

Runnymede Borough CouncilCORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE27 July 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the

Committee present: Councillors R.K. Habgood (Chairman), N. Thewlis (Vice-Chairman), J.R. Furey, Mrs L.M. Gillham, P. A Greenwood, C.J. Norman, Ms C.M. Simmons, P.B. Tuley, P.J. Waddell, and G.B. Woodger

Member of the

Committee absent: None.

108. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 23 and 29 June 2004 were confirmed and signed as correct records.

109. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS IN RUNNYMEDE

The Committee considered data based on the 2001 Census of population and the English Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 that had been published recently on social and economic trends within Runnymede, which would have a key influence on Sustainability Development in the Borough. Promoting sustainable development was a key part of the Local Development Framework (formerly Local Plan), and an integral part of the Council's corporate policy development.

The Census was a count of all people and households in the UK normally undertaken every ten years. Some of the key themes for Runnymede arising from the 2001 Census data, when compared with the 1991 Census results, were a 5% increase in the population, a 10.6% increase in total households, a 31% increase in one-person households, a 14.3% increase in total dwellings and a 24% increase in rented dwellings. There had been a 6% decrease in the total population over 64 years of age and a 14% increase in the population under 24 years of age. There had been a 24% increase in cars in Runnymede, a 5% increase in households with two or more cars and of those who worked, 69% travelled to work by car. Approximately 73% of people stated their general health was good, 20% said it was fairly good and approximately 6% said it was poor.

The English Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 was a measure of multiple deprivation experienced by individuals living in local areas known as Super Output Areas (SOA)s. The overall Index was weighted to convey relative levels of deprivation throughout the whole of England and included consideration of categories known as "domains" for income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, living environment and crime. Officers had drawn together the Indices to provide an aggregated assessment for the Runnymede SOA. While overall Runnymede experienced low levels of deprivation, there were certain pockets in the Borough which had received a relatively poor ranking across a number of domains. Only a small number of households within the Borough were affected in this way.

An integral part of the Sustainability Audit of the Borough was to consider social, economic and environmental objectives that had been identified in National and Regional policy guidance for translation into local targets. The Committee noted the Regional Sustainability objectives which provided a framework for future work on the LDF and established an annual mechanism for monitoring the impact of existing and emerging policy. The Committee endorsed these objectives generally but noted that they would need to be refined to reflect local circumstances.

The information provided by the Census and the Index had particular relevance for targets on improved access to housing, health and well-being, the reduction of poverty and social exclusion, raising educational achievement, improving the quality of the environment, reducing traffic congestion and maintaining economic advantage. These were corporate areas of activity that would require consideration or consultation with other public sector partners, would influence the Leader's Position Statement and the Community Strategy for Runnymede and would contribute towards the work of the Council's Service Committees.

RESOLVED that -

- i) the comment in the report on issues for potential corporate policy development be endorsed; and**
- ii) the mechanism for developing a policy approach on sustainable communities be approved.**

110. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Committee considered the implications of the National Procurement Strategy on the Council's Procurement Strategy, reviewed the Council's Procurement Strategy, noted progress in implementing procurement targets and considered the creation of a new post of Procurement Officer.

The National Procurement Strategy for Local Government set out an agenda for achieving procurement targets. The Committee noted a summary of these along with the Council's progress against these targets. The Procurement Strategy had been reviewed in the light of recent developments, particularly the publication of the National Procurement Strategy, a District audit report and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment report, which identified inconsistent procurement practices across the organisation. The District Auditor had commented that the strategy described procurement in Runnymede rather than setting out its strategic role and had little impact on the way the Council procured. The strategy had been reviewed in the light of this criticism to make the document clearer, to set out guiding principles that would form the basis of procedure and action, to identify procurement objectives that the Council wished to achieve in pursuit of its overall policies and the steps that would be taken to achieve them.

The Committee also noted progress against targets that formed part of the existing Procurement Strategy. An Officer Project Group had been formed to co-ordinate the approach to procurement across the organisation and achieve those targets. Although good progress had been made on a range of procurement initiatives the Project Group were conscious that there were some ambitious targets to be achieved, particularly if the Council was to make significant progress in developing e-procurement as required in the national strategy. A resource would be required to develop and improve the organisation's procurement processes, particularly in the field of electronic methods, which featured high on the Government's agenda for modernising services in the public sector. This task exceeded the capacity of the present Project Group.

It was therefore agreed that an additional resource was required by appointing a Procurement Manager. This would be an additional financial commitment but had potential to produce revenue savings. It was therefore agreed that in creating this new post, there should be a target of producing savings within two years that would be at least equal to the cost of the post. The new post on Grade MM1 would cost £47,000 per annum at top of scale including direct employer's costs. Assuming that an appointment could be made by the beginning of October, this would cost £23,500 in the current financial year. There was a provision of £80,000 for Position Statement Initiatives in the 2004/05 Budget. When procurement savings were achieved, the Council could choose to add the amount back to the Position Statement Initiatives budget or to treat them as a contribution to the Council's £1 million savings target.

The immediate tasks of the Procurement Manager would be to review the Council's procurement practices and produce a business case for investment in e-procurement solutions, review the opportunities for partnership working, advise on procurement procedures and best practice, and co-ordinate the implementation of the purchase ordering module of Task Financials. The Manager would work with neighbouring authorities and participants in the Surrey Procurement Network consisting of the County Council and other Surrey districts. It was intended that the new post would lead to the centralisation of some procurement activities under the Procurement Manager. A job description and person specification for the post were agreed. It was agreed that the post be located in the Technical Services Department, subject to a review of these arrangements after the post had been established for a year.

The Committee agreed that the Director of Finance report back on progress regarding procurement at some time in the future.

RESOLVED that -

- i) the revised Procurement Strategy at Appendix 'A' be approved; and**
- ii) a new post of Procurement Manager be created on Grade MM1 and the cost be met from a virement from the provision for Position Statement Initiatives of £23,500 in 2004/05 and £47,000 in 2005/06.**

111. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

An asbestos survey had been undertaken by a consultant covering all of the Council's corporate non-domestic properties including Day Centres and non-operational properties, as part of the Council's 5-year strategic maintenance plan. The Committee noted the results of the survey whose purpose was to identify the extent and types of asbestos present and the action to be taken to either manage the asbestos in place or, if in an unstable condition, remove it.

The sixty six operational properties surveyed consisted of Day Centres, Public Halls, Civic Offices, Depot, Cemeteries, Public Conveniences, Sports Centre, Museum, Parks and Open Spaces. The forty non-operational properties and allotments were also included in the survey. Thirty seven properties had been identified as having some form of asbestos present. However, all except two properties were in the low to medium risk category. It was an expensive process to remove the asbestos completely, but this would be necessary in the two properties which were at higher risk. A strategy had been developed and the information obtained was to be included in the Estateman asset software to warn all concerned that asbestos was present and to advise what action was needed. A management plan would be developed to identify by means of signage or colour coding the type and position of asbestos, to protect that which was to remain in place so far as necessary, to inform all who used or carried out works in the premises of its existence, and to remove asbestos-containing materials which were a high category risk. Regular reviews would continue.

The management plan would be formalised when the data was fully loaded on the new software, but Officers had formulated a provisional view as to the steps necessary on the basis of the consultant's report and understood best practice. The cost of the measures, which would need to be undertaken by specialist asbestos contractors, was estimated by Officers at £60,000 and consisted of estimated cost of signing, making safe, protecting and, where necessary, removing asbestos in operational corporate properties (£45,000) fees for re-survey of properties, management of contractors and issuing of modified plans (£10,000) and a contingency for unknown measures (£5,000). The above figure did not include any provision for the cost of measures in tenanted non-operational properties. If any unbudgeted expenditure should prove to be necessary, further authority would be sought. Officers envisaged that the cost of all measures could be accommodated within the budget for the strategic maintenance programme for the current year, bearing in mind that the termination of the contract by the main contractor was likely to result in some slippage to the overall programme. Provision would need to be made in future years for the cost of follow up inspections, estimated at £3,000 per annum.

The consultant appointed to carry out the initial surveys had proved to be considerably more financially efficient than the nearest competitor by several thousands of pounds. Their work had been entirely satisfactory and they were now familiar with the properties. It was therefore agreed that they be engaged for the follow up surveys required for the next three years, instead of seeking new bids.

RESOLVED that -

- i) any works necessary in the current financial year to implement the management plan under the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 be undertaken from within the budget for the strategic maintenance programme;**
- ii) the consultant who carried out the original survey be appointed to carry out follow up condition surveys for continuity and for reasons of good value; and**
- iii) the need to undertake periodic reviews, and the consequent financial implications in future years, be noted.**

112. FLOODING IN RUNNYMEDE - ACQUISITION OF HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE

Further to a request which had been made at their July 2003 meeting, the Committee noted a report on the use and cost savings resulting from the acquisition of a Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV). The Committee at its 3 July 2003 meeting had approved a capital estimate of £58,000 for the acquisition of an 18 tonne HGV with a heavy lifting attachment and resolved that a further report be submitted in a year's time showing the use and cost savings arising from the vehicle. The primary purpose of this vehicle was for use in Civil Emergencies. There was a public expectation that the Council should distribute sandbags in the event of flooding. Officers had experienced difficulties in distributing sandbags and the range of other equipment in the emergency stores with the existing vehicles during the severe flooding in the borough in January 2003. Following the Committee's approval, Officers had carried out a tender process to purchase the vehicle. The DSO took delivery of the completed vehicle in early January 2004.

The use of the HGV in distributing sandbags and other emergency equipment was now an integral part of the Council's Flood Emergency Plan. It was also available for dealing with other civil emergencies such as removing fallen trees and debris as a result of strong winds. The DSO used to use a light pickup truck for Special collections (i.e. responding to the public requests to dispose of bulky items of waste) and for removing fly tips. The new vehicle had improved the efficiency of these services. The HGV's volume and load carrying capacity was five times greater than that of the light vehicle that it replaced resulting in considerably fewer trips to the Transfer Station at Charlton Lane, Shepperton and contributing to less congestion on the roads. The use of the lifting attachment for these purposes also reduced the risk of injury to operatives who used to manually lift bulky and heavy items onto vehicles without this facility. The savings which were equivalent to £7,500 in staff time had allowed the crew to spend more time on operational duties. Every autumn fallen leaves were taken to the Transfer Station. This service would benefit in future from the greater capacity of the HGV. For incursions by travellers at Council sites it had often been necessary to block site entrances with improvised barriers, often needed at short notice. The HGV with lifting equipment would be available to respond quickly in those circumstances.

The vehicle had been operating for less than a year so full year operating costs were not available. However, the estimated future annual costs as a result of using the HGV instead of a light pickup truck were as follows:-

Estimated annual Capital charges and maintenance and running costs for HGV	£10,000
Estimated saving on annual Capital charges and maintenance and running costs for surrendered light pickup truck	(£5,000)
Reduction in fuel costs as a result of less journeys to Transfer Station	(£800)
Estimated net cost from the use of the HGV instead of a light pickup truck	£4,200

Depreciation costs had been included within the capital charges.

The cost of leasing a similar vehicle was approximately £18,000 per year for a 5 year contract. The weekly cost of hiring a similar vehicle was approximately £500 per week or £25,000 per year. As the estimated vehicle life was at least 7 years, these methods of acquiring the vehicle would have been more expensive than the capital cost of the purchase.

The new vehicle was helping to achieve a key target in the Runnymede Community Strategy to improve the public's quality of life and feeling of reassurance by dealing rapidly with issues as they arose and where possible improving the local environment. The costs of acquiring and running the vehicle outweighed the potential savings. However, efficiency savings had resulted, along with an improvement in health and safety, better working practices and an enhanced capability in responding to emergencies when they arose.

113. IT HARDWARE - REPLACEMENT

The Committee was advised of the computer hardware that was scheduled for replacement during the year on the grounds that it was not able to carry out the tasks required of it or because it was becoming uneconomic to repair and approval was sought to procure the identified hardware, software and licences. As reported to the Committee in June 2004, the replacement schedule had been modified to allow for a longer life for the majority of equipment, thus saving the Council

£100,000 per annum. The Committee considered the equipment being replaced to the new timetable.

The price of flat panel monitors had fallen dramatically over the past 12 months, but as they were still more expensive than cathode ray monitors and did not provide any power saving benefits, it was agreed that monitors that needed to be retired be replaced by flat panel monitors only if there were space constraints or Document Management System (DMS) considerations. Otherwise, they would be replaced by cathode ray monitors. This would accordingly result in some further savings.

It was also agreed that the following upgrades take place:

- The model of PC selected as the standard would be a 2.8 GHz Pentium IV computer with 512MB of RAM, CD-ROM and industry standard 40GB hard disk.
- Hewlett Packard colour printers would be replaced with Deskjet 5850C printers, personal printers with Laserjet 2300dtn and group printers with Laserjet 4200dtn. All of these printers were network ready and were able to duplex.
- The operating system in use by the Council on the desktop would begin to be migrated to Windows XP Professional as service pack 2 would be available.
- Servers being replaced would use Windows 2003 Server (Enterprise and Standard), but Windows 2003 was being evaluated for the Internet and Exchange servers.
- The existing tape library no longer had sufficient capacity to provide comprehensive backups during the night. This device which used DLT format tapes would therefore be replaced with a device using LTO tapes greatly increasing the volume of data that could be backed up nightly along with speed of backup and restore. The Veritas backup software in use could be migrated to the device with no licensing issues arising.
- As agreed by the Committee in June 2004, Councillors PC's would be replaced with laptop computers. This year's schedule took into account equipment for the four new Councillors and the commencement of replacing the oldest desktop PCs.

This year there was no provision for the upgrade of licences for the desktop. The current Microsoft licences allowed the Council to run Windows XP and Office 2003 on all current machines in perpetuity. In two years time the licensing situation would be reviewed and at that time it would be necessary to relicence the whole site if the Council wished to move to a later version of either Windows or Office. Financial provision had been made for that eventuality.

It was agreed that suppliers of the equipment for personal Computers and Servers should be the lowest bid from three suppliers who were part of the Government Catalogue (GCAT) scheme. GCAT would carry out the tendering processes on behalf of the Council and ensure that best value was achieved. The suppliers of the equipment for monitors and printers would be the best of at least three quotations. It had been found to be financially most advantageous to purchase processors, monitors and printers from separate sources. This practice would continue.

RESOLVED that –

- i) the above software, hardware and licences be replaced or upgraded at a sum not exceeding £157,580 as set out in Appendix 'B';**
- ii) this expenditure be met from the Hardware Replacement Programme; and**
- iii) flat panel monitors only be purchased where they are required for the Document Management System or where space constraints make them necessary.**

114. POST OFFICE CLOSURES IN RUNNYMEDE

The Committee considered a response to the proposals by Post Office Ltd. to close three Post Offices in Runnymede at Marsh Lane, Addlestone, Bond Street, Englefield Green and in New Haw. The Council had not been formally invited to comment on these proposals by Post Office Ltd., but Post Watch (the watchdog for Postal Services) had requested the comments of the Council on the proposals for the Borough.

These closures appeared contrary to Government policy which was to promote access, social inclusion and to enhance local communities. The Committee indicated that applications for

reductions in non-domestic rate would be looked at positively in the future, as the Council aimed to promote viability of local shopping facilities.

RESOLVED that -

- i) the Council raise strong objection to the loss of Post Office Branches in Addlestone, New Haw and Englefield Green; and**
- ii) the comments set out in Appendix 'C' be forwarded to Post Office Ltd., Post Watch and the local M.P.**

115. CONSTITUTION DOCUMENT - SALE OF

The Constitution provided that the Council would fix a price for sale of copies and the Committee considered an appropriate amount.

RESOLVED that -

the price for sale of a hard copy of the Constitution be £10.00 and £5.00 for an electronic download, subject to waiver by the Director of Administration and Leisure in cases he deems appropriate.

116. REFERENCES FROM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 21 JULY 2004

- a) Runnymede Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – Grant Aid

At its meeting on 21 July 2004 the Housing and Community Services Committee approved a stepped increase in the annual core revenue grant to the CAB over the next five years as follows:-

Year	Existing core funding	Increase	Total Grant
2004/05 (current)	£63,550	--	£63,550
2005/06	£65,139	£5,392	£70,531
2006/07	£66,767	£8,464	£75,231
2007/08	£68,436	£8,675	£77,111
2008/09	£70,147	£8,892	£79,039
2009/10	£71,901	£9,115	£81,016

The additional funding was designed to enable the CAB to maintain a new electronic case recording system and retain the trainer of its volunteer staff in the face of growing pressure on services. The Housing and Community Services Committee had asked the Corporate Management Committee to note the financial implications of the award, particularly the need for a corresponding increase in the Council's savings target. The Community Services Best Value Review had identified potential compensatory savings.

The Corporate Management Committee recognised the excellent service which the Citizens Advice Bureau provided. However, in view of the constraints on future year's budgets, particularly in the light of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's recent spending review, the Committee referred the matter back to the Housing and Community Services Committee for further consideration. It was suggested that the Housing and Community Services Committee might reconsider the level of support which it provided to organisations receiving discretionary grants, in order to obtain maximum utilisation of the Council's scarcer resources.

RESOLVED that -

the matter be referred back to the Housing and Community Services Committee for that Committee to give further consideration to the grant support for the CAB.

b) Stock Options Appraisal

At the same meeting the Committee agreed that a feasibility study should be undertaken in order to examine the options for modernisation or redevelopment of the Beomonds and Pinefields Sheltered Housing Schemes. The cost of the works, together with other desirable improvements to the Housing Stock, would have to be taken into account by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan as part of the Housing Stock options appraisal. As there were insufficient Officer resources to undertake the work it would be necessary to engage consultants for the exercise. There was, however, no time to obtain the usual competitive quotations because of the need to complete the assessment of the financial stock options appraisal by September. Thus, to avoid delay, an offer had been accepted from Penningtons, the Council's retained Stock Consultants, to undertake the work for £16,850. The price compared favourably with other quotes the Council had received for similar work, but could not be met from the stock options appraisal budget. The Committee therefore approved a supplementary estimate from the HRA to meet the cost of the study.

RESOLVED that -

a supplementary estimate be approved for 2004/05 in the sum of £16,850, to be met from the HRA, for the cost of the sheltered housing feasibility study.

117. REFERENCE FROM REVIEW BOARD MEETING OF 8 JULY 2004Benefits Priority Indicator of Performance

At its meeting on 8 July 2004, the Review Board received and considered a copy of the report to the Committee on 29 June 2004 on the outturn on the Council's ten priority indicators of service delivery performance. The Board noted that one of the priority indicators contained within the Benefits section was the percentage of benefit renewal claims processed on time. The Board noted that benefit periods had been abolished since 1 April 2004, with renewal claims no longer being required. This indicator, therefore, would not be relevant in the future and no corrective action was required because of abolition of benefit periods. The Board had agreed to refer this matter back for the Committee to decide if it wished to retain the percentage of benefit renewal claims processed on time or some other appropriate measure in future.

Officers had considered this matter after the Board's meeting and advised that previously benefit claimants were required to re-apply at least once a year. This requirement had now been removed and benefit claims were now open ended. The Council was now required by the Department for Work and Pensions to check a number of cases each year to establish that the claimants were still entitled to benefits. Therefore no comparable alternative now existed for this former indicator. However, there still remained two indicators for benefit administration within the priority indicators of performance which related to speed of processing benefit claims in terms of average time for processing new claims and processing notifications of change of circumstance. It was therefore agreed that this area of work was adequately covered within the Council's priority indicators of service delivery performance.

RESOLVED that -

- i) to note that the Review Board has asked this Committee to decide if it wishes to retain within its portfolio of priority indicators the percentage of benefit renewal claims processed on time, or some other performance measure relating to this in future; and**
- ii) in view of the circumstances described above, no replacement be adopted for the priority indicator on the percentage of benefit renewal claims processed on time.**

118. WRITE-OFFS

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds

that the discussions would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 7 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

RESOLVED that -

the Rent arrears, totalling £7,738.65, be written off as irrecoverable.

119. DECriminalISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT (DPE) UPGRADE TO PARKING CHARGES NOTICES PROCESSING SYSTEM

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussions would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Approval was sought from the Committee to the installation of a replacement computer system for handling Decriminalised Parking Charges Notices (PCNs). In the current operation of off-street car parks there was a need to control the issuing of fines or charges notices using a software processing system. The current system had been working satisfactorily for the last five years. However, with the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in November 2004, this system would no longer meet the requirements of the Road Traffic Act 1991 in respect of documentation and tracking and of the National Adjudication Service for the resolution of appeals. In addition, software and hardware had improved in the last five years. Any new system therefore, would have greater capabilities for data storage, retrieval, manipulation and especially report generation, compared to the current system.

As DPE would be managed by Runnymede Borough Council under an Agency Agreement, Surrey County Council (SCC) would be responsible for all additional costs in bringing this operation on stream. The budget estimate was £26,000. In order to progress this matter, quotes for the supply of such a system had been sought from four companies, and evaluated by Runnymede Officers. The results of this evaluation were noted by the Committee. SCC had examined Runnymede Officers' evaluations and had agreed to awarding the work to the lowest tendered price company. From the evaluation, Spur Solutions was the recommended system, it being the lowest tendered price at a capital sum of £24,500, within the budget estimate. This price was fully inclusive of hardware, software and the training of staff on the system. In addition, Spur Solutions offered the lowest price for the ongoing maintenance revenue costs of the system over a seven year life cycle as assessed and set out in the evaluation. This company had recently installed similar systems to cover Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in Reigate & Banstead and Mole Valley. Both of these Boroughs had reported the system to be functioning well. The existing IT infrastructure had capacity for the introduction of the new system without the need to be upgraded. There was a need to have such a charges system fully operational by mid October 2004, which would require system installation in August.

The Council had actively supported the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement into the Borough, which would produce less congestion and clearer streets. Whilst the formal agreement covering DPE had not been signed, there was no reason to doubt that this would take place in the near future. Although SCC would reimburse the costs, the capital programme required amendment to accommodate this proposal and a suitable capital estimate was approved by the Committee. The Secretary of State's approval was required before DPE could be introduced into the Borough. A draft application had been made and initial comments returned. There appeared to be no significant difficulty in SCC receiving approval for the introduction of DPE during late summer 2004, for implementation in November 2004. Until a formal agency agreement was signed with SCC, no commitments to expenditure would be made without SCC's express written authority, including a commitment to reimburse all expenditure and costs incurred by Runnymede Borough Council.

RESOLVED that -

subject to written authorisation and commitment to reimburse from Surrey County Council, the Council's existing parking charges system be replaced by the system offered by Spur Solutions in order to meet the needs of DPE.

120. DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT (DPE) - STAFFING

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussions would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Committee approval was sought to recruit the additional staff needed to meet the requirements for Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE), which was due to be introduced in the Borough in November 2004.

DPE had been introduced in Reigate and Banstead and Mole Valley in May 2004 and in Guildford in June 2004. The other Boroughs and Districts were at various stages of preparation but Runnymede would be the next area to introduce it if preparations proceeded as programmed. A financial model had been agreed and had been used by SCC to identify the resources necessary for the introduction of DPE in the Borough. SCC had agreed, in principle, to meet all of the agreed start-up and revenue costs including staffing costs plus training and uniforms for the first two years of operation and retain the income from on-street Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) for that period. All Runnymede expenditure would be claimed quarterly in arrears under an Agency Agreement.

Waiting restrictions in the Borough Council's off-street car parks were currently enforced by a team of three parking attendants (2.5 full time equivalent or f.t.e.), who were part of Technical Services' Engineering Services team. The management of DPE would be incorporated with the operation of off-street car parks. The additional staff identified in the financial model to combine DPE within the Borough's existing off-street car park operation included 2 f.t.e additional Parking Attendants, ½ f.t.e. Technician/Assistant, and ½ f.t.e Administration Assistant. In addition to the above resources a contribution of £3,000 per year had been identified towards management costs. Salary allocations would be made for the time spent on DPE by other Runnymede Officers on management, financial, legal or IT support and these costs would be recovered under the Agency Agreement.

It was agreed that the two additional parking attendant posts be advertised at a salary grade comparable with the salaries recently offered by Reigate and Banstead, Mole Valley and Guildford in recent advertisements for DPE parking attendants. SCC had agreed with this course of action. A significant proportion of the existing Assistant Engineer's post within Engineering Services was spent managing the Borough's off-street car parking service. It was agreed that, because of the increased workload and responsibility in incorporating on-street parking management, the job title and description be changed to Car Parking Manager and £2,000 of SCC's additional contribution be used to supplement the salary for this post.

The DPE arrangements would be reviewed after two years. If the decision was taken to end the Agency Agreement at that stage SCC would be required to give a notice of a further one year. Surrey County Council would meet any redeployment or redundancy costs directly incurred as a result. Where relevant, job evaluations would then be carried out on the DPE related posts to re-assess the salary grades.

Surrey County Council had reviewed all of the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) relating to on-street parking restrictions and had advertised some changes. Runnymede Officers were dealing with any required changes to off-street Car Parking Orders. The Secretary of State's approval was required before DPE could be introduced into the Borough. A draft application had been made and initial comments returned. There appeared to be no significant difficulty in SCC receiving approval for the introduction of DPE during late summer 2004, for implementation in November 2004. Until the Agency Agreement had been agreed with Surrey County Council, no commitments to expenditure and/or staff appointments would be made without express written authority of Surrey County Council with a commitment to reimburse all expenditure/costs incurred by Runnymede Borough Council, including staff and termination costs.

Unison would be consulted on the proposed operational arrangements for the existing parking attendants and approval for the agreed arrangements would be sought at a future Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that -

approval be given to the recruitment of the additional staff needed to meet the requirements for Decriminalised Parking Enforcement and to the redesignation of the post of Assistant Engineer as Car Parking Manager, as described in the report.

121. STRATEGIC MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR

By resolution of the Committee the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussions would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Authorisation was sought to invite tenders from four of the twenty two contractors who had responded to the advertisement in the European Journal inviting expressions of interest from contractors for routine maintenance and repair works.

In July 2002 the Committee approved a five year strategic maintenance programme to commence in the 2003/4 financial year and a revenue and a capital budget had been made available to carry out the works, in order to comply with the requirements of the Asset Management Plan approved by the Committee in July 2001. The Council had historically undertaken routine maintenance and repair works by the use of a term contract (one under which the contractor was allocated the work during the contract period at rates which had been agreed in advance). The value of the works (estimated at £3.2M over five years for Planned and Reactive maintenance) required that the European Journal be used to seek expressions of interest from suitable contractors. The current contract had been terminated by the contractor on 25 April 2004 and it was therefore necessary to invite tenders to award a new term contract. It was agreed that this contract should be for a period of two years with an option to extend up to five years if this was considered to be beneficial to both parties to the contract.

Twenty-two companies had expressed an interest in the contract, six of which declined to proceed further on hearing in more detail about the range of work being tendered. The remaining sixteen had been asked to provide detailed information on their experience, structure and resources. A contractor's selection criteria form had been used to score the submissions. Based on the information provided and the scores achieved a conclusion was reached by the panel of Officers that twelve contractors were sufficiently experienced and financially sound and had the infrastructure in place to deal with the volume and programme of works. These twelve contractors had been invited to the Civic Offices to give a presentation on their activities, of which three declined prior to interview. The Committee noted the details of the evaluation of the nine contractors who had made a presentation. Contract Standing Order C4.4 required that where the value of a contract exceeded £100,000 the replies be reported to the relevant Committee, who would choose at least four tenderers who appeared to offer the best chance of obtaining a satisfactory bid offering good value for money. The Committee accordingly agreed that the four contractors achieving the best scores in the evaluation undertaken following the presentations referred to above, should be invited to tender.

RESOLVED that -

the four contractors achieving the best scores in the evaluation undertaken by Officers, be invited to tender for the repair and maintenance contract.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.)