

Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing	N	
Commissioner engagement (if report focused on issues of concern to Commissioners such as Finance, Assets etc)	Y	
Relevant Group Head review	Y	
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)	Y	
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee		
	Reviewed by	
Finance comments	O. Owolabi	29/09/25
Risk comments	LH	29/09/25
Legal comments	LH	29/09/25
HR comments (if applicable)	N/A	

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	L. Heron	29/09/25
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	T. Collier	24/9/25
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		

Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

13 October 2025

Title	Procurement support from Runnymede Borough Council
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Linda Heron, Group Head Corporate Governance
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Services
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree in principle to enter into a relevant agreement to support Phase 1 of the proposal set out in Appendix A;2. Delegate authority to the Group Head Corporate Governance and S151 officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, to finalise the details of the proposal; and3. Delegate authority to the Group Head Corporate Governance to enter into the agreement and all ancillary documentation relating to Phase 1 of the proposal set out in Appendix A.
Reason for Recommendation	To support procurement function within the Council and to address recommendations in the internal and external reviews.

1. Executive summary of the report (*expand detail in Key Issues section below*)

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council requires to improve its procurement function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council must consider and implement ways of improving its procurement function
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the proposed joint working arrangement with Runnymede Borough Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the proposal from Runnymede Borough Council • Agree proposals in relation to Phase 1
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2. Key issues

- 2.1 The Council's permanent Corporate Procurement Manager resigned in June 2025, and for operational expediency a decision was made not to fill the role but seek external support. Consequently, the Council approached Runnymede Borough Council ("RBC"). An initial meeting was held to understand the background and discuss possible opportunities for support from RBC in the delivery of our procurement function. Initially the scope was limited to the assistance with building procurement knowledge within the Council and with the provision of training for staff to develop a devolved model of procurement.
- 2.2 Following this meeting and further conversations, RBC have put forward a 2-phase proposal, where Phase 1 envisages alignment of policies and processes, including the actions required to deliver a devolved model. Phase 2 envisages move to RBC providing an overall lead on a full service delivery model from April 2026.
- 2.3 Progressing to Phase 2 would require further approval which would be agreed by both parties. Based on the current timetable, preparation for this phase would take place between January and March 2026.
- 2.4 In all scenarios following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), the Council and RBC will be in the same unitary authority. Therefore, it would be prudent to take this opportunity to align processes at this early stage.
- 2.5 The procurement team at the Council is 3 FTE and currently carries one vacancy (Corporate Procurement Manager). The majority of staff at the Council rely on the Procurement Team for operational support with procurement projects and activities. The Procurement Team does not have sufficient capacity to meet the demand due to the volume of requests.
- 2.6 The current model is not sustainable, and decisive steps must be taken to move to a devolved model, where the Procurement Team would be providing templates, tools, and support for staff to undertake their own procurement activities up to a certain limit, focussing on higher value and more complex procurement projects. To achieve a functioning and safe devolved model of procurement a series of comprehensive and detailed training exercises will be required.
- 2.7 RBC Head of Procurement has delivered a significant body of work on updating contract standing orders, reviewing the contracts register, delivering staff training, improving internal documentation, simplifying processes and

undertaking spend analysis; currently a social value tool is being trialled with wider rollout to follow shortly.

- 2.8 As such, RBC are well placed to replicate similar work at the Council to build a devolved model of procurement. The groundwork, such as training materials and templates, have already been produced at RBC and should be relatively straightforward to roll out. The success of this exercise will be directly dependent on the support and buy-in from staff at the Council.

3. Options appraisal and proposal

- 3.1 Option 1 (recommended) – agree recommendations in this report.

3.1.1 Public sector procurement roles are traditionally hard to recruit, due to scarcity of experienced staff with the relevant skills, knowledge, or qualifications, making collaboration an attractive option. By sharing RBC resources, the Council will secure the necessary support to upskill staff across all departments during Phase 1.

3.1.2 In addition to the wider benefit of improving the resilience of the procurement function, this will also address action points in the internal and external reports and the Commercial theme of the emerging Improvement and Recovery Plan.

3.1.3 This option will also deliver alignment of processes ahead of Local Government Reorganisation, in particular it is anticipated that Spelthorne and RBC will end up in the same unitary combination regardless of which option is approved by Ministers.

- 3.2 Option 2 – the Committee may choose to propose their own recommendations.

Changes to the RBC proposal will require further discussions with RBC and another report to inform the Committee of the outcome; this will inevitably take time and as such reduce the available time for implementation and realisation of benefits before the LGR takes place.

- 3.3 Option 3 – the Committee may choose to reject the recommendations in the report and require alternative proposals.

Please see comments in para 3.2 above.

- 3.4 Option 4 – the Committee may choose to reject the recommendations in the report and not require alternative proposal, i.e. leave matters as they are now.

This option is not recommended as the Council must pro-actively address the action points and the recommendations in the various internal and external reports to improve the Council's procurement function.

4. Risk implications

4.1 Internal processes and procedures

Inevitably the two Authorities will have different procurement procedures, financial systems, contract management processes and constitutional arrangements. This can cause inefficiencies and may require additional input.

Mitigation: the proposal envisages review and streamlining of policies and procedures, regular check-in meetings to monitor progress and escalation procedure to resolve issues and concerns.

4.2 Capacity: RBC may face internal staffing challenges which may impact on the delivery of Phase 1.

Mitigation: monitor progress via regular check-in meetings, use the agreed escalation procedure to resolve issues and concerns.

4.3 Change management: The Council's staff and stakeholders may be reluctant to adopt the new processes.

Mitigation: early engagement, clear and effective communication, monitor and adapt as necessary.

4.4 Cultural differences: Potential clash of organisational cultures may impact collaboration and trust.

Mitigation: explore differences to build alignment, monitor and adapt as necessary.

4.5 Loss or reduction of influence: The Council may perceive a loss of control over one of its internal services through the diminished ability to shape procurement services.

Mitigation: develop Memorandum of Understanding / SLA which clearly addresses these points and accommodate priorities of each Authority, review, monitor performance and report as appropriate.

4.6 Phase 2 agreement: Authorities may not be able to agree a mutually acceptable operational scope of Phase 2; the project will end and the changes delivered during Phase 1 may not be effectively embedded due to limited support and resources.

Mitigation: consider early suitable exit arrangements and the required internal support and processes to ensure successful bedding in of the changes delivered in Phase 1.

5. Financial implications

5.1 Cost of changing e-tendering provider– currently there is no allocated budget, however it is likely that this aspect would be aligned with the transition toward a single procurement function under a new unitary.

5.2 Daily rate (£550 x 60 days over 6 months = £33,000) – current vacancy budget is not sufficient to cover this cost and the operational support from NHS Commercial Solutions that is required to sustain the Council's procurement activities. The savings for the vacant post would cover £25,000 of the cost.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The Council's procurement activities must comply with the relevant legislation and the Council's Constitution.
- 6.2 The Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012 and section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 give powers to the Council to enter into joint arrangements with another local authority for the discharge of any of its functions.
- 6.3 Legal Services will assist in preparing and negotiating the form of the agreement for Phase 1 of the proposed arrangement with RBC.

Corporate implications

7. S151 Officer comments

- 7.1 The S151 Officer is supportive of addressing Procurement capacity within the Council which aligns with External Auditor and Best Value recommendations. The suggested approach is pragmatic and potentially aligns with the transition towards a new unitary. The vacancy saving covers 76% of the cost of the proposed arrangement, the balance of the cost could be treated as an unavoidable Improvement and Recovery Plan related expenditure.

8. Monitoring Officer comments

- 8.1 The Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

9. Procurement comments

- 9.1 The improvement required for the Council's procurement activities is documented in several external reviews. The proposed arrangement with RBC seeks to provide confidence that the necessary improvement can be achieved whilst delivering operational support to the Council's service departments. The current staffing levels are not in a position to support both workstreams without impact to one or both workstreams.
- 9.2 It is anticipated that the arrangement with RBC will run until LGR in April 2027; extrapolating the proposed figure of £33,000 per 6 months, the estimated value of the contract would stand at £99,000. This figure is below the threshold in the Procurement Act 2023 and therefore the provisions of the 2023 Act would not apply.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 No implications arising directly from this report.

11. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 11.1 No implications arising directly from this report.

12. Other considerations

12.1 All relevant consideration are set out in this report and / or Appendix A.

13. Timetable for implementation

13.1 Please see Appendix A.

14. Contact

14.1 Linda Heron, Group Head Corporate Governance

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Proposal from Runnymede Borough Council