

Report of	Head of Commercial Services	Author	Graham Lewis
Title	SEAX Essex Building Control Shared Service for delivery of Building Control Regulation Services		
Wards affected	All Wards		

To consider whether the Council should become a member of the Building Control Shared Service and that it will act as host authority for the shared service.

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree that Colchester Borough Council joins the SEAX Essex Building Control Shared Service with effect from the planned operational launch date of 1 January 2017. This incorporates acceptance of the following:
 - Current financial information and projections
 - The provisional time scales outlined in the mobilisation plan
 - Acceptance of the Partnership Agreement (the governance arrangements), as it stands at the present with only Heads of Terms
- 1.2 To give delegated authority to the Head of Commercial Services in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Waste and Sustainability to:-
 - a. approve any changes in the Host Authority Business Plan
 - b. sign-off the final version of the Partnership Agreement
- 1.3 To appoint the relevant Cabinet Member to the Partnership Management Board.
- 1.4 That a budget provision is agreed for the one-off set-up costs.
- 1.5 To give delegated authority to the Head of Commercial Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Waste and Sustainability to continue to act as Host Authority based on any changes to the Business Plan - Colchester Borough Council has agreed to host SEAX Essex Building Control and as such all partner authority staff, income and expenditure will move to CBC.
- 1.6 To note that the other authorities involved in the Shared Service will be required to formally delegate the discharge of their statutory building control function by a resolution under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and other enabling enactments via the shared service hosted by Colchester Borough Council.
- 1.7 To note the extensive work undertaken by Trading Board to oversee and guide the delivery of this strategically important initiative.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 By creating a shared service the Council will create greater resilience in its building control service, create potential savings for the Council, give more effective support to economic development in the district and provide a better service to customers. Colchester Borough Council has agreed to host SEAX Essex Building Control and as such all partner authority staff, income and expenditure will move to CBC.

All local authority Building Control teams are facing a number of issues which are affecting the viability of the service and as a consequence Colchester Borough Council has been working with six other partner Authorities across Essex with a view to forming a single Building Control shared service, hosted by Colchester Borough Council that will, through the benefits of scale, be better able to tackle these issues.

The outcomes of the work to date demonstrate a clear case for change and the potential to create savings for the partnering Authorities by developing a collaborative working arrangement. A high level Business Case produced by Colchester Borough Council to enable the partnering Authorities: Basildon, Braintree, Colchester, Harlow, Maldon, Tendring, and Uttlesford to present to their respective decision making bodies, for a decision on joining the SEAX Essex Building Control Shared Service. It is envisaged that all Authorities will have a confirmed position by the end of July, with a planned date for the commencement of the service being 1 January 2017.

3. Alternative Options

1. Do nothing
2. Restrict the service
3. Keep in house and invest

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 None

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that Colchester Borough Council agree to be a member of SEAX Essex Building Control Shared Service and that it confirm its position as Host Authority (subject to 1.5 above)

6. Strategic Plan References

This proposal meets the vision, themes and objectives of the [Strategic Plan 2015-18](#).
In terms of;

Vibrant - Create the right environment for people to develop and flourish in all aspects of life both business and pleasure.

Prosperous - Promote Colchester to attract further inward investment and additional businesses, Support people to develop the skills needed by employers in the future to take advantage of higher paid jobs being created, Provide opportunities to increase the number of homes available including those that are affordable for local

Thriving - Be recognised as a centre of learning and educational opportunities for young people to make the best of their potential, to work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve more for Colchester than we could on our own

Welcoming - Ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors and businesses, create a business friendly environment, encouraging business start-ups, support to small and medium sized enterprise and offer development in the right locations, make Colchester confident about its own abilities, to compete with the best of the towns in the region to generate a sense of pride.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 As required

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 As required

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 By becoming part of a shared service the cost of the service is projected to reduce. The experience of other shared services formed around the country is that, by pooling resources, partner councils gain more efficient services at lower costs
- 9.2 The Business Case projects that the shared service will reduce the costs for the Building Control Service compared to the 2016/17 budget by approximately £150,000 from £185,000 down to around £34,000 in five years, with further possible savings being anticipated as the partnership establishes itself and if more partners join.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 10.1 The formation of a building control shared service is intended to produce a more effective service and as a consequence there should be no adverse impact on any part of the community.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no particular references to community safety

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no particular references to health and safety or risk management implications

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The Council currently faces the risk of its Building Control service facing increasing competition and reduced sustainability which eventually will lead to increased costs for the Council.

Business Case not being delivered has been mitigated by several external checks on the Business Case viability and strong management on costs and income generation.

Background Papers

None