

THURSDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2014

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMY AND EDUCATION****SOUTHERN STAFFORDSHIRE BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT  
RENEWAL****EXEMPT INFORMATION****PURPOSE**

To inform Cabinet that the Building Control Partnership Agreement ends on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 and to recommend renewing the current arrangements.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) **The Council enters into a long term agreement with South Staffs Council and Lichfield District Council to provide a shared building control service.**
- 2) **The Solicitor of the Council and Head of Planning and Regeneration are delegated to finalise the Partnership Agreement.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Building standards ensure a built environment that is safe, healthy, accessible and environmentally sustainable. The minimum building standards are set out in the Building Regulations. Building Regulations are highly comprehensive, far reaching and cover all aspects of building design and construction. Local authorities have a statutory duty to enforce these standards.

The business case for entering into an expanded shared Building Control service with South Staffs Council and Lichfield District Council was considered in December 2011 and approval was granted to enter into the partnership initially from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 for a 3 year period. The current partnership agreement is due to finish on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. This expanded partnership developed from the original shared service between Lichfield and Tamworth Councils which began in April 2009.

The benefits of enlarging the partnership were considered to be building resilience and reducing costs both of which have been realised. The current direct cost to the Borough Council is £35,260 for the financial year 2014/15. The briefing paper at Appendix A provides an overview of the benefits of the partnership and a reflection on financial performance to date.

It is proposed to continue with the Partnership arrangements and amend the Agreement for a longer period of time but retain the clause with the option to give 12 months notice to leave the partnership.

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 1) Continue with the Partnership on a 3 year agreement
  - This would require renewal again in 3 years. The current agreement allows any

- one of the Partners to give 12 months written notice to leave the Partnership.
- 2) Continue with the Partnership on a longer term agreement
  - This would give greater certainty to the Partnership and the retention of the 12 months written notice to leave clause provides an option to leave if required.
- 3) Withdraw from the Partnership
  - This would increase costs to the Council.
  - Given the number of applications from Tamworth to the partnership this would require a small team and therefore there would be low resilience.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no proposed increased in costs as a result of this report. Continuing with the Partnership will help to keep costs low.

## LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Description	Likelihood / impact	Status	Countermeasure
Fee Income is less than cost of providing the chargeable service.	Medium/High	Tolerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain market share</li> <li>• Control costs and monitor income closely</li> <li>• Variable costs where possible.</li> </ul>
Increase in non-chargeable costs	Medium/Medium	Tolerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor volumes and activity</li> <li>• Welcome new partners to gain economies of scale.</li> </ul>

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Building Regulations are a key factor in delivering a sustainable built environment. The Building Control Partnership will continue to work with the construction industry to ensure standards are achieved.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### REPORT AUTHOR

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### LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Cabinet, "Building Control Service", 17th December 2008  
 Report to Council, "Building Control Service", 24 February 2009  
 Report to Cabinet, "Building Control Partnership", 23rd November 2011  
 Report to Council, "Building Control Partnership", 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2011

### APPENDICES

A "Briefing Paper: Resilience delivered - Ready for growth !!!"