



Essex County Council

Corporate Policy and Scrutiny

10:30	Tuesday, 30 April 2019	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

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1	Membership, Apologies and Declarations To be reported by the Democratic Services Manager.	4 - 4
2	Minutes of previous meeting To note and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 March 2019.	5 - 8
3	Questions from the Public A period of up to 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make representations on any item on the agenda for this meeting. On arrival, and before the start of the meeting, please register with the Committee Officer.	
4	Ringway Jacobs Joint Task and Finish Group – Approval of draft report Members to receive report CPSC/08/19 . Draft report to follow.	9 - 13
5	Work Programme - April 2019 To note the current position with regards to the committee's work programme.	14 - 16

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Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 28 May 2019 at 2:00pm.

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Urgent Business

To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

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Committee: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Enquiries to: Richard Buttress, Democratic Services Manager

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

Membership

(Quorum 4)

Councillor M Mackrory (Chairman)
Councillor I Henderson (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor V Metcalfe (Vice-Chair)
Councillor J Abbott
Councillor J Beavis
Councillor M Buckley
Councillor M Garnett
Councillor M Hardware
Councillor J Moran
Councillor R Pratt
Councillor W Schmitt
Councillor A Sheldon
Councillor M Steptoe
Councillor A Turrell

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Tuesday 26 March 2019

Present

Cllr M Mackrory (Chairman)
Cllr J Beavis
Cllr M Buckley
Cllr M Garnett
Cllr I Grundy (substitute)
Cllr M Hardware

Cllr I Henderson
Cllr V Metcalfe
Cllr J Moran
Cllr W Schmitt
Cllr A Sheldon
Cllr M Steptoe

Apologies

Cllr J Abbott
Cllr R Pratt
Cllr A Turrell

Richard Buttress, Democratic Services Manager was supporting the meeting.

1. Membership, Apologies and Declarations

Apologies were received from Cllr J Abbott, Cllr R Pratt and Cllr A Turrell.

Cllr I Grundy substituted for Cllr R Pratt.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 February 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

3. Questions from the public

None received.

4. Future Resourcing Services – Temporary Workers Supply

The committee received report CPSC/05/19.

Cllr M Mackrory welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Cllr Susan Barker, Cabinet Member for Customer and Corporate
- Graeme Lennon, Head of People Operations.

Cllr Barker introduced the report:

- To note that the temporary workers contract is £17m, not £30 as stated in the report

Graeme Lennon also introduced the report:

- ECC will be going to the market in April 2019 with a view to the contract commencing September 2019

- The contract will be for two years with the option to extend for a further one
- The contract will have break clauses.

The committee were pleased to see that five of the six recommendations had been included in the contract.

Progress is being made in respect of I.T development and integration with Essex County Council's (ECC) systems.

The specification states that new companies must ensure their systems are compatible with ECC's.

The aim is to have less of a reliance on temporary workers in the future.

The impact of Brexit on temporary workers is currently unknown.

It is more cost effective to have a permanent employee than a temporary worker.

ECC is able to carry out DBS checks on applicants from countries outside of the UK.

Actions

- 1) Clarification to be provided around extensions/break clauses in the contract.
- 2) Wording to be built into the specification that should not deter applicants who have been in some form of rehabilitation previously.
- 3) A further breakdown of the worker types as referenced in 5.8.
- 4) Disability and ethnicity data is not currently collected – more detail to be provided as to whether it will be in the new contract.
- 5) A further progress update will be given to the committee in June 2019.
- 6) The draft contract will be shared with the committee in October 2019.

5. Delivery Risk Assessment process for ECC savings

The committee received report CPSC/06/19.

Cllr M Mackrory welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Cllr Louise McKinlay, Cabinet Member for Resources
- Tina French, Head of Strategic Finance and Insight
- Debbie Knopp, Director – Delivery Service and Design.

Cllr McKinlay introduced the report:

- This report provides the detail of the risk assessment that sits behind ECC's budget
- The pressures on the budget are well documented, which include Pay and Grading, fair funding and business rate retention
- The items marked as red in the budget does not necessarily mean it will not be delivered

- 19% is currently marked as red. In these cases, there are clear business plans which are monitored by CLT and PLT throughout the year
- If there is a saving that cannot be delivered, it will be mitigated by the Cabinet Member/Executive Director
- There is a £4m contingency built into the budget which is usually spent but due to the mild winter it has not yet so far this year. If it is not used, it will be carried forward for future years

It was noted there are a number of headings where risks are listed but no reference is made to outcomes.

There has been a pause on property investment as a result of Brexit. No further work will take place until the outcome is known.

ECC's borrowing is currently at £55m.

The impact of savings on communities is monitored by ECC's Cabinet. The budget is a way of delivering the policies rather than the other way around.

There has been an increase in borrowing forecasts which affects revenue.

An impact assessment is completed before savings are identified in terms of policies coming forward. The Council is mindful of the impact and is being looked into on a micro basis rather than the County as a whole.

Some of those savings listed as red and amber are a result of timing issues or because a consultation is still ongoing.

ECC has a good track record of mitigating savings. Reserves are used for savings that cannot be mitigated against.

When setting future budgets, core data around inflation, population growth and demographics are taken into account. £20m of savings for next year's budget is as a result of inflation.

Actions

- 1) Regular updates to be provided on the progress of delivery risk assessment, appreciating that some information may be commercially sensitive.
- 2) Detailed information to be provided on budget assumptions – how the savings are actually identified.

6. Task and Finish Group: Ringway Jacobs Contract

The committee received a verbal update from Cllr Tony Ball, who is the Chair of the Joint Task and Finish Group looking into the extension of the current highway maintenance contract.

The committee were informed of the following:

- All four meetings as set out in the scoping document have now been completed
- The debates at these meetings went constructive and the conversations were in depth and detailed
- So far, over 20 recommendations have been identified by the Task and Finish Group
- Thanked ECC and EH officers for their input into this piece of scrutiny work.

Reference to the high standard of information provided by officers was made by other members of the Task and Finish Group.

It was acknowledged there is still a lot of work to do to finalise the recommendations.

Actions

- 1) The final report to be considered by the committee on 30 April 2019 ahead of it being submitted to the Cabinet Member.

7. Work Programme

The updated work programme was noted by the committee.

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30 April 2019 at 10:30am.

9. Urgent business

None received.

10. Urgent exempt business

None received.

The meeting closed at 12:02pm.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 4
		CPSC/08/19
Committee:	Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	Tuesday 30 April 2019	
Enquiries to:	Name: Richard Buttress Designation: Democratic Services Manager Contact details: richard.buttress3@essex.gov.uk	

Ringway Jacobs Joint Task and Finish Group – draft report

Members are asked to discuss and endorse the final draft of the Ringway Jacobs Task and Finish Report. The final draft of the report will follow publication of the agenda to allow time for amendments to made following discussion at the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee on the 18th April 2019. A summary of report recommendations can be found below.

Summary of recommendations

Contract Re-procurement

1. Members of the Task and Finish group conclude that the most sensible option for the cabinet member is to renew the contract with Ringway Jacobs for five years, with the caveat that a number of changes are made to current arrangements. These are set out in the recommendations below in the following categories: ongoing scrutiny, maintenance, reporting of defects, customer services and communications and supply chain works.
2. Members still have serious concerns regarding the readiness of Essex County Council (ECC) to re-procure. Within three years, both Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee and Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee need to be satisfied that ECC is in a secure position to re-procure, with a clear place for scrutiny factored into the timeline.

Ongoing Scrutiny

3. A working group (hereafter referred to as the Ringway Jacobs and Essex Highways Working Group) should be established to facilitate an ongoing engagement with Ringway Jacobs and ECC Highways officers. This will continue the work of the task and finish group, encouraging member-driven scrutiny looking at procurement, highways policy and overall contract

performance. This should meet quarterly. A six-monthly update, presented by the Chairman of this working group, will be delivered to both scrutiny committees. The group will be comprised equally of members from both the Place Services and Economic Growth and Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committees and operated through current task and finish arrangements.

4. The annual review of KPI's that are presented to the Cabinet Member should also be presented to the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee for further review, with time to offer recommendations.
5. The Ringway Jacobs and Essex Highways Working Group will continue the benchmarking work of this committee, exploring the work of other highways authorities.
6. The cabinet member is to be commended for improvements in the quality of relationships between members and Ringway Jacobs officers. This is due, in large, to the success of the 'buddy system'. Member relationships with regards to local pieces of work however, could be improved. There should be a mechanism put in place for direct scrutiny of specific contract elements or pieces of work, even if this simply involves the local member being consulted upon request. This could be through an enhanced version of the 'buddy' system already in operation.

Maintenance

7. The cabinet member should consider asking officers to review the risk matrix. As it stands, serious defects that might register significantly on the 'risk impact' scale, but only slightly on the 'risk probability' scale could potentially receive a less urgent timescale for repair than their impact would necessitate. This should be addressed. Members should be engaged through the Ringway Jacobs Working Group to aid in the review and update of the risk register.
8. The Cabinet Member and officers should explore reviewing the current maintenance strategy (last updated in 2008) with a view to determining suitability to ECCs current policy priorities and is encouraged to make use of the Working Group. This should include a conversation around road classifications and priorities as well as the current criteria for defects to warrant repair.
9. Members noted with concern that particular KPIs outlining timescale requirements for streetlight repairs had been removed from the contract. Members ask that KPI A14 (Average number of days taken to repair lighting faults within control of LA) is reinstated.
10. Members should receive a more accurate indicative timetable for remedial works and larger schemes, with estimates on timescales provided for communication with local residents.

11. A specific KPI should be included within the contract for all work carried out by utility companies to be inspected before the two-year maintenance repair ends. This inspection should determine whether the work has been completed properly and to an agreeable standard.

Reporting of defects

12. Officers and Members raised a number of concerns regarding the interaction between Ringway Jacobs and Essex Highways systems (confirm/online reporting tool). This should be seen as a priority moving forward, to ensure a more effective, joined up service is offered in future.
13. The ease with which faults can be reported has a huge amount of impact on overall public perception of the highways service offered by ECC. Ringway Jacobs and ECC should learn from best practice in terms of fault reporting with a view to designing a more effective system. This should provide members of the public with more detailed information regarding the defect including an estimated timescale for repair. We are aware that work is already being undertaken to improve the online tools and the Working Group would welcome being involved in this moving forward.
14. All Members should receive quarterly training opportunities on issues around reporting of defects, changes to the online tool, and follow up enquiries. (Change to quarterly drop-ins and training for changes/improvements).

Customer Services and Communications

15. It was noted by members that, While ECC and Ringway Jacobs are both excellent with regards to reactive communications, both need to work together to produce a more proactive communications agenda. Members of the Working Group gave considerable time investigating this area and would like to undertake further analysis as part of its future programme. Members understand that expectations need to be managed, but feel strongly that Ringway Jacobs should be measured on overall public perception through an additional KPI – the manner of which to be determined by the cabinet and officers, with input from the Essex Highways Ringway Jacobs Working Group.
16. Members question the value of the National Highways Tracker (NHT) as an effective method of measuring satisfaction. Officers and Members should explore whether the NHT is fit for ECC, and whether an in-house alternative could potentially lead to greater ownership of results, more validity of feedback, and more control over the questions asked.
17. A single, clearer set of lines of responsibility for informing members of changes to roadworks and reported repairs be implemented which could be written into the Ringway Jacobs contract.

Supply Chain

18. The Cabinet Member should consider the potential for ECC to employ or contract its own independent inspectors to assess the quality of works carried out by Ringway Jacobs parent companies, as well as the wider supply chain. This could be conducted as a sampling exercise, with a KPI associated to ensure that the quality of works remains consistent.
19. ECC needs to more closely oversee larger pieces of supply chain work. The working group should be more engaged moving forward and provided assurances as to the value for money and quality of work provided by third parties.
20. All third parties carrying out work on ECCs behalf should be branded accordingly, explicitly stating that the organisation is representing ECC. The quality and consistency of signage on Essex Highways works also needs to be greatly improved in terms of the information provided and the expected timescales outlined for completion.
21. The Cabinet Member should explore encouraging Ringway Jacobs to adopt an incentive-based scheme when procuring further works beyond those originally contracted. This could take the form of a ranked preference system as already in operation in authorities such as Leicestershire County Council.
22. ECC should draw more on expertise from within the Supply Chain Forum, collectively determining solutions to local government pressures around efficiency and reputational damage. There need to be mechanisms in place to ensure that these efficiencies are monitored and fed back into the supply chain. The Ringway Jacobs working group should engage with the minutes of these meetings and the Chairman of the Ringway Jacobs working group should be invited to attend Supply Chain Forum meetings.
23. Ringway Jacobs is to be commended for its social value work and commitment to activities beyond those required through the contract, especially with regards to work carried out with the armed forces. ECC should be better at publicising this work. The Cabinet Member should encourage Ringway Jacobs to adopt more internal social value measures, particularly around hiring more apprentices into the Ringway Jacobs workforce. The Cabinet Member might consider adding a KPI determining a minimum expectation (i.e. number of apprentices as a percentage of the overall workforce) into the contract.

Session aims

Members to agree the report and recommendations as set out in the final report.

CORPORATE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20 – (ADOPTED BY SEPTEMBER 2018 COMMITTEE MEETING)

Approach to topic selection – where can the committee conduct reviews quickly, influence change and make a difference to the residents of Essex

Date/Timing	Issue/Topics	Focus/other comments	Approach	RAG
April 2019				
April 2019	Procurement – renewal of Ringway Jacobs contract	Joint committee work with Place Services and Economic Growth Committee	Update on Task and Finish Group progress to be reported	
May 2019				
May 2019	Emerging organisation strategies	Mid-point update on the Organisation Strategy	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
May 2019	Brexit	Committee to receive an update on the impact Brexit will have on ECC	Presentation by the Chief Executive	
May 2019	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be half-yearly 2. Cabinet Member and/or relevant officer to present 3. To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis 	
June 2019				
June 2019	Future of Resourcing Services – Temporary Workers Supply	Committee to receive an update on the progress of the implementation of the Temporary Workers Supply contract	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	

July 2019				
July 2019	Future of Resourcing Services – Temporary Workers Supply	Committee to receive the draft copy of the Temporary Workers Supply contract	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
August 2019				
NO MEETING PLANNED				
September 2019				
September 2019	Work Programme Planning	Committee to identify items for consideration for its future work programme	To be supported by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
October 2019				
October 2019	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be half-yearly 2. Cabinet Member and/or relevant officer to present 3. To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis 	
Topics suggested being pursued				
TBC	Business Rate Retention/Fair Funding Review	Committee to receive an update on the consultation process and the approach ECC are taking to this	Presentation by relevant Cabinet and Directors	
Autumn 2019	Property Investment Portfolio	To receive an in-depth update on the latest position on ECC's property investment programme	Presentation by relevant Cabinet Member, Director and Officers	
Autumn 2019	Property portfolio	Value of ECC Estate and disposal strategy	1) The current value of ECC's property estate	

			2) Breakdown of ECC property estate and their values 3) Details of ECC's disposal strategy	
Ongoing	Budget 2020/21	Committee looking to undertake a pre-scrutiny exercise on ECC's budget for 2020/21	Involvement from Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
TBC	ECC Organisation Redesign/Transformation update	To be determined	To be determined	
Topics suggested to be pursued				
TBC	Customer Contact Centres	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Essex Legal Services – update on external service charging	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Overall strategic direction	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	I.T – update on 'Azure' system	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Social Care Providers	Review ECC's process of dealing with providers who are in a difficult financial position – possible Task and Finish Group	To be determined	