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## **SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL JOINT COMMITTEE**

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 16 June 2022 from 10.00 am - 10.41 am.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Neil Baker, Jane Chitty, Tim Gibson (Chair) and Brian Sangha (Substitute for Councillor John Burden).

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Flo Churchill (Head of Planning Services - Swale Borough Council), Gemma Dand (Technical and Administration Manager - South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership), Wendy Lane (Assistant Director (Planning) - Gravesham Borough Council), Jo Millard (Senior Democratic Services Officer - Swale Borough Council), Simon Thomas (Head of Planning - Canterbury City Council) and Janine Weaver (Director of South Thames Gateway Building Control).

**OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually):** Billy Attaway (Democratic Services Officer - Swale Borough Council).

**APOLOGY:** Councillor John Burden.

### **1 Election of Chair**

Councillor Jane Chitty proposed and Councillor Neil Baker seconded that Councillor Tim Gibson be elected Chair for the 2022/23 municipal year.

***Resolved: That Councillor Tim Gibson act as Chair for the South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.***

### **2 Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

### **3 Election of Vice-Chair**

The Chair proposed and Councillor Jane Chitty seconded that Councillor Neil Baker be elected Vice-Chair for the 2022/23 municipal year.

***Resolved: That Councillor Neil Baker act as Vice-Chair for the South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.***

### **4 Record of Meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2022 (Minute Nos. 25 – 31) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **5 Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

### **6 Urgent Matters by Reason of Special Circumstances**

There were no urgent matters.

7 **Schedule of meetings**

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the schedule of meetings for 2022/23 be noted.**

8 **Exclusion of 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.**

9 **South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Annual Report**

The Director of South Thames Gateway (STG) Building Control Partnership introduced the report which set out the performance and financial information for the year 2022/23. She informed Members that the service had improved and received good feedback since they had moved their booking systems online. She explained that recruitment for experienced surveyors had become difficult due to the extra legislation and licensing regulations set by the Government, but they still hoped to employ experienced surveyors to fill vacancies.

Members understood the challenges faced by the partnership to employ new surveyors, and thanked the Director of STG Building Control Partnership and all her staff for the hard work they had put in to maintain performance targets during difficult times.

**Resolved:**

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

10 **South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2021/2024**

The Director of STG Building Control Partnership introduced the report which sought to agree the STG Building Control Partnership's Business Plan dated 3 November 2021, and service Delivery Documentation for 2022-2025.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the 2022-2025 Business Plan dated 3 November 2021 Version 2 and Service Delivery Documentation be adopted.**

11 **Report on Retention and Recruitment**

The Director of STG Building Control Partnership introduced the report which set-out a number of different pay schemes available to the partnership to try and help the retention

of staff and recruitment of new staff. She outlined the issues that the partnership had been faced with recruitment during the Covid-19 pandemic. The new Government legislation that had been introduced for surveyors had made it even harder to recruit and retain staff. She asked members to consider the new recruitment incentives and raise any concerns that they have.

Members asked questions about the different pay reward schemes and were concerned with offering possible candidates a large sum of money to join the partnership without going under proper scrutiny. The Director of STG Building Control Partnership clarified that each candidate would be scrutinised and the payment would only be used for those candidates with the necessarily specialisms that the partnership missed. Overall, members were happy to support the schemes, but asked the Director to report back to the committee with a progress report on recruitment.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the additional recruitment incentives under the Refer a Friend Scheme and Golden Hello be approved.***

Chair

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