

## **EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 18 November 2021

### **Present:**

Councillor Christopher Marlow (Chairman)  
Councillor Kira Gabbert (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Yvonne Bear, Nicholas Bennett MA J.P.,  
David Cartwright QFSM, Mary Cooke, Nicky Dykes,  
Colin Hitchins, Simon Jeal, Melanie Stevens,  
Michael Tickner, Pauline Tunnicliffe and Angela Wilkins

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Michael Rutherford, Portfolio Holder for  
Resources, Commissioning and Contracts Management  
Councillor Colin Smith, Leader of the Council

#### **51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Robert Evans. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Angela Wilkins.

#### **52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **53 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

No questions were received.

#### **54 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2021 (EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2021, were agreed, and signed as a correct record.

#### **55 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD21131**

The report dealt with the Committee's business management including the proposed work plan for the remainder of the year.

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The Chairman reported that the 5 Year Biggin Hill Airport NAP review had been deferred until the January 2022 meeting as it had proved necessary to engage external counsel to ensure that certain legal questions could be fully dealt with to enable formal consideration of the NAP.

The Vice-Chairman sought two additional volunteers for the Housing and Capital Finance Task and Finish Group.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Director of Finance confirmed that the national spending review had not included any specific funding for the impact of Covid in 2022/23. Going forward, Budget Monitoring Reports would include information on the ongoing impact of Covid and more detailed information would be provided in the draft budget report.

The Committee noted that the revised post-Brexit procurement legislation had not been included in the Parliamentary timetable until 2023.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

## **56 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Key Decisions covering the period October 2021 to January 2022.

## **57 RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING AND CONTRACTS MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered the following reports where the Resources, Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision:

### **a TREASURY MANAGEMENT - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE 2021/22 AND MID-YEAR REVIEW Report FSD21067**

The report summarised treasury management activity during the second quarter of 2021/22 and included a mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy. The report ensured that the Council was implementing best practice in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management. Investments as at 30 September 2021 totalled £427.6m (£373.3m at 30 September 2020) and there was no external borrowing.

In opening the discussion, the Chairman confirmed that he was supportive of the recommendations relating to Sovereign Bonds.

In response to a question from the Chairman concerning variations in the counterparty limits for different banks, the Director of Finance explained that

previous assumptions had been made around risks however this was something that was reviewed on an annual basis.

Members discussed the number of investments with banks with a connection to the Middle East, noting that investments were approaching £55-£60m which was a significant sum invested in one geographical area (although it amounted to 15% of overall investments). The Director of Finance recognised the concerns being raised and explained that controls were in place around FCA regulation, rather than the countries themselves. Resources were managed through the UK and controls were in the UK although Officers would be happy to review the investments.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:**

- 1. Note the Treasury Management performance for the second quarter of 2021/22;**
- 2. Agree the amendment to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement allowing investment in Sovereign Bonds (Sterling denominated only and subject to a maximum duration of three years with a total exposure of no more than £25m); and**
- 3. Recommend that Council approve the 2021/22 prudential indicators as set out in Appendix 4.**

**b INSURANCE FUND - ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021  
Report FSD21064**

The report advised Members of the Insurance Fund position as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and presented statistics relating to insurance claims for the last two years. In 2020/21, the total Fund value decreased from £4.396m to £4.383m. A mid-year review of the Fund had also been carried out and at this stage, it was estimated that the final fund value as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 would increase to approximately £4.413m. The position would continue to be monitored throughout the year.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Insurance and Risk Manager confirmed that the Council's Insurance Services had moved over to LB Sutton on 1 April 2020, and since the move claims handling performance had been good. In relation to whether there was an expectation that the balance would increase, the Insurance and Risk Manager explained that whilst there may be fewer claims, they may be of a higher value or one claim with a significant value.

In response to a question, the Insurance and Risk Manager explained that Employer's Liability cover was in place for any personal injury claims submitted by employees but there was no cover for liability arising from Employment Tribunals or settlement costs. The Employer's Liability Policy

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simply covered personal injury to employees and did not cover staff working from home. The Committee noted that there had been no claims for personal injury in the last year and where staff had any issues with arrangements for working at home there was clear guidance that these should be raised with line managers in the first instance. The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contracts Management confirmed that he had spoken with the Director for Human Resources, Customer Services and Public Affairs who had provided assurances that clear policies were in place for arrangements for working at home.

In relation to the Council equipment used by staff when they were working from home, the Committee noted that in the event of a fire at an employee's home any investigation of a claim would look at legal liability and from an insurance perspective the Council had adequate cover. Members asked for information regarding the arrangements for PAT Testing staff laptops and it was agreed that a response from the IT Department would be sought following the meeting.

The Committee noted that there were currently risks around anything that could have been attributed to Covid, whether directly or indirectly. Other areas of potential risk were claims associated with Highways and Trees.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Insurance and Risk Manager confirmed that it was normal for local authorities to balance cost and risk by taking a high excess in order to reduce the premium and this level of self-insurance was reviewed at every tender.

**RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to note the report.**

## **58 SCRUTINY OF THE LEADER**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Colin Smith, attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Committee. Councillor Smith gave a brief introduction highlighting the following issues:

- Two new Directors had recently joined the Council. The review of succession planning was ongoing and remained a corporate priority.
- The new Corporate Plan – Making Bromley Even Better – had been finalised.
- The 2021/22 staff pay award had been implemented in a timely manner in April 2021.
- The Council's Loneliness Strategy had been launched and would soon be having a positive multi-generational impact across the Borough.
- Preparations were underway for next year's budget.
- A number of housing schemes had recently been launched.

- The tree planting programme was underway.
- The Electric Vehicle Strategy was moving forward and the Open Spaces Strategy had been considered at the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee on 17 November 2021.
- Good progress was being made in the Adult Care and Health Portfolio and the Council had a nationally recognised Hospital Discharge Strategy.
- The pandemic was a long way from being over and the Leader urged all those who were eligible to take up the offer of a vaccine and for all Members to keep hammering that message home at every opportunity possible.

Councillor Smith then responded to questions, making the following comments:

- The Loneliness Strategy straddled both the Adult Care and Health Portfolio and the Children, Education and Families Portfolio. Programmes would be developed led by the Executive Assistant to the Leader who was working closely with the relevant Portfolio Holders and PDS Chairmen. The Committee noted that Members of the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee had been invited to the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee meeting the following week to engage in the discussion around the Loneliness Strategy.
- The Leader confirmed that there was no intention sell parks, although it was acknowledged that the initial wording of the draft Open Spaces Strategy may have been clumsy and led to confusion. In terms of the differing response rates to consultations, the Leader suggested that difference could be attributed to levels of interest for specific issues across the Borough as well as the ways in which different consultations were publicised.
- The Council's Communications Team had been further enhanced and a new member of staff had joined the team. Work was underway to improve communications across the Council.
- In relation to the Afghan refugee issue, there had been a pan-London hiatus, although there was an understanding across London that the families needed to be evenly spread across the 32 boroughs. Significant numbers of families remained in hotel accommodation as there was a basic shortage of available housing and a decision from Government was still awaited in terms of locating families outside London.
- Discussions with the Government continued around fairer funding and the need for a three-year settlement.
- The Committee noted that the Leader had been nominated as the Conservative Lead for homelessness/rough sleeping

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reduction at London Councils and had accepted the role until next May.

- Further details were awaited around planning reforms now the new Secretary of State was in place.

The Committee thanked the Leader to his update.

## **59 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 24 November 2021:

### **(5) BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22 Report FSD21075**

The report provided the second budget monitoring position for 2021/22 based on expenditure and activity levels up to the end of September 2021. The report also highlighted any significant variations which would impact on future years as well as any early warnings that could impact on the final year end position. This report also provided an update on the Covid grant position.

In opening the discussion, the Chairman noted that most of the forecast overspend was concentrated in the Children, Educations and Families portfolio. Members noted that whilst there were some early signs of a return to normal there remained challenges in terms of the budget and mitigations would need to be put in place. SEN Transport and SEN provision remained key areas of national concern and would require a great deal of attention and work at both Officer and Member Level. One of the key challenges was that these were statutory obligations and this to some extent limited the mitigations that could be put in place.

The Committee noted that in January 2021, the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee had established a Budget Task and Finish Group to look at budget pressures. In addition to the issue of SEN Transport, SEN provision and the exponential increase in the number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) were regularly considered by the Committee with it being noted that Bromley was not an outlier. The Chairman of the Children, Education and Families (CEF) PDS Committee highlighted that it took only one complex case to derail the budget and that committee received data demonstrating a sustained increase in the number of cases coming through the front door. Members noted that continued pressure needed to be placed on the Government to deliver the proposed reforms to the national SEN Structure as the system was currently not adequately funded. It was agreed that the recommendations from the CEF PDS Budget Task and Finish Group would be circulated to the Committee along with some benchmarking data considered by the Task and Finish Group. A Member noted that prior to the pandemic there had been a trend in the number of looked after children and the number of EHCPs being consistently higher than the agreed budget. The

Member highlighted the need to review these historic trends and set a realistic budget.

Members noted that further detailed work was being undertaken on whether some Covid grants could be used to fund some of the increases in the cost of SEN Transport arising from the pandemic. The next budget monitoring report would be more explicit around Covid funding.

In response to a question, the Director of Finance agreed to review the data around Section 106 contributions and provide an update following the meeting.

The Committee noted that the contingency budget provided cover for overspends and that there was always rigor in the use of the contingency budget. It was noted that in the previous financial year much of the contingency had gone towards housing initiatives and the contingency was currently healthy.

**RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to:**

- 1. Consider the latest financial position;**
- 2. Note that a projected net overspend on services of £2,458k is forecast based on information as at September 2021.**
- 3. consider the comments from Chief Officers detailed in Appendix 2 of the report;**
- 4. Note a projected reduction to the General Fund balance of £345k as detailed in section 3.4 of the report;**
- 5. Note the full year cost pressures of £10.67m as detailed in section 3.5 of the report;**
- 6. Agree to the release of £30k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to local elections as detailed in para. 3.2.2 of the report;**
- 7. Agree to the release of £40k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to Crystal Palace Park as detailed in para. 3.2.3 of the report;**
- 8. Agree to the release of £587k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to Waste services as detailed in para. 3.2.4 of the report;**
- 9. Agree to the release of £170k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to Legal Services as detailed in para. 3.2.5 of the report;**

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- 10. Agree to the release of £91k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to Property Valuation as detailed in para. 3.2.6 of the report;**
- 11. Agree to the release of £213k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to Public Health grant increase as detailed in para. 3.2.7 of the report;**
- 12. Agree to the release of £89k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to Obesity Grant as detailed in para. 3.2.8 of the report;**
- 13. Agree to the release of £69k from the 2021/22 Central Contingency relating to COVID Recovery grant as detailed in para. 3.2.9 of the report;**
- 14. Agree to the release of £500k Education Risk Reserve as detailed in para. 3.3 of the report;**
- 15. Note the COVID allocation and expenditure in Appendix 7 of the report;**
- 16. Identify any issues that should be referred to individual Portfolio Holders for further action.**

**(6) CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING – 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER 2021/22 Report FSD21071**

The report summarised the current position on capital expenditure and receipts following the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2021/22 and sought the Executive's approval to a revised Capital Programme.

In opening the discussion, the Vice-Chairman noted that spending on the Liquid Logic project has significantly increased. The Vice-Chairman reported that she had received a response from the Assistant Director for Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation concerning the reasons for the increase in costs, however, the Committee were advised that more information was needed to understand the reasons. The Chairman requested that a more detailed response be sent to the Vice-Chairman following the meeting.

Members noted that Bromley had not borrowed to fund its capital programme and as such no loan charges were paid. However, the Director of Finance advised that the situation would need to be kept under review as the current model may not work in the event of a big capital scheme in the future. There would be a need to consider how schemes were funded in the future.



Members noted that there were capital receipts in the pipeline however, anything that was not currently approved by Officers would not be presented in the Capital Programme report.

**RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to:**

- 1. Note the report, including a total re-phasing of £339k from 2021/22 into future years, and agree a revised Capital Programme.**
- 2. Approve the following amendments to the Capital Programme (paragraph 3.3 of the report):**
  - (i) Increase of £57k in relation to Formula Devolved Grant**
  - (ii) Increase of £375k for Schools Capital Maintenance**
  - (iii) £12k decrease in relation to the Scadbury Park Moated Manor Scheme**
  - (iv) Increase of £130k for additional costs on the Anerley and Bushell Way Housing Scheme**
  - (v) Increase of £98k for additional costs on the Burnt Ash Lane Housing Scheme**
  - (vi) Increase of £536k for additional costs related to the Liquid Logic implementation.**

**(7) COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT/REDUCTION SCHEME 2022/23  
Report FSD21068**

The report advised Members of the outcome of the public consultation exercise and sought approval for the scheme to be forwarded to Full Council.

The Committee noted that Officers were disappointed with the low response rate to the consultation which made it difficult to determine whether the responses provided were representative. A Member noted that some of the responses indicated that respondents had found it difficult to answer some of the questions and Members looked forward to seeing suggestions for the consultation the following year.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management highlighted that the scheme had been kept at the same level for a number of years and there had been a positive response from the respondents.

A Member suggested that further consideration was required, particularly around the ongoing impact of the pandemic and the increases in the cost of living which were impacting many families.

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In response to a question, the Director for Corporate Services and Governance confirmed that there were no concerns around the legality of the Equalities Impact Assessment and that there was no standard for Equality Impact Assessments with each undertaken on a case-by-case basis.

The Committee noted that 193 households had received help from the Hardship Fund and last year the collection rate for customers in receipt of Council Tax Support was 83%. The Committee was informed that the number of households in receipt of Council Tax Support was already falling compared to the peak during the height of the pandemic, but was still above the pre-pandemic level.

The Chairman proposed that the Executive be recommended to:

1. Consider the updated Impact Assessment at Appendix 1.
2. Consider the responses to the public consultation exercise at Appendix 2 & 3.
3. Consider that the Council Tax Support/Reduction scheme for 2022/23 retains the calculation of entitlement for working-age claimants on 75% of the households Council Tax liability. Thereby the maximum assistance provided to a claimant of working-age is 75% of his/her Council Tax liability.
4. Recommend to Council the Council Tax Support/Reduction scheme for 2022/23 including maintaining the Discretionary Hardship Fund at £200k.

The motion was seconded by Cllr Gabbert, put to the Vote and CARRIED.  
(Cllrs Wilkins and Jeal voted against, all other members voted in favour)

**RESOLVED: That Executive be recommended to:**

- 1. Consider the updated Impact Assessment at Appendix 1.**
- 2. Consider the responses to the public consultation exercise at Appendix 2 & 3.**
- 3. Consider that the Council Tax Support/Reduction scheme for 2022/23 retains the calculation of entitlement for working-age claimants on 75% of the households Council Tax liability. Thereby the maximum assistance provided to a claimant of working-age is 75% of his/her Council Tax liability.**
- 4. Recommend to Council the Council Tax Support/Reduction scheme for 2022/23 including maintaining the Discretionary Hardship Fund at £200k.**

**(8) ACADEMY INFORMATION SYSTEM AND ASPIEN CORPORATE  
DEBT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SOFTWARE LICENSE AND  
MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS  
Report FSD21072**

The report sought authorisation to review the license agreement for the Academy System and the Aspien Corporate Debt Management System beyond 2022.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director for Exchequer Services explained that Oracle Fusion would be implemented in April 2022. Once the system had been implemented and had bedded in Officers would look to implement advanced collections. The timeframe set out in the report would enable a full review of advanced collections and implementation in stages. Members noted that there would be a parallel running of the two systems.

**RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to:**

- i) Approve the renewal of the agreement for the Academy Information system until 1 April 2024 at an estimated annual cost of £163.24k;**
- ii) Approve the renewal of the agreement for Aspien Corporate Debt Management System until January 2024 at an annual cost of £9k.**

**(9) PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION  
HPR2021/062**

HM The Queen's national Platinum Jubilee celebrations were planned to take place during 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The London Borough of Bromley would be enabling street parties across the Borough by waiving the road closure fee, taking part in the national lighting of the beacons and the Queen's Green Canopy, and delivering a cultural activity programme.

Members expressed disappointment with the report which they considered provided insufficient detail of the planned celebrations for the jubilee of a Monarch who had served the country for 70 years. The Committee felt that there had been insufficient consultation with Members in order to develop a Borough-wide approach to the Jubilee Celebrations and it was noted that the report before Members provided no details of the Communications Strategy for the event and who would be leading on the various projects.

It was noted that there were a number of community groups and uniformed organisations such as Residents' Associations and the Scouting Movement who would also want to engage in the celebrations. As such it was essential

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that the Council played a co-ordinating role, and it was suggested that the Mayor should write to all community groups to launch a public consultation concerning what local people would like to see from any Jubilee Celebrations and to publicise the grants that were being made available. It was further suggested that ward councillors could encourage community groups to apply. A Member highlighted that there needed to be cross-departmental input into plans for Jubilee Celebrations and stressed the importance of including the Council's Looked After Children, for whom Members had Corporate Parenting responsibilities, in the development of any plans.

A Member also noted that opportunities for aspects such as business sponsorship needed to be further explored and every Member of the Council should be contacted for their views on the Jubilee Celebrations across the Borough. In addition, more research should be done into the history of the Borough and its relationship with the monarchy, especially in terms of the Beacon lighting. Members considered that lighting only one Beacon for the whole of the Borough was insufficient.

Whilst not wanting to see delays in publicising the availability of grants, the Committee expressed serious reservations around the £20,000 ceiling on community grant funding, noting that this would mean that some wards may not receive any funding at all. It was agreed that there needed to be more of an idea of the scale of grant applications that may be received before any grant ceiling could be established. It was important to understand what community groups wanted to do to celebrate the Jubilee and following this local ward councillors could then assist with local allocation of grant funding. It was further noted that there would need to be clear and robust criteria for the allocation of funding in order to avoid allegations of unfairness.

In relation to the road closures, a Member questioned why the Council was only allowing road closures on the Sunday, suggesting that in order to facilitate street parties and wider celebrations, road closures should be permitted across the whole of the bank holiday weekend. It was also suggested that consideration should be given to permitting a shorter notification period for road closures.

It was suggested that a dedicated Officer was required to co-ordinate the Council's Jubilee celebrations. A Member expressed concern that there may be insufficient resources within the Regeneration Team to deliver the expectations of Members. The Committee were reminded that the Team were currently undertaking a great deal of work administering Covid Grants and Members needed to recognise that meaningful resource would be required in order to organise the Jubilee Celebration.

The following questions were raised by Members for response following the meeting:

- How did the current Diamond Jubilee proposals compare with the celebrations for the Golden Jubilee in 2002 and the Diamond Jubilee in 2012?
- What was the Council itself doing to celebrate the Monarch's Platinum Jubilee?
- Why were road closures only allowed on the Sunday – could this be extended to the whole of the bank holiday weekend?
- Could consideration be given to a shorter notification period for road closures?
- Could the total community grant available be increased or could the criteria be reviewed to allow for one application per ward?
- Could grants be made available for more permanent memorials?

**RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to:**

- 1. Defer consideration of the report to enable a more detailed and comprehensive report to be provided to Members in January 2022;**
- 2. Request that further details of the community grant programme be presented to the meeting in January 2022, setting out the full criteria for the allocation of grants and more detailed proposals for a revised community grant ceiling;**
- 3. Request that a cross-departmental approach be taken to preparations for Platinum Jubilee Celebrations across the Borough with particular reference to the Local Authority's Looked After Children;**
- 4. Request that further details be provided on the Council's own plans for Platinum Jubilee Celebrations; and**
- 5. Agree that road closures be permitted across the whole of the bank holiday weekend.**
- 6. Agree that the Leader should request that the Mayor writes to community groups publicise the grants that are being made available and encourage their involvement in the Jubilee Celebrations.**

**60 BT/ICT CONTRACT MONITORING REPORT  
Report CSD21130**

The report presented the BT/ICT contract performance report, utilising the Pan London Framework, covering the period 1 September 2020 to 30 August 2021.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Ian Withycombe and Mr Alan Gardener from BT to the meeting.

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The Assistant Director for IT Services confirmed that comments around the format of the report and the use of jargon and abbreviations had been fed back to BT and would be taken on board for future reports.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Assistant Director for IT Services explained that the decision around service credits had been taken by the pan-London Framework in consultation with LBB Officers.

The Committee noted that Bromley was not an outlier in terms of the decision not to implement the latest version of Windows (Windows 11). Members noted that when new versions were released there were often a number of bugs and fixes that were required and it was therefore considered more appropriate to remain one version behind the latest to ensure that all the corporate IT systems were able to interact with the new operating system.

A Member highlighted the need to ensure that the communications system used by the IT Helpdesk allowed Members to return calls. In response, the Assistant Director confirmed that he would ensure that direct telephone lines were provided when messages were left.

In response to a question, Mr Gardener confirmed that during the period of the pandemic when new laptops were being rolled out to staff, call volumes to the help desk increase by approximately 40%. Feedback from staff indicated that they were happy with the new devices. Although the laptop rollout to staff was drawing to a close the service continued to work on a number of projects such as the upgrade to the servers, work on Skype for Business and Office 365. In addition calls to the help desk remained high as staff worked from home and there were less opportunities to share knowledge and best practice in the Office.

The Committee noted that the outcome of the Review of Members' IT would be presented in January 2022, and Members would have an opportunity to consider the range of options available prior to a decision being taken.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**61 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

**RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.**

**The following summaries refer to matters involving exempt information**

**62 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER  
2021**

The Part 2 (exempt) minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2021 were agreed, and signed as a correct record.

**63 PART 2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS**

**a PART 2 CONTRACTS REGISTER AND CONTRACTS  
DATABASE  
Report CSD21129B**

The report presented November 2021's Corporate Contracts Register for consideration. Detailed scrutiny of individual contracts was the responsibility of the six PDS Committees with ERC PDS taking an overview of the Council's larger value (£200k+) contracts to ensure that commissioning and procurement activity was progressed in a consistent manner. The report provided both the Council wide £200k+ register together with the £50k+ register specific to the ERC Portfolio. The Part 2 Contracts Register included a commentary on each contract to inform of any issues or developments.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director for Governance and Contracts explained that the way in which contracts were advertised depended on the tender with there being specific requirements dependent on the value of the contract being tendered. Local businesses were encouraged to sign up to the London tender portal, Contracts Finder and Find A Tender to receive alerts on opportunities relevant to them. In addition, Officers should consider suitable market engagement and awareness raising prior to tender. For lower value tenders, there are also specific policies on local engagement, including inviting (as appropriate) tenders from at least one local business. Members noted that within the Council's Gateway reports there was a section on market engagement.

**RESOLVED: That the contracts Register be noted.**

The Meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Chairman