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## SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL JOINT COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Committee Room - Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 20 September 2018 from 10.15am - 10.55am.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Julia Burgoyne (Vice-Chairman) and Gerry Lewin (Chairman).

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Janine Boughton, Kevin Burbridge, James Freeman, Kellie MacKenzie and Tony Van Veghel.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Bryan Mulhern.

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Jane Chitty and Robert Jones.

The Chairman explained that the meeting was therefore not quorate, but it was agreed that the meeting should still go ahead as the reports were for information only.

### 2 RECORD OF MEETING

The record of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 June 2018 was agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:

The attendance be amended to read:

Kevin Burbidge, Director, Housing and Regeneration, Gravesham Borough Council, not Medway Council as stated.

### 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

### 4 ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman altered the order of business as minuted.

### 5 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**Resolved:**

**(1) That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act:**

**3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

**5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.**

**6 BUSINESS PLAN 2019-2022 COVERING REPORT (TOGETHER WITH THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE BUSINESS PLAN 2019-2022 AND DELIVERY PLAN 2019-2022)**

The Director of South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership introduced the report which sought to agree the STG Building Control Partnership's Business Plan and Delivery Plan 2019-2022 dated 25 July 2018, for submission to each Partner Authority for comments.

The Director of STG spoke about improvements in technology and making sure customers were better informed. He stated that following consultations with both customers and staff, they had reviewed the objectives set out in their Business Plan.

A Member raised concern about resourcing levels. The Director of STG reported that there was a lack of fully trained Building Control Officers. He outlined the ways in which they were addressing the issue which included supporting an apprentice scheme. There was also training being provided to ensure high level competency levels for building control work in respect of high-rise buildings which would be rolled-out across the Board.

Following a question from a Member, the Head of Administration and Business Development of STG outlined details of the consultations undertaken and how they were processed.

A Member considered an STG Awards event to be an excellent idea. Members praised officers that the STG were in the top 10% of respondents for the Building Control Performance Standard Advisory Group's annual survey.

In response to a query from a Member, the Director of STG agreed to amend the wording to paragraph 2.11 of the Business Plan and remove the word "of" and replace with "is".

**Resolved:**

***(1) That the South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2019-2022 and the first draft of the Business Plan 2019-2022 and Delivery Plan (2019-2022) be submitted to each individual Local Authority for comments.***

**7 MONITORING REPORT: APRIL TO AUGUST 2018**

The Director of STG introduced the report which gave an overview of the position of the budget and the progression against the objectives shown in the Business Plan 2018/19.

The Director of STG spoke about the staff consultation and how successful it had been, the importance of achieving consistency in procedures and outcomes and also the advancements made in terms of technology with online applications. The

Director of STG spoke about some resource issues in early 2018. He also spoke about the major success there had been in terms of staff development with five members of staff achieving chartered status and a first year achievement at distinction level in HNC building by a technical assistant.

The Director stated that he was confident that a balanced budget for the end of the year would be achieved.

In response to a query, the Director of STG explained that the increase in trade refuse costs was due to Norse being taken on as the contractor at Medway Council.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the report be noted.***

**8 URGENT MATTERS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The Director of STG provided an update on progress with his replacement. Recruitment had not gone as smoothly as planned, but it was hoped that interviews would be held the first two weeks of November 2018. In light of that he had agreed to carry on in the role, working 3 days a week until 31 March 2018. In response to a query, the Director of STG stated that the position had been advertised in the professional press, and a recruitment agency was being used to ensure the right scope of applicants came forward.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel