

Recommendations from the Executive – 23 March 2023

**Executive
Minute
reference
77**

Council Chamber IT upgrade

Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Governance, Councillor Schofield, introduced the Council Chamber IT upgrade report to the Committee. The report recommended to Full Council an increase of £0.150 million to the approved Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 to fund the upgrade of hybrid meeting and webcasting equipment in the New Council Chamber.

The Council had webcast its public Committee meetings since 2014 to increase accessibility, openness and provide opportunities for public engagement. The equipment was at the end of its lifetime and increasingly experiencing technical failures and overdue for replacement. The report and Annex 1 set out the business case for the project to ensure the local democratic process remained open and transparent for residents. Since 2021, the equipment had been used for hybrid meetings to make meetings accessible to those attending meetings remotely whether residents, Members or officers. This particularly helped those with families or caring responsibilities attend meetings virtually.

The upgrade also aimed to improve the user experience for operators so that the system was easier to set up and be more reliable as well as improve the audio and video quality. It would also provide an opportunity to consolidate support and maintenance contracts and identify potential savings.

The Leader said using the equipment had presented challenges during remote and hybrid meetings that took place during the pandemic. It was the right time to invest in updated equipment and software to provide ongoing transparency and support to those using the Reigate Town Hall Chamber.

There were no comments from Executive or Visiting Members.

RESOLVED – that the Executive:

- 1. RECOMMEND to Full Council to agree an increase of £0.150 million to the approved Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 to fund the upgrade of hybrid meeting and webcasting equipment in the New Council Chamber.**