



Council Meeting

24 10 24 - 7.30 pm

Supplementary Summons

Page

9. Recommendations from Committees

a) Medium Term Financial Strategy - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 17 October 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#).

The Committee noted that the financial forecast contained in the report would be subject to revisions, as some information such as the local government financial settlement, were awaited. Some of the proposed growth items within the Strategy were also subject to further reports to the relevant committees, such as the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025/26

There was discussion about the proposed depot works. The figures within the Strategy were estimates, pending the conclusion of the scoping works that were currently taking place. A report would be considered by the Community Services Committee in due course.

Members asked about the benefits likely to be delivered under the Corporate Debt and Financial Inclusion pilot which included an example of a tenant supported to remain in their home and apply for a raft of benefits, avoiding potential eviction and enabling debt to be reduced.

Members discussed the potential opportunity for the restructuring of debt and any consequential discount for early repayment, which needed to be considered in light of the current level of internal borrowing. Further work was being undertaken to model the impact of any repayments.

Members were reminded of upcoming training opportunities, all of which were open to all councillors.

It was **resolved** that the Council be recommended to approve the Medium-Term Financial Strategy including:

- 1) The approval of the growth items as set out in Appendix 4 of the officer's report, for inclusion in the budget for 2025/26, to be presented to the January 2025 Corporate Management Committee, subject to the processes set out in section 5 of the report being

undertaken.

- 2) The transfer of £337,000 to the Local Plan Reserve to support preparation of the Local Plan review over the next 3 years.

b) Calendar of meetings - 2025/26 municipal year - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 17 October 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#).

It was **resolved** that the Council be recommended to approve the proposed calendar of meetings.

c) Update on recruitment for an Independent Remuneration Panel and Members' Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 17 October 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#).

The Committee agreed that the proposed approach to establishing a new Independent Remuneration Panel was pragmatic, and that it hoped that work on recruiting panel members could start as soon as possible. It was confirmed that preparatory benchmarking work had already been started, in order to expedite the review as much as possible. Members were reminded of the importance of promoting the opportunity to join the panel when the role was advertised again.

It was **resolved** that the Council be recommended to:

- 1) Withdraw the existing Members' Allowances Scheme with an end date of 31 March 2025 inclusive.
- 2) Agree the provisions of the current Members' Allowances Scheme (subject to any subsequent necessary and practicable amendments that may come forward in the intervening period), including an uplift to basic and special responsibility allowances commensurate with the staff pay award (but not including any lump sum provisions or similar), for 2025/26 with an implementation date of 1 April 2025 inclusive.
- 3) Delegate authority to the Corporate Head of Law and Governance to implement the 2025/26 Members' Allowances Scheme to give effect to the above, and undertake any necessary measures to do so (such as advertising it in a local newspaper, authorising the recovery of payments made, etc).
- 4) Request officers bring forward, for members' consideration, a revised financial offer and recruitment process for an Independent Remuneration Panel.

[Councillor Gracey did not vote on this item or the previous item (Calendar of meetings – 2025/26 Municipal Year) because he was not present for the entirety of the items.]

d) **Member Working Parties - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee**

6 - 12

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 17 October 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#).

There was a debate over the co-leaders' proposals.

Some members felt that discontinuing the Regeneration and Major Projects Member Working Party would be disadvantageous in the context of member involvement in reviewing and being aware of proposals from external partners. A contrary view was expressed, highlighting the Council's ability to arrange ad-hoc member briefings as and when matters required member input or awareness. It was also suggested that a proposal to commission focused task and finish groups may be forthcoming in due course.

Concerns were raised on the suspension of the Property and Assets Task Force, pending a review of arrangements by the Constitution Member Working Party. It was suggested that the Council's portfolio of properties required detailed and regular member oversight and that suspending its meetings was an unduly risky approach to take, particularly in the context of the Non-Statutory Best Value Notice. It was contested that the task force had itself been the cause of delays to time sensitive matters which it was felt had put the Council at a commercial disadvantage. It was therefore stated by some members that the Corporate Management Committee should be reviewing issues directly.

Concerns were raised by some members who stated that the proposals represented an overall reduction in councillor engagement.

The Committee noted that, pending the outcome of the Council's meeting on 24 October 2024, member working parties would be able to begin meeting shortly after. It was hoped that the review of working parties by the Constitution Member Working Party would result in a more agile system in 2025/26.

Officers would be presenting updated constitutional provisions for the Council's consideration at its meeting on 24 October 2024.

It was **resolved** that the Council be asked to agree:

- 1) The proposals put forward by the co-leaders, as detailed in the officer's report, i.e.:
 - a) The Constitution and Climate Change Member Working Parties to continue in accordance with their current remits.
 - b) The remit of the Service Review, Communications and Transformation Member Working Party be revised to focus on Digital Transformation.
 - c) The discontinuation of the Regeneration and Major Projects Member Working Party.
 - d) That the Property and Assets Task Force be held in abeyance

pending a review of its functions by the Constitution Member Working Party, and the completion of any necessary Constitutional matters via the Corporate Management Committee and the Council.

- 2) Politically proportional membership arrangements for the agreed member working parties, on the basis of seven members per working party.
- 3) That the Corporate Head of Law and Governance be authorised to make further changes to Runnymede's provisions in relation to member working parties, in consultation with the chair and vice-chair of the Corporate Management Committee, should unforeseen matters arise during the course of the remainder of the municipal year.

The Committee requested that officers prepare amended member working party constitutional provisions for the Council's consideration, taking into account the recommendation of the Corporate Management Committee and any other proposed adjustments that officers feel are required to facilitate the smooth operation of the Council's member working parties for the remainder of the municipal year.

Update following the Corporate Management Committee on 17 October 2024

Revised draft constitutional provisions, in relation to member working parties and task forces, are attached for the Council's consideration. The draft wording is shown using tracked changes in the attached document.

Officers have calculated political groups' entitlement to seats on the member working parties, on the basis of seven members per working party (21 seats in total):

- Runnymede Council Alliance group – 13 seats
- Conservative group – 7 seats
- Independent group – 1 seat

Additional officer recommendations

The Council is asked to:

- 1) Consider and agree updates to Section 3a of the Council's constitution.**
- 2) Agree the allocation of seats on member working parties.**
- 3) Note that group leaders are able to make appointments to member working parties.**

14. Recommendations from Committees

a) Addlestone One Update - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members as part of an exempt document pack for the 17 October 2024 Corporate

Management Committee.

The Committee considered proposals relating to specific tenancies in the Addlestone One development. The Committee was mindful of the need to ensure that Addlestone One retained a complementary range of offerings, in order to safeguard it as a locally valuable facility. Specific consideration was given to the risks and alternative options highlighted within the officer's report.

It was noted that many town centres, particularly those with a focus on leisure offerings, had been facing challenging conditions because of the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing rises in the cost of living.

It was **resolved** that the Council be asked to:

- 1) Grant a new lease on the terms set out in the officer's report, subject to the Assistant Chief Executive (Section 151) being satisfied with the trading estimates and other financial data they require being presented by the tenant detailed in the officer's report.
- 2) Agree a capital contribution for the amount set out in the officer's report, to be drawn from the existing capital provisions, to facilitate the transaction subject to necessary permissions being obtained.
- 3) Delegate to the Assistant Chief Executive (Section 151), in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Corporate Management Committee, the ability to agree various terms outlined in the officer's report, to enable the transaction to be delivered.
- 4) Delegate to the Assistant Chief Executive (Section 151), in consultation with Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Management Committee, the ability to vary the terms of the new lease for the area shown in Appendix C, in line with the Heads of Terms outlined in the officer's report, subject to ensuring that it achieves best consideration reasonably obtainable in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3. Member Working Parties

General Terms of Reference

3.1 Member Working Parties and Task Forces (MWP&TFs) are not Committees and have no decision-making powers. Officers may not act upon them without the authority of the relevant Committee, Sub-Committee, or authorised Officer. However, they can fulfil an important research and advisory function.

3.2 The Council has a number of MWP&TFs which are attended by Councillors and Lead Officers. Their work informs the service Committees and focuses on those issues which are essential in delivering the Corporate Plan.

3.3 Each MWP&TF will operate in accordance with its terms of reference, as set out at the end of this section.

3.4 Each MWP&TF will agree an annual programme of work, to be drafted by the Lead Officer(s), in accordance with its terms of reference, ~~at the start of Municipal Year.~~

3.5 ~~There will be up to 9 Members on each MWP&TF, with the exception of the Property and Assets TF which shall have 6 members.~~ All MWP&TFs will broadly reflect the political composition of the Council as a whole.

3.6 Any Member may attend a MWP&TF as a non-member and participate in discussions, in a non-voting capacity, with the agreement of the chair. Substitutions are permitted in accordance with the principles set out in Standing Order 22.

3.7 ~~All Members (including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) are expected to serve on one MWP&TF.~~ Each MWP&TF will elect its chair at the first meeting of the municipal year.

3.8 Each MWP&TF will have at least one lead officer, all meetings will have a formal agenda and will be clerked, with notes taking the form of action points. Documents being considered by the MWP&TFs, and the notes thereof will be made available to all Councillors, Lead Officers and the Council's Senior Leadership Team. Any papers circulated in advance are to go through the Democratic Services Officer servicing that meeting.

3.9 Each MWP&TF will be scheduled to take place ~~four times per year as appropriate,~~ with ~~additional meetings arranged as an exception should the pre-agreed programme of work require it~~ Each MWP&TF will agree its programme of work at the first meeting of the municipal year. Each chair may also call additional meetings but may only do so, having consulted the MWP&TF and the Lead Officer(s) on workload and service capacity to deliver the necessary preparatory work for such meetings.

3.10 MWP&TFs will, by default, take place remotely but can be held in-person, or as a hybrid arrangement by request of a majority of MWP&TF members.

3.11 Cancellation of a meeting can only take place with the agreement of the MWP&TF chair and lead officer.

3.12 Meetings of any MWP&TFs shall be held in private, and in the unlikely event of any publicity and communications with members of the public, it must be made clear that the responsibility for the relevant decisions lies with the relevant Committee, Sub-Committee, or authorised Officer.

3.13 ~~The Leader and Deputy Leader of~~The Co-Leaders or other political leadership of the Council, Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons of Committees, and for certain civic purposes the Mayor, will remain as the official spokespersons~~men~~ for the purposes of press releases etc.

3.14 Unless otherwise stated, all meetings to be arranged to start at 7:30pm~~and normally are held on MS Teams. The meeting time can be varied by arrangement through the appropriate Democratic Services Officer and with the agreement of the majority of MWP&TF members.~~

Specific MWP&TF terms of reference

Climate Change Member Working Party

Membership

7 members of the Council

Background

In January 2022, the Council committed to tackling climate change and adopted a target to achieve operational 'Net Zero Carbon' emissions from its services and operations by 2030. In October 2022, the Council adopted its Corporate Business Plan and supporting corporate strategies for the 2022-2026 period. This included the Council's overarching Climate Change Strategy. Within this document, Runnymede's 2030 mission statement is set out which is as follows:

To make an effective and lasting positive impact on Runnymede's climate and environment, and to work with our residents, community groups, stakeholders, and partners in order to achieve exacting environmental standards by 2030.

The Council's mission:

- To deliver Carbon Net Zero for Council operations by 2030.
- To align climate change actions and environmental improvements with economic gain. We will promote and maintain a balanced approach to ensure that our actions are both environmentally and financially sustainable. We will do this by supporting our local economy wherever possible.
- To promote the principles of the circular economy (take, make, use, repair, reuse) and decouple from the linear economy (take, make, use, throw) to minimise Carbon emissions and waste, reduce environmental damage and increase biodiversity and health.
- To merge our procurement strategy with technology to create effective solutions to deliver strategic aims.
- To drive biodiversity net gain and protect our natural assets.

The Council's Climate Change Strategy also supports that the Council will monitor Runnymede's progress towards the national target of Net Zero by 2050.

Purpose of the Climate Change Member Working Party

1. The overarching purpose of the Working Party is to support the delivery of the Council's Mission Statement as set out in the Runnymede Climate Change Strategy. This will include consideration of all aspects of the Council's operations; to better understand the obstacles faced in achieving the Council and Borough net zero targets, and developing reasonable options to overcome them.

Functions of the Climate Change Member Working Party

1. To assist in the formulation of a realistic, measurable and deliverable Climate Change Action Plan for the Council, and any future iterations of it, together with the monitoring of the targets which the Action Plan sets.
2. To consider the implications of relevant new or emerging policy/guidance produced by the Government and other relevant organisations which may impact the Council's ability to meet its net zero commitments. This may include considering draft proposals and assisting in formulating appropriate consultation responses, and considering how new policy should be reflected in the Council's own strategies and proposals.
3. For members of the Working Party to act as 'climate change' champions by leading by example and advocating action on climate in recognition of the fact that the Council has an important community leadership role to play regarding the 'climate change' agenda.
4. To identify areas for further research and invite presentations, workshops and discussions with experts as appropriate to help inform the Council's policies and actions in response to climate change.
5. To assist in the formulation of a Behavioural Change Strategy which will identify key areas in which the Council could support its communities in responding to the threats of climate change and reach the Borough's 2050 net zero target. This will include consideration of the best ways of engaging with key partners including Government departments, the Environment Agency, Surrey County Council, local businesses, residents and young people to meet the Borough's net zero commitments.
6. To make recommendations to the relevant committees or other organisations that would help to achieve the Council's net zero commitments.

Constitution Member Working Party

Membership

7 members of the Council

Context

The Council is legally required to create and maintain a constitution, which sets out the manner in which it will operate, as well as various codes of conduct, codes of practice and operational rules regarding the conduct of meetings. The creation of a Member Working Party to review this will enable Member input into this process, which underpins the effective operation of the Council.

The Role of the Constitution Member Working Party

1. Receive and consider requests and recommendations (as appropriate) from ~~the Monitoring Officer, Members,~~ the Council or Committees, or the Monitoring Officer to review specific parts of the Constitution;
2. To receive guidance or reports (as appropriate) on the implications of new legislation.
3. To review areas in the Constitution to ensure that they are complete, accurate, up to date, clear, lawful and fit for purpose
4. To review the Scheme of Delegation to officers.
- ~~5. To receive and consider recommendations on proposed amendments and improvements from the Monitoring Officer, Members, the Council or Committees;~~
- ~~6.5.~~ To keep under review Codes of Conduct relating to Member and Officer conduct.
- ~~7.6.~~ To make recommendations on proposed amendments to the Constitution to the Council, ordinarily via the Corporate Management Committee.

Property and Assets Task Force – in abeyance pending review

Context

RBC has a property portfolio worth over £1billion. The portfolio comprises:

- Operational assets important for the delivery of services and community facilities
- Commercial assets both in and out of the Borough which bring in much needed revenue to fund services
- Town centre assets (Addlestone One and Magna Square) important to the vibrancy of our towns but also commercial and residential assets in their own right and important revenue earners

Some of our assets are managed through three companies wholly owned by RBC; RBCI, RBCS, RBC Heatco. Of necessity, there are separate governance arrangements in place to manage the affairs of the Council's companies and this will not form part of the role of the Task Force.

The maintenance and enhancement of income streams especially to the General Fund is key to the provision of services as other income streams (Council Tax, Business Rates and Government Grants are limited).

The Role of the Task Force

To provide oversight of:

1. The asset management strategy;
2. To monitor progress on the generation of capital receipts where sales are expected;

3. To oversee income generation from the Council's commercial assets including Addlestone One and Magna square and to seek to maximise lettings income across these developments, keeping vacancies to a minimum;
4. To consider new opportunities e.g. re-gearing of leases, potential disposals etc;
5. To oversee projects to maintain and enhance operational assets such as the Civic Offices
6. To understand both risk and commercial opportunity relating to the Council's commercial property portfolio
7. To have oversight of the maintenance and enhancement of operational assets including the Civic Offices, depot and community hall
8. To oversee major refurbishment and/or remedial projects involving Council assets such as the Addlestone One cladding project
9. To explore ways in which the asset base of RBC might help generate further income for the General Fund and/or capital receipts.

N.B In all matters the Task Force will act an advisory body to the Corporate Management Committee and will make regular reports incorporating recommendations accordingly.

Composition:

The Task Force will comprise five to six members.

The value and requirement for ongoing work by the Task Force will be reviewed at the beginning of the next Municipal Year.

~~Regeneration and Major Projects Working Party~~

~~There will be 7-9 members of the Working Party which is expected to meet 4 times within the Municipal Year.~~

- ~~1. To receive reports on use of the Council's Shared Prosperity Fund in relation to economic development~~
- ~~2. To receive reports on the potential for town centre regeneration and to recommend actions in pursuance of this objective to Corporate Management Committee~~
- ~~3. To receive reports twice a year on town centre performance including Council owned commercial property.~~

~~Note: the performance of Addlestone One and Magna Square (developments owned by the Council) is to be reported regularly to the Property and Assets Task Force but there will be a role for this Working Party in the context of the health of town centres as a whole).~~

- ~~4. To receive reports on key external projects which have a bearing on the regeneration and economic prosperity of Runnymede including:

 - ~~• The River Thames Scheme~~
 - ~~• Development of Heathrow airport (and other airports where relevant).~~~~

- ~~• Surface and rail access to Heathrow~~
 - ~~• Completion of the Esso pipeline project~~
- ~~5. To act as the conduit for maintaining and enhancing relations with the business sector including Chambers of Commerce and town teams.~~
 - ~~6. To guide the development of business awards (begun in May of this year) and the annual event.~~

Service Review, Communications and Digital Transformation Member Working Party

Membership

7 members of the Council

Context

~~The Council is a complex body delivering a wide range of services, both statutory and discretionary, to its residents, communities, local business and other stakeholders. Effective communication is a key part of ensuring that all of these stakeholders are able to engage with the Council and have access to relevant information. Effective internal communication supports the operation of services through the sharing of information, policies and procedures.~~

Digital Transformation supports the delivery of Council functions through technological advances, ensuring that efficient, effective and value for money ICT systems are in place. ~~This is a constantly evolving area of work, with competing demands and priorities.~~

~~The Council also has an on-going programme of Service Reviews, as part of a continuous improvement loop, to provide challenge and seek out areas for improvement, whether that be more efficient service delivery, reduction in costs or income generation through business development.~~

The role of the Service Review, Communications and Digital Transformation Member Working Party

- ~~1. Consider areas for improvement in the Council's Communication strategy, commenting on policy proposals, and making recommendations to Corporate Management Committee~~
1. Continue Review implementation of the digital transformation programme to create more resource capacity, become less reactive and more proactive e.g. e-invoicing, O365 deployment, web functionality, hybrid meetings
2. Monitor delivery progress against the digital transformation programme including hardware refresh, website development and cyber security
- ~~3. Receiving the output of Service Reviews for consideration and make onward recommendations to the appropriate Committee~~
- ~~4. Monitor progress of the Service Review Programme~~
- ~~5. To ensure the Working Party's programme of work is aligned with actions and initiatives within the Corporate Business Plan~~

~~6. This MWP has previously also reviewed project portfolio reports prior to presentation at CMC and reviews the corporate KPI set on a Quarterly basis. Going forward, the dashboards for project portfolio and cKPIs will continue to be published to the Members Team area. Queries from members should be directed to the appropriate Service Chair and these will then be picked up by the MWP Chair to bring to the next MWP meeting for discussion.~~