

Runnymede Borough CouncilCORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE27 May 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the Committee present: Councillors N Prescott (Chairman), T Gracey (Vice-Chairman), M Adams, A Alderson, D Cotty, M Cressey, L Gillham, J Gracey, M Heath, C Howorth, M Maddox and D Whyte.

Members of the Committee absent: None

Councillors T Burton, R King and S Whyte also attended.

32. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

33. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Group mentioned below had notified the Chief Executive of its wish that the change listed below be made to the membership of the Committee. The change was for a fixed period ending on the day after the meeting and thereafter the Councillor removed would be reappointed.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Remove From Membership</u>	<u>Appoint Instead</u>
Conservative	Councillor M Willingale	Councillor M Adams

The Chief Executive had given effect to this request in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

34. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

35. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

As he was the Chairman of Egham Chamber of Commerce, Councillor M Adams declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 9 on the agenda on Appointments To Outside Bodies in respect of the appointments of the Council's Member Representative and Deputy Representative for Egham Chamber of Commerce. These two appointments were considered separately by the Committee and Councillor Adams left the meeting for the consideration of these two appointments.

36. PROPOSED CARERS' POLICY

The Committee considered a report on a revised Carers' Policy attached at Appendix 'B' to the agenda which was an employment policy to support employees who were carers so that employees with caring responsibilities could combine that role more easily with their employment role. The Policy had been revised by the Human Resources (HR) Member Working Party at its meeting in April 2021 after being deferred by the Corporate Management Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2021 so that amendments proposed to the policy by Councillor Robert King could be considered.

Councillor Robert King had suggested that the policy should state that flexible working was offered to all employees. However, flexible working was mainly only available to office workers, because there were some roles such as Refuse Collections and Meals on Wheels, where an employee's hours were governed by the type of service and the role in which they were employed. The HR Member Working Party had recommended that the policy be amended to state that all employees had the right to request flexible working as employees who were not working in an office environment could still request flexible working in a way that was feasible for their particular job.

Councillor Robert King had also suggested that the word "registered" was deleted from the definition of carer as those who were looking after someone outside the family might not be registered as carers. The HR Member Working Party had recommended that the policy be amended to state that a non-registered carer would be covered by the policy, with their manager's discretion, if other more suitable care service was not available.

Councillor Robert King had requested that a review be undertaken of the cost of a line manager being given the discretion to award care vouchers to an employee until a final decision was made in the circumstances where that employee had had a dependant's attendance allowance application initially turned down or delayed and was in the process of reapplying or awaiting an appeal decision for this allowance. However, such a review was not feasible because care vouchers no longer existed.

Councillor Robert King had also requested that an exercise be undertaken, which was described in paragraph 3.6 of the report, where the Head of HR would conduct a costing review over a 6 month period of paying the difference in employer's superannuation contributions where an employee reduced their hours, and therefore salary, on a temporary basis due to caring responsibilities, subject to the employee doing the same in relation to an employee's superannuation contributions, with any further extension to this arrangement to be at the discretion of that employee's line manager. The HR Member Working Party recommended that this costing review be undertaken. The Corporate Management Committee agreed that this costing review be undertaken and that the outcome of the review would be reported to the HR Member Working Party. Depending on the outcome of this review, this element might later be added to the Carers' Policy.

The Committee approved the revised Carers' Policy and commended the work of the HR Member Working Party on the Policy which provided a good example of effective cross party working.

RESOLVED that -

- i) the Carers' Policy at Appendix 'B' to the agenda be approved; and**
- ii) the costing review referred to in paragraph 3.6 of the report be undertaken and the outcome of the review be reported to the HR Member Working Party.**

37. GENDER PAY GAP

The Committee considered a report on the gender pay gap figures for Runnymede Borough Council. The purpose of the gender pay gap legislation was to encourage employers to close the pay gap between the genders. This gap arose as, in most organisations, male employees earned more than female employees and employers were required to make a series of calculations which showed the extent of the gap.

Data had been gathered, analysed and calculated for Runnymede Borough Council as at the snapshot date of 31 March 2020 as required by the Gender Pay Gap regulations. The mean gender pay gap for Runnymede was 9.06%. This represented a small improvement of 0.22% when compared to the mean gender pay gap as at 31 March 2019. The median

gender pay gap was 0% (i.e. there was no median gender pay gap). 55.05% of male staff and 44.95% of female staff had an hourly pay rate at or below the lower pay quartile. It was the impact of the number of low paid male manual workers which was helping to keep the gender pay gap relatively low for Runnymede Borough Council. Although the majority of the workforce was female, the existence of the mean gender pay gap of 9.06% was primarily due to the fact that the higher earning senior managers in the organisation were predominantly male.

A Member of the Committee considered that, while noting there had been a small reduction in the gender pay gap, priority should be given to seeking to reduce it further. The Committee discussed measures which could be taken. Policies which could be adopted to further the objective of reducing the gender pay gap included increased flexibility for working conditions for women returning to work from maternity leave, mentoring, coaching and confidence building programmes and management training.

The Committee agreed that the implications of the gender pay gap data and the production of a suitable action plan to encourage the gradual reduction of the gender pay gap would be considered by the HR Member Working Party.

RESOLVED that -

the report be noted and a suitable action plan be devised to encourage the gradual reduction in the gender pay gap.

38. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21

The Committee considered the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 which would form a significant part of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2020/21. It was noted that the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 had been considered by the Standards and Audit Committee at its meeting on 26 May 2021.

It was noted that as it was not appropriate for the Council's Chief Financial Officer (the Assistant Chief Executive) to also be the Finance Director of the three companies that the Council had created, the Assistant Chief Executive had resigned as Finance Director of those three companies and had been replaced by Ms E Lyons.

Declarations of executive positions held with organisations that carried out business with the Council (known as third party declarations) had now been received from all 41 Councillors and the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 would be amended to reflect this.

It was noted that the Council had still not received the audit certificate from its external auditors in respect of the statement of Accounts 2019/20. The Council's Finance officers had expressed their concern at the delay in the production of this certificate. Runnymede was not unusual amongst local authorities in not receiving its audit certificate for 2019/20 as there was a general shortage of external auditors suitably qualified to complete this work.

When the external auditors signed off the Statement for Accounts 2019/20 it was not anticipated that they would raise any matter which might require an amendment of the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21. However, in case the external auditors did wish the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 to be changed, the Committee agreed to approve the signing of it by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive and if it was necessary to change it, a revised statement would be brought to the Committee for approval.

RESOLVED that –

the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020/21, as set out in Appendix ‘C’ to the agenda, be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, subject to the amendment of paragraph 4 on page 47 of the agenda to state that in 2020/21 the Council received third party declarations from all 41 Councillors and in the event of a change, a revised Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 be submitted to the Committee for approval.

39. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee considered the Council’s appointments to outside bodies that were presently due for renewal.

It had been the practice of the Council for speeches not to be made by Members in support of particular nominations to outside bodies when considering this item in previous years. The Committee was advised that this practice would be followed for the consideration of this item. Some Members of the Committee did not support this method of considering these nominations as they considered that this did not give Members the opportunity to advise the Committee of the particular skills that they could bring to their appointment to an outside body. It was agreed that the Constitution Member Working Group would consider whether to recommend that persons nominated to represent the Council on an outside body should be required to provide a brief summary of no more than a page in support of their nomination as representatives.

A number of Members considered that there should be greater cross party engagement in making these outside body appointments and took the view that the Council should make appointments of representatives on outside bodies on the basis of the people most suited for that role rather than on a political basis. It was agreed that officers would check on the nominations received for Heathrow Community Noise Forum and advise Councillor Robert King.

Some Members considered that there should be feedback from Council representatives on outside bodies and noted that at present there was no formal means by which those representatives reported back to the Council. It was agreed that the Constitution Member Working Group would consider whether to recommend that the Council’s representatives on outside bodies should be required to report back to the Council on their attendance and on the activity of the outside bodies to which they were appointed by the Council.

RESOLVED that –

the following appointments be made for the Municipal Year 2021/22 or for longer periods where stated:

(1) Addlestone Chamber of Commerce

Member Representative: Councillor J Broadhead

Deputy Representative: Councillor J Furey

(2) Air Training Corps (No 398 Squadron) Management Committee

Representative: Councillor M Adams

(Councillor R King was also nominated as the Council’s representative on this Committee. The nominations of Councillors Adams and R King were put to the vote and Councillor Adams received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed)

(3) Armed Forces Champion

Representative: Councillor S Walsh

(4) Ashford and St Peters NHS Trust (Three Year Term of Office)

Representative: Councillor M Adams

(Councillor S Whyte was also nominated as the Council's representative on this Trust. The nominations of Councillors Adams and S Whyte were put to the vote and Councillor Adams received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed)

(5) Basingstoke Canal JMC

Member Representative: Councillor S Lewis

(Councillor M Harnden was also nominated as the Council's Member representative on this JMC. The nominations of Councillors Harnden and Lewis were put to the vote and Councillor Lewis received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed)

Deputy Representative: Councillor J Gracey

(6) Chertsey Almshouses Charity

Representative: Mr M East
Deputy: Councillor M Nuti

(7) Chertsey Chamber of Commerce

Member Representative: Councillor D Cotty

Deputy Representative: Councillor M Willingale

(8) Chertsey Combined Charity (Four Year Term of Office)

Representative: Councillor S Dennett

The appointment of a representative to serve for one year, preferably from Addlestone wards, was deferred.

(9) Chobham Common Liaison Group

Representative: Councillor I Mullens

(10) Community Safety Partnership

Representative: Councillor J Furey

(11) Egham Chamber of Commerce

Member Representative: Councillor A Balkan

(Councillor S Williams was also nominated as the Council's representative on this Committee. The nominations of Councillors Balkan and Williams were put to the vote and Councillor Balkan received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed)

Deputy Representative: Councillor N Prescott

(Councillor R King was also nominated as the Deputy representative on this outside body. The nominations of Councillors Prescott and R King were put to the vote and Councillor Prescott received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed).

(As stated in the Minute on Declaration Of Interest above, Councillor Adams declared an interest and left the room for the consideration of the two Egham Chamber of Commerce appointments).

(12) Egham United Charity (Four Year Term of Office)

Representative: Mrs D Brickell

(13) Fair Oaks Airfield Joint Consultative Committee

Member Representative: Councillor J Broadhead

Deputy Representative: Councillor R Edis

(Councillor J Olorenshaw was also nominated as the Deputy representative on this Committee. The nominations of Councillors Edis and Olorenshaw were put to the vote and Councillor Edis received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed)

(14) Frank Muir Memorial Field

Councillors E Gill, L Gillham and M Harnden

(15) Heathrow Community Noise Forum

Member Representative: Councillor C Howorth

Deputy Representative: Councillor J Sohi

(Councillor R King was also nominated as the Council's Deputy representative on this Forum. The nominations of Councillors R King and J Sohi were put to the vote and Councillor Sohi received the greater number of votes and was duly appointed)

Community Representative: Mr P Conway

(16) Joint Committee of the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (Patrol)

Representative: Councillor D Anderson-Bassey

(17) Runnymede Access Liaison Group (RALG)

Representatives: Councillor D Clarke and Councillor M Harnden

(18) Runnymede and Spelthorne Citizens' Advice Bureau Management Committee

Member Representative: Councillor S Dennett

Deputy Representative: Councillor R Bromley

(19) Runnymede Open Awards Centre – Formerly Duke of Edinburgh’s Award

Member Representative: Councillor T Gracey

Deputy Representative: Councillor S Walsh

(20) Sir William Perkins Foundation (Three Year Term Of Office)

Member Representative: Councillor M Harnden

(21) South East England Employers

Member Representative: Councillor M Maddox

Deputy Representative: Councillor L Gillham

(22) South East England Councils

Member Representative : Councillor N Prescott

Deputy Representative: Councillor T Gracey

(23) Staines Shopmobility

Representatives: Councillors M Harnden and R King

(24) Surrey Museums Partnership

Member Representative: Councillor M Harnden

Deputy Representative: Councillor J Wilson

(25) Sustainability and Transformation Plan Stakeholder Reference Group

Member Representative: Councillor T Burton

Deputy Representative: Councillor N King

(26) Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Strategic Partnership Board

Member Representative: Councillor M Willingale

Deputy Representative: Councillor P Snow

(27) Voluntary Support North Surrey (Three Year Term of Office)

Representatives: Councillors D Clarke and N Prescott

(Councillor R King was also nominated as a Council representative on this outside body. The nominations of Councillors Clarke, Prescott and R King were put to the vote and Councillors Clarke and Prescott received the greater number of votes and were duly appointed)

(28) Virginia Water Community Association

Member Representatives: Councillors D Coen and J Hulley

40. URGENT ACTION – STANDING ORDER 42

Proforma 975 detailing action taken after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee at that time was noted by the Committee. Approval by email had been given by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at that time to the urgent action and a copy of the signed and dated proforma would be forwarded to officers by them when physically possible.

41. QUARTER 4 2020/21 AND END OF YEAR PROJECT PORTFOLIO REPORTING

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 noted a report providing them with a progress update on the delivery of the Council's Project Portfolio up until the end of quarter 4 and the year end for 2020/21. The Committee noted project updates for the thirteen grade A and ten grade B projects ranging from the initiation to execution stages, the key project achievements over the fourth quarter of 2020/21, the project execution delays highlighted and the corrective actions in place to address them, the pipeline projects that had been approved in service area business plans for delivery in 2021/22 and a status update on grade C projects. The Committee also noted a Project Portfolio Dashboard which provided a summary of the projects. The Committee noted that project tolerances were different for each project.

The Committee was pleased to note that the project on the new parking system for Runnymede Pleasure Grounds had been delivered and that income levels had increased. Corporate priorities and a new delivery date for the Corporate Business Plan 2021-2025 project were being reconsidered following the impact of the pandemic. A report on the Barbara Clark House project would be submitted to the Committee's June meeting. The implementation of the Community Services partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council remained on track.

Officers were working on a report on proposals for the Chertsey Depot which it was hoped would be submitted to Members in the summer of 2021 and would report to Members on issues related to traffic management in Egham, the parking of contractors' vehicles and the sale of a site in the area.

RESOLVED that –

- i) project updates for the thirteen grade A and ten grade B projects, ranging through the initiation to execution stages, be noted;**
- ii) key project achievements over the fourth quarter of 2021 be noted;**
- iii) the project execution delays highlighted and the corrective actions in place to address them be noted; and**
- iv) pipeline projects approved in service area business plans for delivery in 2021/22 be noted.**

42. FUTURE USE OF MODERN.GOV

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 report proposing that a joint Digital Services/Democratic Services project be undertaken to procure and install Modern.Gov, a paperless meeting app that supported good governance and transparency and delivered streamlined co-ordination of meetings and documents.

Modern.Gov was used by a number of other Surrey local authorities and by a range of other public bodies. Its use in Runnymede would assist in future -proofing the Council in the event of any future local government reorganisation. Feedback had been obtained from neighbouring local authorities who currently used Modern.Gov who reported that it provided good functionality and enabled different strands of work currently recorded in different locations to be centralised into one location, which would improve efficiency. It would be more user friendly for residents accessing the Council's website and provided the ability to easily view and annotate Committee papers, navigate through historic agenda items and easily synchronise future meetings to calendars.

The potential future use of Modern.Gov had been discussed at the Service and Digital Transformation Member Working Party and whilst Members in attendance supported future use of Modern.Gov, queries had been raised about costs and whether the Council should self-host it or it should be cloud hosted.

Regarding the cost of the system, the Capital Programme contained a budget for the purchase and installation of the system and the capital cost could be met from that budget. The Medium Term Financial Strategy included provision for the additional revenue costs associated with the purchase and the shortfall in that revenue provision could be met from anticipated savings from other smaller systems. Officers had considered self-hosting and cloud hosting and had concluded that cloud hosting would be appropriate for the Council's needs and the Committee agreed with that course of action noting that cloud hosting would be more secure from a business continuity perspective.

The Committee noted the anticipated costs of the purchase, implementation and ongoing maintenance of the system. The Committee approved the procurement route, the proposed provider and contract length as set out in the report. The contract would be for five years with the option to exercise two additional 12 month extensions. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to use the Crown Commercial Services Back Office Software Framework (RM6194) for cloud computing services. This framework permitted the direct award of a contract to the provider specified in the report.

It was anticipated that Modern.Gov would lead to wider efficiencies which would generate future savings for the Council. It was compatible with the Council's new website provider and with the current IT equipment supplied to Runnymede Members. A 6 to 9 month lead in time would be required and it was agreed that officers would focus on the project from summer 2021 with a view to its implementation in January 2022.

Modern.Gov training would be provided for Democratic Services officers. Regarding Modern.Gov training for Members, it was agreed that officers would arrange for a demonstration on Modern.Gov to be given to Members if Members considered that company website advice on the use of Modern.Gov did not provide sufficient information. It was also agreed that structured training would be provided for Members on Modern.Gov which would consist of a series of packages.

While no Member could be compelled to receive agenda electronically, the implementation of Modern.Gov would drive the move towards paper-light agenda and would make a positive contribution to the Council's Climate Change Strategy. It was agreed that the Constitution Member Working Party would consider whether to recommend that the part of the Council's Constitution relating to provision of printed copies of the Council's Constitution to certain Members should be amended.

RESOLVED that -

the procurement of Modern.Gov be approved using the Crown Commercial Services RM6194 Back Office Software cloud computing services framework to make a direct award to the provider specified in the report with the implementation project to commence in Summer 2021 ahead of a go-live target date in January 2022.

(The meeting ended at 9.06 p.m.)

Chairman