

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**
held on Tuesday, 3rd February, 2009 at Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor W Fitzgerald (Chairman)
Councillor R Domleo (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors D Brickhill, D Brown, P Findlow, F Keegan, A Knowles, J Macrae,
P Mason and B Silvester

In attendance:

Councillors E Howell, L Smetham, A Richardson and A Thwaite

141 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

142 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members gave a general declaration of personal interest in respect of every item on the agenda where an individual member was a Member of Cheshire County Council and/or one of the current Borough Councils. In addition Councillor D Brown declared a personal interest in minute 147 (People into Jobs) by virtue of being a representative on the Groundwork Trust. In accordance with the Constitution they remained in the meeting during consideration of these items.

143 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no questions from members of the public.

144 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2009 were approved as a correct record.

145 KEY DECISION CE11 HUMAN RESOURCES FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICIES

Consideration was given to policies in respect of flexible working arrangements and flexi-time which would support service delivery and provide benefits for employees in Cheshire East.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report: -

1. That approval be given to the policies on:
 - Flexible Working Arrangements (Appendix 1); and
 - Flexi-time Policy (Appendix 2)
2. That a further report on Mobile and Home Working be submitted to a future meeting following the completion of consultations with the trade unions.

146 **REDUNDANCY PROVISIONS**

The Cabinet was requested to confirm arrangements in respect of severance provisions for non-teaching employees in the new Council.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report: -

That approval be given for the severance provisions for non-teaching employees, agreed in July 2008, to continue to apply until 31 March 2010 at which point they will be subject to review.

147 **PEOPLE INTO JOBS**

Councillor D Brown had declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being a representative on the Groundwork Trust. In accordance with the Constitution he remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.

Consideration was given to the provision of match funding from April 2009 to December 2010 in support of the People into Jobs bid. The bid for European Regional Development funding had been submitted by the Cheshire and Warrington Alliance on behalf of the Cheshire Districts and Warrington Borough Council and had been approved subject to match funding and contract arrangements by the North West Development Agency.

The Cabinet approved the match funding but also requested that in the light of the current economic situation the North West Development Agency be requested to consider what assistance could be given to people made redundant more recently and to preventing the loss of businesses in the area.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report and as now given: -

That approval be given to the request for match funding from April 2009 – December 2010 in support of the bid, together with contributions from Other partners, equal to the amount from the European Regional Development Fund.

RESPONDING TO THE RECESSION

Consideration was given to the likely impact of the recession on both Cheshire East as an area and on the new Council, and to the development of a whole Council response. In considering the way forward and the formulation of a strategy for Cheshire East Council it was noted that Cabinet intended to establish a combined Member/Officer Recession Response Task Group, comprising Councillors D Brown, F Keegan and J Macrae and John Nicholson (Strategic Director Places), and that this Group would be able to consider this matter further.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report and as now given: -

1. That the Recession Response Task Group be set up and that its remit include addressing the recession in a monitoring role and a remedial role, taking into account work already being carried out in this area.
2. That consideration be given to the proactive policies to be developed over the coming months to enable Cheshire East as an area to better weather the economic recession.
3. That as part of the Service Planning process all service areas review the likely impact of the recession on their own service and on their budget and that where appropriate they develop, with Member approval where necessary, proactive policies that will assist individuals, communities and local businesses.
4. That the consequences of the economic downturn be discussed with the Cheshire East Local Strategic Partnership so that strategies to assist individuals, communities and local businesses can be developed at the Local Strategic Partnership level.

HOUSING BENEFIT LOCAL SCHEME

Consideration was given to the amount of pension to be disregarded when calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for people in receipt of income from War Widows (Widowers) and War Disablement Pensions and the Armed Forces and the Reserved Forces Compensation Scheme.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report: -

That approval be given for Cheshire East Council to wholly disregard War Widows (Widowers) and War Disablement Pensions and the Armed

Forces and Reserved Forces Compensation Scheme payments when assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

150 **DRAFT FINANCE AND CONTRACT RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Consideration was given to the preparation of the Finance and Contract Rules of Procedure in order that they be operational from vesting day; the rules were in the process of being prepared alongside revisions to the Constitution due to be considered by the Governance and Constitution Committee and then by Council.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report: -

1. That approval be given to the recommended approach to the Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.
2. That Officers be authorised to develop the framework and the Rules for consideration by Members in accordance with the timetable reported.

151 **SECTION 24 SCHEDULES OF CONSENT**

Cabinet were informed that no delegated decisions had been made since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED

That it be noted that no delegated decisions had been made since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

152 **PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to an update on the Local Government Reorganisation Programme with particular focus on Customer Access and Staffing Issues. Achievements made within the reporting period were recorded and the steps to be taken in the next reporting period were highlighted.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report:-

That progress made in this reporting period be noted.

153 **REGIONAL FUNDING ADVICE TRANSPORT PRIORITIES**

In accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Chairman agreed to allow consideration of this item as a matter of urgency so as to enable a response to be made to the consultation

exercise relating to transport priorities the deadline for which had been extended to 4 February 2009 in order to allow the Cabinet to consider the matter.

Consideration was given to a report on the Regions consultation exercise on the draft Regional Funding Advice for the North West for the period to 2018/19. It provided a summary of the proposed changes from the first process, considered the impact that this might have for Cheshire East, and sought agreement on a Cheshire East response to the draft proposals on transport priorities.

RESOLVED

For the reasons set out in the report: -

1. That the draft Regional Funding Advice on transport priorities and its impact on Cheshire East priorities be noted.
2. That approval be given to the draft response set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.00 pm

W Fitzgerald (Chairman)