

DEVON BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

31 MARCH 2025

Present:

Councillors Birch (Vice-Chair), Cheadle, McKay, C Parker, Southcott and G Taylor (Chair)

Officers in Attendance:

Drew Powell, Corporate Director – Strategy and Governance

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

Nigel Hunt, Head of Devon Building Control Partnership

Neil Blaney, Director of Place

Simon Arthurs, Interim Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Deputy S151)

Gordon Bryant, Head of Financial and Audit Services

Joanne Butler, Accounting Technician

Matthew Long, Accountant

1. MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor and seconded by Cllr Cheadle that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

3. PART 1 OPERATIONAL REPORT 2024-2025 Q3 & Q4

The Head of the Partnership introduced the item to the Committee. He advised the Committee that they were in the process of drawing out information on KPIs. He also noted that market share was being regained and that an appointed registered building inspector had been hired. He was looking to form a panel of customers that would meet twice a year to discuss issues.

In response to a question on the risk posed by the Local Government Reorganisation, the Head of the Partnership confirmed that this would be a risk

item starting next year. It was considered that the move to unitary in other councils led to challenges for Building Control departments.

The Committee were informed that the software package used by DBC was Uniform and the software had not been updated with mandatory KPI information. Whilst other software was available, this would have a cost implication.

In response to a question on the Partnerships role in addressing environmental impact, the Head of the Partnership responded that they can only try and influence customer decisions.

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor and seconded by Cllr C Parker that the report be noted.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor and seconded by Cllr Birch that the press and public be excluded as per the resolution below.

RESOLVED

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

5. PART 2 OPERATIONAL REPORT 2024-2025 Q3 & Q4

The Head of the Partnership introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee discussed the report, including staffing, the Building Infrastructure Levy, the DBC Audit, the reporting of KPIs through Uniform, enforcement, TDC reorganisation and the LABC awards.

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor and seconded by Cllr Birch that the report be noted, and that once both the Audit report and KPI findings are available and circulated that a MS Teams meeting be held to discuss both.

Resolved

That the report be noted, and that once both the Audit report and KPI findings are available and circulated that a MS Teams meeting be held to discuss both.

6. PART 2 DBCP OPERATIONAL PLAN Q2 2024-2025

The Head of the Partnership introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee discussed the reporting of KPIs including examples of KPIs and that they are largely not interconnected. They also considered the ways that enforcement could be carried out. Other topics of discussion were staff morale, new building regulations, the DBC Strategy Board, vacancies, and the MTFP.

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor and seconded by Cllr Birch that the report be noted and that the Committee thanks the DBC Officers for their hard work.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the report be noted and that the Committee thanks the DBC Officers for their hard work.

7. PART 2 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Interim Deputy Chief Financial Officer introduced the item to the Committee.

The 2024-25 estimated year-end position was presented and discussed before the 2025-26 budget was covered. The Committee discussed the Partnership reserves, the strategy board, impacts on the Building Control industry, the approval of the draft budget, the use of time recording, and the different income levels from Building Control work for the 3 authorities. The difference between budget and forecasts was highlighted as a result of the income sensitivity and the proposals to keep the volatility of finance risk on the Head of Partnerships operational risk register. It was noted that the draft budget figures would come to the Committee in November in future in accordance with the Partnership agreement.

The Committee also considered the additional Local Government Pension Scheme payments charged to the Devon Building Control Partnerships reserve account. It was noted that it had been agreed 3 years ago that annual contributions to the pension fund would be made by Devon Building Control Partnership and that the figures went before the DBC Strategy Board for approval. The Interim Deputy Chief Financial Officer would discuss the final figure for the year with the Director of Corporate Resources (Chief Finance Officer) and confirm if there was any requirement for a similar additional charge in relation to 2025-26...

It was proposed by Cllr Birch and seconded by Cllr Cheadle that the report be noted and that when determined, any additional charges in relation to the Local

Government Pension Scheme chargeable to the Devon Building Control Partnership reserve account would be brought to the Strategy Board for confirmation.

A vote was taken. All were in favour.

Resolved

That the report be noted and that when determined, any additional charges in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme chargeable to the Devon Building Control Partnership reserve account would be brought to the Strategy Board for confirmation.

CLLR G TAYLOR
Chair

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.00 pm.