

Organisation

Portfolio Updates

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Corporate Policy & Resources

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Information Technology

- Transformational change to the Council delivered during the pandemic:
 - Rapid implementation of systems to enable staff and Council Members to work remotely and securely; and
 - Development of new processes to ensure IT systems deliver high availability.
- Data Centre and Telephony systems are now due for renewal; consultancy phase completed to identify improvements:
 - A strategy of 'cloud first' is being adopted which will improve resilience and performance.
- The CRM system continues to be developed to enable the delivery of online automated transactions.
- Video conferencing facilities are being improved to enable the delivery of Council Committee meetings both online and hybrid.
- IT Projects continue to be delivered with particular focus on improving resilience and Disaster Recovery capability
- This work all informs a new IT Strategy which will be created this year and will cover the next five years.

Projects & Performance

- Quarterly reporting on performance and risk
- Programme and project management support, coordination of corporate governance boards and production of project dashboards
- Added value:
 - Improvements to corporate project and programme management framework, building on experience and best practice
 - Support provided to service areas in relation to performance enhancement, and fees & charges opportunities

Corporate Policy

Corporate policy

- Preparation of year 1 Corporate Plan Annual Report
- Corporate policy support provided in relation to a range of issues including Covid recovery work; development of the Commercial Strategy Part 1; Equality Objectives, policy and reporting; Surrey-wide joint working.
- Future focus to include support for development of Commercial Strategy Part 2, Leisure & Culture Strategy; and advice and support on other emerging cross cutting/regional/national initiatives.

Environmental sustainability

- Comprehensive progress update provided elsewhere on the O&S agenda

Communications & Customer Contact

- Communications and Customer Contact have continued to devote much resource to supporting the Council's emergency Covid-19
- Easing of restrictions also means the teams are increasing their support for BAU activities.
- Internally, work towards hybrid working is being supported by the Communications team at a strategic and tactical level
- Key business objectives that have been pursued include:
 - Development of the Council's communications channels to include more e-marketing; and
 - Provision of a broader customer contact interface, primarily through social media

Data & Insight

- Until recently the team had been diverted to support the Council's Covid response work,
 - eg supporting a very targeted approach to surge testing using local data and insight
- Now the remit of the team has been broadened it is initially concentrating on:
 - Data audit and data improvement; and
 - Consultation activities (for example, Covid impact research, Merstham Rec consultation and other resident consultations)
 - Providing added value by supporting teams across the Council to use data and insight to deliver services more efficiently and effectively

Organisational Development & HR

Hybrid working

- Focus is continuing to harness what COVID has taught us – working differently to the benefit of our residents:
- Hybrid working for the Council has been defined and is being tested with Services
 - For officers, meetings online as default is the agreed approach
 - Phased approach to officer return to the office has started for those who require it
 - Phased approach for team interaction has started
 - Phased approach for Member meetings/Businesses/residents/Mayoral duties has also started

Organisational Development & HR

Hybrid working (cont)

- For the medium term, changes to enable Hybrid Working are being progressed:
 - Full procurement process to commence for physical works to the site required (architects already procured for the design).
 - Change agents to support human/behavioural impact elements of hybrid are being procured (continuous engagement)
 - ICT architecture reviewed and ICT Strategy revised in line with future ways of working

Organisational Development & HR

Implementation of Resourcing Review

- Good progress has been made on the first stage of work – completing a review of the OD & HR Service
 - Recommendations include a focus on improved Workforce Planning for the Council.
- HR and Finance are working together to review and improve the current processes on resourcing at the Council.
 - This work is being scoped – specific projects will then be progressed through the Organisation Board.
- Part of the Council's resourcing approach includes supporting apprenticeships throughout the organisation.
 - Throughout the pandemic, both traditional apprenticeships have been offered as well as use of the Apprenticeship Levy to upskill staff (more detail can be found in our Apprentice Fact Sheet)

Finance & Governance

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Finance & Governance

Finance

- **Progress 2020/21**

- Update to MTFP approved by Executive in July 2020 and refreshed in the November 2020 budget report

- 2021/22 Capital Investment and Treasury Management Strategies approved

- Regular updates to Executive on Covid-19 budget impacts; monthly returns submitted to MHCLG and grants and income loss claims submitted

- Statement of Accounts 2019/20 published and audited

- **Progress 2021/22**

- Forecast 2021/22 Revenue budget gap can be balanced through use of reserves but ongoing impacts of income losses due to Covid is a significant concern

- Capital Programme proposals for 2021/22 onwards were relatively modest following significant growth last year; to be funded in the main through prudential borrowing

- Service & Financial Planning for 2022/23 progressing on schedule with report to 18 November Executive and Budget Scrutiny Panel on 1 December

Legal & Procurement

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Legal & Procurement

Legal - Progress 2021/22

- Recruitment of an experienced Planning Solicitor (March 2021), Property solicitor (May 2021) and Legal Secretary (September 2021). Very little transactional/operational work is being outsourced with income now being generated from the drafting of section 106 agreements, leases and licences.
- Data protection and Information Governance will move from Legal Services to the Data and Insights team to ensure that all data functions can feed into the Organisational Board raising the profile of the importance of data processing and enhancing a culture of data protection compliance.

Land Charges - Progress 2021/22

- A review of Local Land Charge services to improve accuracy and efficiency was completed this year with all data being successfully migrated to the Surrey Building Control Partnership, in turn increasing the quality of land charges information.

Procurement - Progress 2021/22

- Following a Procurement Audit conducted earlier this year, a focused workstream has been created to look at how to strengthen the centralised procurement service with a view to ensuring that we positively continue to seek best value when procuring goods and services across all service area.

Revenues, Benefits & Fraud

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Revenues, Benefits & Fraud

Council Tax & Business Rate Collection

- At the end of Period 5, Council Tax collection for 2021/22 was at 47.15%, an increase of 0.31% for the same period in 2020/21. In 2019/20 the collection rate at Period 5 was 47.89%, so still not back to pre-Covid level.
- At the end of Period 5, Business Rates collection for 2021/22 was at 48.65%, down on last year by 2.52%. Alterations to the Retails Rate Relief (from 100% to 66% from July) has skewed the collection rate due to revised instalment dates following re-billing.
- Magistrates Courts are now open again for both Council Tax and Business Rates, although due to Court closures for most of 2020/21, there is a backlog of accounts to move to Summons stage.
- The RBBC recovery team is also providing a recovery function on behalf of Waverley Borough Council, as part of its commercial work.

Revenues, Benefits & Fraud (cont)

Counter Fraud

- Cumulative figures from April 2019 to March 2021 have savings totalling £1,306.679. This is based on Cabinet Office savings for types of fraud identification, including Housing fraud, Right to Buy (Raven), Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits

Business Grants & Covid Support

- There have been a total of 11 Business Grant Schemes in place from April 2020 to the present.
- A total of 7,640 payments have been made to local businesses under various criteria totalling £42,391,877.
- The Additional Restrictions Grants (discretionary) is the only scheme still in operation, and this closes on 31/03/2022. The funding is also being used to support businesses through the Business Growth Grant Scheme, and £1m has been ringfenced for this scheme.
- Test & trace Payments – eligible for people told by the NHS to self-isolate and will lose earnings. 479 payments of £500 had been made up to 27/09/2021, and demand is still high. The scheme has been extended to March 2022.

Commercial & Investment

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Commercial & Investment

Portfolio focus

- Focus is on overall strategy; our companies; and our assets
- Bulk of work relates to managing existing investments – new investment is only a small proportion

(1) Commercial Strategy

- Commercial Strategy Part 1 agreed in December 2020
- Work now underway to develop Commercial Strategy Part 2. Will include:
 - Consideration by Commercial Strategy Scrutiny Panel, then
 - Consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, then
 - Executive agreement

Commercial & Investment (cont)

(2) Companies

- Approach to company structures revisited by CVESC in April 2021
- Update on existing companies provided elsewhere on the O&S Agenda. In summary:

Company	Status/focus
Greensand Holdings Ltd	Property
Horley Business Park LLP	Horley Business Park
Pathway for Care Limited	Supported Living
RBBC Ltd	Inactive
RBBC Housing – Independent Living	Now dissolved
Camelia Close (Tadworth) Ltd	*New – interim Residents Management Company
Housing company	Proposals for establishment of a housing company currently being developed

Commercial & Investment (cont)

(3a) Property Assets: Income generating portfolio

- As presented in our Capital Investment Strategy, properties within the Council's income generating portfolio include:

Crown House, Redhill (Greensands)	Regent House, Redhill
Unit 61E Albert Road North	Units 1-5, Redhill Distribution Centre, Salfords
1-4 Quarrydene Parade, Merstham	Warwick Quadrant, Redhill
Beech House, Reigate	Land at Reading Arch Road
51b High St, Reigate	55-63 Victoria Road, Horley
Forum House, Redhill	Travelodge, Redhill

- Work is underway to update valuations, yield information and forecasts
- Impact of the pandemic – 94% of rent collected, with 6% shortfall (resulting from two CVAs)

Commercial & Investment (cont)

(3b) Property Assets: Projects

- **Marketfield Way:** Good progress - development remains on programme; Heads of Terms Agreement being finalised with cinema provider; other lease discussions advancing
- **Crematorium:** Position under consideration following refusal of planning permission
- **Horley Car Park:** Development feasibility work underway

(3c) Property Assets: Acquisitions

- No new property acquired in recent months
- Various opportunities considered but turned down