

Runnymede Borough CouncilCORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE25 March 2021 at 7.30 p.m. via MS Teams

Members of the Committee present: Councillors N Prescott (Chairman), J Gracey (Vice-Chairman), A Alderson, I Chaudhri, D Cotty, L Gillham, M Heath, J Hulley, R King, M Maddox and D Whyte.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor M Willingale.

Councillors D Clarke and J Olorenshaw also attended.

516 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record. As the meeting was being held remotely using MS Teams, the Chairman would sign these Minutes when this was physically possible.

517 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Willingale.

518 CORPORATE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – PROPOSED 2021/22 INDICATORS AND TARGETS

The Committee considered the proposed Corporate Key Performance Indicator (CKPI) set for 2021/22 as recommended by the Service and Digital Transformation Member Working Party. The Committee also noted the latest Quarter 3 report for the 2020/21 CKPIs showing performance against targets which provided them with data to assist their consideration of this item.

The Committee approved the changes to the CKPIs for 2021/22 which had been recommended by the Working Party. For Customer, Digital and Collection Services, CDCS2 on the percentage of lost Customer Service Calls per quarter would be amended from 12% to 7% due to exceptional performance achieved in 2020/21. For Housing, the current description for H3 on the percentage of satisfied customers with the reactive repairs service would be changed to the revised description of H3: satisfaction with the overall reactive repairs service achieved (% of total number of responses return) to clarify what this CKPI measured. The targets for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 in 2021/22 for H8: percentage of stock with a valid safety certification electrical installation condition report would be reduced from 100% to 80% and 90% which were more realistic figures. The target for H9: number of outstanding high-risk fire assessment actions would be reduced from 140 to 70 in quarter 1 of 2021/22 and to 30 for Quarters 2 to 4 of 2021/22 as ongoing assessments were reducing the number of actions required.

For Environmental Services, the target for ES1: dry mixed recycling rate (paper, cans, glass, plastic) would be increased from 23% to 24% in 2021/22. This was reckoned to be a realistic figure as although the results for 2020/21 had been between 25.57% and 26.49%, it was considered that this might be because more people were working at home and ordering online and therefore producing additional packaging. For ES2: garden waste and food waste recycling rate, the targets would be increased from 23% to 24% in view of the additional green waste customers gained in 2020/21. For ES3: percentage of bins collected, the targets would be increased from 99.87% to 99.9% in view of the consistent exceptional performance achieved in 2020/21.

For Community Services, CS2: number of befriending referrals per quarter, would be a new CKPI for 2021/22, subject to funding being approved for the proposed befriending initiative which had been put forward as loneliness had been identified as an issue during the pandemic. This indicator would be added for monitoring purposes if the initiative was set up, with targets to follow for the following year. Vulnerable people appreciated regular calls which also provided an opportunity to advise them of Council services available with the potential to increase the Council's income for those services where a fee was charged. For Housing, HS2: average number of calendar days to relet a void property (excludes major works voids) would also be a new CKPI for 2021/22 with a target of 25 days each quarter. This indicator was reported to central Government and therefore provided an opportunity for benchmarking. C1: number of individual trips with Community Transport per quarter, would be removed as a CKPI for 2021/22, as due to Covid-19 the speed of recovery of this service was uncertain. However, this indicator would continue to be monitored by the business unit. All of the other CKPIs and targets would remain unchanged for 2021/22.

The Committee was pleased to note the exceptional performance in the third quarter of 2020/21 for ES3: percentage of bins collected. Performance on the CKPIs which related to rent arrears had been only just short of the targets set in the third quarter of 2020/21. Officers were commended for very good results for rent collection and rent arrears particularly in view of the adverse effects of Covid-19.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) the proposed 2021/22 Corporate Key Performance Indicator descriptions, as set out in Appendix 'B' to the agenda, be approved; and;**
- ii) the proposed 2021/22 quarterly/annual targets, as set out in Appendix 'B' to the agenda, be approved.**

519 REFERENCE FROM HOUSING COMMITTEE – PROPOSED ADDITIONAL POSTS

The Committee considered a reference from the Housing Committee which, at its meeting on 10 March 2021, had recommended the approval of two additional posts to be located within the Council's Housing Service. The Housing Committee had approved a Housing Revenue Account supplementary revenue estimate for 2021/22 and subsequent years to cover the full year costs of the two new proposed staff which were £84,800.

These two additional posts of Housing Policy Officer and Tenant Engagement Officer (job title to be confirmed) would enable the Housing Service to introduce a Quality Management System (ISO 9001) which was one of the actions contained within the Housing Business Unit Plan. The service would also be able to respond effectively to the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper - Charter for Social Housing Residents. These posts provided sufficient resources to meet the Council's requirements as a social landlord at present based on the detail provided in the White Paper.

UNISON supported additional staff to deliver these actions and was pleased to see resources being put in place to respond to additional work which sent out a positive message to staff. The Corporate Management Committee approved recruitment to these posts which would allow the Council to develop its Housing policies and its engagement with tenants.

**RESOLVED that –**

**the recruitment of two additional staff, a Housing Policy Officer and a Tenant Engagement Officer, to be located within the Council's Housing Service, be approved.**

520 TEMPORARY RESOURCE IN HUMAN RESOURCES: PROPOSAL FOR A 12 MONTHS CONTRACT

The Committee considered a report seeking approval for a supplementary revenue estimate in the sum of £50,000 to fund a one year temporary post in the Human Resources business unit.

The Council's original budget for 2020/21 had included a sum to strengthen the Human Resources (HR) capacity in the Council in view of the substantial additional work that HR was undertaking. This was for 1 professional HR post and one part-time HR Assistant role. This was also in the context that, for the size of authority, Runnymede's HR service had fewer HR staff to deal with the staffing issues in its workforce than both comparable and smaller authorities in Surrey. These proposals had had to be shelved because of the financial impact of the pandemic on the Council's finances.

However, HR work within the Council had not diminished and in fact had grown over the past year. Partly, this had been in response to the Covid crisis, but it was also a result of work which could not be stopped or rescheduled. Capacity had also been affected by an unusually high level of sickness absence and the need for one member of the team to shield. The range of tasks undertaken by HR was noted by the Committee. HR was a small team and the need to strengthen the capacity of the Unit had been recognised and prioritised by the Chief Executive.

As well as the continuing other work in HR, the Council was embarking on a Voluntary Redundancy Strategy. This was necessary to meet financial targets and to make a major contribution to £2m of savings which had to be achieved by the Council over the next two financial years, including potential further staff restructuring. The Voluntary Redundancy Strategy would also enable some re-investment within the Council in areas of priority to Members including a Climate Change Officer, a Bid Writer to access more resources for the Council in a range of different areas and a Joint Enforcement Team. The Committee noted the significant work created for HR by the Voluntary Redundancy Strategy. There was an immediate need for extra resource in HR for 12 months - otherwise it would not be possible to achieve the target date for completion of the Voluntary Redundancy Strategy which was March 2022.

Although this was a growth item, the 12 months post was necessary to ensure that there was sufficient capacity in place to process Voluntary Redundancy applications and to meet legal responsibilities. The cost of a one-year post was £33-35,000 plus on costs and a one-off agency fee, bringing the total cost to £50,000. Before the end of the one-year period, there would be an evaluation of the ongoing needs of the HR Business Unit to ascertain whether some of the savings generated by the Voluntary Redundancy Strategy needed to be re-invested.

It was noted that HR was in the implementation phase for the new Vendor Neutral Contract for the use of agency staff that had been previously agreed by the Committee. Therefore this temporary post would be procured by using the current agency staff arrangements. However, the agency charge being made for this post was lower than for many other agency staff procurements.

A Member expressed the view that the Council should be recruiting permanent staff to cover the workload in HR rather than procuring a short term post through an agency. However, a majority of Members of the Committee supported the one-year temporary post in the HR Business Unit in view of the urgent need for resources in this area and considered that, while the use of agency staff should be avoided where possible, this was required on this occasion to complete the Voluntary Redundancy Strategy and to assist with the HR workload. It was noted that it might be necessary for a report to be submitted to the Committee in the future seeking further resources for the HR Business Unit.

**RESOLVED that -**

**a supplementary revenue estimate in the sum of £50,000 be approved to fund a one-year temporary post in the Human Resources Business Unit.**

521 TELEPHONY REVIEW AND STRATEGY

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

On 30 July 2020, the Corporate Management Committee had agreed that the Council's telephony network be reviewed. The Committee noted a report outlining the outcome of this review including the key findings and the recommended next steps for the Council. The Committee noted the various options which had been considered. The review had been discussed at the Service and Digital Transformation Working Party and that Working Party had supported the recommendations in the report. The impact of Covid-19 on the Council and the recovery plan which was required meant that resources needed to be re-evaluated taking into account the organisation's short to medium term financial strategy. In view of the Council's current systems strengths and opportunities which could be maximised with limited expenditure, the Committee agreed that the Council's existing telephony systems be maintained with enhancements and additional licences to meet the Council's medium term strategic aspirations. The Committee agreed that Contract Standing Orders be waived to enable a direct award to be made to the incumbent providers for a three year period without a full tender process.

The enhancements which would be provided would include an increase in call recording monitoring, wallboards displaying real – time call statistics, new management reporting tools, improved integration, rolling out of softphones and additional Contact Centre licences and Contact Centre enhancements. The equality and privacy impact implications of these decisions were noted. It had not been possible within the package to meet the cost of moving hardware onto the Cloud – this proposal would be looked at again when the Council reviewed its telephony requirements before the expiry of the contracts in November 2024. Various measures had been taken to strengthen the Council's internet resilience.

A project budget had been allocated in the Digital Transformation Programme and the Committee noted a breakdown of the capital and revenue costs of the enhancements and additional licences required. Additional revenue costs had already been built into the budget as part of the Digital Transformation Programme. The capital costs could be met from the provision held in the Capital Programme and the Committee approved the release of this money.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) the outcome of the Council's Telephony review be noted;**
- ii) having considered the recommendations outlined in the Telephony Strategy the procurement approach be approved to:-**
  - a) make a direct award to the Council's incumbent providers for the supply and implementation of the enhancements recommended in the report;**
  - b) award a 3 year support and maintenance contract of the Council's telephony system from November 2021 to November 2024 with the Council's incumbent providers; and**

- c) **increase the call recording licensing across the Council and co-term the support and maintenance contract from May 2023 to November 2024;**
- iii) **the Corporate Head of Law and Governance be authorised to enter or execute under seal any contractual documentation to fulfil the extensions required; and**
- iv) **a capital estimate be approved in the sum reported drawing down from the pre-approved capital provision held in the Capital Programme for the Digital Transformation Programme.**

522 REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – SOCIAL PRESCRIBING AND CITIZENS ADVICE RUNNYMEDE AND SPELTHORNE

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

The Committee considered a reference from the Community Services Committee which, at its meeting on 11 March 2021, had considered proposals for a one year project between the Council's Social Prescribing Project and Citizens Advice Runnymede and Spelthorne (CARS). The Community Services Committee had supported the proposals.

The Council had been offering a Social Prescribing service for three years, funded by a combination of the Better Care Fund and two Primary Care Networks. Social Prescribing provided support to residents who had social, wellbeing and other non-medical needs. The impact of Covid-19 had demonstrated a clear need for the Social Prescribing service to continue and to be sufficiently resourced to do so. However, Social Prescribing was only the access point to services. The success of Social Prescribing depended upon other organisations, as well as local community assets, to provide the support required. One such organisation was CARS, who had always been a key support to residents referred to Social Prescribing. Officers reported that since 1 April 2020, a total of 233 referrals had been received by Social Prescribing. 70 of these referrals had been passed on to CARS who played a critical role in supporting residents with specialist advice on housing and accommodation and financial hardship as well as benefits checks, debt advice and legal advice.

The Council's Senior Leadership Team and Corporate Leadership Team had proposed that £40,000 of the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) funding that the Council had received in order to respond to the Covid -19 pandemic be awarded to CARS in the form of a one-off grant for 12 months. This would allow CARS to recruit a full time adviser to cope with demand. CARS would work in partnership with the Council's Social Prescribing service to provide a timely service to the community. This partnership approach was also intended to provide an opportunity for CARS to gain greater exposure across Health and Social Care, through its link to Social Prescribing, which might provide a platform for potential funding from other sources in the future. It was agreed that officers would discuss with a Member possible performance indicators for the 12 months post to be employed by CARS for the one year partnership between the Council's Social Prescribing service and CARS.

The Committee supported this proposal and recognised the key role played by CARS and how a joint approach would be beneficial for all parties.

**RESOLVED that -**

**the proposals for a one-year project between the Council's Social Prescribing Project and Citizens Advice Runnymede and Spelthorne be approved.**

523 PROPOSED PROCUREMENT OF MICROSOFT LICENCES

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Approval was sought for the award of a three year contract for Runnymede Borough Council's Microsoft Enterprise Licensing. The Council could only procure Microsoft Licences through a partner reseller.

The Council was approaching the end of its current framework contract for Microsoft licensing. Microsoft Software and Cloud Services ultimately underpinned all of the activities that the Council undertook and all of the services that it delivered. The Council was not allowed to extend its existing contract beyond the date for expiry. The Council was required to enter into a new licensing agreement for three years to ensure that it could continue to use Microsoft Software and Cloud Services. The Health Trust Europe Information Communication Technology Solutions Framework provided access to a single lot Framework which covered five areas, one of which was IT software which was appropriate for the Microsoft Enterprise Licensing procurement. The Committee agreed to approve a waiver of the Council's Contract Standing Orders to authorise a direct award from this Framework to the top-ranking partner reseller in this Framework who was also the Council's incumbent supplier, due to the necessity to avoid serious disruption to Council services. The equality and privacy impact implications of this decision were noted.

As part of the new agreement there would be an increase in the unit cost for Microsoft licences. This increase had already been built into the Digital Services budget. The unit cost for Microsoft licences had increased across the whole of the public sector. The Committee was pleased to note that officers had been able to secure a contract discount for the new contract despite an increase in overall contract value.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) a waiver of the Council's Contract Standing Orders be approved to authorise a direct award to the Council's incumbent provider from the Health Trust Europe Framework for Microsoft Enterprise Licensing for a contract term of three years, due to the necessity to avoid serious disruption to Council services; and**
- ii) the Corporate Head of Law and Governance be authorised to execute under seal the call off contract agreement.**

(The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.)

Chairman