

Runnymede Borough Council**Corporate Management Committee****Thursday, 13 October 2022 at 7.30 pm**

Members of the Committee present: Councillors T Gracey (Chairman), C Howorth (Vice-Chair), L Gillham, J Gracey, N King, R King, I Mullens, M Nuti, N Prescott (Substitute, in place of M Heath), D Whyte and M Willingale.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor M Cressey.

258 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2022 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

259 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr M Cressey.

260 Declarations of Interest

None.

261 Talent Management Strategy

The Corporate Head of HR and Organisational Development reported that the Talent Management Strategy followed on from the Organisational Development Strategy and sought to develop the Council's existing workforce and attract new staff.

The strategy advocated a blended approach between exclusive and inclusive, and some of the key areas included the creation of a graduate programme, along with having a high potential talent programme for rising stars within the organisation, which would involve the creation of a development programme and sponsorship of professional qualifications.

The strategy had been an agenda item several times at the last municipal year's HR Member Working Party, and was also presented to the HR & Staff Wellbeing Member Working Party at its meeting earlier in the week.

The Chair of the HR & Staff Wellbeing Member Working Party confirmed that its meetings would have a firm focus on recruitment and retention going forward, and commended the workstreams within the strategy.

Resolved that –

The Talent Management Strategy was approved.

262 Appointment to Outside Bodies - Third Canvas

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.

This was the third canvas for Members to apply for outside body appointments, yet a handful of vacancies remained.

The Committee Chair instructed the Corporate Head of Law & Governance not to instigate a fourth canvas to try and fill the remaining vacancies, however, it was reported on the night that an email trail had revealed that Cllr Nigel King had volunteered to fill the position of Deputy for the Heathrow Noise & Airspace Community Forum, which the Corporate Head of Law & Governance accepted.

Resolved that –

The nominations to outside bodies were approved.

263 **Calendar of Meetings**

Corporate Management Committee considered the calendar of meetings for 2023/24, which broadly followed the same pattern from previous year and avoided the school holidays.

A Member queried the quick turnaround between the election of new Councillors and the first full Council meeting of the municipal year being less than a fortnight apart, however the Committee Chair felt that having a larger gap would both delay the nomination to Committees and potentially have a knock-on effect on Committee dates, and also send the wrong message to residents.

Democratic Services would consider sending out placeholders for Member Working Parties for 2023/24, with details of those meetings to be firmed up closer to the time. It was emphasised that Member Working Parties took place in private and may lead to confusion if the dates were released to the public.

The Chair of the Planning Committee confirmed he was happy to address any concerns about briefings taking place immediately after Planning Committee meetings.

A Member highlighted the recently announced Bank Holiday in May 2023 and the possible impact that would have on dates.

Resolved that –

The calendar of meetings for 2023/24 was recommended to full Council.

264 **Casework Tracking Software for Members and Officers**

The Head of Digital Innovation advised that following a request from two Members under Standing Order 27.4 of the Council's constitution, Digital Services had researched casework tracking software with a view to assisting Members in serving the residents and businesses of the borough.

Three options were presented to the Committee to achieve this:

- a) Improve the status quo: Members already had access to several IT software applications through the Council's Microsoft licenses. Training and guidance could be provided to help Members fully harness the potential of these applications.
- b) Purchase a new system: this would be tailor built and indicative costs had suggested this would be around £25,000.
- c) Developing the Council's own system utilising its CRM function. This would be the quickest and cheapest option and was recommended by officers.

The proposed timeline would be six weeks to work with Members and Officers to gather requirements, followed by an eight week build within the digital platform, followed by testing, meaning an approximate three-and-a-half-month lead in time.

In the event this was approved, the Head of Digital Innovation asked for nominations for a Task and Finish Group.

Whilst acknowledging that the initial growth request was negligible, the Committee Chair felt that the timing of the matter was not appropriate given that all growth bids would be considered as part of the budget setting process, whilst using OneNote and MS Teams to track tasks and integrate into Outlook was considered a suitable workaround.

A Member highlighted the need for the software by advising that when an officer leaves a role it can often be challenging to track existing casework, which can lead to Member frustration in having to repeat the same information to different officers and effectively return to square one. Furthermore, data could be extracted more quickly and be available for cross-Council incidents and a clear timeframe could be established for responses.

Several Members also spoke of the benefit of Microsoft Power Apps, however the Head of Digital Innovation advised that whilst possible, building this in to the system would be a much longer lead-in time.

Several Members advised they had not been aware of a need for an app to track casework, and suggested that the matter went to the Communication & Digital Transformation Member Working Party to fully assess the need.

A named vote was requested on the item and the voting was as follows:

For (8):

Cllrs T Gracey, Howorth, Gillham, J Gracey, N King, Nuti, Prescott, Willingale

Against (3):

Cllrs R King, Mullens, D Whyte

Resolved that –

The casework tracking software for Members and Officers was deferred to the Communication & Digital Transformation Member Working Party to assess the need.

265 Improving Online "Report It" Services

The Head of Digital Innovation advised that following a request from two Members under Standing Order 27.4 of the Council's constitution, Digital Services had looked into options for improving the Council's online reporting services.

It was acknowledged that since the launch of the Council's new website in August 2021 the current options for residents to report matters to the Council was not at the desired level, and a new solution would help to streamline the process.

Work had been ongoing behind the scenes to integrate the Council's mapping solution, and subject to Committee approval a pilot would be rolled out in November to enable the reporting of fly tipping to go into the CRM system and immediately logged. This would be a significant improvement on the current arrangement and longer-term it was hoped to roll this out to other matters such as reporting graffiti or dead animals.

The system could also signpost users to neighbouring boroughs where applicable, and the Head of Digital Innovation confirmed to a Member that an in-house application could be

feasible in future, although scoping work would be required to establish cost.

The Head of Digital Innovation confirmed that Customer Services would have access to the system and would be able to log issues on a resident's behalf, and this would be made clear on the webpage. Furthermore, issues reported would remain on the mapping system for 30 days to prevent duplicate issues being reported.

Resolved that –

1. The options available to improve our online “Report It” services were noted.

2. The progress made on developing our own online “Report It” services using Runnymede Maps was noted.

3. The direction of travel was noted in supporting Digital Services to continue to build on the development work with plans in place to roll out the new model for:

- o **Bus shelters**
- o **Dead animals**
- o **Graffiti**
- o **Public bins**
- o **Dog poo bins**
- o **Street furniture**

266 **Urgent Item - SO42**

The Committee Chair reported on the actions and budgetary implication taken following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Committee thanked Officers for the work undertaken, particularly preparing the area where the cortege passed through the borough.

The Chief Executive added that attempts were being made through a county-wide bid to recover some or all of the associated costs.

A Member asked that residents were made aware that it was necessary to cancel bin collections on the day of the funeral due to the work undertaken by refuse collectors on Runnymede Meadows rather than because they had the day off, and suggested thanking Officers involved in proceedings via the Council website.

267 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting during the consideration of the remaining matters 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.

268 **Grounds Maintenance Project Spend**

The Corporate Head of Environmental Services reported that the Grounds Maintenance project team had requested approval for the procurement route and awarding of contracts from within an approved capital budget in order to purchase equipment, machinery and vehicles for the Council's Grounds Maintenance Service.

The Chair of Environment and Sustainability Committee added that whilst a number of the vehicles it was proposed to purchase were diesel engines, it was hoped to move to HVO fuel further down the line. It was also hoped to move to EV vehicles once the necessary

infrastructure was in place to support this.

A Member asked about what was currently known about the scale of what Surrey County Council plan to bring in-house, and the impact on the capital budget, and officers advised that the first meeting with on the subject was in the coming days. There was concern from some Members that details had not been shared at Community Services Committee.

When asked about the prospect of leasing rather than purchasing vehicles to provide more flexibility about when the Council could move to EVs, the Corporate Head of Environmental Services advised that there would be the option of selling the vehicles, whilst second-hand vehicles were also under consideration.

The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of approving the spend in order to be ready for the new season, and offered to take Members through the economics of the spend to reassure residents that value for money was being achieved.

Resolved that –

Approval was given to award contract(s) for the purchase of equipment, machinery and vehicles. Required equipment, plant, machinery and vehicles would be procured subject to a further competition procurement exercise using two frameworks.

269 **Q2 Project Portfolio Report**

The Committee was provided with a progress update on the delivery of the project portfolio up to the end of the second quarter of the municipal year.

Three projects had been delivered within the quarter, six projects were at risk due to two or more indicators not being green within the project's RAG status. Mitigation plans were in place for some of those.

Three projects had an agreed completion date change and from the resulting re-baselining were now reporting green within the RAG status, and twelve projects were reporting good progress and were on track, and four projects had commenced within the quarter. Two projects had been moved to 'on hold'.

A Member commended officers for the completion of Magna Square, but commented on the lack of car club space. The Head of Assets & Regeneration advised that the electric points were now live but there was a bottleneck on the supply of vehicles.

The Committee Chair added that the school transport initiative had been reported to the recent Community Services Committee, and ahead of going to next week's full Council advised that any funds saved as a result of the proposed recommendation would be retained within the Community Services budget for use on projects supporting youth and leisure, as well as recreation facilities across the borough.

A Member asked about the impact of the work coming out of the Corporate Plan on the project portfolio, and was advised that many of the items identified would be actions or standalone items rather than projects.

The Housing Committee Chairman noted that there were more projects from Housing than any other service, all of which were on track and on budget.

Resolved that –

1. Project updates for the thirteen grade A and thirteen grade B projects ranging through the initiation to execution stages were noted

2. The One Programme update was noted.

3. Key project achievements over the second quarter of 2022/23 for the months of July, August, and September were noted.

4. Project execution was noted.

270 **HR and Payroll Procurement Update**

The Head of Digital Innovation reminded Committee that approval for the budget and procurement of the Council's new HR and Payroll integrated system was approved in February 2022.

The procurement exercise failed to identify a sufficient range of supplier tenders, and Procurement Project Board desired more choice to ensure value for money, therefore the contract was not awarded with a view to retendering later in the year.

Following the outcome of the original procurement approach, and taking into consideration all findings and lessons learned, it was recommended to use a framework to procure the HR and Payroll integrated solution. An additional capital outlay was being requested as part of this process.

Further lessons learnt had revealed that the cost for ongoing maintenance and support was too low, a supplementary estimate was therefore being requested to reflect supplier feedback and expectations.

The Chair of the HR and Staff Wellbeing Member Working Party emphasised the importance of the IT upgrade, which would have huge benefits once implemented, adding that the Working Party had looked into the prospect of joint working but it would not be desirable to tie the Council down to a particular system and the ambition should be for other authorities to bid to join Runnymede rather than the other way round.

Resolved that –

1. The outcome of the original procurement exercise using the 'Find a Tender Service' for a HR and Payroll integrated system was noted.

2. The revised procurement approach to procure the HR and Payroll integrated system using the Crown Commercial Services Gcloud framework was approved.

3. An additional capital budget for the implementation of the HR and Payroll system was approved, taking the total capital budget to be drawn down from the pre-approved capital provision held in the Capital Programme.

4. A second supplementary revenue estimate for the ongoing systems licensing, support, and maintenance was approved.

5. Delegated authority to Assistant Chief Executive (S151 Officer) was approved in consultation with the Chair of the HR and Staff Wellbeing Member Working Party and the Chair and Vice Chair of Corporate Management Committee for the Council to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer for the provision of a HR and Payroll integrated system.

271 **Procurement of Agency Services Across the Investment Portfolio**

The Corporate Head of Assets and Regeneration was seeking approval for the

procurement of a commercial and residential agency to provide advice on the running of the commercial portfolio.

A number of different agents were currently utilised to work with the Council on lettings, rent reviews and basic agency advice.

Whilst no growth was being requested for the procurement, financial regulations required Committee approval due to the value being requested.

The service was intended to provide a one-stop service around agency advice across all sectors with the intention of drawing out value across the Council's portfolio.

The desired expertise from market specialists meant that it would not be economic to carry that experience in-house, and the expertise could be drawn upon any time and would save valuable time for the Assets & Regeneration team.

The Committee chair asked about the consequences of the contract value going over budget, and the Corporate Head of Assets & Regeneration advised that such a scenario would be reported back to Corporate Management Committee as an over-spend, however the budget would be monitored closely.

Furthermore, whilst there was a value on the contract, it was potential rather than committed spend and the outlay would be done on a schedule of rates that was largely linked to rent reviews.

A Member asked about the prospect of DLUHC asking the Council to divest some of its investments, and the Committee Chair advised that even if that was the case the Council would still have sufficient properties to manage to make the spend worthwhile.

The Chief Executive added that an asset management review had been instigated, however spend in recent years might be misleading for comparison purposes as it was unlikely to be comparable against what's coming up due to a cluster of leases coming to an end.

Resolved that –

The Committee approved the procurement of Commercial and Residential agency/professional services through an appropriate framework that specialises in these fields.

272 **Proposed Letting at Addlestone One**

The Corporate Head of Assets and Regeneration recommended the letting of part of a unit at Addlestone One to a franchise business, who had suggested they would consider the letting of a unit in Egham subject to the success of this letting.

The letting would offer a diverse option to Addlestone One, and would further cement the scheme as a leisure destination, adding to the vitality and viability of the development, as well as adding to the critical mass to attract further businesses to the scheme.

A Member raised concerns about the potential delay of utility companies accessing the location and the knock-on impact this could have on rent, the Corporate Head of Assets & Regeneration acknowledged the issue and advised that the tenant would be signed up to a meter at the earliest possible opportunity, although stressed that utility work was beyond the Council's control.

Resolved that –

1. Committee approved the outline terms for the letting of part of Unit 6 at Addlestone One.

2. Committee approved the costs to split the unit, which would be taken from the capital budget for the Addlestone One scheme.

(The meeting ended at 9.34 pm.)

Chairman