

Providing Building Control support to Luton Borough Council

In 2017, Luton Borough Council invited Re to work alongside their existing Building Control team to provide short term interim management and capacity support and to improve service efficiencies by reviewing systems and processes.

Due to reduced reduction in the number of existing staff and the difficulty in recruiting new staff to the team, Luton Borough Council required immediate Building Control capacity and expert support to ensure that their service standards were maintained.



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What we did:

Our Building Control experts worked side by side with the Council's Building Control team to provide additional capacity and expertise and help clear the backlog of Building Control related work.

Once initial work commenced we also identified that a substantial and meaningful restructure of the team would be necessary to ensure long lasting and sustainable improvements to the Council's service standards. We reviewed and analysed the Council's Building Control procedures and practices and identified and implemented proven solutions that provided instant service improvements and efficiencies.

These improvements included:

- Improvements to the Building Control IT system to enable meaningful and accurate management reports.
- Implementing an open approach to accepting applications and interaction with public during the entire working day.
- Increasing the use of mobile technology for smarter and agile working.
- Using Re's plan checking hub to help support and reduce the checking of application backlogs.
- Implementing stronger performance management tools to help monitor and control output standards and help surveyors to manage their workloads.
- Reviewing and updating the Building Control Policy to help strengthen the fundamentals of the function as well as writing an Enforcement Policy to set out new enforcement action procedures.
- Developing a dangerous structures policy and training the Council's staff to deliver this specialised service.

The outcome:

- Before introducing Re's resilience service, the Council had a 9 month application checking backlog and 0% of building control plans were checked within 10 working days. Since implementing our resilience service, the backlog has been cleared and 65% of plans are now checked within 10 working days with further improvement forecasted ahead
- By adding extra capacity, Luton Borough Council is able to provide a high level of service to its customers. It can provide access to surveyors and technical staff from 8.30am to 5.00pm and customer emails are now answered within 48 hours.
- The Council are now using online submission portals and online payment procedures which generates service and resourcing efficiencies
- A new energy was created amongst the Council's Building Control team and morale was restored.
- The Council were extremely happy with the service provided by Re and have now extended the contract by a further 6 months.
- We are now introducing a marketing campaign to help the Council to win more work and increase its market share.



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