

MINUTES of the meeting of the **RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 2 February 2023 at Committee Room.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Monday, 24 April 2023.

Elected Members:

- * Steve Bax
- * Nick Darby (Chairman)
- * Will Forster (Vice-Chairman)
- * David Harmer
- * Edward Hawkins
- * Robert Hughes (Vice-Chairman)
- Robert King
- * Steven McCormick
- * Tony Samuels
- * Lance Spencer
- * Lesley Steeds
- * Hazel Watson
- * Jeremy Webster

(* =present at the meeting)

1/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

No apologies were received.

2/23 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 9 DECEMBER 2023 [Item 2]

Apologies for absence from Tony Samuels be reflected in the minutes. Subject to this, the minutes of the 9 December 2022 meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

4/23 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

None received.

5/23 PERFORMANCE MONITORING SESSION NOTES 14 DECEMBER 2022 [Item 5]

Noted and agreed.

6/23 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL DATA STRATEGY TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Rebecca Paul, Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up

Rachel Crossley, Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform
Angela Lawrence, Head of Data

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman asked what improvements could be expected from the strategy. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up said that the Council recognised the need for improvement to become a data enabled organisation. The three-year transformation programme would enable the collection of high-quality data with everyone within the organisation understanding the value of the data, where to find it and how to use it.
2. The Chairman questioned how the strategy would save money. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up said that beginning with good data would enable good quality decisions, add value and mitigate risk. It would also help in addressing issues such as those recently experienced with the Unit4/ Systems Applications and Products (SAP) project.
3. The Chairman, in reference to the 88 per cent of data accuracy noted in the presentation queried if the figure was considered high or low. The Head of Data said that it was unlikely that 100 per cent data quality would be achieved across the whole Council and the focus was to ensure that the data was fit for purpose, which was the case at 88 per cent. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform added that extra focus would be invested into understanding crucial data sets in areas that required 100 per cent accuracy with gaps being addressed and safeguards implemented as a result. The Chairman stressed the need to ensure any relevant data remained accurate following changes.
4. The Chairman asked if the £3 million cost of the programme was a sensible amount. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up said that the costs provided value for money and the spend would save money going forward.
5. A Member asked who would input the data and if undertaken manually, how accurate would that be. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up explained that the exercise would identify data input inconsistencies across the directorates with solutions being built into the programme to improve accuracy.
6. A Member asked for reassurances that only required data was collected and that it was accurate and stored correctly. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform confirmed that the project would look at developing training and support for officers to address any instances where this was not currently the case.

7. A Member considered that £3 million was unlikely to be sufficient for the scope of the three-year programme.
8. The Chairman requested an explanation of the Council's statutory and regulatory requirements for data usage. The Head of Data said that compliance of the Data Protection Act 1998 and United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) were required. In addition the Council was working towards compliance with the Data Management Association standards (DAMA), a global best practice for data management.
9. The Chairman questioned what compliance training was required for Members to gain relevant knowledge of the statutory and regulatory requirements. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up gave reassurances that the Council was compliant with the required standards and confirmed that the data team were trained. A Member said it was imperative that Members received training too.
10. A Member asked if the Council was compliant across all known data sets. The Head of Data explained that part of the data strategy programme was about ensuring that DAMA compliance was implemented across the organisation. GDPR was currently more embedded across the organisation with mandatory compliance training in place for officers available. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up agreed that the sharing of important information and training would benefit Members of the Resources and Performance Select Committee (RPSC). A Member added that Member oversight was required regarding ownership of data, who was entitled to access the data and the methodology used to determine what data was required.
11. A Member said that external providers needed to be convinced that the Council had the expertise and was working within GDPR rules. The Head of Data explained that the Council aimed to increase the knowledge and understanding of GDPR across the organisation.
12. A Member asked who had the responsibility for this within the Council structure. The Head of Data advised that the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director was the senior responsible officer.
13. The Chairman asked how could Members add value. Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform said that challenge and support around decision making and scrutiny were areas that the Committee could add value and their input would be welcomed. The Chairman noted the need for officers to share information with Members to facilitate more involvement from the Committee. Members suggestions of a subgroup to include

Members with relevant experience were noted and the Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up said that involvement from the Member Development team could be beneficial.

14. A Member asked how the data academy self-assessment tool noted on pages 32, 37 and 38 would be achieved by September 2023. The Head of Data explained that the first iteration of the data academy would go live by March 2023. This would curate the existing data offer available across the Council and would be followed by the skills and knowledge expectation for officers to measure against being available by the end of September 2023. The Member asked how confident officers were that this would be in place by September 2023. The Head of Data said that work was already ongoing and was confident in the September 2023 expectation.
15. The Chairman asked if the Council had suitable hardware and software to support the transformation. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up said that a data quality tool and a data cataloguing tool had been acquired. The Head of Data added that these tools would support data quality checks and track progress over time and would be used in conjunction with the current technical capability within the organisation.
16. A Member queried the steps the Council was taking to address the issue of private data being stored on spreadsheets within teams. The Head of Data said that behaviour and culture would be addressed through staff training to embed the value of data, how to treat data and the accessibility of data. Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform added that setting up the Data board was one leadership element aimed at embedding these values within teams.
17. A Member said it would be helpful if in the future, external social care organisation contractors had access to relevant databases. The Head of Data highlighted the need to identify opportunities to work with such organisations to understand what data they needed to access to be able to undertake the required work. This would be followed by discussions with leads to determine a flow of work that was appropriate, ethical and protected the data.
18. A Member questioned if examples of best practice from other Councils had been researched or if any discussions with the Local Government Association (LGA) had taken place. The Head of Data confirmed that an LGA maturity tool was being used to enable comparisons with other councils in addition to working with a collaborative group of Councils to share knowledge and understanding.

19. A Member, in noting the use of the data cleansing tool to support the SAP to Unit4 programme was concerned that the data quality issues around the Unit4 programme were not identified earlier as this would have mitigated some of the data cleansing problems. The Head of Data confirmed that the team had the data quality element from early in the project, the challenges experienced had been because of the quantity of data being dealt with through a manual process.
20. A Member queried how the programme of work aligned with the Council's data strategy document presented to Cabinet in February 2022, how would the program of 18 workstreams noted in the strategy support and produce results set out in the strategy. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up explained the 18 projects were divided into three work themes; foundation, workforce and insight capability which fit with the original objectives set at the outset of the project. The ambition was to measure data quality across the organisation with benefits from the program being reported on, as noted in the project plans. The Head of Data added that reporting against milestones took place regularly through the transformation programme reporting currently in place.
21. A Member asked how the planned work specifically interlinked with the data strategy document presented to Cabinet in February 2022. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up summarised the foundation work taking place including the development of a governance framework to ensure a continued high level of data quality going forward followed by a workforce piece to address cultural barriers by providing staff with the tools and confidence to continue to ensure that the quality of data remains high. In addition, insight capability to ensure the data supports sound decision making would be developed through pilot programmes.
22. The Member suggested that the Committee's recommendations should include a request for reassurance that the Transformation Programme fully aligns with Council's Data Strategy and provides value for money.
23. A Member requested more information on business and delivery planning, project management and resources.
24. A Member, in noting the reports reference to the Data Board asked for further information around the Data Board governance, including how often the Board met and the stakeholders involved and whether minutes and decisions were available to Members. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform explained that the Data Board was formally agreed at the beginning of 2023 through Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) as a

subcommittee of CLT and was represented by senior level officers from all directorates, including information governance officers and colleagues from resources to include finance and IT elements. Papers were not currently published but more information could be shared with Members. The Board had two roles – a Programme Board; and a long term role to consider provide a place for organisational decision making on data. A Member asked if it would be appropriate to have a Member representation. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform said the delegations of Member involvement were being considered.

25. A Member asked if there was a business case to identify the plan for delivery, the expected benefits and the resulting savings to justify the £3 million spend. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up noted the difficulty in quantifying this information and said that where possible, this information would be available. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform added that one element around tools could be quantified by investment and time saved, this would require a business case to continue with investment in newly identified roles being made possible through freed up time quantifiable in the next year.
26. A Member asked if there would be a hard stop at three years in January 2025. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform said that three years was the maximum permitted time to invest in programmes funded by the transformation programme however a hard stop was not considered the best course, consideration was already taking place now to consider what roles and resources would be needed in the base budget and choices would need to be made going forward.
27. A Member questioned how success or failure of the project considering that Cabinet had signed off a £3 million investment without a detailed business case. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform said that the outcomes were about transforming the organisation in addition to saving money and explained that there was a business case in place for this work which was required in order to secure transformation funding. The Head of Data reiterated the commitment to evidence where the programme provides value to the organisation and putting in place measures longer term to develop this information. The Member requested more reassurance around the business case.
28. A Member requested the Committee be provided with a breakdown of the £3 million spend. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform agreed to share more detail of the breakdown.

29. A Member asked if parts of the Council where the most improvement was needed had been prioritised. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform said that some elements would be simpler to address within the whole organisation to avoid working in silos and over focusing in some areas but there were areas of focus including Unit4 and Land and Property in addition to considering the balance of willing participants and complex areas.
30. A Member asked who was determining what needed to be acquired in terms of data and how was this being decided. The Head of Data said that there would be a focus on ensuring current methods to capture data were sound, and that data supported insight, with conversation to take place within teams to determine priorities, requirements and any gaps.
31. A Member noted the need for continuous training of staff to be built into contracts. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Levelling Up confirmed that this would be addressed within the workforce, capability and insight pieces.
32. The Chairman said it would be useful for break dates to be made available in relation to leasehold properties and asked if it would be possible for Land and Property to collate that data in the future. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform agreed to follow the query up for a response. **Action – The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform**
33. A Member asked if legal department data would be available to access going forward. The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform confirmed that the legal department was not outside the scope of the data strategy, and the Director – Law and Governance sat on the Data Board.
34. A Member asked if the key performance indicators (KPIs) developed could be monitored by the Committee going forward. The Head of Data confirmed that the KPIs would be shared with the Committee once established. **Action – The Joint Executive Director, Public Service Reform**

Resolved:

The Resources and Performance Select Committee:

1. **Member engagement and training:** Asks the service to arrange a programme of well publicised Member seminars; training (with real world examples); and oversight (cabinet to consider the best way to involve members) to impart detailed understanding of the Data Strategy Transformation Programme.

2. **Cabinet's role and update to full Council:** Invites Cabinet to play a leading role in raising awareness on this topic (beyond cabinet) and requests the Cabinet Lead on Data to include an update on this topic in their report to full Council.
3. **Resources, project management and KPIs:** Acknowledges the ambitious nature of the transformation programme and therefore requests that a business plan – with a fully resourced project management plan; key performance indicators; summary of a risk and issues log; relevant costings and details – be developed by the service and shared with the Select Committee.
4. **Strategic alignment and value for money:** Seeks reassurance that the Transformation Programme fully aligns with Council's Data Strategy and provides value for money.
5. **Progress report to the Select Committee:** Asks for a progress report in September 2023 and a 6 monthly update thereafter addressing the aforementioned recommendations along with any relevant matters involving the Council's Data Strategy and the Transformation Programme underpinning it.

7/23 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER [Item 7]

The Select Committee noted the Recommendation Tracker and the Forward Work Programme.

8/23 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 8]

The Committee noted its next meeting would be held on 24 April 2023.

Meeting ended at: 12:08pm

Chairman