

**MINUTES OF THE BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, TOWN HALL, MACCLESFIELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2007**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Wray (Congleton Borough Council) in the Chair

Councillors	W J Macrae	Macclesfield Borough Council
	F Keegan	Macclesfield Borough Council
	J Iddon	Congleton Borough Council

**Also Present:**

Mr G Allen, Chief Planning Officer	Congleton
Mr I Bunn, Head of Building Control	Macclesfield
Mr A Logan	Macclesfield (Planning)
Mr N Edmonds	Congleton (Finance)
Mr A Rennie	Congleton (Finance)
Miss N Mault	Macclesfield (Legal)

9 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Bailey (Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council), Mr A Millington (Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council) and Mr P Yates (Macclesfield Borough Council).

10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting. However, Councillor J Iddon declared a personal interest in respect of paragraph 2.8 – (Accommodation), of the Building Control Progress Report, by virtue of the fact that he was a Director of SECE, who managed Wesley Court, Sandbach, immediately he became aware that this matter was to be discussed. In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillor Iddon remained in the meeting during consideration of this matter.

11 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

That the Minutes be agreed as a correct record.

12 **BUILDING CONTROL PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a progress report, presented by Mr I Bunn, in respect of the East and South Cheshire Building Control service. Significant progress had been made following its inception on 13 November 2006 and the report highlighted the main areas of progress, including financial management, marketing and business plans policy, staffing, remote working policy, information technology, accommodation and performance. It was noted that, subsequent to the signing of the Legal Agreement, the Building Control Management Team were now able to continue the development of the joint service activities. Staff had now been allocated to positions within the joint service structure and significant work was currently being undertaken

to ensure progress of the joint service. The Finance Group, together with the Head of Building Control, were reviewing financial arrangements and would prepare a Service Level Agreement for finance services by the end of January 2007.

The Building Control Management Team had recently given a presentation to the Planning Agents Forum, hosted by Macclesfield Borough Council, which had resulted in a number of external partners signing with the services for the Building Control provision.

With regard to staffing, all staff had now signed Secondment Agreements, highlighting new terms and conditions, together with reporting procedures and any concerns had now been dealt with. There were currently four vacancies within the structure, which had been advertised in the appropriate publications.

Councillor Iddon expressed concern that there had not been any progress in respect of the electrical contract for Wesley Court, Sandbach. It was reported that there had been an issue in respect of the electrical contract price and revised quotes were awaited.

Councillor Iddon requested that he be kept informed if there were any further problems in respect of Wesley Court – **Action IB.**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the progress report be noted.

#### **13 BUILDING CONTROL BUSINESS PLAN 2007/08**

Consideration was given to a report requesting the Joint Committee to approve and adopt the proposed Building Control Business Plan for the joint service operations. The Business Plan would enable the service to identify potential improvements required for the financial year 2007/8 and to operate effectively and efficiently. The proposed Business Plan highlighted the potential budgets required to allow the service to meet its commitments for 2007/8, in an attempt to achieve improved service delivery and continued the development of the business case approved by each Council prior to the inauguration of the partnership agreement.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Building Control Business Plan, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved and adopted.

#### **14 BUILDING CONTROL POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report requesting the Joint Committee to approve and adopt the proposed Building Control policy for the joint service operations. Each Council had made a commitment to the joint Building Control Service, through a joint legal agreement, which contained a service level agreement, highlighting the scope of service that the Joint Building Control Committee was to provide to each individual

Council. The proposed policy clearly set out standards of service that would enable the service to move forward, enhancing its service delivery.

In considering the Building Control Policy the Joint Committee agreed to replace paragraph 2.6 of the Policy with the following text:

“Building Control staff shall maintain suitable liaison with Planning Officers, ensuring that Building Regulations submissions accord to plans decided under the Town and Country Planning Act. Any discrepancies realised throughout the construction process shall be referred to the relevant Chief Planning Officer or their nominated staff.”

**RESOLVED**

That, subject to the above revision, the proposed Business Control Business Plan, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved and adopted.

15 **BUILDING CONTROL CHARGE TEAM 2007/08**

Consideration was given to a report requesting the Joint Committee to agree the scheme for the recovery of Building Regulation charges.

The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 authorised the service to fix, by means of a scheme, charges to recover costs associated with the Building Regulation functions. The Local Government Association provided guidance relating to such charges in the manner of a model scheme to be adopted by each Council. The proposed scheme followed the guidance as set out by the LGA and increased fees on the previous year by approximately 3%. This was considered an appropriate amount to cover the costs of the Building Regulations function, without pricing the service out of a very competitive market.

**RESOLVED**

That the scheme for the recovery of the Building Regulation and advisory charges for 2007/08, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be agreed and referred to each relevant Council for consideration under the normal budget setting process.

16 **BUILDING CONTROL REMOTE WORKING POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report requesting the Joint Committee to approve and adopt the proposed Building Control Remote Working Policy for the joint service operations. The proposed policy set out the principal remote and home working arrangements for all staff, irrespective of how often they worked at home. It was noted that the proposed policy would provide managers and staff with clear guidance in respect of how to determine a remote or home working arrangement and it was intended to facilitate safe and effective working arrangements, without being too prescriptive.

**RESOLVED**

That the Building Control Remote and Home Working Policy 2007, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved and adopted.

17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 24 April 2007, at 4.00pm, to be hosted by Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council.

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and concluded at 4.45pm.