

**Child Rights and Wellbeing
Impact Assessment (CRWIA)
for Building Standards
Division – Verification
Delivery Model consultation
on an increase in building
warrant fees**

June 2023

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) for Building Standards Division – Verification Delivery Model consultation on an increase in building warrant fees

Disclaimer

This **draft** document is an **initial assessment** of the impact of the Building Standards Verification Delivery Model Consultation on an increase in Building Warrant Fees proposal and Scottish Government will continue to review and update this document where required during the parliamentary/strategic decision making process. Any future iterations will reflect an increased understanding of these impacts as the amount of data and research available continues to grow.

This impact assessment should be read in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment and the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

CRWIA Stage 1 – Screening

Brief Summary (Guidance Section 2.1)

The aim of this policy is to increase building warrant fees. The increase in fees will be used to strengthen and make improvements to the way in which the building standards system in Scotland is delivered.

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017 and the construction failings of Edinburgh School buildings, a Ministerial Working Group was set up to review building and fire safety regulatory frameworks. The Group commissioned two Expert Review panels; Compliance and Enforcement and Fire Safety that subsequently published their own recommendations.

The Building Standards Futures Board was set up at the beginning of 2019 to provide guidance and direction on the development and implementation of the recommendations made by the Review Panels and workstreams were established to undertake this work. The Compliance and Enforcement Panel found that the building standards system in Scotland was not broken but did need strengthened in some areas.

The Verification Delivery Model Working Group (DMWG) was set up to review the current verification delivery model (VDM) while providing advice and comment on potential revisions to the VDM. The Group considered the potential for a national/central Hub with regional strengthening. To test this proposal, a pilot Hub was established in May 2022, initially for 18 months but extended now to 2-years. The pilot Hub has been well received and has already had a positive impact on the resilience of the building standards system. A business case for a permanent Hub following the pilot phase is being prepared.

It is proposed by increasing building warrant fees, a proportion will be used to fund a permanent Hub that will provide support and assistance to all 32 local authorities as well as the wider construction industry.

A number of other changes to the building standards system are being brought forward through the work of the Futures Board. The Compliance Plan Approach is in the process of developing a new Compliance Plan Manager role and Compliance Process within the system which will seek to improve compliance with building regulations.

The Digital Transformation workstream is in-scope of the Planning Digital Programme and the redesign of the eDevelopment Portal. It is also taking forward digital transformation of the building standards system in Scotland, working with local authority verifiers to share best practice, create guidance and drive change.

Local authority building standards verification teams are funded through the income generated from building warrant fees. The changes to the system, brought through the Futures Board will put an additional ask on resources and budget within local authorities. It is intended to increase building warrant fees to provide the additional funding for this.

The proposal to increase building warrant fees has led to research in the following areas:

- Fees Part 1 Research was undertaken in 2022 and looked at the 2017 building warrant fees increase and lessons learned from this.
- Fees Part 2 Research is currently underway and focusses on developing a flexible fee model for a future Building Standards Hub (BSH) as well as providing funding for other changes that will strengthen the system. The final report for this is expected around the end of April 2023.

It is proposed by increasing building warrant fees, a small proportion of this increase would be used to fund a future BSH that will provide support and assistance to the full building standards system in Scotland and local authorities.

A public consultation on an increase in building warrant fees would be required before a final decision on a funding mechanism for a future BSH can be concluded.

Start date of CRWIA process: 15 March 2023

Which aspects of the relevant proposal currently affects or will affect children and young people up to the age of 18? (Guidance Section 2.1)

This policy aims to increase building warrant fees to fund the changes to improve and strengthen the building standard system in Scotland. The policy should not directly impact children or young people.

An increase in fees would possibly result in a child's parents or guardians paying more money for a building warrant fee, reducing the disposable income that could be spent on the child's welfare. The fee however would still be significantly smaller than any resulting cost of building work to be carried out and is therefore negligible.

An increase in fees may dissuade contractors to take forward building works due to cost. These building works could be something that could benefit children such as a play-area, however again, the cost of the fee is significantly smaller than the resulting cost of building, therefore the effect of increasing the fee dissuading a contractor taking forward work is extremely small. Any decision not to take forward work on such projects will be determined on other factors and not the fee cost of a building warrant.

Which groups of children and young people are currently or will be affected by the relevant proposal? (Guidance Section 2.1)

As noted above in section 2, this policy aims to increase building warrant fees to fund the changes to improve and strengthen the building standard system in Scotland. The policy should not directly impact children or young people.

Declaration

Is a Stage 2 Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment required? (Tick relevant requirement) (Guidance Section 2.1)

CRWIA required No explanation required, please complete questions 5 and 6

CRWIA not required Please explain why below and contact the children’s rights unit to discuss this decision crwia@gov.scot

Explanation why CRWIA is not required:

This policy aims to increase building warrant fees to fund the changes to improve and strengthen the building standard system in Scotland. The policy should not directly impact children or young people.

Sign & Date

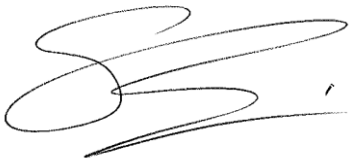
Policy Lead Signature & Date of Sign Off: Cameron Murdoch 03/04/2023

CRWIA author, if different from policy lead, Signature & Date of Sign Off:

Cameron Murdoch 03/04/2023

Deputy Director Signature & Date of Sign Off:

Dr Stephen Garvin 18/05/2023





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