

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Transformation of Highways Services Sub Committee

held on Wednesday, 17th November, 2010 at Mayors Reception Room
Municipal Buildings Crewe

PRESENT

Councillors J Macrae, P Mason and R Menlove

COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor T Beard, D Brickhill and J Narraway

OFFICERS

Strategic Director Places, Head of Environmental Services, Interim Project Manager, Senior Lawyer Corporate and Commercial Team and Highways Transportation Manager.

13 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor Jamie Macrae be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received on this occasion.

15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T Beard declared a personal interest in the business of the meeting as his daughter was employed by the Highways Service.

16 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

No questions had been submitted from members of the public.

17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2010 be approved as a correct record.

18 PROGRESS REPORT

The Sub Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Places which updated Members on progress achieved since the last meeting in respect of the Highways Procurement Project. As a precursor to the discussion; the Sub Committee was reminded of the timeframe set out for completion of the project.

Of the nine bidders who had submitted Pre Qualification Questionnaires, five had since been short-listed. The organisations concerned were to be invited to participate in dialogue to develop outline solutions to meet the requirements of the authority.

Arrangements for managing the transition period from 'today' through to the expiration of the current contract and the mobilisation and commencement of the new contract were discussed; the Head of Environmental Services outlining the steps which had been put in place to manage the risks involved in such a challenging period. As this was not the only impending issue to affect the service, assurances were sought that the potential impact of changes to the Transport Structure and Local Transport Plan Settlement would also be taken into account as part of the process.

The Sub Committee went on to discuss the potential risks to the Council should the programme slip. On the proviso that the evaluation of solutions was completed on time, officers were confident that the project would remain on track.

For those directly affected by the changes, a Staff Stakeholder Group had been established to improve the flow of communication. A Member commented that it was equally important for Councillors to be advised of progress on a regular basis and it was agreed that monthly briefings would, in future, be circulated.

A Highways Contract Group had been established comprising six members of the Corporate and Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committees to monitor the work of the Sub Committee. Meetings dates for the Group had been scheduled but not widely circulated and as this body was seen as the most appropriate forum at which to consider Members' questions and concerns, it was proposed that the dates be included in future reports for completeness.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

19 FUTURE MEETING DATES

Dates for future meetings of the Sub Committee had been set in order to fit in with the procurement timetable i.e. 4 January 2011, 30 March 2011 and 6 June 2011.

Subsequent to this, it had transpired that the January meeting would not be quorate and the Chairman proposed that the meeting be rescheduled to 20 December to be held on the rising of Cabinet. To ensure that future meetings were also quorate, the Chairman requesting that the dates set aside be confirmed at each meeting.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 10.25 am

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Councillor Macrae