

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

held on Tuesday, 20th March, 2012 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor L Gilbert (Chairman)
Councillor G M Walton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors P Butterill, H Davenport, K Edwards, R Fletcher, P Hayes,
S Hogben, P Hoyland and A Thwaite

Apologies

Councillors A Barratt

OTHERS PRESENT

Councillor R Menlove

OFFICERS PRESENT

Caroline Simpson – Head of Development
Denise Griffiths – Facilities Manager
Michele Burrow – Senior Carbon Management Officer
Diane Bramall – Media Relations Officer
James Morley – Scrutiny Officer

171 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no Members of the Committee who wished to declare any interests

172 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That subject to the following amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2012 be approved as a correct record.

- (a) That in minute 167 final bullet point, the word “universally” be added between the words “wasn’t” and “supported”.

173 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/ OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak

The Committee considered a presentation on the Council's Corporate Landlord Model from the Facilities Manager and the Head of Development.

Corporate Landlord was a project to centralise all property functions, to be managed by Assets. Currently the management of the Council's assets was fragmented. Some assets were being managed corporately by Assets and some were being managed by the services that used those assets such as buildings and land. The purpose of centralising all assets was to achieve efficiencies in the management and maintenance of assets.

With the exception of schools, highways infrastructure, and assets devolved/transferred as part of Local Service Delivery, all assets would be included in the Council's Corporate Landlord Model.

One of the methods that Assets would use to manage assets was a property helpdesk. The helpdesk would be a first point of call for any issues which building managers, service managers, councillors or the public had with any of the Council's assets. The helpdesk could be used to report building repairs and maintenance issues such as a leaking roof or broken windows as well as issues with cleaning or waste removal, and electrical issues such as fire alarms or automatic doors. It was suggested that the benefits of the helpdesk would be an improved customer service, more responsive maintenance service, people kept better informed of progress with issues and helped to manage contractors more effectively. The Committee were hopeful that the sheer number of assets and the likely number of calls from various sources would not overwhelm the helpdesk services and that operators had the necessary skills to deal with each call. Officers assured the Committee that the helpdesk would have sufficient resources and expertise to deal with the demand for the service.

The Committee was interested to know how the new system would perform and whether it would deliver savings, improve the management of assets, ensure disposal of surplus assets at a good rate of return and improve the devolution/transfer of assets as part of Local Service Delivery.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted.
- (b) That the Facilities Manager be requested to return to the Committee in six months with an update on how the system has been working.
- (c) That service managers be requested to give feedback on the effectiveness of the Corporate Landlord Model in six months time.

The Committee received a presentation on the Carbon Management Programme from the Senior Carbon Management Officer. The presentation was designed to brief Members of the Committee on the Carbon Management Programme to enable them to effectively scrutinise the Annual Review of the Carbon Management performance of the Council.

The presentation explained why carbon management was an issue and why it was important to reduce the Council's carbon emissions. The carbon management programme (CMP) was a five year plan endorsed by the Carbon Trust. The target of the CMP was to reduce the Council's CO₂ emissions by 25% by 2016 from the baseline level set in 2008. Currently 55 projects had been identified which would reduce emissions by 20%. Plans to achieve the remaining 5% of the target were yet to be identified. The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC), informally known as the Carbon Tax, was a legal obligation for large organisations to pay £12 per tonne of CO₂ emissions produced each year. Cheshire East Council was not obliged to start paying for the CRC until the 2013/14 municipal year as the authority had been created after the introduction of the first phase of CRC. The second phase would begin in 2013 and it was expected that the rate would increase to £16 per tonne of CO₂ produced. It was calculated that this would cost Cheshire East Council £700,000 per annum. This created a financial incentive for the Council to reduce its carbon emissions.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted and the Senior Carbon Management Officer be thanked.
- (b) That the Senior Carbon Management Officer be requested to attend the Committee meeting on 24 April to present the Carbon Management Annual Review for the Committee to consider.

176 **SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT**

The Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that the Scrutiny Chairmen's Group had considered the Scrutiny Annual Report at its last meeting. The Scrutiny Annual Report contained a section on Lessons Learned over the past year and Members of the Committee were asked to discuss their views on the performance of the Scrutiny Function and give their feedback on what had improved from the previous year and what could be done better in the future.

The Committee discussed the past year and gave feedback on how it felt the process could be improved.

RESOLVED- That the Committee's suggestions for the Annual Report be presented to the Scrutiny Chairmen's Group for consideration.

177 **WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED- That the Work Programme be updated

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.30 pm

Councillor L Gilbert (Chairman)

.....