

EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 20 May 2024

Present:

Councillor Simon Fawthrop (Chairman)
Councillor Shaun Slator (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Jeremy Adams, Mark Brock,
David Cartwright QFSM, Kira Gabbert, Adam Jude Grant,
Julie Ireland, Ruth McGregor, Alexa Michael, Tony Owen,
Chris Price, Alison Stammers, Melanie Stevens and
Michael Tickner

Also Present:

Councillor Christopher Marlow, Portfolio Holder for Resources,
Commissioning and Contracts Management

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Simon Jeal and Councillor Mark Smith. Councillor Chris Price and Councillor Alison Stammers attended as their respective substitutes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mark Brock declared that he held shares in a smoking cessation company. Councillor Brock had been advised that the level of the shares did not meet the requirements for a disclosable pecuniary interest and as such he would be taking part in the debate.

Councillor Stammers declared that her son was in the Armed Forces.

Councillor Gabbert declared that she was a patient at the Dysart Surgery.

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions were received.

4 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2024 (EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)

The minutes of the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee meeting held on 25 March 2024 (excluding exempt information), were agreed and signed as a correct record.

5 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD24063

The report dealt with the Committee's business management including matters outstanding from previous meetings and the proposed work plan for the remainder of the year.

The Committee noted that a further update on Biggin Hill Airport would be received in September 2024 and representatives from Biggin Hill Airport Limited and Flightpath Watch would be invited to that meeting.

Members requested that an update on the Transformation Programme be added to the Work Programme for October 2024 when the Chief Executive was next scheduled to attend a meeting.

In relation to the budget, the Chairman highlighted the need to be focused on the budget and identifying savings where possible. Issues around temporary accommodation and housing should be referred to the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee for scrutiny with a detailed update on the budget position being included in the first quarter budget monitoring report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Key Decisions covering the period May 2024 to July 2024.

7 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 22 May 2024:

(6) PROVISIONAL FINAL ACCOUNTS 2023/24 Report FSD24036

The report considered the 2023/24 provisional outturn at portfolio level and Council-wide as well as the potential implications for the Council's financial position in 2024/25. The purpose of the report was to give a broad overview of the financial outturn. Details of the carry forward requests and a summary of

the Council's capital programme were considered in the report and more detailed reports would be submitted to individual PDS Committees.

The 2023/24 provisional outturn enabled the General Fund balance to remain at £20m, subject to the recommendations in the report being agreed.

The Director of Finance introduced the report highlighting that there were significant pressures within Housing and Children's Services but that mitigations had been put in place to address any overspends in 2024/2025. Whilst there were some underspends in the contingency there was limited flexibility. The first budget monitoring report would focus on cost pressures and there would be a need to review growth pressures. Going forward it would be important for PDS Committees to thoroughly scrutinise any proposals for growth, budget monitoring overspends and any mitigation that could be put in place. In relation to lobbying government, the Director of Finance highlighted the importance of understanding the impact of any new burdens and giving due consideration to what services could not be provided if more government funding was not forthcoming.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Director of Finance confirmed that all aspects of income generation would be addressed in the October report and that any new invest-to-save initiatives would come through the Transformation Programme.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations in the report be supported.

**(7) CRM REPLACEMENT CAPITAL PROJECT - CRM & WEBSITE
REDESIGN CLOSURE REPORT AND WEBSITE PHASE 2
OPTIONS
Report CSD24045**

The report provided an update on the CRM replacement capital programme including a scheme closure report on the completed software implementation and the completed redesign of the Council's public facing website.

The report also sought Members' approval to progress the complementary scheme to enhance the My Account features of the website including the personalisation and single sign on initiatives outlined in the report.

The Committee requested that details of the projected number of users be circulated following the meeting.

In noting that there was no statutory requirement to spend the funds that had been allocated for the upgrade, a Member questioned whether the proposals in the report that were designed to improve the customer experience represented a good use of the underspend. In response to a question from the Chairman, the Assistant Director for Customer Services confirmed that Option 2A outlined in the report provided the technology for the single sign on whilst option 2B provided enhanced features. In discussion, Members indicated that they were yet to be convinced that options 1 and 2 (A&B) outlined in the report would represent value for money and it was suggested

that there were other system improvements that may provide better value, such as the housing bidding system.

Councillor Julie Ireland proposed that the Committee support Option 3 – do nothing and return the capital receipts - within the report. The motion was seconded by Councillor Alexa Michael, put to the vote and CARRIED by majority.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to adopt Option 3 – do nothing and return the capital receipts - as outlined in the report.

**(8) PROCUREMENT OF A SPECIALIST STOP SMOKING SERVICE
Report ACH24-027**

The report outlined the proposed procurement for a Specialist Stop Smoking Service for individuals in Bromley who required support to quit smoking. Permission was sought to commence the procurement of the Service in accordance with the arrangements set out in the report to commence the Service on 1st April 2025. Contracts with a whole life value of £1m and above require Executive approval prior to proceeding to procurement.

A small pilot project, Smokefree Bromley, was currently being delivered by Solutions4Health. This contract went live on 1st January and was due to end 31st December 2024 with an available extension period to 31st March 2025.

It was proposed this service would be funded jointly from the substantive Public Health grant plus the ring-fenced Stop Smoking Grant from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). The DHSC Stop Smoking Grant was available annually until March 2029. The ring-fenced Stop Smoking grant allocation was reassessed annually in accordance with estimated smoking prevalence rates in the Borough. Therefore, authorisation was sought to design a service with a degree of flexibility to enable Chief Officer approval of subsequent variation to the scope and value of the Smoking Cessation Service contract in line with the requirements of the grant.

In opening the debate, the Chairman expressed concerns around the value for money arising from the proposals.

In response to a question concerning the age profile of smokers across the Borough, the Director of Public Health confirmed that there was a lower prevalence of smoking in young people, but instances of vaping were increasing. It was highlighted that vaping was effective as a method of encouraging adults to stop smoking. The service proposed in the report was for adults only and there was currently no service for individuals who had only ever vaped.

The Director of Public Health confirmed that the success rate for previous services had been good – around 40% - but that had been a very different service to the proposals before the Committee.

A Member highlighted the need to evaluate the cost of smoking to the social sector, not just the NHS. It was suggested that one of the most effective actions that could be taken was to discourage individuals from smoking. There needed to be a 40% success rate for the service to pay for itself.

In response to a question, the Director of Public Health confirmed that it was not possible to means test for the service, but the highest risk groups would be targeted for support.

The Director of Public Health explained that one of the conditions of the grant was that the Local Authority must “Invest in enhancing local authority commissioned stop smoking services and support, in addition to and while maintaining existing spend on these services and support from the public health grant”. However, the Chairman suggested that there may be other priorities, for the Local Authority’s Public Health grant, such as vaccination.

The Chairman proposed that the Council proceed with the programme on the basis of utilising the additional funding from Government and review how much, if any Bromley Public Health funds, should be spent. The amended recommendation was seconded by Councillor Tony Owen, put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED: That Executive be recommended to agree that the Council proceed with the programme on the basis of utilising the additional funding from Government and review how much, if any Bromley Public Health funds, should be spent.

**(9) BROMLEY HEALTH & WELLBEING CENTRE, CHURCHILL COURT - REFURBISHMENT, LEASE & CONTRACT AWARD
Report HPR2024/019**

A Report to Executive on 30th November 2022 set out the recommendation to purchase the freehold of the Direct Line site known as Churchill Court with a view to moving the Council offices off the Civic Centre site and subsequent disposal. As part of that report, Members agreed to the provision of a new Health & Wellbeing Centre for Bromley town centre.

On 17th May 2023 a follow-up report was shared with the Executive which set out details of the conversion of the 1st Floor offices within Phase Four, Churchill Court to provide a new NHS Health & Wellbeing Centre (HWBC). Following that agreement Council officers have been working with colleagues in the NHS to design the new public facility, obtain planning consent, building control approval, agree funding and finalising the lease terms. This report, together with the accompanying Part 2 report, set out the outcomes of that exercise and sought permission to continue with the next steps.

The Part 2 report set out the outcome of the tender process and award of contract for the construction works. It also detailed the capital project budget and terms agreed with the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) for the share of capital funding and lease terms. In addition, the report updated Members on the overall project timetable.

On behalf of the Bromley Town Ward Councillors, Councillor Julie Ireland thanked the Property Team for the updates and confirmed that the local ward councillors entirely supported the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations in the report be supported.

8 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

A ARMED FORCES COVENANT PROGRESS UPDATE Report HPR2024/017

The report summarised the progress on the work that had taken place to date under the Armed Forces Covenant since its renewal and the ongoing work underway to further support Bromley's Armed Forces Community.

The Committee noted that the Council would have to complete the process to demonstrate that it qualified for the Silver Employer Certificate.

In response to a question, the Head of Culture confirmed that opportunities for Looked After Children to be involved in the Cadets would form part of the second priority of the action plan: strengthening our links with the armed forces community

RESOLVED: That

- 1. The progress and work underway to meet the pledges set out in the renewal of the Armed Forces Covenant which was re-affirmed in June 2023 be noted.**
- 2. The award of the Bronze Employer Certificate in national recognition of the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Community be noted.**
- 3. The Portfolio Holder for Resources Commissioning and Contracts Management be recommended to adopt the refreshed Action Plan which sets out how the Council will deliver the Armed Forces Covenant in Bromley and measure progress.**

B RISK MANAGEMENT Report FSD24032

The report provided Members of the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee with the net 'High' (Red) risks

extracted from the Corporate Services, Finance and the Human Resources and Customer Services Risk Registers.

A Member sought and received confirmation that Fire Risk Assessments and Fire Strategies were in place across the property portfolio. .

Officers confirmed that the fire strategies across the Council's portfolio were in the process of being reviewed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

9 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**

10 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2024

The Part 2 (exempt) minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2024 were agreed, and signed as a correct record.

11 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 2 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 22 May 2024:

(13) PART 2 CRM REPLACEMENT CAPITAL PROJECT - WEBSITE REDESIGN UPDATE REPORT

The Committee noted the Part 2 information.

**(14) PART 2 BROMLEY HEALTH & WELLBEING CENTRE,
CHURCHILL COURT - REFURBISHMENT, LEASE &
CONTRACT AWARD**

The Committee noted the report and supported the recommendations.

12 PART 2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

**A PART 2 CONTRACTS REGISTER AND CONTRACTS
DATABASE**

The report presented May 2024's Corporate Contracts Register for consideration.

Detailed scrutiny of individual contracts was the responsibility of the six PDS Committees but ER&C PDS took an overview of the Council's larger value (£200k+) contracts to ensure that commissioning and procurement activity was progressed in a consistent manner. This report provided both the Council-wide £200k+ register together with the £50k+ register specific to the ER&C Portfolio.

A full report was provided twice a year (May and November) including a detailed Part 2 report which included a Procurement RAG Rating and commentary on each relevant contract to inform Members of any issues or developments. Otherwise, a Part 1 Register only would be provided as a For Information item with an accompanying Part 2 report only for any contracts RAG rated Red by the Corporate Procurement Team.

The Contracts Register full report presented in 'Part 2' of this agenda included a commentary on each contract to inform Members of any issues or developments.

In response to a question concerning the impact of inflation on energy services, the Assistant Director of Governance and Contracts confirmed that the Energy Commissioning Strategy had been agreed around three years previously and enabled the Council to select services from a framework in order to achieve the most competitive price. It was noted that a longer-term commissioning strategy would be presented to Members in due course.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Meeting ended at 8.58 pm

Chairman