

Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 28 March 2023

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors Kate Chinn, Monica Coleman, Liz Frost, David Gulland, Graham Jones, Colin Keane, Eber Kington and Alan Williamson

In Attendance: Councillor Steven McCormick

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Andrew Bircher (Interim Director of Corporate Services), Victoria Potts (Interim Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration), Chris Anderson (Head of IT), Brendan Bradley (Head of Finance), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Tony Foxwell (Senior Surveyor) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

53 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked by members of the public.

54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

55 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 26 January 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

56 PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2023-24

The Committee received a report providing an update on the current financial year's approved 2022-23 planned maintenance programme and requesting approval for the planned maintenance programme for the next financial year 2023-24.

The following matters were considered:

- **External funding.** Following a question from a member, the Senior Surveyor informed the Committee that officers would continue to seek funding from external sources for works to reduce CO₂ emissions.
- **Correction to report, Bourne Hall and Playhouse lighting replacement.** The Committee noted a correction to a typing error on page 13 of the agenda. The proposed works should read: "Replacement lighting with high efficiency LED lights to the remaining locations." (correction in bold and underlined).

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the progress and anticipated spend at the end of the current year 2022-23 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- (2) **Note the additional emergency works raised and carried out in the 2022-23 planned maintenance programme.**
- (3) **Approve the 2023-24 planned maintenance programme at an estimated cost of £539,000 as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.**
- (4) **Subject to the Council's financial and contract requirements, to delegate authority to the Head of Property and Regeneration to make changes within the 2023-24 planned maintenance programme to cover unforeseen matters (such as tender price variances) of up to, but not exceeding £20,000.**
- (5) **To agree to transfer the unspent budgets back to the Planned Maintenance Reserve at the end of the financial year.**

57 IT STRATEGY

The Committee received a report providing details of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Information Technology Strategy for 2023 and beyond. The report sought the Committee's agreement to a revised and more detailed IT Strategy and IT Roadmap being submitted for approval later in 2023.

The following matters were considered:

- **Blockchain ledger technology.** Following a question from a member, the Head of IT informed the Committee that the adoption of blockchain ledger technology would be considered by officers.
- **Councillor devices.** The Committee was informed that councillors would be provided with the option of either a laptop or tablet device following the elections in May 2023.
- **Website.** In response to a question, the Head of IT informed the committee that resourcing the works contained within the IT strategy would be challenging. The Committee was informed of the staged

approach which would be taken to update the public website, including an increased use of the My Council Services portal.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 8 votes for and 2 abstentions to:

- (1) Agree the draft IT Strategy and the associated plan to invest in a programme of works as set out in the draft IT Roadmap. The works to include; a refresh of end user devices for councillors and officers, a programme of works to update infrastructure, and transformational projects to improve and increase online services to residents.**
- (2) Approve the indicative funding implications for delivering the defined IT Roadmap in 2023-2024 as set out in table 1 of the report, these being; the carry forward of unspent 2022/23 capital funding of £215k and new capital funding for 2023/24 of £225k (which is inclusive of an additional £15k in order to complete the Member device refresh).**

58 ANNUAL PLAN 2023/24

The Committee received a report asking it to approve the annual plan for the council for 2023-2024.

The following matters were considered:

- **Service delivery plans.** The Committee noted that the Annual Plan contained 22 high level actions and was supported by a set of service delivery plans which provided more specific targets across the council's activities. In response to a query from a member, it was confirmed that work to review the Council's constitution was included in the service delivery plan for the Interim Director of Corporate Services.
- **Identification of business start-up premises.** The Committee noted that this action had been carried forward from 2022-23.
- **TRN definition.** The Committee noted that the abbreviation "TRN" used in the Annual Plan related to Tree Replacement Notices.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 7 votes for, 2 abstentions and the Chair not voting to:

- (1) Approve the annual plan shown at Appendix 1 to the report for the year 2023-24.**

59 ENDING THE WORK OF THE CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report bringing the work of the Constitutional Working group to an end under Strategy and Resources Committee and transferring the responsibility for this work to Standards and Constitution Committee.

The following matter was considered:

- **Thanks to Officers.** The Committee requested that it's thanks to officers for their work to support the Constitutional Working Group be recorded in the Minutes.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Thank the members of the Constitutional Working Group for their work in preparing the amended documents approved at Council on the 14th February; and**
- (2) Transfer responsibility for the continuation of Constitutional updates to the Standards and Constitution committee**

60 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee resolved with 8 votes for, 1 abstention and the Chair not voting to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

61 COMMERCIAL TENANT UPDATE

The decision on this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

62 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY UPDATE

The decision on this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.29 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)