

Medway Council
Meeting of South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint
Committee

Thursday, 21 September 2017

10.00am to 10.50am

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
Sarah Kilkie, Assistant Director (Communities), Gravesham Borough Council
Tomasz Kozlowski, Assistant Director, Physical and Cultural Regeneration
Tim Silver, Acting Head of HR Services
Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer
Tony Van Veghel, Director, South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership
James Freeman, Head of Planning, Swale Borough Council
Andrew Barnett, Principal Accountant, Gravesham Borough Council

13 Apologies for absence

There were none.

14 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 12 June 2017 was agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15 Declarations of interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

16 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

17 Expansion of South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership

Background:

The Joint Committee considered a report which sought approval to extend the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership by the inclusion of Canterbury City Council's building control service.

In response to questions from Members, the Director of the Partnership confirmed that discussions with Canterbury City Council regarding the latter joining the partnership had satisfactorily resolved all HR, TUPE and operational issues. The partnership's digitalisation programme and the use of agile and mobile working meant City Council staff could now largely work from Canterbury and would only need to visit the offices in Rochester infrequently.

Underpinning the discussions was the principle that there would be no cost to the existing partners and Canterbury City Council would be responsible for any costs associated with joining.

Members welcomed the proposed expansion. Assuming all three partners approved the expansion an action plan would be implemented to ensure the expanded partnership was in place from 1 April 2018.

A Member expressed the view that possible national changes in building control could lead to more work for the partnership with developers using an independent service such as the partnership.

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to approve the expansion of the partnership through the inclusion of Canterbury City Council's building control service.

Reasons for decision:

The expansion of the partnership will build in further resilience and provide opportunities for a wider market and broader customer base as well as providing reductions in contributions for the existing three partners.

18 Exclusion of the press and public

Decision:

The press and public were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the exempt material relating to agenda items 5,7 and 8 because consideration of these matters in public would disclose information falling within Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as

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specified in agenda item 6, and, in all the circumstances of the case, the Joint Committee considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

19 South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business Plan 2018-2021

Background:

The Joint Committee considered a report which sought agreement to the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership's Business Plan and Delivery Plan for 2018-2021.

Members welcomed the Plan and asked that it be amended to elaborate on the Partnership's readiness to deal with further expansion and also details of succession planning arrangements.

A suggestion that local authorities in Kent be invited to a conference on the work of the partnership, with the aim of encouraging further councils to join, was agreed.

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed:

- 1) subject to the inclusion of the above mentioned points regarding readiness to deal with further expansion and succession planning, to approve the draft Business Plan 2018-2021 (dated 30 August 2017 Version 2) and Delivery Plan 2018-2021 (dated 30 August 2017 Version 2) and send to each Partner Authority for comments, and;
- 2) to ask the Director to invite neighbouring councils to a conference on the work of the partnership.

Reasons for decision:

The Joint Committee has a duty under the Memorandum of Agreement to formally consult with partner authorities on the draft Business Plan.

20 Monitoring Report April 2017 to August 2017

Background:

The Joint Committee considered a report which updated Members on the current forecast for the 2017/18 financial year and gave details against the progress of the objectives of the Business Plan 2017/2018.

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Noting that the partnership had been operating for ten years, Members asked that their appreciation of the hard work and commitment of staff in making the partnership the success it had become be placed on record.

Decision:

The Joint Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

Reasons for decision:

The Constitution requires the Joint Committee to monitor the progress of the Partnership.

Chairman

Date:

Michael Turner 01634 332817

Telephone: 01634 332817

Email: michael.turner@medway.gov.uk