a Local Authority Building Control team.</p>

			<p>legislation and dealing effectively with reported “dangerous structures” and other urgent/emergency cases. Possess an excellent knowledge of the relevant technical guidance and current legislation, being able to demonstrate superb professional assessment skills applicable to more complex and technically challenging commercial and residential cases.</p> <p>Good team player, be self motivated and be able to work under pressure. You will also help to support, develop and mentor other staff.</p> <p>Additionally you will have excellent written and verbal communication skills, be computer literate and possess a full, clean driving licence.</p>	<p>You should preferably hold a degree (e.g. Building Control Surveying / Building Surveying) OR have a minimum HNC in Building Construction with significant and relevant construction industry experience and be actively working towards a recognised professional qualification (e.g. RICS/CABE).</p>
Nottingham City	Building Control Officer	<p>L1 = £32,878 L2- £34,788</p> <p><u>Median:</u> £33,833</p>	<p>To join our successful team you should be an enthusiastic Building Control Surveyor with experience of the Building Control function, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Checking plans and details in relation to proposed building work, for compliance with the Building Regulations and associated legislation within statutory time periods, and checking Building Notices for compliance with the Building Regulations.</li> <li>•Carrying out inspection work on site for the compliance with the Building Regulations and the Council's Building Control policy.</li> <li>•The timely maintenance of full, accurate and complete records.</li> <li>•Investigating breaches of Building Regulations and associated legislation and to take appropriate action following Council policy including collating evidence, preparing reports and providing evidence in court as necessary.</li> </ul> <p>Alternatively, you will have significant experience in a relevant building profession that would enable you to undertake these duties with limited guidance and training. Your workload would not include dangerous structures. You will have the opportunity to work flexibly from home and the office to suit your work life balance and the needs of the service.</p> <p>Applicants should submit their CV and covering letter as one document outlining how their current skills, knowledge and experience meets the essential criteria listed below. Applicants should remove any personal details from their CV and Covering Letter (including their name), as part of our commitment to remove the risk of unconscious bias.</p>	<p>Ideally, the successful candidate would hold a recognised construction qualification, be working towards, or have membership of a professional body such as the RICS, CABE or CIOB.</p>

			<p>The application process will capture your personal details (including your name) and these details will only be made visible to recruiting managers once the shortlisting stage has been completed.</p> <p><u>Essential requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of Building Regulations and associated legislation.</li> <li>• Knowledge of in-depth building construction techniques and methods.</li> <li>• Experience of working in a Building Control or related environment.</li> <li>• Ability to organise working procedures and work to statutory deadlines.</li> <li>• An understanding of competition and marketing of Building Control and enthusiasm to promote the service.</li> <li>• Experience of working with stakeholders and partners, to efficiently deliver projects that meet customer needs.</li> <li>• Experience of delivering projects ensuring agreed deadlines, costs and outcomes are realised.</li> </ul>	
City of York Council	Building Control Surveyor	<p>Level 1-4 £30,500 to £34,797</p> <p>Median: £32,649</p>	<p>Development of career if you can combine detailed experience of the operation of the building control function with a clear commitment to the development and delivery of customer-centred services, then you could help us to deliver even higher standards whilst gaining experience of the diverse range of developments and constructional practices which York offers.</p> <p>A high level of self-motivation is a must. You will need to be an effective communicator, able to deal with developer negotiations, and equally comfortable working independently or as a part of a team.</p> <p>If you share our commitment to achieving ever higher standards of customer service, we offer casual car user allowance, free car parking, occupational pension scheme and great career development opportunities.</p> <p>As this role is public facing, applicants will need to demonstrate, at interview, their competency to converse and provide advice and guidance to members of the public, in spoken English to CEFR level C2: Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural conversational flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the person with whom they are conversing is hardly aware of it.</p>	<p>You should be working towards, or hold, a recognized qualification in Building Control, (IBC, ABE, RICS,) or have worked in Building Control for a significant number of years.</p>

## APPENDIX II - BENCHMARKING BUILDING CONTROL CHARGES 2018/19

## COMPARISON OF THE AVERAGE BUILDING CONTROL CHARGES 2018/19 WITH OTHER DISTRICT COUNCILS

NEW DWELLINGS						
S.No.	District Council	Particulars	Average Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	Average Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	Average Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	Average Regularisation Charge (no VAT)
1	Maldon	Bungalows/Houses/Flats - 1 to 5 Plots not exceeding 300m <sup>2</sup>	£390.72	£1,092	£1,631.04	£1,729.8
2	Braintree	Bungalows/Houses/Flats - 1 to 5 Plots not exceeding 300m <sup>2</sup>	£445.5	£968	£1,481.2	£1,557.85
3	Epping Forest	Bungalows/Houses/Flats - 1 to 5 Plots not exceeding 300m <sup>2</sup>	£499	£1,037	£1,536	£1,600
4	Folkestone and Hythe	Bungalows/Houses/Flats - 1 to 5 Plots not exceeding 300m <sup>2</sup>	£410	£1,195.11	£1,926.13	£2,006.38
5	Uttelsford	Bungalows/Houses/Flats - 1 to 5 Plots not exceeding 250m <sup>2</sup>	£544.8	£1,062	£1,702.8	£1,773.75
AVERAGE			£458	£1,070.82	£1,655.43	£1,733.56

WORK TO A SINGLE DWELLING					
S.No.	District Council	Particulars (Average)	Extension & New Build Single storey extensions floor area ranging from 0-100m <sup>2</sup>	Conversions (First & Second floor loft) or Other conversions	Alterations (including underpinning): renovation thermals, replacement windows/rood, cost of works ranging from 0 - £100,000
1	Maldon	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£214	£230.4	£160.29
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£418.8	£345	£234.17
		Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£695.5	£631.8	£433.54
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£737.57	£670.5	£459.6
2	Braintree	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£180.5	£139	£139.86
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£426.5	£320	£169.71
		Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£637.67	£482.5	£325.14
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£669.67	£506.5	£341.43
3	Epping Forest	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£243.33	£237.5	£195
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£469.17	£272.5	£208
		Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£712.5	£510	£403
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£741.67	£532.5	£419
4	Folkestone and Hythe	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£150	£175	£125
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£253.03	£479.19	£120.32
		Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£403.03	£761.67	£245.32
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£503.79	£817.74	£306.65
5	Uttlesford	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£189	£153	£152
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£404	£354	£324

		Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£611	£543	£490
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£636.46	£565.63	£510.42
AVERAGE		Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£195.37	£186.98	£154.43
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£394.30	£354.14	£211.24
		Building Notice Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£611.94	£585.79	£379.4
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£657.83	£618.57	£407.42

ALL OTHER NON-DOMESTIC WORK				
S.No.	District Council	Particulars (Average)	Extensions and New Build Single Storey & part 2/3 floor area ranging from 0 - 100m <sup>2</sup>	Alterations - including replacement windows/roof, renewable energy, thermal, shopfront, Cost of works ranging from £0 - £100,000
1	Maldon	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£230.4	£230.16
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£618	£247.44
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£918.25	£516.9
2	Braintree	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£288	£170.8
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£524	£246.8
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£827.25	£439.2
3	Epping Forest	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£290	£184
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£520	£169
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£842.5	£355.5
4		Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	Information not available	£228.7

	Folkestone and Hythe	Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	Information not available	£436.98
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	Information not available	£732.78
5	Uttelsford	Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£282	£142.8
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£601.5	£307.8
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£920.31	£469.38
AVERAGE		Plan Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£272.60	£191.29
		Inspection Charge (inclusive of VAT)	£565.88	£281.6
		Regularisation Charge (no VAT)	£877.08	£502.75

APPENDIX III - DEFINITIONS				
LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	DESIGN OF INTERNAL CONTROL FRAMEWORK		OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS	
	FINDINGS FROM REVIEW	DESIGN OPINION	FINDINGS FROM REVIEW	EFFECTIVENESS OPINION
<b>Substantial</b>	Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.	No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.
<b>Moderate</b>	In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective.	Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions.	A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	Evidence of non-compliance with some controls that may put some of the system objectives at risk.
<b>Limited</b>	A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.	A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk.
<b>No</b>	For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Poor system of internal control.	Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls.

RECOMMENDATION SIGNIFICANCE	
<b>High</b>	A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently.
<b>Medium</b>	A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action.
<b>Low</b>	Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency.

## APPENDIX III - TERMS OF REFERENCE

### BACKGROUND

Local authorities are under a duty to provide an at-cost building control service to the public under the Building Act 1984. This includes a duty to enforce the Act in their jurisdiction and retain ultimate responsibility for decision-making with regard to enforcement action. However, unlike other statutory services Local Government building control services compete with the private sector (Approved Inspectors).

The Service has two elements, which are described as fee earning and non-fee earning work. The building regulation aspect of the service is income generating and in accordance with The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 and CIPFA accounting requirements. This aspect of the business must be self-financing over a continuous three-year rolling period. The non-fee earning part of the service is funded by the council tax payer and includes dangerous structures, enforcement, demolitions, support for the safety advisory group and consultancy services to other council services.

### PURPOSE OF REVIEW

To review the effectiveness of the Council's approach to and delivery of change to the Building Control service.

### KEY RISKS

Based upon the risk assessment undertaken during the development of the internal audit operational plan, through discussions with management, and our collective audit knowledge and understanding, the key risks associated with the area under review are:

- Staff capacity and/or training is inadequate to meet the objectives of the service
- Policies, procedures and strategies are not fit-for-purpose and/or effective
- Application and/or notices received are not subject to sufficient review and/or approval to ensure compliance with Building Regulations
- Ineffective inspections are conducted to validate whether Building Regulations are being adhered to
- Ineffective procedures in place to manage dangerous structures, demolitions to ensure referrals are identified and assessed properly
- Revenue relating to the service is not set appropriately, not raised in line with scale fees agreed and/or not monitored appropriately
- Management information and/or oversight is ineffective to monitor the risks specifically including post Grenfell risks and/or performance of the service
- Promotion of the service to inform those in the Council area of their obligations is insufficient and/or ineffective.

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

This review will consider the effectiveness of the Council's building control service including:

- Review recruitment and retention compared to its comparators
- Review the capacity of the team in light of the future operating model
- Review a sample of 15 building control applications from start to finish to check compliance with procedures

- Assess overall governance and how the Council promote the service and ensure it is commercially effective.

However, Internal Audit will bring to the attention of management any points relating to other areas that come to their attention during the course of the audit. We assume for the purposes of estimating the number of days of audit work that there is one control environment, and that we will be providing assurance over controls in this environment. If this is not the case, our estimate of audit days may not be accurate.

## APPROACH

Our approach will be to conduct interviews to establish the controls in operation for our areas of audit work. We will then seek documentary evidence that these controls are designed as described. We will evaluate these controls to identify whether they adequately address the risks. Any opportunities identified to improve arrangements will be offered for consideration alongside recommendations to resolve any weakness in controls.

## EXCLUSIONS

Our work will be restricted to the areas of consideration within the scope of our review. This is a high level review, we will therefore assess controls through interview, walkthroughs and review of supporting evidence and documents provided by the Council, but there will be no substantive testing.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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