

Medway Council
Meeting of South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint
Committee

Thursday, 17 June 2021

10.00am to 10.25am

Record of the meeting

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

Present: Councillors: Chitty, Burden, Gibson and Spooner

Substitutes: None

In Attendance: Gemma Dand, Technical and Administration Manager - South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership
James Freeman, Head of Planning, Swale Borough Council
Wendy Lane, Assistant Director (Planning) - Gravesham Borough Council
Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer
Janine Weaver, Director, South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership
Debbie Yau, Democratic Services Officer

1 Election of Chairman

Councillor Chitty was elected Chairman for 2021/22.

2 Election of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Gibson was elected Vice-Chairman for 2021/22.

3 Apologies for absence

There were none.

4 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2021 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct

5 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee, 17 June 2021

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

6 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

7 South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Annual Report

Discussion:

Members considered the Partnership's annual report for 2020/2021.

In response to a question about the likely impact on the Partnership of the Building Safety Regulator proposed in the Building Safety Bill, Members were advised that the Regulator would oversee performance and have responsibility for improving the competence of people involved in the construction and management of higher risk buildings. The Regulator would be able to request councils to support its work and this would impact on the Partnership's resources in terms of staff and finances. There were concerns there would not be enough surveyors in the post Grenfell environment and also that there would be onerous demands on staff to undertake training. There was a risk people might leave the profession or choose not to progress to a senior surveyor role.

The point was made that the professional bodies should be asked how they managed the information they were required to record and monitor so that they met their legal responsibilities.

It was queried whether there was a need for extra insurance to protect staff given the increased accountability for those in the industry in the light of the Bill and in the event of any prosecutions for manslaughter. The Director of the Partnership advised that liability insurance was in place which covered this.

In terms of what representations were being made to the Government, Members were advised that the Local Authority Building Control organisation was making representations. A suggestion that the Chief Executives of the four councils be asked to also make representations expressing the Committee's concerns was approved.

Decision:

The Committee agreed to:

South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee, 17 June 2021

- a) note the report.
- b) request the Chief Executives of the four partner authorities to make representations to the Government expressing the Committee's concerns about the impact of the Building Safety Bill.

Reasons for Decision:

The Constitution requires the Joint Committee to maintain a monitoring role on the progress of the partnership.

8 South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2021/24

Discussion:

Members considered a report seeking approval of the South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership's Business Plan and Service Delivery Documentation for 2021-2024.

Decision:

The Committee agreed to adopt the 2021-24 Business Plan and Service Delivery Documentation for 2021-2024.

Reasons for Decision:

The Joint Committee has a duty under the Memorandum of Agreement to formally adopt the Business Plan at the Annual General Meeting.

9 Schedule of meetings

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the schedule of meetings agreed at the last meeting:

16 September 2021 at 10am

2 December 2021 at 10am

10 March 2021 at 10am

- b) note the appointment of Bhupinder Gill as Medway Council's Monitoring Officer.

South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee, 17 June 2021

Chairman

Date:

Michael Turner 01634 332817

Telephone: 01634 332817

Email: michael.turner@medway.gov.uk