



AGENDA

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 8 June 2022

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT*

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock (Chairman), Monique Bonney (Vice-Chairman), Lloyd Bowen, Derek Carnell, Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, Julian Saunders, David Simmons, Bill Tatton, Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine, Mike Whiting and Corrie Woodford.

Quorum = 3

Information for the Public

*Members of the press and public can listen to this meeting live. Details of how to join the meeting will be added to the website on 7 June 2022.

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Therefore by entering the Chamber and speaking at Committee you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those sound records for training purposes.

Pages

1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chairman will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures.

The Chairman will inform the meeting whether there is a planned evacuation drill due to take place, what the alarm sounds like (i.e. ringing bells), where the closest emergency exit route is, and where the second closest emergency exit route is, in the event that the closest exit or route is blocked. The Chairman will inform the meeting that:

(a) in the event of the alarm sounding, everybody must leave the building via the nearest safe available exit and gather at the Assembly points at the far side of the Car Park. Nobody must leave the assembly point until everybody can be accounted for and nobody must return to the building until the Chairman has informed them that it is safe to do so; and

(b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation. Any officers present at the meeting will aid with the evacuation. It is important that the Chairman is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of

Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

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| 4. | Forward Decisions Plan | 5 - 6 |
| 5. | Member Appointments to Sub-Committees | 7 - 10 |
| | To agree the membership of the Appointments Sub-Committee, Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee and Investigation and Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee. (Appendix to follow) | |
| 6. | Member Appointments to Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group | |
| | To agree the membership of the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group. (Report and Appendix to follow). | |
| 7. | Member appointments to Joint Arrangements | |
| | To agree the membership of the Mid-Kent Improvement Partnership Board and the South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee. (Report and Appendix to follow). | |
| 8. | Award of Merchant Service Contract | 11 - 14 |

Issued on Monday 30 May 2022

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

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Policy and Resources Forward Decisions Plan

Report title, background information and recommendation(s)	Date of meeting	Open or exempt?	Lead Officer and report author
<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24</p> <p>We are required to review our Council Tax Support Scheme on an annual basis and to put a scheme for 2023/24 in place by March 2023. The recommendation for the scheme for 2023/24 is to go out to consultation to seek views on the move to a banded Council Tax Reduction Scheme.</p>	<p>13.7.22</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>Lead officer: Lisa Fillery</p> <p>Report author: Zoe Kent</p>

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Policy and Resources Committee	
Meeting Date	8 June 2022
Report Title	Membership of Sub-Committees
EMT Lead	David Clifford – Head of Policy, Governance and Customer Services
Head of Service	
Lead Officer	Jo Millard – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<p>The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the membership of the Appointments Sub-Committee based on the Groups’ nominations for membership at Appendix I; and 2. Agree the membership of the Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee based on the Groups’ nominations for membership at Appendix II; and 3. Agree the membership of the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee based on the Groups’ nominations for membership at Appendix III.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Policy and Resources Committee to agree the membership of the Appointments Sub-Committee, the Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee and the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee, based on Groups’ nominations for membership.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council’s constitution establishes three sub-committees of the Policy and Resources Committee. The membership of each sub-committee must be drawn from the parent committee. Sub-committee seats are not separately included in the political balance calculation, but the membership of sub-committee places should be as proportionate as far as reasonably practicable.
- 2.2 Under Part 2.2.1 of the constitution, the Policy and Resources Committee has the following sub-committees, each comprised of seven members of the Committee who have received appropriate training on the conducting of hearings and employment:

Appointments Sub-Committee

The functions of the Appointments Sub-Committee are to

- i. agree the appointments of Directors of the Council/Shared Services; and
- ii. make recommendations to Full Council on the appointments of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer.

This sub-committee can include any seven members of the Policy and Resources Committee who have had or are willing to have appropriate training, with the proviso that sub-committee membership is as politically balanced as is reasonably practical.

Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee

The function of this sub-committee is to hear any disciplinary action against one of the Council's statutory officers, the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or the Section 151 Officer.

This sub-committee can include any seven members of the Policy and Resources Committee who have had or are willing to have appropriate training, with the proviso that sub-committee membership is as politically balanced as is reasonably practical. However, it must be noted that membership of this sub-committee is mutually exclusive of membership of the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee.

Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-committee

The function of this sub-committee is to hear any disciplinary appeals brought by a statutory officer on any disciplinary sanction short of dismissal.

This sub-committee can include any seven members of the Policy and Resources Committee who have had or are willing to have appropriate training, with the proviso that sub-committee membership is as politically balanced as is reasonably practical. However, it must be noted that membership of this sub-committee is mutually exclusive of membership of the Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to agree the membership of the Appointments Sub-Committee, the Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee and the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee, based on Groups' nominations as set out in Appendices I, II and III.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Places on sub-committees should be allocated as far as practicable in accordance with the wishes of political groups and agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee, so there are no alternative options.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 All Group Leaders have been asked to advise Democratic Services of their nominations to seats on sub-committees.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The recommendations in this report contribute to the council priority to renew local democracy and make the council fit for the future.
Financial, Resource and Property	As with the parent committee and all service committees, the working group will need to operate within the budget framework adopted each year by Council.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The establishment of sub-committees is set out in the Council's constitution.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Groups' Nominations for the Appointments Sub-Committee
- Appendix II: Groups' Nominations for the Investigation and Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee
- Appendix III: Groups' Nominations for the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committee

8 Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers.

Policy and Resources Committee Meeting Agenda Item:

Meeting Date	8 June 2022
Report Title	Award of Merchant Services Contract
SMT Lead	Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources
Head of Service	Philip Wilson, Head of Finance and Procurement
Lead Officer	Philip Wilson, Head of Finance and Procurement
Classification	Open

Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Committee decides to place its merchant services requirements with Worldpay.2. That the period of the contract should run for four years from 9 June 2022.3. That the Policy and Resources Committee approve delegated authority to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee to enter into the contract with Worldpay.
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1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report requests authority from the Policy and Resources Committee to award the merchant services contract to the preferred supplier through a framework agreement. Merchant services is term used for the service provided to enable the Council to take payments from customers using cards, or other devices via a secure, encrypted channel.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council requires merchant services to facilitate the acceptance and processing of debit and credit card transactions. There is a charge based on the value of the transaction which can vary according to the type of card used. This report covers the use of merchant services for the payment of Council Tax and other items by card via the Council's website and telephone payments.
- 2.2 The merchant services contract was put out to tender in 2016 and reported to Cabinet on 5 October 2016. The Cabinet approved the recommendations that the Council place its merchant services requirements with Worldpay for three years from 16 January 2017 with the option to extend for a further two years. This option was taken up so that the current contract arrangements ended on 16 January 2022.

- 2.3 The Council obtained the services of a consultant to review the current contract and future approach. They concluded that the tariffs available via the Crown Commercial Service framework agreement are lower than the levels that the Council can realistically expect to achieve through an open tender process.
- 2.4 A framework is an agreement between a contracting authority (such as Crown Commercial Services) and one or more suppliers which establishes the terms under which a supplier will enter into a contract with a member in the period during which the framework agreement applies. In effect this means that the Council is able to use this contract arranged by Crown Commercial Services without having to go out to tender itself.
- 2.5 In 2021/22 the cost of merchant services covered in this report was £69,500. In 2021/22, the Council received £14.5m income via credit/ debit cards under this contract (of which £12m was for council tax) and it is vital that this service is efficient, accurate and reliable.
- 2.6 The consultant compared the Council's current costs with Worldpay against the costs that would be incurred once the contract is procured through the framework agreement. The result was that the annual cost on the existing tariffs was estimated at £73,600 compared to the costs via the Crown Commercial Services framework of £52,300. The value of a four year contract under the Crown Commercial Services framework is £209,200.
- 2.7 It is therefore recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee agree the recommendation for the Council to place its merchant services contract for this service with Worldpay using the Crown Commercial Services framework. This will be for a four year contract beginning 9 June 2022 to 8 June 2026.
- 2.8 Due to resource issues it was not possible to agree the new contract in time for an earlier Cabinet meeting. It is estimated that the cost of the merchant services with Worldpay from 17 January 2022 to 8 June 2022 is £24,800 including VAT. As this is under £25,000 this will be treated as one quotation in advance under the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 To approve the recommendation that the Council places its merchant services requirements for payments through the website and by telephone with Worldpay through the Crown Commercial Services framework agreement as detailed in the report.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 An open tender exercise could be carried out but this could result in higher tariffs than being paid through the proposed framework agreement and significant use of staff resources to facilitate the procurement process.

5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 No consultation was carried out for this report.

6. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The selection of a tenderer to meet the Council's merchant services requirements assists the delivery of the "renewing local democracy and making the Council fit for the future" priority within the Corporate Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	The 2021/22 core merchant services cost was £69,500. The anticipated annual reduction in cost is estimated to be in the region of £21,000.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The proposed framework agreement has met the Public Contract Regulations. The Council will ensure that the correct procurement procedure under the framework will be followed. The whole life value of the contract is £209,200.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/ Ecological Emergency	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7. Appendices

7.1 There are no appendices.

8. Background Papers

8.1 All background papers to this report are held in the Finance and Procurement Department.

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