

Medway Council
Meeting of South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint
Committee

Thursday, 11 December 2014

10.00am to 10.30am

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: Chitty (Chairman)

Substitutes: Councillors: Mulhern (for Lewin)

In Attendance: Vikki Finneran, Principal Accountant Financial Services,
Gravesham Borough Council
Caroline Frampton, Principal Accountant, Swale Borough
Council
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director, Housing and
Regeneration
Councillor John Gilbey, Canterbury City Council
Sarah Kilkie, Assistant Director (Communities), Gravesham
Borough Council
Andrew Lawson, Principal Accountant
Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer
Tony Van Veghel, Director, South Thames Gateway Building
Control Partnership
Terri Williams, HR Business Partner
Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer

11 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burden and Lewin.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mulhern who was attending in place of Councillor Lewin and also Councillor John Gilbey (Canterbury City Council) who was attending as an observer.

12 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 2 October 2014 was agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

14 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

15 Proposed Expansion of South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership to include Canterbury City Council

Discussion:

The Director of the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership introduced a report which advised that Canterbury City Council's Cabinet had agreed in principle that its building control service should join the partnership. The report sought the Joint Committee's approval for this expansion. Subject to the partner Councils agreeing that Canterbury City Council should join the Partnership, it was expected that the new Partnership would be in operation by 1 April 2015

The Director clarified that the figures in Appendix 1 to the report showing the contributions from Medway Council and Swale Council for 2016/17 were incorrect. This would be amended before the report was sent to each Council's Cabinet.

A member referred to paragraph 3.9 and asked how the southern side of Sittingbourne had been defined. The Director replied that this had not yet been decided but it was likely to be the existing South Thames Gateway boundary.

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Director of the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership, in consultation with the Officer Steering Group and the Heads of Legal departments at the partner authorities, to take all the necessary actions to enable the proposal of Canterbury City Council being included within the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership by 1 April 2015.

16 South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2015/2018

Discussion:

The Director of the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership introduced a report which set out revised proposals for the South Thames Gateway Building Control Draft Business Plan and Delivery Plan for 2015-2016

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following consultation. Members' agreement was sought to refer the revised documents to the Cabinet of each partner authority.

In response to a question the Director clarified that no changes would be made to existing teams as they had developed good relationships in their areas but there was the flexibility to move people to different teams to provide temporary support where this was needed.

Decision:

The Joint Committee:

- a) approved the updated version of the Business Plan and agreed to refer it to the Cabinet of each partner authority to approve the Final Draft Business Plan.
- b) noted the final contributions figures, which will be included in each authority's budget planning process for 2015/16.

17 South Thames Gateway Building Control Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

Discussion:

The Joint Committee discussed a report which presented the external auditor's certificate and opinion in respect of the Joint Committee's accounts for 2013/2014.

Decision:

The Joint Committee noted the external auditor's certificate and opinion as presented.

18 Administrative Arrangements

Discussion:

Members considered a report which asked the Joint Committee to consider a provisional programme of meetings for the 2015/2016 municipal year and also to agree the replacement of the Partnership's Section 151 Officer.

Decision:

The Joint Committee:

- a) noted the provisional timetable of meetings for the 2015/2016 municipal year.

- b) agreed to the appointment of Phil Watts (Medway Council) as S151 Officer from 28 February 2015.

19 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to exclude the press and public during consideration of agenda item 10 (Monitoring Report: September 2014 to November 2014) because consideration of this matter in public would disclose information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as specified in agenda item 7 and the Joint Committee considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

20 Monitoring Report: September 2014 to November 2014

Discussion:

The Joint Committee discussed the report which set out the current forecast for the 2014/15 financial year and gave details against the progress of the objectives of the Business Plan 2012/2017.

The Chairman asked how the Partnership's fees compared to the private sector. The Director replied that in most cases the Partnership's fees were lower. He also clarified that the Partnership received good co-operation from each Council's planning department and continued to notify applicants for planning permission at an early stage of its services.

Decision:

The Joint Committee noted the contents of the report.

Chairman

Date:

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