

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

held on Tuesday, 25th January, 2011 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)
Councillor A Martin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors W S Davies, H Davenport, R Fletcher, T Jackson, M Parsons,
M J Simon, M J Weatherill and A Thwaite

In attendance

Councillor L Smetham

Officers:

A Fisher, B Flanigan J Goodman, D McGifford, J Robinson and C Simpson

Apologies

Councillors L Gilbert, M Hollins and C G Thorley

59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

Councillor R Fletcher declared a personal interest in items 8 and 12 – Tatton Park Vision, due to being a Member of the National Trust.

60 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/ OPEN SESSION

None

61 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

62 UPDATE OF THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT TRANSFORMATION PROJECT AND MEMBER GROUP

The Committee received a presentation by the Project Manager for the Development Management Transformation Programme (DMTP) who highlighted that the aim of the project was to deliver a new operating model that would provide a more efficient and effective service at a reduce cost.

To do this all operations needed to be consolidated into one IT platform by implementing a common system and bringing all business data into one place, once this had been achieved a single way of doing things and a rationalisation of business processes could be adopted.

The outcomes of the project would be to:

- Deliver efficiencies and improved customer service through a new operating model, new IT, improved business processes and a more effective organisational restructure. The number of staff required would be reduced and a single system would enable better management of performance through improved Management Information.
- Improve data quality, service standards and business performance, in turn, delivering a customer oriented performance culture.
- Improve customers experience by adopting a single customer interface via the Contact Centre for all initial customer enquiries and further support customers through new back office processes
- Support and grow Cheshire East's culture through a joined up across the team, way of working and by bringing together teams that had previously been located at different offices. Also to support cultural development through a training, education and awareness programme.

The Project Manager then went on to highlight the current position and biggest challenges to date, which were:

- Building a new infrastructure.
- Finding and converting all legacy business data across 4 different systems.
- Managing the restructure process and job slotting.
- Deciding on an appropriate solution to desk top and local data problems.

Future challenges included:

- Migrating the converted data and making sure its all present
- Integrating the new planning system with the new GIS system and consolidated EDRMS document management system
- Testing and making sure everything works
- Getting staff to adopt a single way of working
- Developing culture and adopting new delivery assurances processes

It was noted that all elements of the project would be completed by April 2011.

Members made comments with regard to the availability of plans on the internet and hard copies at council owned buildings. It was reported that plans should be available on the internet within 4 hours of the application being registered, and that hard copies would be still be available for the public to view and to Town/Parish Councils.

It was agreed that the Enforcement Section needed to be approved and that unauthorised structures should be a priority for the section.

RESOLVED

That a progress report be brought back to the Committee on 7 June

63 ECONOMIC RECOVERY TASK GROUP

The Committee gave consideration to a presentation by the Senior Regeneration Officer on the work of the Economic Recovery Task Group. He reported that following the 2009/10 Economic Recession Work, Cheshire East had approved a budget of £400,000 to deliver the 2010/2011 Economic Recovery Action Plan. The presentation highlighted that the following key tests must be met to assess the suitability of funding support:

- Based on clear evidence
- Immediate/responsive impact – not long term projects
- Visible/tangible/measurable impact
- Evidence of added value, not core business
- Strong partnership approach to development and delivery
- Maximisation of match funding opportunities

The presentation also outlined:

- Economic data
- Places grants schemes
- Promotional activities
- I visitor guides
- Tourism support
- Business information
- Benefits and take up
- Apprenticeships

Members were pleased to see the work being undertaken by the Economic Recovery Task Group and made the following comments:

- It was suggested that Cheshire East do more to market itself to foreign investors and tourists.
- That the shop frontages in Macclesfield had been improved as a result of window dressing and other environmental improvements.
- That the womens enterprise event was a great success.
- That Macclesfield Silk Heritage Trust and the Heritage Rail Centre in Crewe be promoted and assisted by the Economic Recovery Task Group. It was also agreed that the Committee should visit these sites to gain a better understanding of the organisations.

RESOLVED

That visits of Macclesfield Silk Heritage Trust sites and the Heritage Rail Centre be arranged to gain a better understanding of the organisations.

64 DRAFT BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Committee received a presentation by the Economic Development Manager outlining the draft Business Engagement Framework. The presentation detailed:

- Why Cheshire engage with its businesses.

- How Cheshire East supports and promotes its businesses. This is done by understanding the skills needed and promoting workforce development, investing to ensure the right transport infrastructure was in place, promoting business development opportunities and ensuring policies enable businesses to grow and prosper.
- The approach to business engagement through targeted business engagement, pro active support for businesses and responsive services.

A list of key account businesses within Cheshire East were circulated to the Committee and it was agreed that Members should notify the Economic Development Manager of any additional relevant businesses that they were aware of.

With regard to transport infrastructure, Members were pleased to see that the Authority was liaising with Manchester Airport and agreed that all modes of transport needed to be linked together. It was noted that the DFT were no longer committed to the SEMMMs scheme, however the authority would be able to bid for funding from the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

It was agreed that any comments on the draft framework should be submitted to the Economic Development Manager by 14 February 2011

RESOLVED

1. That Members notify the Economic Development Manager of any relevant businesses not currently on the list of key account businesses
2. That any comments on the draft Business Engagement Framework be forwarded to the Economic Development Manager by 14 February 2011

65 TATTON PARK VISION

The Committee gave consideration to a report which presented the new vision for Tatton Park which aimed to substantially develop the visitor experience, generate new sources of income and in doing so, eliminate the need for a public subsidy.

By 2016/17, it was proposed that Tatton Park would attract over 1 million paying visitors; this increase would directly increase park entry revenues as well as secondary spend throughout existing and new visitor facilities. This improved economic performance would have been achieved by a programme of targeted investment, cost efficiencies and development in existing visitor product.

The proposal aimed to deliver real growth in a competitive market through developing the potential of its attractions and events. This would deliver sufficient additional net income to help eliminate the need for a public

subsidy over the next 5-6 years and provide a sustainable platform from which to secure its current and future leasehold obligations.

It was noted that the report and recommendations had already been considered and approved the Tatton park Board and Cabinet.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be recommended to:

1. Endorse the Tatton Park Vision, supported by a capital “invest to save” programme to realise the full potential of the asset.
2. Update the Council’s Capital Programme be in due course to include investment in development proposals as part of the Tatton Vision programme, supported by firm business cases.

66 FORWARD PLAN - EXTRACTS

Consideration was given to the extracts of the forward plan which fell within the remit of the Committee. It was noted that CE10/11-73 Cheshire East Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026, fell within the remit of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and not the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED

That the extracts of the forward plan be noted.

67 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Consideration was given to the work programme. It was agreed that an update on the Development Management Transformation Project and Member Group be brought back to the Committee at its meeting scheduled to be held on 7 June 2011.

RESOLVED

That the Committee receive an update on the Development Management Transformation Project and Member Group at its meeting scheduled to be held on 7 June 2011.

68 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

69 TATTON PARK VISION

Consideration was given to a report of the Strategic Director – Places.

RESOLVED

That the Committee fully endorse the pursuance of the 5 priority areas to be developed as the vision for visitor activities for Tatton Park

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.30 pm

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)