

POLICY GUIDANCE FOR REVENUE REDUCTION EXERCISE - STATEMENT BY THE LEADER
(Ref: Minutes of Corporate Management Committee, 30 September 2004, page 336, para. 244)

1. As the Officers' report to the Committee on 30 September (Financial Forecast 2005/6 - 2009/10) made clear, if the Council is to maintain its enviable record of financial flexibility, innovation and high quality services, there is a need for a rigorous look at what we do and how we do things.
2. Good progress has been made over the last four/five years, first with a £966,000 revenue reduction target and the current £1m target. However, below inflation grant settlements from Government over recent years mean we have to find the full impact of inflation, additional legislative burdens, increases in certain service needs and quite understandable aspirations for growth in key areas.
3. Throughout these last few years we have successfully sought to minimise the impact to frontline services and that is a credit to Members and staff. Indeed, we have been able to pursue a range of attractive new initiatives. To the £954,000 revised target identified in the Financial Forecast papers, we must add both the need to safeguard against capping (a further £550,000 also identified in the 30 September report) and the deficit funding required as a result of the actuarial review of the Superannuation Fund (£466,000 reported to the December Committee). This totals £1,970,000.
4. I think it is therefore necessary to provide guidance, both to the Policy Committees and senior Managers, as well as our external partners. The following statement is intended to provide policy guidance in any detailed examination of initiatives and particularly what are, in relative terms, not our priorities for the foreseeable future:
 - Financial consequences of withdrawal or service remodelling by others will no longer be picked up by the Council.
 - Services with modest benefit relative to cost of provision will be reduced or withdrawn.
 - Specialist discretionary services capable of being reasonably provided by the private sector will be discontinued.
 - Joint working with partners to achieve service resilience or reduction in unit costs will be vigorously pursued.
 - The key targets and priorities identified in the current series of Service Plans will, wherever possible, have priority call on resources.
 - Changes in demographic and associated social needs/demands will, for the most part, be a key issue in future service reviews and service planning.
 - Our very considerable IT investment (unfortunately often directed by the Government's e-government targets, rather than local service needs) to yield greater savings.
 - Review back office arrangements and ensure that what we expect as Members is reduced.
 - Maximise our return on assets, save for those occupied by voluntary and charitable groups.
 - Discretionary fees and charges (including car parking charges) need to at least reflect the cost of provision and/or comparative tariffs elsewhere.
 - Reinvigorate the concept of "create/save" and provide an enterprise fund to pump prime explicitly identified savings or opportunities for additional income.

RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PERSONNEL SERVICES MEMBER WORKING GROUP

6.15 p.m. Thursday 11th November 2004, Members Room, Civic Offices

In attendance: Councillors Roger Habgood, Rod Pate, Cherith Simmons & Peter Waddell.
Chief Executive Officer, Tim Williams & Personnel Officer, David Thomas

1. Apologies for Absence
Councillor Linda Gillham
2. Minutes of Meeting 29th July 2004
Agreed
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes
None
4. The Greater London Job Evaluation Scheme
The Personnel Officer had drafted a report for the Corporate Management Committee on 2nd December which recommended the adoption of the GLPC Job Evaluation Scheme and identified the resources required.

Members supported the recommendations and suggested that the report could also usefully rehearse the background to the project for the benefit of Members of the Committee.

5. Competencies and Performance Pay
The Personnel Officer provided a brief verbal update to Members on progress since the last meeting.

Essentially, the Director of the South East Employers Organisation had been invited to prepare a costed options report for Members consideration and this would be brought forward in due course.

6. Staff Survey
The Personnel Officer had drafted a report for the Corporate Management Committee on 2nd December based on the findings of the recent staff survey.

Members were pleased to note the generally positive responses by staff but recognised that in some areas there remained scope for improvement, particularly in terms of certain aspects of communications. It was hoped that the new Communications Officer, when in post, would be able to advise on ways in which this could be addressed

7. Any Other Business
None

8. Date of Next Meeting
The Personnel Officer would convene a meeting when sufficient progress had been made on Evaluations or when the report from South East Employers was available. He would in the meantime keep Members of the Working Group updated on progress.

**Runnymede Borough Council
Information Strategy Member Working Group**

Agreed Action Notes of meeting held on Thursday 2nd December 2004

	Action By:
<p>Present: Cllrs Niall Thewlis, Lynda Gillham, Robert Ray, Hugh Meares Tim Williams, Nigel Watson, Basia Dobrzalska,</p> <p>Apologies: Cllrs Roger Habgood, Adrian Tollett, John Dean Siobhan Treacy,</p>	
<p>1. Vision and Mission Statement for Corporate Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BD presented the Vision and Mission statement for Corporate IT systems. • HM said that this statement supports service continuity and quality • TW said that in order to be successful in the rollout of Corporate Systems RBC would have to continue to make significant investment on an annual basis in the rollout of systems • LG asked about the investment of training. TW confirmed that investment for training would also have to be found • NT said that he would like to see high level road map, but although it was available, it was not presented due to time constraints, and will be presented at the next IT Working Group Meeting • CRM was briefly discussed- new building will have a large impact on the investment and time resource spent on corporate systems • The Vision and Mission statement was agreed by all 	BD/NW
<p>2. Housing Benefits- Presentation of the case for Back Scanning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BD presented an overview of the Housing Benefits Trial, which has now been completed. Various issues have been raised which are being worked on • BD also presented a cost analysis for back-scanning of Housing Documents. The analysis did not include a benefit analysis, which BD has requested from the Housing Benefits department. BD to request this to be prepared by the Housing Benefits section for the next meeting • The sum of the finances required for back scanning (in-house costs only), including extra hardware and human resources will amount to approximately £80k • HM questioned the need to scan such a large number of documents and said that the figures should be examined. BD to ask Housing Benefits to do this • HM asked that outsourcing options, including the use of off-shore resources, be considered and that costs be presented • TW said consideration needs to be given to how this should be financed 	BD BD BD
<p>3. Content Management- Contract and Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NW gave overview of the CMS system. The selection of the service provider has been delayed so that more information could be extracted from the companies including how IEG outcomes and WC3 standards compliance will be met . • Potential suppliers have expressed an interest in potentially using RBC as a reference site 	

<p>4. Skills Gap Analysis- IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This topic will be presented at the next meeting. • NW has asked for Councillors to review the Skills Gap Analysis and that comments to be sent to him in the next 10 days so that they could be incorporated into the document for the next meeting 	
<p>5. Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	
<p>6. Date of Next Meeting The date of the next meeting will be at 6.00pm on Thursday 6th January 2005</p>	All to note

Circulated by e-mail to:

Cllrs Niall Thewlis, Roger Habgood, Hugh Meares, Robert Ray, Lynda Gilham, Adrian Tollett and John Dean
Tim Williams, Nigel Watson, Basia Dobrzalska and Siobhan Treacy