

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Staffing Committee**  
held on Friday, 21st January, 2011 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

## **PRESENT**

Councillor D Topping (Chairman)  
Councillor R Domleo (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors W Fitzgerald, R Fletcher, P Mason and B Moran

## **Unions**

Olga Kokkinis – UNISON  
Craig Nicholson – UNISON  
Phil Mason – UNISON  
Lesley Hall – UNISON  
Colin Priest – GMB  
S Reed – GMB  
Anton Woolford – AEP Soulbury  
Babak Bassirian – NUT Soulbury

## **Officers**

Erika Wenzel, Chief Executive  
Lisa Quinn, Borough Treasurer & Head of Assets  
Paul Bradshaw, Head of HR and Organisational Development  
Julie Davies, HR Strategy and Policy Manager  
Amanda Rudham, HR Policy Manager  
Rosie Ottewill, Workforce Development & Capacity Manager  
Bronwen MacArthur-Williams, Corporate Health & Safety Manager  
Steve Reading, Senior Accountant, Finance

## **21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor D Flude.

## **22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **23 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

## **24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **25 BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS 2011-14 - PRE BUDGET REPORT**

The Borough Treasurer presented a report on the Pre Budget Report 2011/2012.

The Pre Budget Report set out the changes that would be made to the revenue and capital budgets to enable a balanced budget to be set. The Report would be used as the basis of an engagement exercise in January and February 2011.

The Council was facing financial pressures arising from the reduced funding from Government; demographic changes leading to increased service requirements; higher numbers of young people needing protection; impact of severe winters on the road network; and in year spending pressures.

The Key Proposals contained in the Pre-Budget report were:

- No Council Tax Increase
- A Revised Council Tax Base
- Adults – overall budget increasing to recognise £9.8m of growth pressure
- Children and Families – Overall budget increasing to recognise £0.1m of growth pressures
- Places – Overall budget decreasing by £3.7m
- Supporting Service Delivery & Cross Directorate Savings – Decreasing Budget by £11.1m
- No Proposed Supplementary Business Rates being levied in 2011/2012
- Income from charges for Council services to increase in line with inflation
- Council borrowing estimated at £23m

The Trade Union representatives raised a number of points for discussion, including the proposal not to increase the Council Tax and the Government £4.4m funding offer; National No-Domestic Rates allocation; earmarking of reserves for future voluntary redundancies and the % of money put into reserves; and the budget allocated for SEN provision.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Pre-Budget Report be noted.

## 26 HR UPDATE

The Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development, aided by the HR Strategy & Policy Manager, Corporate Health & Safety Manager and Workforce Development & Capacity Manager, presented a report which provided a general update on Human Resource issues, including Health & Safety, Organisational Development, HR Delivery and HR Policy and Reward.

Phase 1 of implementing PRIME had been successfully completed and work had now begun on Phase 2 delivery to schools staff. It was anticipated that all services and schools would be using the electronic system by the end of March 2011.

Hearing tests of Waste and Recycling Operatives commenced in November last year and a member of the Corporate Health & Safety Team had been trained by Occupational Health to undertake audiometric tests to continue this programme in Macclesfield. Occupational Health Nurses would continue to deliver this service to Operatives in Crewe until a second Corporate Health & Safety Officer was trained. The Occupational Health Nurse had undertaken 20 hearing tests to date and so far no results had shown that any operative had experienced work related hearing loss. Personal protective equipment was being sourced which would filter out high frequency noise whilst still enabling Operatives to hear passing traffic.

A new Violence at Work Policy had been drafted, which included guidance for employees when working either with known or potentially violent persons and incorporated the use of the Potentially Violent and Aggressive Persons database, which contained information on known violent or aggressive persons and dangerous dogs (or other animals). The Committee was asked to approve the draft policy, which had been forwarded to Trade Union Representatives for comment and agreement at the Corporate Health & Safety Forum in February 2011.

As part of the process for the Council to retain Investors in People (IIP) recognition, a series of informal health-checks were being undertaken ahead of the formal corporate assessment in May 2011. One area the IIP had highlighted was the need to ensure there was a common understanding regarding the role of a Cheshire East manager and the skills, knowledge and behaviours that were required to undertake this role effectively. To support this role the Employee Development Charter was being re-launched and an 'aspiring leaders' competency framework and on-line toolkit was being created.

Work was continuing to address equal pay issues and develop a set of modern, flexible and affordable terms and conditions of employment for the Council. An initial proposal for new terms and conditions had been made to the trade unions in December and consultation was ongoing. Further consultation with the wider workforce would follow over the coming

months. It was anticipated that the new pay structure and terms and conditions would come into effect on 1 September 2011. A new employee newsletter 'Fit for the Future' had been created and would be issued on an annual basis to ensure that all employees were kept up to date and included in the consultation process about the review.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the report be noted.
- (2) the draft Violence and Aggression Policy be approved.

## **27 PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE**

The HR Strategy and Policy Manager presented a report on the progress with the Council's Five Year People and Organisational Development (OD) Strategy (2010-2015).

In January 2010 the first comprehensive five year People and OD Strategy for Cheshire East Council had been developed and endorsed by Members and Trade Unions. The Strategy was developed to enable the Council to address both national and local people priorities and to enable employees to plan for, manage and deliver services to meet the changing needs, priorities and expectations of communities. The People and OD Strategy linked closely with the Council's Workforce Development Planning framework.

The report received listed the achievements and future priorities for each of the key themes: - Staff, Style, Strategy, Skills, Systems and Structures.

Over the next 12 months, HR activities and projects would build on the success of the strategy so far and ensure that the Council continued to have a strong strategic focus and approach to workforce issues.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

## **28 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 involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing this information.

## **29 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **30 ITEMS REQUESTED BY THE TRADE UNIONS**

The Trade Union representatives raised issues relating to the following matters:

- Continuation of the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme Post April 2011
- Budget Consultation – Council Tax

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.45 pm

Councillor D Topping (Chairman)