

Medway Council
**Meeting of South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint
Committee**

Monday, 12 June 2017

2.00pm to 2.50pm

Record of the meeting

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

Present: Councillors: Chitty (Chairman), Lewin (Vice-Chairman) and Burgoyne

In Attendance: Janine Boughton, Head of Administration and Business Development
James Freeman, Head of Planning, Swale Borough Council
Sarah Kilkie, Assistant Director (Communities), Gravesham Borough Council
Tomasz Kozlowski, Assistant Director, Physical and Cultural Regeneration
Andrew Lawson, Principal Accountant
Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer
Tony Van Veghel, Director, South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership
Andrew Barnett, Principal Accountant, Gravesham Borough Council

1 Election of Chairman

Decision:

Councillor Chitty was elected Chairman for the 2017/2018 municipal year.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Burgoyne to her first meeting of the Joint Committee.

2 Election of Vice-Chairman

Decision:

Councillor Lewin was elected Vice-Chairman for the 2017/2018 municipal year.

3 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies.

4 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 16 March 2017 was agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 Declarations of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

6 To consider whether any items in Part A of the agenda should be considered in private or any items in Part B in public

Decision:

The Committee decided there were no items in Part A of the agenda that should be considered in private and no items in Part B that should be considered in public.

7 STG Joint Committee - Administrative Arrangements 2017/18

Discussion:

The Joint Committee considered a report regarding administrative arrangements for the 2017/2018 municipal year.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Director (Communities), Gravesham Borough Council for the help and support she had given the Joint Committee during 2016/17 when Gravesham Borough Council had acted as Secretary.

A suggestion that, if possible, a future meeting in 2017/18 take place in Rochester to allow members an opportunity to carry out a site visit at the Partnership's offices was supported.

Decision:

The Joint Committee:

- a) agreed the timetable of meetings for the 2017/2018 municipal year (as set out in paragraph 3 of the report);
- b) noted the appointments of the Monitoring and Deputy Monitoring Officers, and S151 Officer and Deputy S151 Officer (as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report) and;
- c) agreed to select Medway Council to provide a secretary to the Joint Committee for the 2017/2018 municipal year.

8 Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

There was none.

9 Exclusion

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to exclude the press and public during consideration of the items listed in Part B of the agenda on the grounds that consideration of these matters in public would disclose information falling within paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10 STG Annual Report 2016-17

Background:

Members considered a report which detailed performance and financial information for 2016/17.

In response to queries from a Member the Director of the Partnership clarified the reasons behind the differences between the actual figures compared to the budgeted figures on certain budget lines (i.e HR approved agency, payment to general fund and essential user).

Noting the trend towards builders and developers having more influence on clients in advising on which building control body to use, it was suggested that the Director consider holding an event for builders, developers and architects to explain and promote the role of the Partnership. The Director undertook to look at adding this to the Partnership's marketing strategy,

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to note the report.

11 STG Business Plan 2017-20

Background:

Members considered a report seeking agreement to the Partnership's Business Plan and Service Delivery Documentation for 2017-2020.

Members welcomed the decrease in contributions expected of the partner organisations over the three year period.

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A Member commented that Swale Borough Council were looking at the possibility of appointing an independent monitoring officer to ensure planning conditions were met on site. It was possible the Partnership could provide this service and other councils could adopt the same approach.

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to adopt the 2017-20 Business Plan and Service Delivery Documentation.

12 Interim Report on Progress Towards Expansion of the STG Building Control Partnership

Background:

Members considered a report on the viability of Canterbury City Council joining the Partnership.

The Director advised that there had been two main reasons behind the ultimately unsuccessful approach by Canterbury City Council to join the Partnership in 2014: the costs involved in staff that were required to transfer into the Partnership and the requirement for frequent attendance at the central office in Rochester. The introductions of mobile and agile working had overcome the latter issue. However, there was still work to be concluded on the legal and HR issues regarding the TUPE transfer of staff. In response to questions about the likelihood of Canterbury joining on this occasion, the Director stated that the principle of nil detriment to the existing Partners and Partnership still applied. However, a successful outcome would yield significant advantages to both parties and it had been established that there would be no question of redundancies of existing Canterbury City Council staff as a result of the expansion.

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to the ongoing development of a full business case for Canterbury City Council to join the partnership and instructed senior officers to make available resources at each authority as are required to develop and resolve all work streams.

Chairman

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