



# Corporate Management Committee

Thursday, 23 June 2022 at 7.30 pm

Council Chamber, Runnymede Civic Centre,  
Addlestone

## Members of the Committee

Councillors: T Gracey (Chairman), C Howorth (Vice-Chair), M Cressey, L Gillham, J Gracey, M Heath, N King, R King, I Mullens, M Nuti, D Whyte and M Willingale

In accordance with Standing Order 29.1, any Member of the Council may attend the meeting of this Committee, but may speak only with the permission of the Chairman of the Committee, if they are not a member of this Committee.

## AGENDA

- 1) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- 2) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Mr B Fleckney, Democratic Services Section, Law and Governance Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425620). (Email: [bernard.fleckney@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:bernard.fleckney@runnymede.gov.uk)).**
- 3) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on [www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk).

4) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.

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Filming should be limited to the formal meeting area and not extend to those in the public seating area.

The Chairman will make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to the use of social media audio-recording, photography and filming in the Committee meeting.

## List of matters for consideration

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### Part I

#### Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

1. **Notification of Changes to Committee Membership**
2. **Minutes** 4 - 11  

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (Appendix 'A').
3. **Apologies for Absence**
4. **Declarations of Interest**  

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable and non-registrable interests in items on the agenda.
5. **Empowering Committees Strategy** 12 - 30
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11. **Chertsey Depot Site - Proposal for Refurbishment** 80 - 136
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# Agenda Item 2

Runnymede Borough Council

## **Corporate Management Committee**

Thursday 26 May 2022 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the Committee present: Councillor T Gracey (Chairman), C Howorth (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan (Substitute, in place of Cllr M Willingale), M Cressey, L Gillham, J Gracey, N King, R King, I Mullens, M Nuti and D Whyte

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor M Heath.

In Attendance: Councillors A King and S Williams.

### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Heath.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **Improving Annual Leave Entitlement**

The Committee considered proposals to improve the basic annual leave entitlement of officers to 28 days and, after 2 years, to 31 days to assist recruitment and retention, and give the Authority a more competitive edge over neighbouring Councils. The Committee also reviewed the current arrangements for an additional days leave at Xmas and Banked leave.

The proposals had also been the subject of prior consideration by the HR MWP, CLT and SLT.

The Committee was generally supportive of the proposals which it was hoped would assist recruitment and retention.

The organisational costs of the proposed new leave arrangements would require a supplementary revenue estimate of £14,000 for 2022/23 increasing to £45,000 by 2024/25. was noted. However, the costs were estimated since much depended on the level of labour turnover and it was hoped this measure might reduce labour turnover overall. The Chairman asked that the actual spend against the supplementary estimate provision be tracked by Officers.

For some years, staff had received an additional day's leave at Christmas which altered from year to year in terms of timing and was deducted from their annual leave entitlement. The Committee agreed to give this as an additional day 'free gratis.' For staff who could not take the extra statutory day, they would be allowed to take it at some point in their current leave year or be paid for it (e.g., Refuse staff).

With regard to Banked Leave, Runnymede had a local arrangement called 'Banked Leave. which was originally introduced to enable staff to set aside some leave to take the following year if they were planning to go on a long holiday. At present staff could bank 5 days of their

leave each year for 2 years However, in practice many staff banked and retained this leave, and this had become very expensive when staff left the Authority.

To off-set the costs of bringing in an enhanced leave entitlement, the Committee agreed to cease this practice for new staff and phase it out for existing staff over the next 2 years. to reduce banked leave to 5 days in one year and then to take the remainder in the second year. A Member asked for banked leave to be phased out over a longer period.

From the initial consultation UNISON had expressed concerns over elimination and phasing out of banked leave and its impact on longer serving staff and asked for the phasing out to be done over a longer period than proposed. A further consultation would take place with UNISON following the Committee decision.

HR MWP would review the overall package of staff benefits and also be informed of the impact of new leave arrangements on recruitment and retention.

#### **Resolved that**

- 1. the proposals to improve the basic leave entitlement of officers to 28 days and after 2 years to 31 days, be approved and a supplementary revenue estimate in the sum of £14,000 for 2022/23 increasing to £45,000 by 2024/25 be approved;**
- 2. the additional extra statutory day which employees currently need to deduct from their annual leave entitlement at Christmas be given as an additional day to be taken at the date when CLT determine for all staff except those front-line staff who have to work it. For staff who cannot take the extra day they can either take it as an additional day's leave later in the year or be paid for it as at present; and**
- 3. subject to further consultation with UNISON, the system of banked leave be removed for new starters and phased out for existing staff over 2 years, by requiring staff to take 5 days in year 1 and the remainder in the second year.**

#### **Annual Governance Statement 2021/22**

The Committee received the Annual Governance Statement which provided a review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control and governance framework alongside an action plan for improvements. The Committee was asked to consider the draft Statement and approve it for signature by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The Statement described how the Council had complied with the seven core CIPFA/SOLACE principles of delivering good governance:

Some key improvements to the system of governance had been made this year which were set out in the Statement; notably the undertaking of a review against Cipfa's new Financial Management Code, as reported to Standards and Audit Committee in January 2022, and Member participation in the new Local Audit Forum.

An update on progress against previously identified areas for improvement were set out in the appendix to the Statement alongside any new areas identified for improvement in the coming financial year. The review was an iterative process, ensuring that the Council's system of governance adapted to external change, such as new regulatory frameworks, government guidance and the current risk environment.

The Annual Governance Statement had been considered by the Standards and Audit Committee at its meeting the previous evening and the comments of that Committee were verbally reported. These included additions recommended to Principles D and E to change the frequency of Constitution updates and to add other partnerships. The Committee accepted these additions.

The Chairman was pleased with the significant financial savings achieved on detection of fraud.

Some minority group Members commented on the degree of engagement with them on the Corporate Business Plan prior to report to Committee

**Resolved that:**

**the draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 as reported, be approved with additions recommended by Standards and Audit Cttee to Principles D and E to change the frequency of Constitution updates and to add other partnerships, and the AGS be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive .**

**Use Of Contain Outbreak Management Funding**

The Committee was provided with an update on the use of the Council's Contain Outbreak Management Fund allocation which had been allocated to it by the Government via SCC.

A list of items the funding had been spent to date and where it was still earmarked for was out in the agenda report. Not all of the money had been earmarked for schemes as it was anticipated that additional money might be required for events associated with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and also for potential requirements over the winter period.

The money received by the Council had been spent in accordance with the grant conditions focusing on keeping both the local community and the Council operating throughout the pandemic.

In response to suggestions by some Members, Officers would consider whether time limited funding for Free School Meals and additional support for CAB fit the criteria. Suggestions were invited from Members on potential uses for the remaining monies

**Empowering Communities Strategy**

A final draft of the Empowering Communities Strategy would be circulated by the Chief Executive to Committee Members shortly. The Chairman offered to meet with the Leader of RIRG in advance of the final version being brought to the June meeting of this Committee.

**Appointments to Outside Bodies**

The Committee considered the Council's appointments to outside bodies that were presently due for renewal in accordance with the recently approved new procedure for such appointments.

There were several outside bodies where no nominations had been received and a further nomination round would be undertaken to invite nominations to those outside bodies and a report thereon would be made to the July meeting of this Committee.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) the following appointments be made for the Municipal Year 2022/23 or for longer periods where stated:**

**Addlestone Chamber of Commerce**

Member Representative: Councillor J Broadhead

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*

### **Air Training Corps (No 398 Squadron) Management Committee**

Representative: Mr M Adams

### **Armed Forces Champion**

Representative: Councillor S Walsh

### **Basingstoke Canal JMC**

Member Representative: Councillor S Lewis

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*

### **Chertsey Chamber of Commerce**

Member Representative: *Vacancy*

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*

### **Chertsey Combined Charity (Four Year Term of Office)**

Trustee: Councillor Clarke

Trustee: Mr N Rubidge

### **Chertsey Market and Fairs Charity-Feoffees of Chertsey Market**

Trustee: Councillor Nuti

### **Chobham Common Liaison Group**

Representative: *Vacancy*  
*(Officers to confirm the continued existence of this Group)*

### **Community Safety Partnership**

Representative: Councillor Burton

Representative: *Vacancy*

### **Egham Chamber of Commerce**

Member Representative: Councillor A Balkan

Deputy Representative: Councillor N Prescott

*Councillor S Williams was also nominated as the Council's representative on this Committee. The nominations of Councillors Balkan, Prescott and Williams were put to the vote and Councillors Balkan and Prescott received the greater number of votes and were duly appointed. A named vote was required and the voting was as follows:*

*For Cllrs Balkan and Prescott (7): Cllrs Balkan, Cressey, J Gracey, T Gracey, Howorth, N King and Nuti .*

*For Cllr Williams (4): Cllrs Gillham, R King, Mullens and Whyte.*

**Fairoaks Airfield Joint Consultative Committee**

Member Representative: Councillor J Broadhead

Deputy Representative: Councillor Mann

**Frank Muir Memorial Field**

Councillors E Gill, L Gillham and M Harnden

**Heathrow Community Noise Forum**

Member Representative: *Vacancy*

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*

Community Representative: Mr P Conway

**Henry Smith's Charity**

Trustee: Ms K Reed-Brooke

Trustee: Councillor M Nuti

Trustee: Councillor S Dennett

**Mary Drew Almshouses Charity**

Trustee: Mr P Taylor

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

Representative: *Vacancy*

**Runnymede Access Liaison Group (RALG)**

Representative: Councillor Jenkins

Representative: Councillor Harnden

**Runnymede and Spelthorne Citizens' Advice Bureau Management Committee**

Representative: Councillor Mullens

Representative: Councillor Balkan

**Runnymede Open Awards Centre – Formerly Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

Representative: Councillor Walsh

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*

**South East England Employers**

Member Representative: Councillor Gillham

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*



### **South East England Councils**

Member Representative : Councillor T Gracey

Deputy Representative: Councillor Willingale

### **Staines Shopmobility**

Representatives: Councillor M Harnden

Representative: *Vacancy*

### **Surrey Museums Partnership**

Member Representative: Councillor M Harnden

Deputy Representative: Councillor J Wilson

### **Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Strategic Partnership Board**

Member Representative: Councillor Snow

Deputy Representative: *Vacancy*

### **Virginia Water Community Association**

Representative: *Vacancy*

Representative: *Vacancy*

**ii) a further nomination round be undertaken to invite nominations to those outside bodies where no nominations have been received and vacancies exist.**

### **Strode's Foundation -Appointment of Replacement Trustee**

The Committee considered the nomination received from Cllr Williams to replace Councillor Balkan, as a Trustee on Strode's Foundation following Cllr Balkan's resignation from the Foundation.

**Resolved that:**

**Councillor Williams be appointed to serve as a Trustee on Strode's Foundation for the remaining 3 years of a 4 year term until May 2025.**

### **Urgent Action – Standing Order 42**

Proforma 997 detailing action taken after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee was noted by the Committee

### **Quarter 4 2021/22 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 2021/22. The Committee noted project updates for the thirteen grade A and eleven grade B projects ranging from the initiation to execution stages, the key project achievements over the fourth quarter of 2021/22, 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 and Members asked that instructions regarding accessing the Project Dashboard be sent to all Members

The Committee was pleased to note the progress on many projects and the Chairman of Housing Committee advised the Committee that the St Georges development had been completed.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) project updates for the thirteen grade A and eleven grade B projects, ranging through the initiation to execution stages, be noted;**
- ii) One programme update be noted;**
- ii) key project achievements over the final quarter of 2021/2022 be noted;**
- iii) the project execution delays or issues highlighted and the corrective actions in place to address them be noted;**

**Future Management of Property**

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 paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

The Committee considered a detailed comprehensive report on the future management of one of its properties. The Council had granted a lease to occupy and use the property which was owned by the Council.

The Committee received background information on the historical and current relationship of the Council with the Tenant, the current legal position with the Tenant and 5 options for moving forward with associated risks, and financial and operational implications.

The Committee favoured options 3 and 5 set out in the report as the preferred route moving forward. An Action Plan with timeline and details of any supplementary revenue estimates or other resource requirements required in pursuance of these options would be brought back to Committee for approval in July.

**Resolved that-**

- i) options 3 and 5 be adopted from now as the preferred route;**
- ii) An Action Plan with timeline and supplementary revenue estimates be brought back to Committee for approval in July.**

(The meeting ended at 9.25 pm)

Chairman



## **Empowering Communities Strategy (Chief Executive – Paul Turrell)**

### **Synopsis of report:**

**The Empowering Communities Strategy is part of the forthcoming Corporate Business Plan to be submitted to this Committee in July. This report sets the context, highlighting the main section of the Strategy and inviting Members' comments.**

### **Recommendation(s):**

**Members are asked to comment on the draft Strategy (Appendix A), suggest any additions or revisions for report back to the July meeting of this Committee and approval and sign off by Full Council as part of the Corporate Plan.**

## **1. Context and background of report**

- 1.1 The Empowering Communities Strategy has a number of elements designed to connect with all parts of the Runnymede community. It is a theme taken up by local authorities across the country; perhaps a sign of the possibilities which exist to harness the energies and skills of communities in a post covid world.
- 1.2 The Covid Pandemic proved just how communities can bind together to support individuals and families in a crisis. Runnymede has a vibrant, energetic community with many voluntary and community groups. There is an enormous amount of pride in and commitment to this historic area. This provides an opportunity for the public sector to support and enable communities to own and develop their own initiatives. Many of the community groups that exist require support and sometimes seed corn funding to develop their activities. The Council will seek to support community initiatives and recently has employed a Bid Writer to research and help to bid for community funds from government and other sources. Surrey County Council has also set up a £100m pot to support voluntary groups across the County and it is important Runnymede is in the strongest position possible to exploit these funding opportunities. The priority will be sourcing funding for Council initiatives but, wherever possible, voluntary organisations will be supported or signposted to sources of funding.

## **2. Report**

### **2.1 The Empowering Communities Strategy aims to:**

- a) Ensure that decisions made by the Council are based on sound evidence, particularly through consultation with our residents. The Council will set up a CITIZENS PANEL of up to 800 residents drawn from all sectors of the community to ensure that both qualitative and quantitative analysis can be carried out. Further details will be set out in a report to the Corporate Management Committee later in the year. This will allow a number of focus and interest groups to be established as well as surveys of a statistically representative sample of the

community of 88,000 in Runnymede. We will use new technologies to test ideas and discuss improvement of our services, This will give residents every opportunity to give us their opinions in a way which is convenient to them.

- b) Voluntary groups will be supported wherever possible and encouraged to provide new activities and facilities. One such project recently has been the Holme Farm workshops project which will provide a skills and crafts base (workshops) for learning hobbies and skills and outdoor activities associated with horticulture, understanding nature and encouraging bio-diversity. Similarly, there are groups that provide important communication points between public services and communities, for instance flood prevention groups.
- c) The Government has encouraged communities to consider their own neighbourhood plans. One has already been put in place in Thorpe and others are in the pipeline. This will give local communities more say and control over shaping their communities and the Council will support those that want to put their plans in place.
- d) The voluntary sector plays a key role in many different aspects of Runnymede life but particularly in terms of health and wellbeing. Many people give up enormous amounts of time to devote part of their lives to community activities whether this be cultural activities or sports, scouting or interest groups. This commitment to community must be harnessed and supported if it is to thrive. Where finances permit, the Council will provide seed corn funding or assist with accessing funding from other bodies.
- e) Ensure that the Council presents the best possible case to external stakeholders in preserving, protecting and enhancing the quality of life in Runnymede. There are many key initiatives that impact upon Runnymede and where our residents should and have come to expect us to be strong advocates for their interests. Some of the key issues impacting on the Borough in the next few years will or may include:
  - The River Thames Scheme
  - Development of Heathrow, night flights and flight movements, the road network, skills and jobs
  - Southern Rail access to Heathrow
  - Devolution and a County Deal
  - The Esso Pipeline project

All of these are vital issues to the Borough, and it is important the Council has the capacity to play its role in representing the perspective of Runnymede and its residents.

### **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 A number of elements of the Strategy have financial implications, particularly the Citizens' Panel. Officers will report back on the costs of individual items but the Strategy's objectives will be aligned with the Medium-Term Financial

Plan to ensure that any new initiatives can be fully funded. Individual elements of the Strategy requiring funding will be reported back to this Committee for approval.

**4. Equality implications**

4.1 As each initiative is formulated, an equality impact assessment will be carried out.

(To resolve)

Background papers - none

# Runnymede Borough Council

## Empowering the Community Strategy

Draft: April 2022

Strategy lead:

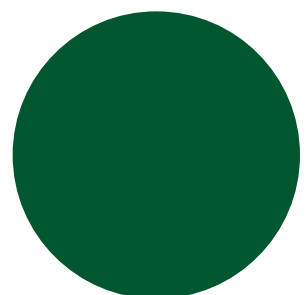
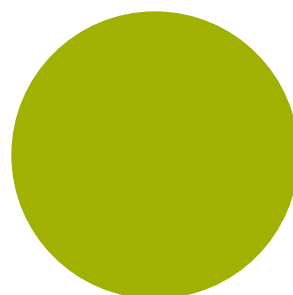
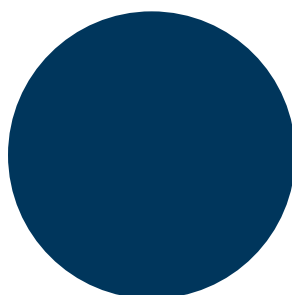
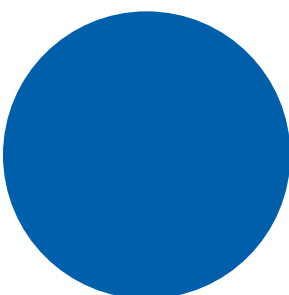
Paul Turrell, Chief Executive





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# Introduction and context

**Many councils talk about ‘empowering their communities’ but the phrase can mean different things in different locations. This strategy aims to set out what is relevant to Runnymede and what we believe will make a difference to the quality of life we seek for our residents.**

We are fortunate enough to have a voluntary sector that is active and highly motivated. This became very clear in the community response to the Covid pandemic but there have been previous events such as the floods of 2014, where community groups played a significant role in the Borough’s response.

Our role will be to ensure that we understand the priorities expressed by our communities, changing needs and requirements, nurturing and enhancing community involvement in everything we do.

There are two other important challenges:

- ▶ To ensure we identify, understand and respond to the needs of our less privileged communities, and

- ▶ Make the most of the synergies between partners to address complex and often multi-faceted challenges.

That is what this strategy aims to do with seven key priorities for the Council over the next five years.

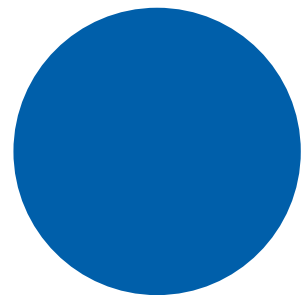
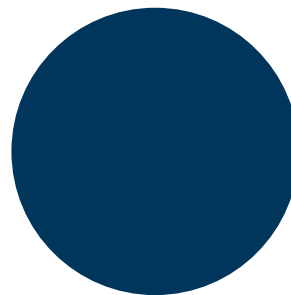
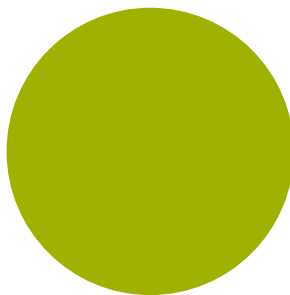
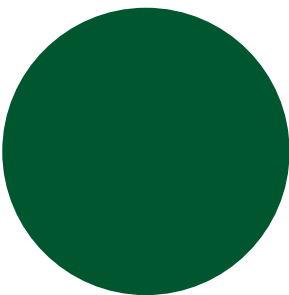
This is one of four outward facing strategies which are being developed as part of the Council’s new Corporate Plan; the other three being concerned with Economic Recovery and Prosperity, Climate Change and Environmental Improvement and Health and Wellbeing. There will also be a section on Organisational Development.

All of these strategies are related and to a large extent, underpinned by our approach to Empowering our Communities.



# This strategy's priorities

- 1** Evidence Based Decision Making.
- 2** Listening to our residents.
- 3** Enabling Communities to help themselves.
- 4** Enabling communities to take control of services or plans for their areas.
- 5** Advocacy-standing up and pressing government and other organisations to meet Runnymede residents' priorities.
- 6** Working effectively with partner organisations.
- 7** Dealing with inequalities. Identifying those pockets of deprivation that exist in Runnymede and where particular cohorts in the population are not benefitting from the relative prosperity of the area. This could be because of skills, poorer housing, less access to education and life chances or physical factors such as poor transport and access to facilities.



# Evidence-based decision making

**The quality of decisions made on behalf of our residents is going to be determined largely by listening to our residents and examining evidence and data that informs our decisions.**

Listening to the views of residents requires a range of techniques. Not all residents are readily accessible and able to give us their opinions. Social media enables us to access harder to reach group and elicit views which were elusive in previous years.

In some cases, it is better to have a dialogue with our residents so that they are informed of the choices and constraints faced by a local authority.

Quantitative analysis can give us an overview of the perception of our services, concerns residents have about their communities and environment and aspirations they may hold. Qualitative research gives us the opportunity for in depth analysis and exploration of new ideas and ways of working with our communities and to examine the views of communities of interest whether that be young people, BME communities, older people or families.

## Our approach

To ensure that we can reach all parts of the community including BME and hard to reach groups we propose to take the following approach:

- ▶ Reinvigorate our Citizens' Panel comprising up to 1,000 residents. This will enable us to conduct general surveys which will give us a statistically significant information and to conduct qualitative research with smaller groups.

The Citizens Panel will be drawn up to be representative of the population as a whole by age, gender (including gender status), ethnicity and location so that all parts of the Borough, and all communities, are represented.

- ▶ Use social media to gauge general opinion. This is the preferred route for many of the younger generations and whilst it may not give a statistically accurate sample, Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor are useful tools to give a guide to public opinion.

- ▶ Where appropriate, set up regular group meetings to help improve services. Examples will include a residents' climate change group to examine those initiatives which will make the most difference, a leisure users' group to encourage health and wellbeing, and flood action groups. We will consult residents on what they would find most useful.

## Better use of data

Another aspect of evidence-based decision making is data and analytics.

There is a library of information available to help inform our approach to key areas of the Council's work including:

- economic development analysis,
- health and wellbeing,
- crime statistics, and
- ward-based data.

We will utilise the availability of this information to improve the quality of our decision making and help inform our dialogue with residents.

There are good examples of initiatives used elsewhere in Surrey and further afield that have had the most effect and could be transferable to Runnymede.

## Case study: Evidence gathering with Housing Service tenants

The Council's Housing Service is responsible for around 3,000 homes located across the Borough.

These properties are occupied by people from our Housing Register and they come from a range of backgrounds and life experiences.

Our housing ranges from Surrey Towers in Addlestone, to Independent Retirement Living sites, blocks of flats and individual houses.

During the past 12 months, the Council's Housing Service has delivered a step change in the range and frequency of its engagement with tenants. This work has been spearheaded by Corporate Head of Housing Andy Vincent and delivered at ground level by recently recruited Engagement Officer Kate Hall.

The development of new policies to govern the service's activities, and its planning for dealing with issues has been interwoven with face to face and online conversations, surveys and evidence gathering events. These have included:

- ▶ A multi-agency estate day to gather information about anti-social behaviour in Addlestone.
- ▶ Coffee mornings with older tenants to ex-



An IRL tenant giving her views to Kate Hall

plain planned improvement work at Independent Retirement Living sites, and to gather feedback.

- ▶ A Pets in the Park event to bring dog owners together in order to survey them and discuss ideas for a forthcoming pets in the home policy.
- ▶ A printed tenants' newsletter has been distributed multiple times. This allows for engagement and requests for input from people who are not regular internet users.

The Council's new website now includes a dedicated consultations section and the Housing service have made significant use of this to gather data digitally which can be easily analysed.

## Actions

1

Re-establish the Citizens' Panel.

2

Develop approaches to consultation and resident participation across all Council services and all communities.

3

Establish residents' focus group to feedback ideas on key areas such as climate change strategy.

4

To ensure that wherever appropriate, reports on development of policies and strategies or projects involving significant expenditure are based on evidence and data which reflects our residents' views.

# Community initiatives and facilities

There are numerous examples from the last Corporate Planning cycle of individuals and groups taking the initiative themselves to improve quality of life in their communities.

▶ A series of initiatives were taken by the Forest Estate residents in Englefield Green where an old community hall has been refurbished to house a number of clubs such as a breakfast and after school club. It is now a hub for social gatherings, enhancing community spirit and cohesion and enabling residents to mix in a way that didn't exist before.

▶ The 'Mens Workshops' proposal in New Haw. With the assistance of the local MP, Dr Ben Spencer, the initiators of this proposal have managed to persuade Defra to gift them a piece of land which will house a number of workshops for crafts, wood and metal working and a number of outside facilities involving horticulture and ecological pursuits. This is the brain-child of a older resident in the Borough and is going to enable many generations to come to take advantage of the opportunities offered.

▶ The establishment of 'The Lit' a trust based in Egham High Street which has taken over the Literary Institute in Egham High Street. As well as housing the Egham Museum, the Lit is developing a range of community and arts facilities which will add much to the town centre offer.

These examples demonstrate the energy and imagination of the community. The Council wants to encourage more of these projects as does the County Council.

We will work on the provision of a Runnymede fund to assist with a range of community initiatives, particularly where there is evidence of support and need from the local community.

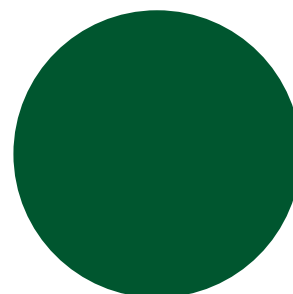
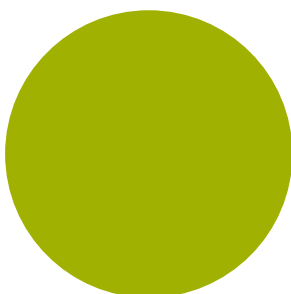
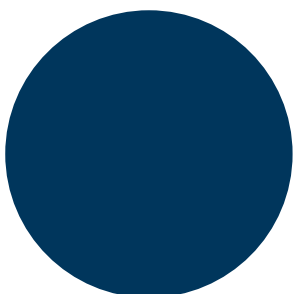
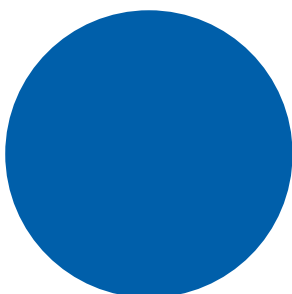


Forest Estate Community Hub volunteers



The Men's Workshops team at Holme Farm

We will also seek to combine sources of funding whether that be from government, charitable or County resources to make the most of grants that become available.





## Best value from grants

There are some elements of work which are best carried out by the voluntary sector, often because voluntary organisations can achieve better value for money or are closer to their communities.

However, it is important, where resources are scarce, that grants to the voluntary sector further the objectives of the Corporate Plan and do so in a way which provides best value for money.

Regular reviews of grants are necessary but this must be balanced against allowing voluntary organisations sufficient time to have impact.

Mature authorities do this through service level agreements that incorporate at least three year funding arrangements and ensure that services provided are still relevant and that organisations are performing well.

## Using our community venues well

During the pandemic, many of the Council's facilities have been used to support NHS efforts with testing and vaccination.

Now is the time to consider making the most of our community estate and consider how we can make more of the facilities we have which include community and day centres.

Some of these facilities have been well used and are valued by the communities that use them whilst some others have not been used to maximum effect.



Chertsey Hall



Eileen Tozer Centre



Hythe Centre



XXXXXX

## Actions

1

Continue to support and nurture the development of community initiatives.

2

Seek to establish a Runnymede Local Initiatives Fund to pump prime community projects and facilitate access to other sources of funding.

3

To review our 'community assets and estate' to ensure we are optimising usage to meet a variety of community needs and interest.

4

To encourage communities which lack key facilities, to form groups to work on community initiatives and self-help schemes.

5

To review all grants to voluntary organisations on a three-year basis with annual assessment of performance.

# Competing for resources

**Whilst Runnymede has been reasonably successful in obtaining grant funding from government, the national position is a competitive one. There is a requirement to have projects ready to go to lever in government resources as soon as new government initiatives are announced.**

Recently, the Council and Surrey County Council were successful in levering in £44m for improvements to the A320.

This vital set of roundabout improvements provides the means by which housing development in the western part of the Borough can take place and this is an integral part of the Council's Local Plan.

To obtain this funding, required months of work on the part of the Council's Economic Development officers and demonstrated that to be successful with small or large projects requires local authorities to be prepared.

The Council recruited a Bid Writer in January 2022, whose sole purpose will be to identify and prepare bids especially for funding for major projects.

The Council's success in dealing with climate change will rest partly on its ability to lever in new resources as it will with 'green' economic development projects.

There will also be opportunities to bid for community funding and we will develop networks to enable a rapid and flexible approach to funding opportunities.

New alliances will be necessary with the private sector particularly in relation to the development of such initiatives as solar farms, developing new sources of sustainable energy, electric vehicle charging, e-bike schemes, and car hire and investment in biodiversity.

Finally, there will need to be close alliance with Surrey County Council on climate change as there will be with neighbouring boroughs and districts.

## Actions

**1**

To seek new opportunities for funding economic infrastructure and climate change initiatives in the Borough.

**2**

To seek new sources of funding for community initiatives.

**3**

To work with neighbouring authorities and Surrey County Council on regional initiatives to secure funding for the County.

**4**

To seek to be prepared and able to bid for resources through the work of the Council's new bid writer but with input from the Strategic Leadership team where appropriate to be prepared to compete for major sources of funding.





# Neighbourhood planning

The Government has encouraged local communities to consider developing neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood plans sit within the framework of Runnymede Borough Council's Local Plan which was adopted in 2019.

There is currently one approved Neighbourhood Plan covering parts of Thorpe.

Others are in progress covering areas of Virginia Water, Englefield Green and Ottershaw.

Neighbourhood plans can have several benefits for local communities by:

- ▶ Setting local policies and design guidelines that help to protect or formulate the character of an area.
- ▶ Helping to grant planning permissions through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders.
- ▶ Providing a vision for an area.
- ▶ Ensuring that local communities have a say in the spending of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to be used for the provision of essential local community facilities.

A fund has been established by the Council to assist with neighbourhood planning and officer time will be available, which is essential in developing the plan. Further resources can be applied for from central government.

Runnymede Borough Council will continue to support all local residents' groups who wish to go down this route.

## Case study: Creating Thorpe's Neighbourhood Plan



Thorpe village

In May 2021, Thorpe's Neighbourhood Plan was approved by the Council.

The community-led initiative was several years in the making and brought together residents with ideas and ward councillors. Consultations were carried out and detailed development work brought it to fruition.

The voluntary group were supported by Council officers with technical advice. The Council also has a role in designating the area which the plan applied to.

To ensure the wider community supported the plan's aims and policies, a referendum was organised by the Council. There was overwhelming support and since 30 June 2021, the plan has been taken into consideration by the Council's Planning Committee when applications for development within its area have been debated.

## Actions

1

To ensure that communities understand the potential benefits of neighbourhood planning.

2

To support communities who want to develop their own neighbourhood plan with financial and professional support.

# Representing residents on the wider stage

**This is a huge area of work for the Council, consuming substantial officer and member time. However, it is vitally important that as a Borough Council we punch above our weight in representing the needs and aspirations of our community. As well as the work we do ourselves, we will seek to work with other boroughs and districts and the county council to produce the most powerful case we can to Government for investment in Surrey.**

## River Thames Scheme

Runnymede is a small area covering only 80 square miles. It is however, economically important housing some of the world's leading companies.

Runnymede has the highest gross value added (GVA) of any of the 11 districts in Surrey. This economic vitality needs to be balanced against the Borough as a place to live ensuring that quality of life remains a top priority too.

There are several important challenges. The top priority is to ensure that the River Thames Scheme (RTS), a flood protection programme to benefit 6,000 homes and businesses in Runnymede goes ahead as quickly as possible.

Runnymede and Surrey County Council have made a major investment in the RTS alongside a substantial government investment in excess of £250m.

Runnymede will play a key role in co-ordinating the planning consents required for the RTS which will be a complicated process.

RTS involves building two diversionary channels on the Thames between Chertsey and Teddington with improvements to a number of weirs and locks.

Both Runnymede and Surrey County Council are working closely with the Environment Agency which is leading the project management of RTS.

Part of the RTS is concerned with making the most of the land close to and adjacent to the three new channels for leisure and recreation, cycleways and pedestrian routes.

We will be working to ensure that optimum use is made of this considerable investment in flood defence.



The Thames at Runnymede

The RTS will take a number of years to deliver and may not be completed until 2030. In the interim, Runnymede will work with partners and community groups to ensure that we put in place the best possible flood prevention measures. We will also work to ensure that community benefits are maximised through:

- ▶ investment in leisure and recreation (some of which may be commercial), and
- ▶ investment in pedestrian footways and cycleways ensuring new and safer routes as an alternative to road use.

## Heathrow Airport Expansion

Following the pandemic, proposals for a third runway at Heathrow are not likely to go ahead now or at least not in the next ten years).

New and scaled down proposals for improving Heathrow including access to the airport are likely to emerge.

It is too early to say what these will be in a post pandemic economic environment but Runnymede is concerned to ensure that:

- ▶ Southern rail access to Heathrow and into

North London remains on the agenda. This is extremely important to our residents and could have significant environmental benefits, providing less reliance on the car for airport journeys as well as easier access to North London.

- ▶ That any new scheme for Heathrow considers the needs of the North Surrey authorities in terms of skills development and jobs, cycleways and footpaths as part of the transport network, improved bus as well as train links and community infrastructure improvements.

## Actions

1

Take a lead role in the implementation of the River Thames Scheme (RTS) in co-ordinating the Development Consent Order. Seek to ensure that RTS brings with it a range of environmental gains and leisure and recreational opportunities. Continue to work closely with Surrey CC as the major funder of the RTS and the Environment Agency as project managers.

2

Ensure that until the RTS is completed, adequate cover is in place for flood emergencies including flood wardens and community groups.

3

Monitor the development of Heathrow to ascertain the potential economic benefits of growth to the Borough whilst evaluating the environmental impact. Reflect our residents' views to government. Heathrow Airports Limited and statutory bodies on important issues such as night flights, noise pollution and surface access.

4

Lobby for a much improved Southern Rail access to Heathrow and beyond into North London.



# Tackling inequalities

**There remains a need to tackle the inequalities which are still apparent in specific parts of Runnymede.**

There are five wards which stand out as needing intervention and support:

- ▶ Addlestone South
- ▶ Addlestone North
- ▶ Englefield Green West
- ▶ Egham Hythe
- ▶ Chertsey St Anns

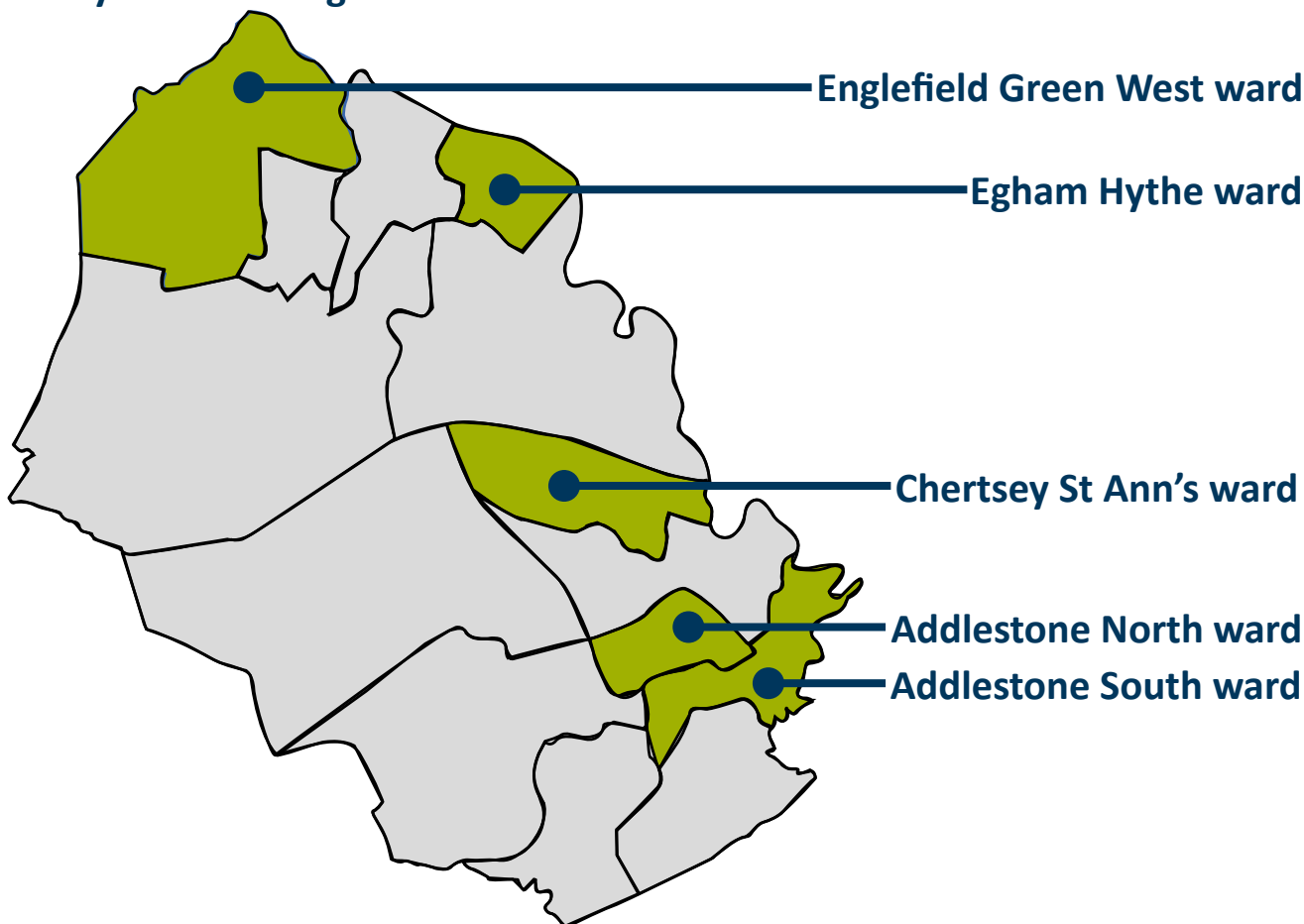
The type of intervention varies between wards. In some cases, it relates to unemployment and/or low-income households. In others housing, access to educational opportunities and transport or lack of facilities are the issues.

The Council will seek to engage with each community and tailor a package of support which meets the needs of the community.

## Actions

- 1** To undertake an analysis of deprivation in the Borough.
- 2** To formulate an engagement strategy with communities in
- 3** To work with other agencies to address challenges identified for individual communities.

### Runnymede borough



# Working with other agencies

**During the pandemic, it was evident that by working together across agencies, the Council could provide more powerful results for the community. It should not just be in times of crisis that such a powerful response can be provided.**

The opportunity exists to forge new and more effective alliances going forward by sharing the vision for our community, acknowledging the impact other agencies are or can have going forward and looking for synergies between our individual actions.

A wide range of bodies deliver community initiatives across our Borough and include:

- ▶ Statutory bodies such as Surrey County Council, schools and trusts, the NHS and other local authorities (we have a fully integrated Community Services 'offer with Surrey Heath Borough Council active now for over three years).
- ▶ The voluntary sector led and co-ordinated by Voluntary Support North Surrey.
- ▶ The business sector especially through programmes of corporate social responsibility.
- ▶ Faith groups which include Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths.

Whilst officers seek to keep in contact with all of these sectors, there is no single forum where the Council can share its ideas and initiatives and invite these groups to share their work, ideas and thoughts around greater collaboration.

## Actions

**1**

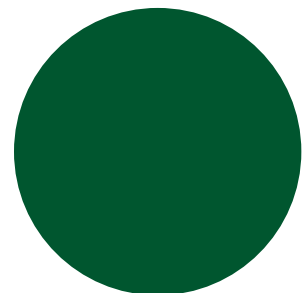
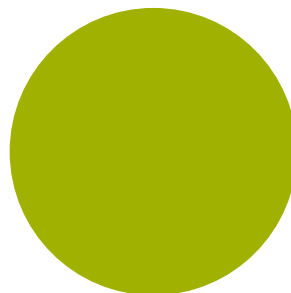
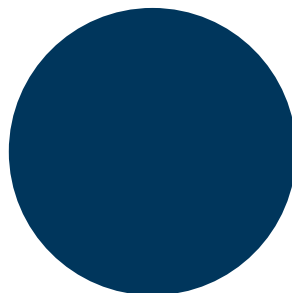
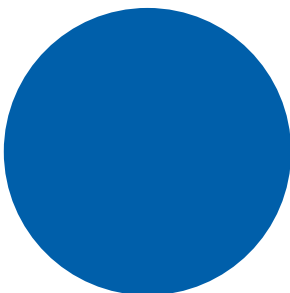
**To establish a forum (to meet twice yearly) to discuss community initiatives, to share findings and seek views on how to enrich our communities.**

**2**

**To invite collaboration on individual projects where there is mutual benefit.**

**3**

**To encourage partner participation in community led projects especially where these are centred around community cohesion, tackling deprivation and encouraging inclusiveness.**





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Publication date: February 2022



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**ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
(Human Resources – Fiona Skene)**

**Synopsis of report:**

**To consider a proposed Organisational Development Strategy for 2022-2026 which will form one of the strands of the Corporate Business Plan**

**Recommendation: That the Organisational Development Strategy at Appendix A be approved.**

**1. Context and Background to report**

1.1 An OD Strategy looks at how an organisation needs to develop over a period of time – what is its vision for the future and how will this vision be realised in practice. In essence the type of Council we would like to be is:-

- Progressive
- Ambitious
- An ‘employer of choice’
- Commercial
- Accessible

The key strands of this strategy are

- People
- Process
- Technology
- Green

The draft OD Strategy is attached at Appendix A.

**2. The Themes of the Strategy**

**2.1. People Theme**

The ‘People’ theme considers the kind of culture we want to develop which is based on being

- ❖ Customer-focussed
- ❖ Performance driven
- ❖ Innovative
- ❖ Passionate
- ❖ Promoting equality and diversity
- ❖ Delivering excellent value for money

The strategy considers how to develop this culture in practice and embed these values within the workforce. The People strand of the OD strategy covers a number of themes including Leadership development, effective performance management, workforce planning, talent sourcing and management, employee motivation and

engagement, and employee well-being. There are a series of actions within each of these themes to facilitate the achievement of these themes into reality. Integral to this is workforce planning and talent sourcing. Workforce planning is a process where changing organisational needs are reflected in the organisation's people strategy to ensure that we have 'the right people with the right skills, in the right roles, at the right time at the right cost...'. The basis to this is analysing what current and future workforce needs are and planning for them rather than reacting on a short term basis. Talent sourcing is explored within the strategy with appropriate actions. An accompanying Talent Management Strategy has been developed and has gone through the HR Members Working Party. It was felt that the OD Strategy should be reported to committee first and be followed by the Talent Management Strategy at the July CMC.

The OD Strategy also covers the issues of employee motivation and engagement and having a Health and Well-being Strategy for the workforce, developed in liaison with Occupational Health.

The Strategy then goes on to cover a Process Theme and a Technology Theme – also key elements in developing the organisation to meet current and future needs.

## 2.2. **Process Theme**

The process theme mainly covers *reviewing services areas periodically* to achieve savings, redesign the mix and range of services delivered as required, streamlining management processes, generating additional income and assuring customer service. The process theme also covers *process improvements, corporate reviews of policies, providing training for staff and Members to ensure full benefit is achieved from investment in IT and the issues around internal decision-making and governance.*

## 2.3. **Technology Theme**

The Technology Theme of the strategy explores the next phase of Digital strategy, building upon the investments made already, continuing to invest in smarter systems, developing a successful approach to hybrid working, and implementing video conferencing.

## 2.4. **A Green Organisation**

Although the Climate Change Strategy covers green issues comprehensively, the Green Theme is also a strand of the OD Strategy. Managers can use logistics to minimise work mileage and a Green Travel Plan and green initiatives will form part of an Employee Green Theme led by the Corporate Head of HR and a small working group of officers.

## 3. **Summary**

3.1 The OD Strategy covers a wide range of themes designed to move the organisation forward over the next 4 years to become the kind of Council the organisation aspires to be. A plan will be developed for the next 4 years with the prioritised objectives identified to ensure a realistic approach is taken to the implementation of the OD Strategy.

3.2 The Committee is asked to approve the OD Strategy.



(To resolve)

**Background papers**

None stated

# Runnymede Borough Council Organisational Development Strategy

2022 - 2026

# Organisational Development Strategy

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# Organisational Development Strategy

## Organisational Development Strategy

### Introduction

The objective of this strategy is to convey the organisational development vision which will enable Runnymede Borough Council to deliver its Corporate Plan and act as the key enabler for staff and councillors to perform their duties to the best of their ability and make Runnymede Borough Council the employer of choice for local people.

What sort of Council do we aspire to be;

- **Progressive**  
Willing to listen to customer needs; willing to change and adapt; in touch with the aspirations of the population
- **Ambitious**  
Willing to develop plans for regeneration of the borough; willing to share services with others to provide sustainable and high quality services
- **To be an employer of choice**  
A place where our staff are committed, happy and part of our journey
- **Commercial**  
Willing to take measured risks in order to create the resources we need going forward
- **Accessible**  
Prepared to invest in new technologies to enhance accessibility to our services

### Key aims of the Strategy

## Organisational Development Strategy



These themes will come together to:

**Support the Council's business** – by understanding the needs of customers, staff, partners, stakeholders and legislation, the Council can deploy effective, agile technology and well-trained staff. This will enhance our ability to change working models which will deliver cost reduction and value for money – with residents' needs at the forefront.

# Organisational Development Strategy

**Lead the Council through change** – by providing a clear framework for the planning and effective governance across the whole Council underpinned with modern transparent policies which support and encourage staff.

**Transform the organisation** – by showing how investments in both staff and technology can eliminate silos inherent in many service areas with legacy systems and traditional ways of working. Through efficient business processes, collaborative working, modern technology, supporting new and better ways of working can deliver efficiencies and improvements.

**Encourage innovation** – by creating a ‘Can Do’ culture setting out the Council’s aspirations for the use of talent management, modern technology, partnership collaboration, ensuring staff are supported in looking at innovative ideas and emerging solutions while at the same time deploying good practice.

**Enhance the digital provision** – through constant review of technology platforms and staffing resources needed to ensure effective adoption as modern technologies emerge that offer opportunities to deliver greater value, better performance, improved scalability, extended availability and are more secure.

## People Theme

### Cultural Change

The culture of an organisation has a major impact on its success so developing the right culture is key to its success.

#### **What do we mean by culture?**

The culture of an organisation could be described as ‘its personality and character.’ Organisational culture is made up of shared values, beliefs, and assumptions about how people should behave and interact, how decisions should be made and how work activities should be conducted. Our Corporate Values are the foundation on which we work and help us to achieve the Council’s overall vision. They are:

- Customer-focused
- Performance driven
- Innovative
- Passionate
- Promoting equality and diversity
- Deliver excellent value for money

At the heart of an organisation’s culture is its people. They are its greatest asset and therefore choosing the ‘right people with the right skills, in the right roles, at the right time and at the right cost’ remains essential to a high performing organisation.

However, culture is not only about employees having the right skills. They also need to ‘buy in’ to the shared values of the organisation and key to this is effective leadership – leaders who set a clear direction of what the organisation is trying to achieve that is realistic and achievable, determine what beliefs and behaviours the organisation values, live them and influence employees to live them too.

***‘Culture is simply a shared way of doing something with a passion’***

In 2019, the Council introduced Leadership and Staff competencies and conducted briefings for all managers and staff on this new competency framework. This was followed by

# Organisational Development Strategy

leadership training on the new performance management framework and briefings for all staff. For managers and supervisors these leadership competencies are

- Strategic Thinking (including commercial awareness)
- Managing and Developing Performance
- Decision Making

For staff the competencies are:

- Building relationships
- Business Development
- Customer Focus
- Organisation Awareness
- Planning and Organising

Managers are recruited and appraised based on these competencies

In 2019 the Council flattened its management structure removing Director roles and created enhanced Corporate Head roles who work together collaboratively in a Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). A strong cohort of able strategic and operational heads now exists to take the Council forward under the leadership of our Chief Executive and new Assistant Chief Executive. This organisational change has been accompanied by a Management Development programme with training streams targeted towards the development needs of each tier of managers covering supervisory management, middle management, and senior managers. This approach is designed to embed the desired leadership culture in managers within the Council.

## What culture do we want the organisation to develop in future?

- Strategic vision based on an assessment of the needs of the community translated into practical operational plans and objectives which are realistic and achievable
- Focussed on a set of key agreed objectives which are costed and affordable
- Evidence-based decision-making
- Efficiency and cost effectiveness achieved by streamlined processes linked to maximising the use of Digital systems
- A culture that listens to its residents and puts the customer first
- Services which work effectively together to improve the customer experience
- A council that works collaboratively with other public services and partners to achieve shared objectives
- An engaged, motivated workforce
- Ambition and innovation tempered by realism
- Commitment to the green agenda

## How do we achieve this?

***‘Shaping your culture is more than half done when you hire your team’***

Successful organisations are shaped by the calibre, skills and motivation of the staff they employ. Therefore, effective recruitment, emotional engagement of leaders and staff within

# Organisational Development Strategy

the organisation, its culture and objectives, and retaining talented staff has a major impact on the organisation's effectiveness. The Council's OD Strategy needs to facilitate the corporate plan of the organisation and have sufficient resourcing to achieve its objectives. Employees are motivated by the ability to achieve tangible results and to receive praise and recognition for these achievements.

***'If you want employees to feel appreciated you need to celebrate their achievements regularly and publicly'***

Making employees feel valued therefore needs to be an underlying feature of this strategy.

At a time when the employment market is booming and the cost of living is rising it might be assumed that pay policy is the main factor in retention but although this is important, recent research by the CIPD identified that although feeling pay was 'fair' mattered, four non-financial factors were also important to employees: -

- The purpose of the organisation and whether they feel inspired by it
- The type of work people do
- The type of career they have.
- How they are treated



The opportunities offered by employers for personal skills development are particularly important to employees of all ages. This was reflected in a survey conducted by HR in 2021.

Reward experts are clear that in terms of a pay strategy in response to increasing cost of living pressures and inflation, employers will generally have to maintain the value of employees' wages relative to the cost of living to enable employees to maintain a reasonable standard of living or suffer staff demoralisation and potential labour turnover. This will mean considering alternative approaches to the current practice of a fixed 2% pay award for everyone once a year. The Council may need to invest more resources in pay and reward as part of financial planning to meet the rate of inflation more closely. However, any inflation related pay rises need to be affordable.

It may require a more flexible approach, for example, analysing market pay rates for the overall workforce and looking at where within the workforce we should consider a higher percentage increase. Greater use of competency-based pay ladders would be more appropriate to reflect progression in terms of the development and application of professional competencies.

Secondly, looking at the overall employee experience and what is offered as a total package to ensure we are appealing as an employer. Setting out for employees an attractive and flexible total rewards package is important and facilitating the opportunity for employees to develop and have a better work/life balance.

Paying attention to overall employee well-being is now also seen as a key element of people strategy in organisations, while maintaining organisational effectiveness.

Research has found that reducing work is not necessarily the way to improving employee well-being, but other factors are considered equally as important:

- Feeling that work is meaningful

# Organisational Development Strategy

- Having good workplace relationships
- And having enough resources and time to complete work

Therefore, looking at how jobs are organised and how employee productivity can be improved by working smarter rather than harder is significant as well as providing the type of flexible working arrangements, which employees expect as a longer-term consequence of the pandemic.

The Council is currently making a substantial investment in modernising its Digital systems across a range of services. This needs to be accompanied by reviewing and streamlining processes to ensure maximum efficiency is achieved and training staff thoroughly when new systems are brought in so they can be used to their full potential. Every effort will be made to provide customers with different options to access council services – web-based, by telephone through Customer Services and face to face (where this is most appropriate). Mystery shoppers and focussed customer surveys for front-facing services may be used, to check that customer service is of the highest standard. An investment will also be made in training staff in customer service skills.

We must never forget that the overall purpose of the organisation is to serve the community, meet their identified needs and ensure that in the behaviour of managers and staff the customer is first and at the heart of what we do. To this end, the Council will consider creating a Citizen's Panel to ensure the voice of the borough is heard.

To make sure that the culture of the organisation fulfils this key purpose, the structure of services will need to be kept under review and the types of skills employed updated to ensure the organisation metamorphosises to adapt to external and internal change drivers. The approach to change will be to analyse the changes needed, plan them, consult and implement change in an emotionally intelligent and practical way. This may increasingly involve more partnerships with other public sector organisations such as the NHS or more shared services with other councils to make the best use of scarce skills or reduce costs.

Therefore, to achieve the type of culture we require as an organisation, the OD Strategy needs to contain the following key themes:

- Leadership Development
- Effective performance management
- Workforce planning – identifying the skills we need currently and in the future
- Talent sourcing, developing skills and managing talent
- Employee motivation, recognition, and engagement
- Employee well-being
- Service Reviews
- Robust Decision Making & Governance
- Modern transparent council policies
- Digital Experience & Smarter systems
- Developing a successful approach to hybrid working
- A green organisation

## Leadership Development

Effective leadership is essential to success in an organisation. Having recently recruited a new Assistant Chief Executive and now having a talented group of Corporate Heads, the Council needs to build imaginatively on this foundation.



# Organisational Development Strategy

At senior level, SLT need to work collaboratively across services and avoid silo behaviours. To achieve this, Corporate Heads need to meet regularly outside the formal framework of SLT itself with away days, joint working on corporate projects, acting as a 'critical friend' providing support on familiar challenges that senior managers face within service areas. They need to provide an example of being corporate in their leadership style, provide clear direction to their service areas and set an example of commitment to the aims and desired culture of the organisation. As part of their regular one to ones and annual appraisal, specific personal development needs can be identified as part of a Personal Development Plan which may include short courses or mentoring/coaching where appropriate. HR should organise mentors or coaches for managers as needed.

Leadership is needed at all levels in the organisation. Therefore the Council has already invested in a Management Development Programme with targeted streams for senior, middle and first-line management to develop their skills which is due to complete in 2023.

Corporate Heads need to identify and encourage talent in their service areas and provide opportunities for these staff to present reports to SLT, committee or Member groups, and participate or lead on localised or corporate projects. Talented staff should have an Individual Development plan, structured training and can participate in the management development programme.



## ACTIONS

- 1. Corporate 'Away days' to be held at least three times a year to encourage innovative and strategic working**
- 2. Corporate Heads to act as a 'Critical Friend' to colleagues meeting informally, building relationships, critiquing reports and working collaboratively on corporate projects**
- 3. SLT form action learning sets to encourage their personal development**
- 4. Personal Development plans should be used for all managers**
- 5. Mentoring or coaching should be provided as needed**
- 6. Corporate Heads should identify and develop talent in their service areas and provide opportunities for development through working on projects and presenting reports to Members and senior management**

## Performance Management

Corporate Heads should develop their Business Plans based on the Corporate Plan, overseen by their Member Working Group, and on the objectives set out in their appraisals. Within the Business Planning process, Corporate Heads should set out realistic and achievable objectives for their service areas, evaluate the resources required to achieve them in terms of both financial and human resources, and recognise any skills development required within their service area which should be identified through a service training plan which is overseen by HR. HR would then analyse the training needs identified across the organisation and develop a three year Corporate Training plan which would then be commissioned. Through the Performance Management Framework, these objectives should be cascaded through employee's annual and six-monthly reviews and monitored through regular one to ones. Managers will use these reviews to discuss with employees their career

# Organisational Development Strategy

aspirations and skills development needs. Their agreed training needs would also be included within the Service Training plan and in a Personal Development Plan.



## ACTIONS

1. Based on the 'Golden Thread principle', Corporate Heads will prepare Service Training Plans based on the Corporate Plan and a limited number of realistic objectives identified by their Member Working Group
2. As part of the preparing the Service Business Plans, each Corporate Head will prepare a Service Training Plan identifying training needs for their service area which will be used by HR to prepare a 3-year Corporate Training Plan
3. All Employees will have a Personal Development Plan

## WORKFORCE PLANNING

Workforce planning is a process where changing organisational needs are reflected in the organisation's people strategy.

***'The right people with the right skills, in the right roles, at the right time, at the right cost...'***

Workforce planning needs to take place at two levels: -

- A broad corporate workforce plan
- Service workforce plans prepared as part of the planning process by senior managers in that service area

The basis of workforce planning is analysing what your current and future workforce needs are and planning for them rather than just reacting to short-term requirements. It is about analysing where the gaps are in the types of staff skills required and making practical plans to close those gaps. The creation of HR Business Partners in HR should help with this process. They will work with service heads to analyse the types of staff they need and advise on how those gaps can be closed either through talent sourcing using the most appropriate methodologies for sourcing the type of staff concerned or through developing those skills internally. A simple workforce plan for that service area can be developed and tangible practical plans made to fulfil those needs. These practical plans need to be updated and monitored.

Plans can include both 'growing your own talent' and sourcing talent from outside the organisation. In terms of 'growing your own talent', a Talent Management Strategy needs to be implemented which sets out the main measures required to do so. This will include senior managers using the performance management framework to identify talent and provide a suitable Personal Development Plan to develop the individual with appropriate training and opportunities for growth and ensuring those opportunities are provided.

In terms of sourcing external talent, these plans may include building relationships with local colleges/universities or schools and marketing the opportunities available in these occupational areas effectively. Consideration could be given to having internships or more

# Organisational Development Strategy

trainee or apprenticeship positions for school or college/university leavers linked to competency-based career grades and a flexible benefits package.



## ACTIONS

1. **HR create a corporate workforce plan**
2. **Service Heads and senior managers in service areas work with HR Business Partners to produce a practical service workforce plan to resolve skills gaps in their service areas**
3. **A Talent Management strategy is developed for the Council**

## TALENT SOURCING

It is estimated that 95% of public sector organisations in the South-East have recruitment difficulties. For 2022, there is a booming jobs market and significant competition for staff particularly in areas of skills shortage. Local government has an image problem and therefore developing more effective marketing strategies to make us 'an employer of choice' is essential to prevent recruitment gaps providing operational issues and demoralising existing staff. For this reason, a new post of Recruitment and Retention Manager will provide additional capacity in HR. This post will research into reasons for leaving and provide imaginative approaches to marketing roles. He/she will work with line managers and HR Business Partners to ensure jobs are placed in the most appropriate locations to attract the widest range of suitable applicants (e.g., appropriate professional websites, social media, Linked -In, You Tube, college career bulletins, participating in relevant job fairs, etc).

Building relationships with colleges and universities and offering internships for the summer in areas relevant to the occupation concerned or one year sandwich placements for relevant courses may assist in raising our profile as an employer and making students aware of the opportunities available, as well as more effective marketing of the opportunities and benefits of working at the Council.

In the current jobs market, our pay levels need to be competitive, particularly in areas of skills shortage, and the benefits we offer sufficiently attractive. To this end, HR have implemented a market pay database to enable us to be more agile in this respect. Once recruited, managers need to pay attention to ensuring that employees are properly inducted and supported, given an employee 'buddy' to support them, and have their training needs identified and delivered. The development of more competency-based career grades should enable effective skills development and the opportunity to use these skills effectively and then reward their contribution in a timely way to retain capable staff. The costs of improved pay levels need to be factored into business plans and consider the savings made in improved retention.

### ***Careers with a social value***

# Organisational Development Strategy

The results of CIPD research did indicate that working for an organisation that had real social value did appeal to potential recruits and feeling 'inspired' by what their organisation was trying to achieve.

Local authorities do provide a range of socially valuable careers but do need to really raise awareness of those careers with potential applicants in the jobs market. Once employed, it is equally important to have managers who motivate and inspire them.

## ***Developing careers***

Paying attention to developing the careers of employees can have a major impact on whether employees stay. In a smaller organisation this is particularly important where career pathways can be more limited. Sometimes this can mean involving talented staff in interesting projects, paying particular attention to their personal development, and putting them on professional or managerial development programmes.

Encouraging employees to fill out exit questionnaires and analysing these can help identify why staff are leaving and be used to resolve underlying issues. Focussing on a smaller number of objectives in service areas which are realistic and achievable within the resources employed really matters. Ambition tempered by realism. These non-financial factors are also important in staff retention.

Clearly problems in recruitment and retention remains a key issue for our organisation in the competitive jobs market of the southeast

## **In terms of the benefits package itself what more could be done?**

- A sufficiently attractive and flexible benefits package involving alternative options for staff to choose from (e.g., additional holiday or Dental Insurance)
- Hybrid working which enables a blend of working within the office and at home combined with team building and effective communications
- Publicising the existing benefits (e.g., mortgage assistance and rent equalisations schemes, pension, training provision, salary sacrifice schemes etc)
- Exploring access to low-cost housing
- Improving annual leave
- Ensuring that pay is competitive in the marketplace
- Publicise training and development provision
- Illustrating what career pathways could look like by short videos on the recruitment webpage
- Travel passes linked to the green agenda
- Health screening
- Publicise the non-monetary benefits



# Organisational Development Strategy

## ACTIONS

1. HR to work closely with line managers to ensure that job opportunities are marketed in the most effective way and in the most appropriate media
2. Relationships are developed with schools, colleges and universities to market career opportunities at the council and encourage internships
3. A package of flexible benefits is developed that is sufficiently attractive within the marketplace
4. Pay is kept under regular review to be competitive particularly within areas of skills shortages
5. The financial and non-financial benefits package is kept under regular review
6. Training and development opportunities are effectively marketed

## DEVELOPING SKILLS AND MANAGING TALENT

The CIPD defines talent as

**‘Individuals who can make a significant difference to organisational performance. This may be either through their immediate contribution or, in the longer term by reaching their highest levels of potential’**

Talent management is:

***‘The systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of value to the organisation. This may be through their own potential or because they fulfil critical roles’***

It is essential that the Council develops and successfully implements a Talent Management Strategy and programme. A Talent Management Strategy has been developed and needs to be implemented. To be successful it requires commitment from the top (i.e. CLT and SLT) and the active co-operation of managers to engage with individuals regarding their personal and career development. Using Personal Development plans to set out the actions required to assist the employee in their career and ensure these are implemented in liaison with HR.

There are two types of talent management approaches:

- An inclusive one which focusses on developing skills across the workforce
- An exclusive one which focusses on the development of high-performance individuals.

RBC will deliver a blended approach. Through the employee performance management framework, all employees will have their development needs identified and where training is agreed, these will be formulated into a service training plan. HR will prepare a 3-year training plan based on prioritised training needs for the whole organisation. Some development activities can take place ‘on the job’ or through gaining different types of experience organised by the line manager. This can include structured work experience, on-line training, coaching/mentoring, job rotation or secondments.

For high performance individuals a talent management programme will be developed to provide opportunities to work on corporate or localised projects or move between different service areas to gain broader-based relevant experience, and to be sponsored for specialist professional or managerial development. Greater use will be made of a two-year indemnity contract to retain the staff who have been given these opportunities. Consideration will be given to a small graduate programme.

Maximum use will be made of the apprenticeship programme to recruit school or college leavers or sponsor existing staff with a view to targeting these apprenticeships to areas of identified skills gaps.

# Organisational Development Strategy



## ACTIONS

1. Implement the Talent Management Strategy and programme
2. Provide the opportunity for talented employees to work on localised or corporate projects to build their skills and experience
3. Implement a small graduate programme in collaboration with LGA
4. Maximise the use of the apprenticeship programme to attract school and college leavers focussing these on areas of skills shortage

## EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION, RECOGNITION & ENGAGEMENT

*'Being a great place to work is the difference between being a good organisation and a great one'*

But how?

*'There is no magic formula for a great company culture. The key is to treat your staff how you would like to be treated'*

**Richard Branson**

This may seem obvious but sometimes conflicting priorities, organisational pressures, rising workloads, lack of resources and change can lead to staff feeling demotivated.

It is important that staff feel cared about and valued. Often managers assume increasing pay is the main way to retain staff but how the employee feels about how they are treated and the organisation itself can make all the difference. The quality of line management matters. There are several types of management styles which are effective but emotional intelligence remains one of the key management skills required in a modern organisation, which is why an emotional intelligence course forms part of the management development programme. Regular one to ones, positive and constructive feedback, coaching and guidance where required and remembering to give praise where warranted. A positive, supportive culture in the team, good relationships with work colleagues, open and transparent selection processes for promotion, the opportunity for personal development and good two-way communications are all essential elements within a successful team. Where teams or individuals have conflicts, attempts need to be made to resolve these through individual or team mediation.

Within the wider organisation itself good communications cascading from the management team to managers and staff needs to be regular and effective. The opportunity for staff to provide feedback also matters (e.g., to contribute to decision making on some topics through focus groups and workshops can help staff to feel that the organisation is a joint enterprise.)

The Council already has an employee of the month scheme, but this could be expanded to have a Team of the Month scheme or potentially an annual Staff Oscars ceremony. Rewards could include additional leave or tickets to the Light cinema for example. The success of individual employees should be given public recognition within the organisation on a regular basis through the staff newsletter. Attention should be paid to ensure that there is a balance in terms of all staff, in all kinds of roles, at all levels in these recognition schemes.



# Organisational Development Strategy



## ACTIONS

1. All managers attend the emotional intelligence training day within the Management Development programme
2. Mediation is used where individual or conflicts within a team arise
3. Consideration should be given to introducing a Team of the month award scheme and an annual 'staff Oscars' ceremony
4. An internal communications strategy is developed to ensure the most effective two-way communications within the organisation
5. Staff focus groups or workshops could be used selectively to inform decision-making where appropriate
6. Staff suggestion scheme be reviewed and relaunched to support innovation

## EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

As a consequence of the pandemic, employee well-being has gained prominence in HR strategy. The Council should develop a Well-being Plan in liaison with its Occupational Health provider. This will cover both mental and physical health. This may include

- Health promotion initiatives such as Look after your Heart, Managing Stress, Well-woman, Well-man lunchtime sessions, Healthy Eating, reducing smoking or drinking etc
- Combining this with facilitating yoga, healthy exercise or relaxation sessions
- Encouraging walking
- Conducting stress audits in areas where this is a particular issue
- Mental Health First Aid
- Hybrid working and well-being

In addition, HR should review its stress management guidelines and facilitate training for managers in this area and provide briefings for staff in liaison with UNISON. Consideration will also be given to training mental health first-aiders.

Health and Safety training is being organised for SLT combined with the introduction of an officer board to set up a Health and Safety workplan on an annual basis to ensure that staff health and safety is given the prominence it requires.



# Organisational Development Strategy

## ACTIONS

1. A corporate plan on Staff Well-being developed in liaison with the Council's Occupational Health provider
2. A series of initiatives on staff well-being will be organised in liaison with our OH provider
3. An annual H&S plan will be prepared to ensure staff Health and Safety is given adequate prominence

## Process Theme

### Service Reviews

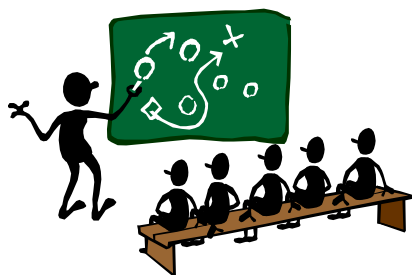
Runnymede Borough Council are committed to providing better quality and better value services. Service reviews have been a corner stone of the Council's transformation over the last 24 months, underpinning the success of several service improvements and restructures.

Reviewing services regularly allows us to achieve savings; redesign the mix and range of services delivered; streamline management processes; develop and improve; generate additional income and assure effective customer service. It also gives the Council the opportunity to collaborate with partners and neighbouring authorities where shared service opportunities can be explored and implemented.

Service reviews will be led by the relevant service area across the Council working closely with Digital Services who will act as a 'critical friend' to identify innovative ways that our current and future technology can improve service delivery and create efficiencies.

A service review toolkit will be updated and embedded across the organisation to underpin the delivery of service reviews. This toolkit will provide a methodology and supporting documents to empower services to drive change from within their service areas. In doing so this ensures a consistent and co-ordinated approach to undertaking reviews and delivering better outcomes for our customers.

Employees will be encouraged to put forward their ideas for process improvements through staff suggestion schemes and be considered by a panel of senior managers across the organisation.



## ACTIONS

1. Service Review programme to be formulated with re-engineering at the heart of the process. Managers will lead the workshops within and between service areas to ensure maximum efficiency
2. Update and implement a corporate service review and improvement toolkit supported by evidence-based research.
3. To review the approach taken to procure goods, works and services across the Council to ensure compliance with the Public Contract Regulations and to



# Organisational Development Strategy

**achieve demonstrable value for money whilst ensuring efficient and effective processes and procedures**

- 4. Explore shared services with neighbouring authorities when opportunities arise following system or resource reviews**
- 5. Develop service champions within service areas to participate and lead on service improvement**
- 6. Train service champions in process improvement, facilitating workshops, creating process maps and documenting processes using tools such as Microsoft Visio.**
- 7. Conduct a baseline assessment of reviews to be undertaken and prioritisation of service areas.**
- 8. Ensure Digital staff responsible for system improvement are offered appropriate training such as ITIL 4, Prince 2, Agile and other suitable qualifications**

## Internal Decision Making and Governance

Locally elected members are responsible for the strategic direction of the Council and officers are expected to provide professional advice to support members in their strategic decisions. As well as a committee system, Runnymede have implemented Member Working Groups to support projects arising from the Corporate Plan providing transparency and governance across the Council. It is therefore appropriate that newly elected members are provided with appropriate training in addition to a thorough induction to understand their responsibilities and civic duties. In a modern environment, it is important for members to be able to access Council business in an efficient and flexible manner. To this end, the Council will supply modern technology to facilitate this throughout the term of each administration. Member devices should be periodically refreshed to keep up to date with emerging technology and working groups reviewed to ensure successful delivery of the Council's strategic objectives.

The Council has made substantial capital investment in renewing outdated digital systems and needs to maximise the potential benefits from this investment.

As new systems and processes come on board, it is important to ensure that there is proper governance, with relevant internal boards overseeing software procurement, data storage, security, and contract management. In addition, we need to ensure our policies are updated to reflect changes in legislation, technology, and support staff and members through a more flexible and modern way of working.

It is critical that the Council maximises the use of technology and that staff are trained on how to use new systems, attend software user groups to keep up to date with software developments and network with colleagues to get the best out of systems supplied. System administrators and service champions should work closely with Digital Services who can support service areas with technical advice to develop business cases for additional and improved software to ensure Runnymede maintains modern effective systems to deliver essential services.

Detailed specifications, robust procurement and strong contract management will ensure transparency and governance. Contracts should include staff training and system development as standard.

For example, the implementation of an integrated HR/Payroll system will be overseen by HR Member Working party with a requirement for managerial and employee self-service modules to be incorporated mid-2023. This will enable administrative efficiencies to take place across the Council due to sophisticated workflow systems within it. This will enable

# Organisational Development Strategy

staff to book leave and training courses, claim overtime and other expenses, apply for jobs internally, report sickness absence etc. Managers will be able to view in real-time analytics for their teams and provide management information to members as required. This will save time and increase transparency across the organisation. Training for managers and employees on how to use these facilities will be needed to maximise the potential benefits.



## ACTIONS

- **Digital Services to work with Service Managers to identify where additional training is required in specific Digital systems**
- **Digital Services to provide IT training to newly elected members**
- **System administrators and service champions attend software user groups and account management meetings to ensure systems are continually improved and staff maximise usage**
- **Staff training and system development to be included as part of all new system contracts to protect investment and ensure all modern technology is fully realised**
- **Member device refresh to be reviewed every four years to enable members to conduct their civic duties in a modern and efficient way**
- **Corporate review of policies**
  - Pay Policy
  - Maternity/Paternity Policy
  - Agile/Hybrid working policy
  - Flexible working policy
  - Disciplinary policy
  - Absence policy
  - Health & Safety policy
  - Corporate Debt policy
  - IT security policy
  - Mobile Device policy
  - Mobile phone policy
  - Members IT protocol
  - Fraud and Corruption policy
- **Corporate review of internal decision making:**
  - Review of all internal officer decision-making boards
  - Review constitution – create better alignment with the Corporate Plan
  - Review membership to boards and terms of reference
  - Review relationship of internal decision-making boards with Service Chairs, Member Working Group and Committees.

# Organisational Development Strategy

## Technology Theme

### Digital Experience

Digital experience is about improving technology to support staff in delivering efficient effective services for our customers, visitors and partners. We want:

- to understand customer needs
- for customers to have a positive experience
- to have the right culture, information, and skills in the organisation
- the right approach to maximising all the opportunities digital technology provides

Runnymede Borough Council invested in a new digital platform which included:

- new website
- customer relationship management system
- One Account resident portal

Following the successful launch of the new website we have accelerated progress building on these foundations. With continual improvement of online services and maximising opportunities to build and develop new online opportunities:

- first in the Silktime Council index for meeting accessibility requirements since November 2021
- 140 new online services built and operational allowing customers to interact with the council 24/7
- Over 8500 garden waste sign ups online
- improved resident One Account offering providing a single digital platform to transact, report and track issues
- Improvements to online payments



### ACTIONS

As we move into the next phase of our ambitious strategy, we will introduce a more consistent and high-quality approach across our digital platforms and services:

- 1. Most council services will have an online presence with at least 70% of customers self-serving**
- 2. Information presented in a way that is easy to use regardless of device or system, and in plain English so it is easy and quick to understand**

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- 3. An evidence-based review of our top 50 online services to ensure continuous improvement and development of high demand council services**
- 4. Future service delivery will be efficient and affordable considering end-to-end delivery rather than from the first point of contact**
- 5. Develop an annual rolling review and improvement programme for online content based on data insight**
- 6. Build on our WCAG 2.1 accessibility success by working on our PDF/document improvement plan to remove all documents with accessibility issues by the end of 2023**
- 7. Explore web chat options to help customers access information and services**
- 8. Build on the single view of our customers by integrating our customer relationship management system with our telephony system.**
- 9. Implement our online parking portal to digitise the parking service and increase our online offer within One Account**

## Smarter systems

The Councils Digital Transformation Programme has successfully delivered a rolling review and re-procurement of long-standing IT systems across the Council. The work of the programme will continue through the term of our Corporate Business Plan and within this OD Strategy.

This strategy will be underpinned by the procurement of our core corporate IT systems including HR and Payroll, Financial Management and Environmental Health, all of which are integral to managing the Council's biggest assets our people and our money.

Investment in an integrated HR and Payroll system to enable manager and employee self-service and other efficiencies within the HR and Payroll service areas. The procurement of a new Financial Management system will modernise and transform the Council's finance processes and the new Environmental Health system will enable the team to work smarter with the public, businesses, and partners, keeping data secure and eliminating manual processes.



## ACTIONS

- 1. Continue to evaluate our existing technology, replacing it with new, up to date solutions where it no longer meets our requirements.**
- 2. We will equally work with service areas and providers to maximise the use of existing technology to ensure we get the most out of investment.**
- 3. Provide corporate training on cyber security and how to protect the information staff handle**
- 4. Procure and implement a new HR and Payroll solution to underpin the transformation of the HR and Payroll services**

# Organisational Development Strategy

5. Procure and implement a new Financial Management system to provide the tools to transform our finance service area.
6. Procure and implement a new Environmental Services system to underpin system and service improvement for our Environmental Health, Regulatory Services and Trading Standards services across the Council.
7. Develop networking groups across Service areas to maximise collaborative working

## DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL APPROACH TO HYBRID WORKING

The Council will introduce its formal Hybrid Working Policy on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022. Surveys have been conducted of the experience of managers' and employees to hybrid working and the Council needs to remain on a constant learning curve to maximise the benefits while resolving any issues encountered.

Many employees value the additional flexibility which hybrid working provides and most prefer to spend part of the week in the office and part at home. The main concerns are:

- Lapses in communication between individuals and sometimes service areas
- The need to provide adequate training and support for new starters and properly induct them into the team
- Some loss of team cohesion
- Customer service and liaison in some teams
- Performance management in some situations
- Communications between some managers and staff
- Employee well-being

Training and management guidance will be provided for managers in how to manage staff working remotely as part of the roll out of hybrid working. However further training will need to be developed to ensure this model works most effectively.

In addition, periodic surveys of managers and staff need to be conducted by HR to monitor how this is progressing. This would be used to develop action plans to improve how this model is working.

There is some desire amongst some managers and staff to have a more flexible model than the 3-days in the office and 2 days at home model. However, a cautious approach is being adopted, to review and evaluate how hybrid working turns out in practice, refine the existing approach and learn the lessons from what works and what needs reviewed before creating a more flexible model.

Research from the CIPD illustrates that teamwork training enhances the performance of virtual teams as does

- encouraging the use of videoconferencing over audio or written communications
- synchronising work schedules of team members to maximise the overlapping of working hours
- sharing information about contexts, policies and actions
- investing in team building sessions to improve social relations and clarify roles within a virtual team

# Organisational Development Strategy

- Sharing feedback about expectations from each other
- Trying to avoid negative feedback
- Ensuring the role of co-ordinator is clear to everyone
- Providing appropriate tools to help co-ordination and project management

There is an aspiration that part of the Civic Building will be leased out to a public sector partner. This will require some internal modelling of how the building is laid out and the introduction of hotdesking.



## ACTIONS

- 1. To monitor and evaluate the success of agile working and design further training and guidance for managers**
- 2. To design sessions on developing effective virtual teams**
- 3. To develop a hot desking policy**
- 4. To refine the Hybrid Working approach based on surveys and practical experience of implementation**
- 5. Rollout of hardware refresh replacing legacy IT hardware with new laptops, docking stations and monitors to standardise workstations across the Council.**
- 6. Implement video conferencing equipment within meeting rooms across the Civic Centre to enable hybrid working across the Council**

## A GREEN ORGANISATION

The Climate Change Strategy sets out how the Council will address the Climate Change challenge in the Borough. However, managers and staff can contribute to the green agenda in several ways: -

- Managers who co-ordinate the journeys of Council vehicles can minimise mileage and fuel emissions through logistical planning of routes and co-ordination of journeys
- A Green Travel plan can be developed to reduce emissions through
  - Negotiating annual season tickets for rail and bus travel for staff
  - Research the use of hybrid pool vehicles for work use
  - Move to electric cars and bikes in some service areas such as Parking enforcement
  - Remove the Essential user lump sum which rewards staff for higher car usage
  - Reducing commuting via Hybrid working
  - Introduce a salary sacrifice scheme to encourage staff to use more environmentally sustainable transport

# Organisational Development Strategy

- Encouraging staff to produce ideas to reduce waste through recycling and other waste reduction practices within the Civic Offices

Whilst the Council has a separate Climate Change strategy, HR will lead on staff related benefits particularly around Green Travel for employees.



## CONCLUSION

This OD strategy sets out an ambitious programme of work for the next 4 years and will form the basis of an action plan to develop the organisation to become 'an employer of choice'

This Strategy underpins the Council's Corporate Plan and all other service strategies. It is the foundation upon which all our services are delivered – it is key. This strategy, with its initiatives and delivery roadmap, are the foundation blocks that will provide Runnymede with the assurance that we will continue to deliver high quality services to our stakeholders.

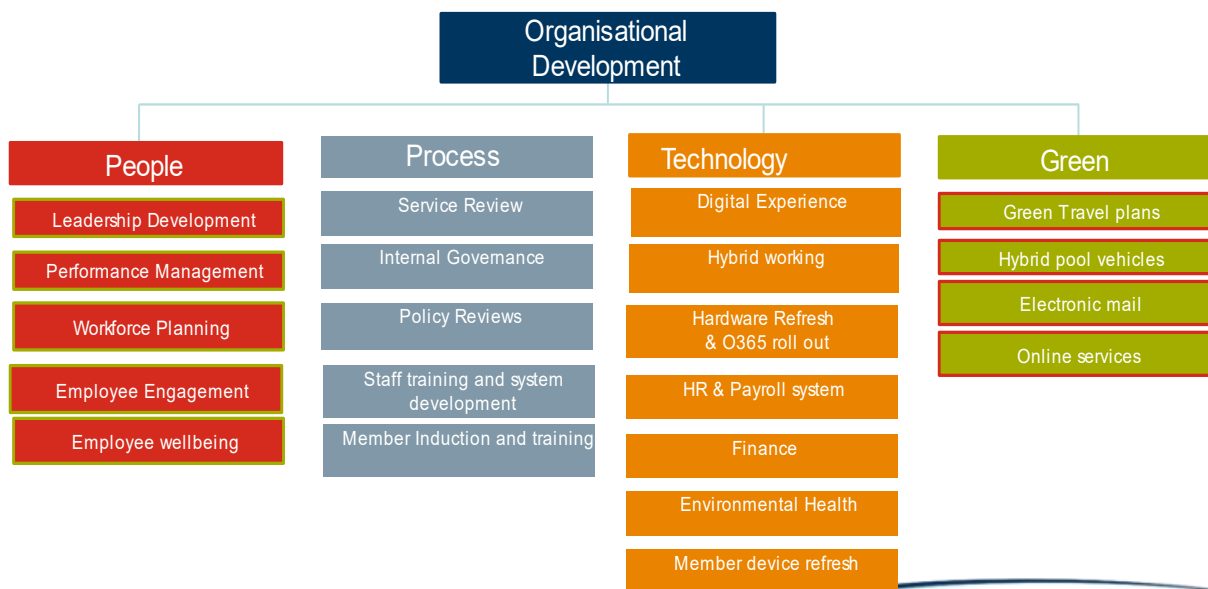
We must ensure that the plans we put in place are fit for purpose, robust and resilient with talented, fully trained, experienced staff to support it and drive development forward. With sound investment and keeping abreast of the latest technology and solutions, we can ensure that Runnymede is in the best possible position to deliver the right services to residents until 2026 and beyond.

***'Have a clear direction on what you are trying to do and bring in great people to execute it and then you can do pretty well'***

# Organisational Development Strategy

## Action Plan

# Organisational Development Strategy



Appendix 1 sets out the individual strands to be delivered under this four year plan.



# Organisational Development Strategy

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**DATE**

## Review and Replacement Runnymede's Council Tax Support Scheme (Resources-Ed Bowen)

### Synopsis of report:

**To approve consultation on a revised Council Tax Support scheme, for those of working age, ensuring it is up to date, relevant and incorporates the roll out of Universal Credit to Runnymede's residents.**

**To stabilise Council Tax Support entitlement and simplify the administration of claims and make it easier for the Council's most vulnerable residents to receive financial assistance towards their Council Tax liability.**

### Recommendation(s):

**The Committee approve consultation on options 2 and 4 for Runnymede's Council Tax Support scheme to come into effect from April 2023.**

#### 1. Context

- 1.1 In April 2019 we introduced a new scheme for working age customers that removed entitlement for those in bands F, G and H, introduced a minimum income floor that mirrors the provision in UC, restricted the minimum entitlement to £5 & £10, reduced the level of savings that can be held and made some administration changes to align entitlement with Universal Credit (UC).
- 1.2 If a local authority wishes to make fundamental changes to its Council Tax Support (CTS), it needs to consult the public and other affected groups on these changes. The scheme also needs to be approved by Full Council.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was replaced by a locally designed and funded scheme entitled 'Council Tax Support'. Previously Council Tax Benefit was a national scheme which was funded more or less in full by Central Government in the form of benefit 'subsidy' paid to the Local Authority by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 2.2 As part of the introduction of this new scheme the Government in effect reduced the funding available to local authorities by approximately 10% of the baseline Council Tax Benefit spend in 2012/13, although the impact of this was mitigated somewhat by a transitional grant which was available to Local Authorities in Year 1 (2013/14).
- 2.3 The Local Government Finance Act 2012, introduced Section 13A (2) which sets out the legal requirement for each LA to set up a CTS scheme. Under the relevant Council Tax Support legislation, those claimants of Pensionable age must be protected. In this context 'protected' means they cannot receive less financial assistance under the proposed Council Tax Support scheme (CTS) than they would have under the previous Council Tax Benefit regime.
- 2.4 In April 2019 we introduced a new scheme for working age customers that removed entitlement for those in bands F, G and H, introduced a minimum income floor that

mirrors the provision in UC, restricted the minimum entitlement to £5 & £10, reduced the level of savings that can be held and made some administration changes to align entitlement with Universal Credit (UC).

2.5 If a local authority wishes to make fundamental changes to its CTS, it needs to consult the public and other affected groups on these changes. The scheme also needs to be approved by Full Council.

2.6 We currently award around £4.1 million in CTS, shown in the table below:

Claimant Group	Number of Claims	Total Annual Award.
Pensioners	1,437	£2,000,168
Vulnerable / Disabled Claimants	892	£1,233,734
Working Age & Employed	65	£65,650
Working Age Other	674	£789,234
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,068</b>	<b>£4,088,786</b>

### 3. **Report**

#### 3.1 **Options for Change**

Looking ahead to 2023-24, there are a number of options for a revised CTS scheme, that would be:

- simpler to understand
- simplified administration
- stabilise council tax support entitlement so reducing the need to rebill customers everytime there is a small change in household income
- reduce costs in postage and administration
- redeploy existing staff to overpayment recovery and data matching to ensure awards are correct
- expand welfare work to ensure the council is not chasing debts unnecessarily and causing further financial hardship for residents

#### **The Effect On The Council Tax Base:**

3.2 The council tax base is used to calculate the amount of council tax charged per household and how much is raised for the preceptors (Surrey County Council, Police and Fire authority).

3.3 It is important to understand that the more we reduce council tax liability with CTS the more of that foregone revenue has to be made up by the remaining council taxpayers.

3.4 Over the past few years to avoid triggering a referendum on council tax increases, we have chosen to increase the council tax by £5 on Band D. For every £5 increase in the council tax liability, 37 pence went to covering that increase in council tax liability, leaving £4.63 to be spent on other services.

3.5 The 2022/23 council tax raises £179.55 on each Band D for all our services, £9.82 of that goes towards the cost of CTS.

3.6 Therefore, to provide a more generous CTS scheme, more of that revenue would be drawn away from other services.

## **UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

- 3.7 Claimants and families on a low income are expected to claim Universal Credit to assist with their living expenses / rent and will also need to make a separate claim for CTS to receive assistance with their Council Tax.
- 3.8 Every time a claimant's CTS entitlement changes, we are obliged to notify them in writing of this change. They are also issued a new Council Tax bill. There is a theoretical situation that could arise: because customers need to be given sufficient advance notification of changes in direct debit payments, if their Council Tax Support was recalculated 12 times in a year, a payment may never actually be taken.
- 3.9 The volume of work now generated by Universal Credit causing a change in every month is becoming unmanageable. We currently have 825 households claiming Council Tax Support based on their Universal Credit entitlement. This represents 50% of our current Council Tax Support caseload, and we are currently receiving around 1,300 notifications from the DWP each month in relation to Universal Credit.
- 3.10 Because of the issues caused by the treatment of Universal Credit within the default Council Tax Support scheme, many local authorities, including Surrey Heath and Epsom & Ewell have made changes to their Council Tax Support scheme.

### **3.11 Runnymede's current CTS scheme for working age people**

- Pensioners and working age vulnerable are fully protected and continue to receive up to 100% relief towards their Council Tax
- With the exception of those classed as vulnerable, everyone must pay at least 20% of the charge. The vulnerable will pay at least 10% of the charge
- The amount of CTS awarded is limited to Band D for working age people in Band E dwellings.
- Entitlement to CTS will be withdrawn entirely for those in properties in Bands F, G and H
- CTS entitlement calculated at less than £10.00 per week will not be paid, except for those classed as vulnerable – the previous level of £5.00 per week will be maintained
- The savings/capital limit £10,000, except the vulnerable at £16,000.
- Backdating is set at three months
- Earnings disregards will match Housing Benefit levels
- Allowed temporary absence outside of the UK will be reduced to four weeks – matching the Housing Benefit scheme
- Second Adult Rebate continues to be withdrawn
- A Minimum Income Floor will be introduced for those who are self-employed, along with a one-year start up period
- Non-dependent deductions will be increased to match the levels set by the Government in the Prescribed Requirements
- Entitlement to the Family Premium will be restricted for new CTS applications received from 1 April 2019

### **3.12 Options**

#### **OPTIONS FOR A CHANGED CTS SCHEME FROM 2023: (more detail is in Appendix A)**

**Option 1:** Retain the scheme in its current form with no changes. We would continue to uprate it, as we have done in previous years, and another 4.59% increase in next

year's council tax liability to make the total annual spend £4.2m would mean council tax on each Band D would rise to £179.92

**Option 2:** Stabilise entitlement for residents by simplifying what happens when CTS changes by small amounts during the financial year.

Introduce a de minimis amount where any change of circumstances would result in an increase or decrease in a working age claimant's entitlement of less than £3.25 per week, then no change in CTS will occur until the total changes cumulatively amount to at least £3.25 per week.

Where this does occur, the change will be effective from the date of the last change.

The London Borough of Haringey have just introduced a de-minimis scheme which ignores gross income changes of less than £16.25 per week.

**Option 3:** Introduce a banded income scheme that gives claimants a percentage reduction based on the household income.

**Option 4:** Treat a claim for Universal Credit as a claim for CTS. Currently, CTS is underclaimed in part because of the frequent changes and the broken link to Housing Benefit claims. We propose taking the UC data and treating that as a claim for CTS. However, the data that is shared does not provide all the information we need to make a decision under the current scheme.

We propose Introducing a flat rate non-dependent deduction and removing the additional earnings disregard (AED). These changes will allow us to use the UC data without the cost and delay of gathering additional information.

To compensate for the loss of the additional earnings disregard we could change the minimum weekly entitlement for working age employed customers to £5.00.

Those in the Working Age Other category are not entitled to the AED and so would only be affected by the change to a flat rate non-dependant deduction.

### **Disadvantages**

**Option 1: Retain the scheme in its current form with no changes.**

The disadvantages of retaining the scheme would be the increased administration burden & costs, as described above.

**Option 2: Stabilise entitlement for residents by simplifying what happens when CTS changes by small amounts during the financial year.**

Disadvantages:

Those with small decreases in income will not see their entitlement rise as quickly

**Option 3: Introduce a banded income scheme that gives claimants a percentage reduction based on the household income. Modelling indicates this would lead to an increase in the spend on CTS on each Band D of 38 pence.**

Disadvantages:

Those with decreases in income will not see their entitlement rise as quickly

Some customers will immediately be better or worse off depending on the bands of income and the level of percentage reduction

There is an additional licensing cost from NEC

**Option 4: Treat a claim for Universal Credit as a claim for Council Tax Support. Introduce a flat rate non-dependant deduction**

Disadvantages:

Some customers will be better off while others may be worse off as their non-dependant will be asked to contribute more towards the council tax with the increased non-dependant deductions.

**Remove entitlement to the additional earnings disregard**

Disadvantages:

Some customers in full time work will be worse off with the removal of the additional earnings disregard.

**Benefits**

Option 1: Retain the scheme in its current form with no changes.

Advantages:

The only advantage would be a saving on the cost of consultation and work involved in modelling and assessing the impacts of change.

Option 2: Stabilise entitlement for residents by simplifying what happens when CTS changes by small amounts during the financial year.

Advantages:

Stabilising entitlement will aid household budgeting. Those with frequent small changes in entitlement will see fewer changes in their entitlement reducing the need to rebill and reprofile council tax instalments

Option 3: Introduce a banded income scheme that gives claimants a percentage reduction based on the household income.

Advantages:

Those with frequent larger changes in entitlement will be able to budget better. By stabilising entitlement, it will reduce the need to rebill and reprofile council tax instalments

More transparent and easier to understand likely entitlement

Option 4: Treat a claim for Universal Credit as a claim for CTS.

Introduce a flat rate non-dependant deduction

Advantages:

Standard rates of non-dependant deduction will be more transparent, easier to understand and lead to quicker decisions.

Remove entitlement to the additional earnings disregard

Advantages:

Taking the DWP data we can automate some of the decisions to speed up decisions and ensure those entitled are given the support they are entitled to as soon as possible.

**3.13 Option 2 & 4 – preferred option**

In a revised scheme:

- there is a de minimis level of £3.25
- treat a claim for Universal Credit as a claim for CTS
- flat rate non-dependant deductions
- removal of the additional earnings disregard

- 3.14 The table below shows the impact of the options when modelled with a 4.59% increase in Council Tax and an uplift in welfare benefits and allowances and premiums, similar to the uplift in 2022/23:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Effect on Tax Base and cost</b>
Option 1: Retain the scheme in its current form	Tax Base 34452.7 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.92 Current Band D £179.55 Increase of 37 pence
Option 2: Introduce a de minimis amount	Tax Base 34452.7 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.92 Current Band D £179.55 Increase of 37 pence
Option 3: Banded scheme. The modelling indicates an increase of £815 over 2021	Tax Base 34450.8 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.93 Current Band D £179.55 Increase of 38 pence
Option 4: Automation of claims. The modelling indicates a saving of £15,447 on the current year scheme	Tax Base 34465.9 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.85 Current Band D £179.55 Increase 35 pence

### **Officer recommendation**

- 3.15 We have presented four options that would lead to less administration and efficiency savings while delivering a scheme that is more accessible with claims linked to Universal Credit and that is fit for the future.
- 3.16 The choice to not make any changes needs to be considered and if appropriate dismissed on a reasoned basis.
- 3.17 Therefore, the recommendation is for options 2 (a de minimis level) and 4 (allow for the automation of claims) to be taken forward for consultation.

### **Mechanism for Revising the CTS Scheme**

- 3.18 Before the RBC CTS scheme can be revised, there must have been consultation with major preceptors and the general public on the possible options for change. The consultation will run from July to August, giving sufficient opportunity for interested parties to comment and try and obtain as broad a range of consultation responses as possible.
- 3.19 An independent market research company would be asked to undertake the consultation on behalf of Runnymede Borough Council. 1,000 questionnaires to be issued to a consultation group to include a wide variety of working and pensionable age customers and the survey to be available on the Council's web site.

## Financial implications

<b>Option</b>	<b>Effect on Tax Base and cost</b>
Option 1: Retain the scheme in its current form	Tax Base 34452.7 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.92 Current Band D £179.55 Increase of 37 pence
Option 2: Introduce a de minimis amount	Tax Base 34452.7 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.92 Current Band D £179.55 Increase of 37 pence
Option 3: The modelling indicates an increase of £815 over 2021	Tax Base 34450.8 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.93 Current Band D £179.55 Increase of 38 pence
Option 4: The modelling indicates a saving of £15,447 on the current year scheme	Tax Base 34465.9 Budget £6,198,784 Band D £179.85 Current Band D £179.55 Increase 35 pence

## **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 When Council Tax Support was introduced, local authorities were obliged to have a scheme in place by 11 March.
- 4.2 Schedule 1A, paragraph 5 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states:
- 4.3 For each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme
- 4.4 The above is understood to mean that for every financial year since 2013, local authorities need to have considered whether to amend/revise or keep the same their local scheme. Best practice suggests that, as part of any review of a local scheme, consultation with stakeholders be undertaken. As with the initial Council Tax Support scheme from April 2013, the decision to maintain or revise a scheme needs to be made by full Council.
- 4.5 In addition to any local variations, each year the Government issues regulations amending the default scheme. Amendments in respect of pensioners *must* be incorporated into any local scheme. Whether these amendments need to be included in a local scheme for working age residents are for each local authority to decide.

## **5. Equality implications**

- 5.1 Councillors need to demonstrate that they have consciously thought about the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as part of the decision making process. The three aims the authority must have due regard for are:



- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic

5.2 The Council must pay due regard to any obvious risk of such discrimination arising from the decision before them.

5.3 A full EIA will be completed on the proposed scheme, prior to its implementation.

## **6. Conclusion**

6.1 The Committee to approve the preferred options for Runnymede's Council Tax Support scheme for consultation.

(To resolve)

**Background papers:**

**Appendix A**

## **1.0 CURRENT CTS SCHEME**

The Revised Scheme – from 1 April 2019 for those of working age only, is:

- CTS will continue to be restricted to the Band D charge
- With the exception of those classed as vulnerable, everyone must pay at least 20% of the charge
- The vulnerable will pay at least 10% of the charge
- CTS entitlement calculated at less than £10.00 per week will not be paid, except for those classed as vulnerable – the previous level of £5.00 per week will be maintained
- Second Adult Rebate continues to be withdrawn
- Backdating remains at three months
- Earnings disregards will be reduced by £5.00 per week – matching the levels in the Housing Benefit scheme
- Allowed temporary absence outside of the UK will be reduced to four weeks – matching the Housing Benefit scheme
- Entitlement to CTS will be withdrawn entirely for those in properties in Bands F, G and H
- The capital limit will be reduced from £16,000 to £10,000 – except for the vulnerable
- A Minimum Income Floor will be introduced for those who are self-employed, along with a one-year start up period
- Non-dependent deductions will be increased to match the levels set by the Government in the Prescribed Requirements
- Entitlement to the Family Premium will be restricted for new CTS applications received from 1 April 2019

As well as the above, the rules of the scheme have been clarified with regards to the calculation of the income and applicable amount for those applicants in receipt of Universal Credit. The rules have also been updated so that a claim for UC can be taken as an initial claim for CTS.

What has not changed?

- War Pensions will continue to be disregarded in full
- Child Benefit and child maintenance will continue to be disregarded in full
- Those of pension age will continue to be protect from all changes

## **1.2 PRINCIPLES OF A DE-MINIMIS CTS SCHEME**

The proposed change is to stabilise what happens when CTS entitlement changes by a small amount. This would have a positive effect because frequent small changes in council tax payments can make household budgeting difficult for residents as they get a new Council Tax bill and payments every time their CTS amount changes.

Under the existing scheme an increase in income of £15.00 would lead to a £3.00 change in CTS. This proposes to ignore cumulative changes of less than £3.00 per week

#### Increases in income

Mrs C has weekly income of £249.90 and qualifies for a CTR award of £21.59 a week.		
<b>Increase in weekly income used in CTR calculation</b>	<b>CTR entitlement change under current scheme</b>	<b>CTR entitlement change under proposed scheme</b>
£25.00	- £5.00	- £5.00
£20.00	- £4.00	- £4.00
£15.00	- £3.00	£0.00
£10.00	- £2.00	£0.00
£5.00	- £1.00	£0.00

#### Decreases in income

Mr D has weekly income of £446.21 and qualifies for a CTR award of £15.28 a week.		
<b>Decrease in weekly income used in CTR calculation</b>	<b>CTR entitlement change under current scheme</b>	<b>CTR entitlement change under proposed scheme</b>
£25.00	+ £5.00	+ £5.00
£20.00	+ £4.00	+ £4.00
£15.00	+ £3.00	£0.00
£10.00	+ £2.00	£0.00
£5.00	+ £1.00	£0.00

### **ADVANTAGES OF DE-MINIMIS SCHEME**

- Stabilises entitlement and reduces the need to rebill customers on every change of household income. This in turn leads to improved collection rates as payment profiles are reset less frequently.
- More likely to be cost neutral
- No additional licensing or software costs

### **DISADVANTAGES OF DE-MINIMIS SCHEME**

- Modelling this change is not possible with the tools we have. We are working with NEC to model the changes.
- For those with gradual decreases in entitlement they will not see an increase in entitlement as quickly or in some cases at all.

### **1.3 FLAT RATE NON-DEP DEDUCTIONS**

A flat rate non-dep deduction (NDD) would increase efficiency and prevent unnecessary recalculations adding certainty for customers.

Non-Dependants are any adult who is not dependant on the claimant or their partner who is not liable for the payment of council tax, such as a grown-up son or daughter, a friend or relative. NDD's are a deduction from the weekly eligible CT charge to represent a notional amount the ND would be contributing to the household for expenses including CT.

The majority of customers do not have any non-dependant deductions, either because they are disabled and require care or the ND is disabled and unable to contribute to the cost.

There are currently 72 WA customers who have NDD's ranging from £4.20 to £12.85 per week.

The proposal is to increase the rate for those out of work to £5.00 (currently £4.20) and £10.00 for all others

This equates to reductions in entitlement:

Vulnerable of £1,249

Employed £624.

Other £1,123.

Total saving for the year £2,996.

#### **1.4 REMOVAL OF ADDITIONAL EARNINGS DISREGRD**

Currently a customer working 30 hours or 16 hours if a lone parent is entitled to a £17.10 additional earnings disregard (AED). This was to encourage work and offset the additional amount in working tax credit. However, UC is replacing WTC and the data shared by DWP does not include the number of hours a customer is working.

Modelling indicates there are 97 customers who are currently working and getting the AED are - 39 Vulnerable and 58 Employed. If we extended the removal of the AED to all groups now this would equate to a saving of £17,671 and because of the minimum weekly award 5 vulnerable and 16 working age employed would no longer be entitled to any CTS.

Therefore, to ensure customers on UC get the CTS they are entitled to quickly and efficiently, the proposal is to remove this disregard for those on UC only from April 2023 onwards.

This equates to reductions in entitlement:

Vulnerable of £5,886.

Employed £11,785.

Other £0.00

Total saving for the year £17,671

To compensate some of this loss we could increase the minimum weekly entitlement to £5.00 per week for the working age group.

This equates to reductions in entitlement:

Vulnerable of £5,886.

Employed £6,565.

Other £0.00

Total saving for the year £12,451

## **1.5 PRINCIPLES OF A BANDED CTS SCHEME**

A banded scheme looks at the resident's household income and make-up in order to apply a percentage reduction or a maximum amount to pay. As income changes these become less likely to result in change to the council tax support, and subsequently a change to their council tax liability.

It operates in a similar way to the existing pension age second adult rebate scheme, but with the added element of an assessment of the ability to pay based on household composition and disability.

### **ADVANTAGES OF BANDED SCHEMES**

- These schemes are much simpler to understand and explain.
- Residents can see more clearly much they will receive.
- Those residents who have changes in their household incomes, are less likely to see a change in their entitlement as they move up and down within the income band.
- It can encourage work as residents who are able to work and earn more can do so without necessarily seeing a corresponding increase in their council tax liability.
- Provides an opportunity to remove the need for a claim form from UC claimants.
- Provides an opportunity to stop sending award notices on every occasion, and rely on the council tax demand notice to show the award of CTS.
- Linking the household income to Universal Credit income simplifies the administration and allows for more automation of the claiming and entitlement process.
- It reduces the need to rebill customers when there is a change of household income of more than 4pence per week\*. This in turn leads to improved collection rates as payment profiles are reset less frequently.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF BANDED SCHEMES**

- Bands can create cliff edges for those at the edges, and so a small increase or decrease in household income can result in a larger change in entitlement, than would have resulted in the existing means test benefit.
- Can discourage residents from reporting changes, if they think they are within the parameters of a band.
- There remains a need to record every change in household income as accumulative changes could result in tipping the customer from one band into the next.

## 1.6 Council Tax Base

We currently have 37,603 dwellings in the Valuation list, but we know that some of those are exempt and have discounts like the 25% single person disregard. Therefore, not every household contributes the full amount. The council tax base calculation is the calculation of the number of dwellings in the borough converted to a Band D equivalent, after discounts, exemptions and council tax support.

The council tax we ask people to pay is calculated by establishing the budget requirement divided by the council tax base.

This is what happens to council tax due if the tax base is reduced by CTS:

Total number of band D equivalents after allowance for council tax support	35,182
Band D @ 98% collection rate	34,478.36
Add number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu	45.8
Revised Tax base after allowance for council tax support	34,524.16
RBC Band D to raise £6,198,784	£179.55

If we increase the CTS by £45,760 to extend entitlement to those in Bands F to H, that means there are now 34,501.8 Band D equivalents.


This would mean the council tax would have to rise to £179.67 an increase of 12 pence on Band D to cover the additional entitlement.

In effect we have two choices, increase council tax by more to offset the reduction in tax base, which is the default calculation in regulations, or to reduce the budget to reflect less money coming in.

## Examples

### Option 2 De-minimis

#### Option 2: De minimis Scheme example


	Sally – receives Universal Credit and is in the Working Age Vulnerable group			With a de minimis level of £3.25 Sally would have 5 benefit periods:		
	01-APR-2021	09-MAY-2021	19.96	01-APR-2021	16-MAY-2021	19.96
	10-MAY-2021	16-MAY-2021	19.96	17-MAY-2021	15-AUG-2021	13.42
	17-MAY-2021	20-JUN-2021	13.42	16-AUG-2021	17-OCT-2021	8.53
	21-JUN-2021	18-JUL-2021	11.97	18-OCT-2021	13-FEB-2022	15.14
	19-JUL-2021	15-AUG-2021	13.67	14-FEB-2022	31-MAR-2022	10.04
	16-AUG-2021	05-SEP-2021	8.53			
	06-SEP-2021	19-SEP-2021	8.53			
	20-SEP-2021	17-OCT-2021	10.86			
	18-OCT-2021	21-NOV-2021	15.14			
	22-NOV-2021	19-DEC-2021	12.85			
	20-DEC-2021	13-FEB-2022	12.93			
	14-FEB-2022	31-MAR-2022	10.04			
	<b>Sally's annual Council Tax Support is £723.57</b>			<b>Sally's annual Council Tax Support would be £739.27</b>		

### Option 3 Banded


#### Option 3: Income Banded Scheme for Runnymede

Band	Vulnerable	Maximum award	Band	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Maximum award
1	£0 - £349.99	90%	1	£0 - £184.99	£0 - £209.99	80%
2	£350 - £449.99	70%	2	£185 - £264.99	£210 - £374.99	60%
3	£450 - £549.99	50%	3	£265 - £334.99	£375 - £399.99	40%
4	£550 - £629.99	36%	4	£335 - £479.99	£400 - £484.99	35%
5	Income above maximum £630	0%	5	Income above maximum £480	Income above maximum £485	0%

#### Option 3: Banded income scheme modelling Worse off

	Salvia – receives Universal Credit and is in the Working Age Other group			With a Banded income scheme Salvia would have 1 benefit period:		
	01-APR-2021	02-MAY-2021	22.57	01-APR-2021	13-OCT-2021	17.34
	03-MAY-2021	04-JUL-2021	22.25			
	05-JUL-2021	08-AUG-2021	22.45			
	09-AUG-2021	05-SEP-2021	23.12			
	06-SEP-2021	13-OCT-2021	22.45			
	14-OCT-2021	31-MAR-2022	0.00			
	<b>Salvia's annual Council Tax Support is £619.72</b>			<b>Sally's annual Council Tax Support would be £485.22</b>		

#### Option 3: Banded income scheme modelling no change

	Dave - Working Age Vulnerable current CTS award £23.12 per week					
	Contributory ESA	£74.70				
	ESA Support Group	£39.40				
	PIP Daily Living Enhanced	£89.60 disregarded				
	PIP Mobility Enhanced	£62.55 disregarded				
	Universal Credit	£40.16				
					Total assessable Income	£154.26
	Income Band £0 - £349.99 = 90%					
	CT weekly liability for main CTS £25.69					
	New CTS award £23.12 per week					
<b>Dave's annual Council Tax Support is £1,202.24 and would remain £1,202.24 under this Banded Income scheme</b>						

### Option 3: Banded income scheme modelling Better off



Dee – receives Universal Credit and is in the Working Age employed group

01-APR-2021	25-APR-2021	12.83
26-APR-2021	26-SEP-2021	11.22
27-SEP-2021	31-MAR-2022	12.83

Dee's annual Council Tax Support is **£633.57**

With a Banded income scheme Dee would have 1 benefit periods:

01-APR-2021	31-MAR-2022	13.48
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Dee's annual Council Tax Support would be **£702.88**

### Option 4 Universal Credit data share

### Option 4: Non-dependant deductions worse off Example



Tina Lives with two non-dependants. Her current CTS is £26.78.

Helen Gets ESA Main Phase Income Related and the ESA Support Group, with PIP Daily Living Enhanced and PIP Mobility Enhance. She is exempt from a NDD



Tom

For 10 hours work he earns £129.78. Tom's earnings means there is a £4.20 NDD. This would change to £10.00 and Tina's entitlement would reduce to £20.98. Annual Council Tax Support was £1,392.56, now £1,093.96

### Option 4: Non-dependant deductions Better off Example



Hayley lives with a non-dependant Eric and currently gets £18.38 CTS per week.



Eric earns £744.62, this means there is a £12.85 NDD.

This would change to £10.00 and Hayley's entitlement would increase to £21.23.

Annual Council Tax Support was £955.76, now £1,106.99

### Option 4: Removal of Additional Earnings Disregard



Gary – receives Universal Credit and is in the Working Age employed group

01-APR-2021	25-APR-2021	12.83
26-APR-2021	26-SEP-2021	11.22
27-SEP-2021	31-MAR-2022	12.83

Gary's annual Council Tax Support is **£633.57**

With the removal of the additional earning disregard Gary's entitlement would change to £9.41 but with the increased minimum to £5 instead of £10 he would

01-APR-2021	31-MAR-2022	£9.41
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Gary's annual Council Tax Support would be **£490.66**



## **Runnymede Joint Committee – Constitution Changes (Law and Governance- Mario Leo/Bernard Fleckney)**

### **Synopsis of report:**

**To amend the Joint Committee constitution to reflect the transfer of SCC executive highway functions from Local and Joint Committees.**

### **Recommendation(s):**

**Recommend to Full Council that the Runnymede Joint Committee be updated to reflect the transfer of executive highway functions from its remit.**

## **1. Context and background of report**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 22 February 2022, SCC Cabinet agreed to transfer the SCC highways functions from the remit of the Local Joint Committees
- 1.2 Cabinet approved changes to the way that executive highway functions decisions are taken, transferring them from Local and Joint Committees to enable Officers to take such decisions in more direct consultation with the relevant members. These changes took effect from April 2022 and sit alongside the development of new engagement methods and tools to enable Members and Officers to reach out more effectively to residents.
- 1.3 The following will therefore be removed from Section B delegated Powers of the Runnymede Joint Constitution:

### Decisions in relation to highways and infrastructure:

- a. The allocation of the Surrey County Council highway capital budget and highway revenue budget which are devolved to the Joint Committee for minor highway improvements and highway maintenance within the Committee's area including the scope to use a proportion of either budget to facilitate local highways initiatives (SCC).
- b. To allocate funds to review on-street parking management, including local on-street parking charges where appropriate and to approve the statutory advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) relating to on-street parking controls (SCC).
- c. To agree local speed limits on County Council roads within its area, and to approve the statutory advertisement of speed limit orders, taking into account the advice of the Surrey Police Road Safety and Traffic Management Team and with regard to the County Council Speed Limit Policy (SCC).
- d. To approve the statutory advertisement of all legal orders or appropriate notifications relating to highway schemes within the delegated powers of the Joint Committee (SCC).
- e. Where, under delegated powers, the Parking Strategy and Implementation Team Manager or Highways Area Team Manager has chosen to refer the decision on whether a TRO should be made to the Joint Committee, the Committee will make that decision (SCC).

- f. To consider applications for stopping up a highway under section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 when, following the consent of RBC, unresolved objections have been received during the period of statutory public advertisement, and to decide whether the application should proceed to the Magistrates' Court (SCC).

2. **Legal Considerations**

- 2.1 The Runnymede Joint Committee is a joint committee of SCC and RBC and is set up under the provisions of section 102 of the Local Government act 1972

3. **Other implications**

- 3.1 There are no other implications arising from these changes.

4. **Conclusion**

- 4.1 Council be recommended to update the Runnymede Joint Constitution to reflect the above-mentioned changes.

(To recommend to full Council on 21 July 2022)

**Background papers**

Confirmatory email from SCC dated 13 May 2022

**RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL****CONSULTATION WITH APPROPRIATE CHAIRMAN AND VICE- CHAIRMAN FOR URGENT ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER STANDING ORDER 42**

**TO: Councillors  
Chairman and Vice- Chairman of the Corporate Management Committee**

**FROM: Linda Norman**

**OFFICER REFERENCE: Sec13a Local Discount      DATE: 16 May 2022**

**1. Synopsis of report:**

To create a Local Council Tax discount under Section 13A (1) (C) equivalent to any potential loss of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) that could arise by Sponsors receiving the monthly £350 'Thankyou payment' under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Whilst regulations have been laid to disregard this payment in calculating Housing Benefit entitlement, under the Council's LCTS scheme, this has not been included as the scheme was approved prior to the Government announcing its intention. Regulations do not allow for changes mid-year to Local Council Tax Support schemes and therefore the Government have introduced subsequent legislation that allows councils to introduce a local discount equivalent to the loss of LCTS. The Collection Fund (Council Tax Reductions) (England) Directions 2022 will allow for the exclusion of any discretionary discounts which are as a result of offsetting lost LCTS due to the Homes for Ukraine scheme from the requirement to transfer the level of discounts awarded under S13A(1)(c) from General Fund to Collection Fund.

**2. Reasons why this matter cannot wait for a Committee Decision.  
(Please state if agreement of Chairman and Vice-Chairman required within 24 hours, and why)**

The Council is committed to supporting the Homes for Ukraine scheme and already have Ukrainian refugees staying with Sponsors who are in receipt of Council Tax Support. It is therefore important to create this local discount and implement it as quickly as possible to ensure those Sponsors who are supporting refugees are not adversely affected whilst the Council goes through the democratic process of implementing this discount. The Government are expecting Local Authorities to create such schemes as quickly as possible and have passed enabling legislation to facilitate this through Section 13A (1) (C)

**3. Recommendation(s)**

To create a Local Council Tax discount under Section 13A (1) (C) equivalent to any potential loss of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) that could potentially arise by having the £350 'Thank you payment' under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

#### 4. Context of report

When announcing Homes for Ukraine on 14 March 2022, the Secretary of State indicated that the scheme would not affect the sponsor's benefits or council tax status.

On 11 April 2022, the Government laid regulations which made the following changes:

- Amending the Council Tax (Additional Provisions for Discount Disregards) Regulations 1992 so that a person who has secured a visa under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme is disregarded for council tax discounts. This will protect the sponsor's single person discount and the 50% discount received by any households where all the occupants are already disregarded.
- b) Amending the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 so that there is no loss of an exemption where a household hosts a person who has secured a visa under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme.

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 ('the 1992 Act') does not permit in-year changes to billing authorities' LCTS schemes. Therefore, for the 2022/23 year, it is not possible to ignore the £350 monthly thank you payment when calculating an LCTS for the host household and this will result in less LCTS being awarded.

To protect the LCTS reduction of the host household, the Government wishes to encourage billing authorities to offset any Homes for Ukraine-related changes in Council Tax Support through discretionary discounts made under s13A(1)(c) of the 1992 Act.

To facilitate this, the Government has revoked the Collection Fund (Council Tax reductions) (England) Directions 2013 and replaced them with directions specifying that where a discount is provided to offset an increase in liability resulting from a Homes for Ukraine thank you payment or non-dependant deduction no billing authority payment need be made into the collection fund.

All other provisions in the directions will remain unchanged. The net impact of this measure will be that billing authorities and major preceptors will receive the same amount of income as if there had been no Homes for Ukraine-related impact on the LCTS claim during 2022-23. Persons arriving from Ukraine via the Homes for Ukraine and other schemes will have access to local council tax support in cases of financial hardship and it will be open to billing authorities to provide discretionary discounts where they consider this appropriate.

## 5. Report and, where applicable, options considered

As the Council is committed to supporting the Homes for Ukraine scheme, a local discount needs to be created to offset any reduction in LCTS that may occur due to a sponsor receiving the £350 'thank you' payment as part of their income allowance when calculating entitlement to LCTS. To not create a local discount to cover this anomaly between the Housing Benefit Regulations and Runnymede's LCTS scheme is not a viable option that Runnymede should consider.

Legislation has been laid to facilitate the introduction of this discount with no loss of income to the billing authority or preceptors involved. The decision for the Council is simple. It should create a local discount under existing powers to ensure there is no loss of LCTS to a sponsor family. The amount of discount required will be equivalent to the reduction of LCTS lost.

The Government have already made provision for a statutory discount to protect a sponsors 25% single person discount by amending The Council Tax (Discount Disregards and Exempt Dwellings) (Amendment) (England) Order 2022 (SI 2022/439) and The Collection Fund (Council Tax Reductions) (England) Directions 2022 have been published.

The SI adds a new class of "persons of other descriptions" to the list of those disregarded under The Council Tax (Additional Provisions for Discount Disregards) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/552) so that a person who holds permission to stay in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme is disregarded for council tax purposes.

In addition, for properties which are exempt under any of the classes B, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, L, Q or T any occupation by a person under the Homes for Ukraine scheme is disregarded.

Changes have also been made to classes N, S and U to also include anyone who is occupying under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

The Council needs to approve the creation of a local discount 'Ukraine Sponsor Discretionary Council Tax Reduction' equivalent to loss of LCTS when considering the £350 thank you payment as income.

## 6. Policy framework implications

- This policy underpins the Council's Corporate Theme of 'Supporting Local People'
- This policy underpins the Council's commitment to supporting the Governments Homes for Ukraine scheme

## 7. Financial and Resource implications (where practicable)

Software is being developed from the Council's Revenues and Benefits Supplier (NEC) to be able to administer both the statutory discounts and a local discount. The cost is expected to be offset by the £10,500 per refugee that the Government is providing.

The cost of the discount will be covered by The Collection Fund (Council Tax Reductions) (England) Directions 2022

## 8. Legal implications

The Government have already made provision for a statutory discount to protect a sponsors 25% single person discount by amending The Council Tax (Discount Disregards and Exempt Dwellings) (Amendment) (England) Order 2022 (SI 2022/439) and The Collection Fund (Council Tax Reductions) (England) Directions 2022 have been published.

The SI adds a new class of "persons of other descriptions" to the list of those disregarded under The Council Tax (Additional Provisions for Discount Disregards) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/552) so that a person who holds permission to stay in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme is disregarded for council tax purposes.

The creation of this local discount is covered by Section 13A (1) (C)

9. **Equality implications**

By creating a local discount equivalent to any potential loss of LCTS, will have a positive impact on any resident with protected characteristics

10. **Other implications (Environmental/biodiversity/ sustainability must be addressed)**

There are none

11. **Background papers**

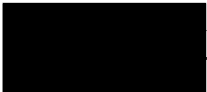
There are none

12. **Chief Officer(s) Decision**

Signature of authorised officer .....Linda Norman.. 

I have been consulted and agree with the above

Signature(s) and position(s) of other relevant Chief Officer, Corporate Heads or authorised representatives

 AMANDA FAHEY : ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE ..

**NB:** this must include the Assistant Chief Executive or his authorised representative where the decision involves expenditure, loss of income, or future implications for budget or financial forecast.

13. **Chief Executive's Decision**

Signature of Chief Executive 

I have been consulted and agree with the above

14. **Chairman and Vice-Chairman Comments**

I concur in the Chief Officer's decision

Signed 

Date 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Signed 

Date 18 May 2022

I have the following further comments:

**Exclusion of Press and Public  
Officers' Recommendation that –**

**the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following reports under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the reports in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

**(To resolve)**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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