
SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Whitehead Room, Central House, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4NU on Thursday, 1 December 2022 from 10.00 am - 10.27 am.

PRESENT: Councillors Neil Baker (Vice-Chair), Jane Chitty and Tim Gibson (Chair).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Philippa Davies (Democratic Services Officer, Swale Borough Council), Kirsty Stoddart (Technical and Administration Manager, South Thames Gateway Building Control) and Janine Weaver (Director of South Thames Gateway Building Control).

OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually): Flo Churchill (Interim Head of Planning, Swale Borough Council), Wendy Lane (Assistant Director (Planning), Gravesham Borough Council), Jo Millard (Democratic Services Manager, Swale Borough Council) and Simon Thomas (Head of Planning, Canterbury City Council).

1 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

2 Record of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 September 2022 (Minute Nos. 1 - 7) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

4 Urgent Matters by Reason of Special Circumstances

There were no urgent matters.

5 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Agreed:

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 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 Monitoring Report: September 2022 to November 2022

The Director of South Thames Gateway (STG) Building Control Partnership introduced the report which updated the committee on the current forecast for the 2022/23 financial year and gave details against the progress of the objectives of the Business Plan 2022/23. She spoke on the effects of the cost-of-living crisis on the construction industry; balancing the budget; the importance of the team being able to meet in person post pandemic; gave an update on the delivery plan; an overview of the use of resources; and performance of the partnership.

Members were invited to make comments, and these included:

- Acknowledged the importance of team working;
- this had been a tough year; and
- thanked the partnership for all the work they had carried out during challenging times.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

7 South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2023-2026

The Director of South Thames Gateway (STG) Building Control Partnership introduced the report which sought agreement of the STG Building Control Partnership's Business Plan and Delivery Plan for 2023 – 2026. She explained that the draft version had been considered by the Committee in September 2022. The Director of STG gave an overview on staffing and the importance on putting succession planning in place.

Resolved:

(1) That the updated version of the Business Plan, incorporating any comments received, be approved and it be referred to the Cabinet or relevant Committee of each partner authority to approve the Final Draft Business Plan.

8 South Thames Gateway Building Control Memorandum of Agreement

The Director of South Thames Gateway (STG) Building Control Partnership introduced the report which sought approval of the proposed changes to the STG Building Control Partnership's Memorandum of Agreement (MoA). She explained that the current MoA was approved in 2007 and had not been updated since then. It was important that it was updated to reflect the current needs and to strengthen and modernise the Partnership, and reflect legislation.

Members made the following comments:

- It was important to get this right;
- acknowledged the financial pressures, but the Partnership had worked well;
- very proud of the Partnership and what it had achieved;
- joint working with other local authorities worked in this instance;

- there would have been more cost implications for the individual councils if the work had been carried out separately from the Partnership;
- suggested the work of the STG was included within the Member induction for each council;
- there were opportunities to improve the Partnership even more in the future; and
- the work carried out so far should be valued.

Resolved:

(1) That the changes to STG Building Control Partnership's Memorandum of Agreement be approved and it be referred to the respective Councils to affix their Common Seals.

Chair

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