

<b>Meeting Date</b>	12 February 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	STG Building Control Partnership Business Plan 2020 to 2023
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Mike Baldock, Cabinet Member for Planning
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman, Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	James Freeman, Head of Planning
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Draft South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business and Delivery Plans for 2020 to 2023 be agreed.

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and make any comments on the draft STG shared Building Control Partnership (STG) Business and Delivery Plans 2020 to 2023 and to refer the comments to the Joint Committee.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 STG Building Control Partnership (involving Medway, Canterbury, Gravesham and Swale) went live in October 2007 with Canterbury joining in April 2018. Under the terms of the Memorandum Agreement between the four partner authorities, a three year rolling business plan needs to be agreed.
- 2.2 Each partner authority must advise the Secretary to the Joint Committee whether it approves or rejects the revised draft business plan by no later than 10 days before the Annual Meeting of the Joint Committee in June each year
- 2.3 Whilst much of the Building Control Partnership operation is subject to competition from Approved Inspectors, the service retains statutory responsibilities regarding public protection e.g. dangerous structures, demolitions, unauthorised works and maintaining registers etc.
- 2.4 Over the past few years, the service has had to compete with 'Approved Inspectors' within an increasingly competitive and shrinking market, which has put pressure on income generation within the service and correspondingly has put pressure on the resourcing of the service itself. The ability to adapt to this new competitive environment has been a major benefit of a combined authority shared service and has facilitated significant improvements on embracing digital

transformation, including the freedoms and accessibility that remote and agile working operations deliver, improving the customer experience and introducing efficiencies and savings to service delivery.

- 2.7 During this difficult period, whilst there has been some impact on service performance, the management team has ensured that communication with customers has been paramount to service delivery with no noticeable increase in customer dissatisfaction being recorded.

### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1 The plan includes actions to maintain progress towards;
- Continue to meet customer needs and expectations;
  - Maximisation of technology to reduce costs and continue to improve the way the service operates;
  - Valuing and supporting the development of staff
- 3.2 Over the past years, the contributions from each partner has seen year on year savings and in recent years that has been secured via the use of a small reserve fund. However, given the pressures being experienced by the service, there are limited opportunities for further reductions without impacting significantly on service delivery and performance. Accordingly, it is proposed that whilst there is a very minor reduction in contribution in 20/21, it is forecast that each authority would be looking for a small additional contribution of £2,600 over the following two years. This position will be kept under review through the roll forward of the Business Plan. Details of the financial plan 2020-23 are included in Appendix I.
- 3.3 The Cabinet needs to advise the secretary to the Joint Committee whether it approves without amendment or approves with further proposed modifications to the Business plan to be agreed with partner authorities or rejects the revised draft business plan.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The Council could consider removing itself from the partnership. However, whilst the Council is facing significant pressures on its revenue budget over the next few years, the success of the building control partnership has been recognised in that the efficiencies secured since its inception would have significantly exceeded any potential savings as a single authority service given the economies of scale a shared partnership presented. This has been borne out through separate reviews undertaken at the respective partner authorities, particularly in Canterbury City Council's recent decision to join the service. Therefore, it is not recommended at this stage that the authority should consider removing itself from the partnership although, as contained in the Business Plan, there are proposals to review how

consultancy services can be promoted to increase potential income and how best to make use of the existing staff abilities and experience to achieve efficiencies.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Business Plan has been considered and agreed by the Joint Authorities Committee overseeing the operation of the Building Control partnership. This has involved Councillor Tim Gibson as the authority's representative on the Joint Committee.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications															
Corporate Plan	The Partnership has built resilience into the service that supports the Council's aim to provide well run customer focussed services.															
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>Appendix I sets out the details of the financial plan accompanying the Business Plan.</p> <p>It is proposed to increase the total partner contribution over the three year plan by £2,214 (3.5%).</p> <p>The contributions for Swale BC are as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="544 1099 1493 1442"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="544 1099 863 1202">Year</th> <th data-bbox="863 1099 1182 1202">Contribution (£'s)</th> <th data-bbox="1182 1099 1493 1202">Change from previous year (£'s)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 1202 863 1261">2019/20</td> <td data-bbox="863 1202 1182 1261">63,440</td> <td data-bbox="1182 1202 1493 1261"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 1261 863 1319">2020/21</td> <td data-bbox="863 1261 1182 1319">63,042</td> <td data-bbox="1182 1261 1493 1319">-398 (-0.6%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 1319 863 1377">2021/22</td> <td data-bbox="863 1319 1182 1377">65,029</td> <td data-bbox="1182 1319 1493 1377">+1,987 (+3.1%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 1377 863 1435">2022/23</td> <td data-bbox="863 1377 1182 1435">65,654</td> <td data-bbox="1182 1377 1493 1435">+625 (+1.0%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>At Swale, the medium term financial plan will accommodate the proposed contributions as stated above.</p>	Year	Contribution (£'s)	Change from previous year (£'s)	2019/20	63,440		2020/21	63,042	-398 (-0.6%)	2021/22	65,029	+1,987 (+3.1%)	2022/23	65,654	+625 (+1.0%)
Year	Contribution (£'s)	Change from previous year (£'s)														
2019/20	63,440															
2020/21	63,042	-398 (-0.6%)														
2021/22	65,029	+1,987 (+3.1%)														
2022/23	65,654	+625 (+1.0%)														
Legal and Statutory	The Partnership and Joint Committee operate under a memorandum of agreement signed by each of the partner authorities.															
Crime and Disorder	Effective control and enforcement of building standards and dealing with dangerous structures is consistent with an increased perception of security and wellbeing.															
Risk Management and Health and Safety	This is detailed in Section Three of the Service Delivery Documentation, focussing on the highly competitive market the partnership operates within as well as a lack of investment in staff															

	development and IT solutions.
Health and Well Being	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Sustainability	None identified at this stage.

## **7 Appendices**

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- Appendix I: South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership – Business Plan 2020 – 23
- Appendix II: South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership – Service delivery Plan 2020-23

## **8 Background Papers**

None.

APPENDIX I

Three year Budget Build and Contribution Calculation for 2020/21 to 2022/2023

	<u>2020/21</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2021/22</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2022/23</u> <u>Budget</u>
Staffing	1,607,066	1,638,738	1,655,648
Premises	57,145	58,288	59,453
Transport	78,352	78,516	78,682
Supplies and Services	161,787	189,336	189,533
Support Services	44,998	45,898	46,816
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<u>1,949,348</u>	<u>2,010,777</u>	<u>2,030,132</u>
Contributions	(300,200)	(309,660)	(312,640)
Income	<u>(1,649,148)</u>	<u>(1,701,117)</u>	<u>(1,717,492)</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>(1,949,348)</u>	<u>(2,010,777)</u>	<u>(2,030,132)</u>
Chargeable 84.6%	(1,649,148)	(1,701,117)	(1,717,492)
Non-Chargeable 15.4%	<u>(300,200)</u>	<u>(309,660)</u>	<u>(312,640)</u>
	<u>(1,949,348)</u>	<u>(2,010,777)</u>	<u>(2,030,132)</u>
<b>Authority and Agreed Percentage</b>	<b><u>2020/21</u></b> <b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>2021/22</u></b> <b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>2022/23</u></b> <b><u>Budget</u></b>
Canterbury - 23%	(69,046)	(71,222)	(71,907)
Gravesham - 15%	(45,030)	(46,449)	(46,896)
Swale - 21%	(63,042)	(65,029)	(65,654)
Medway - 41%	<u>(123,082)</u>	<u>(126,961)</u>	<u>(128,182)</u>
	<u>(300,200)</u>	<u>(309,660)</u>	<u>(312,640)</u>