

Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date: Thursday, 3rd March, 2011
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest/Whipping Declarations**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests in any item on the agenda

3. **Public Speaking Time/ Open Session**

A total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to make a statement(s) on any matter that falls within the remit of the Committee.

Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes, but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned, where there are a number of speakers

4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 January 2011** (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve the minutes as a correct record

5. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 February 2011** (Pages 7 - 14)

To approve the minutes as a correct record

For any apologies or requests for further information, or to give notice of a question to be asked by a member of the public

Contact: Katie Smith
Tel: 01270 686465
E-Mail: katie.smith@cheshireeast.gov.uk

6. **Transformation of Waste and Recycling Collection Services** (Pages 15 - 22)

To give consideration to a report describing the transformation of waste and recycling collection services and explaining its impact on the Council and its residents.

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)

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

held on Tuesday, 8th February, 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, C G Thorley and M J Weatherill

Substitute

Councillor A Thwaite

In attendance

Councillors L Smetham, D Thompson and R Menlove

Officers

A Fisher, R House, R Kidd, P Sherratt, C Simpson and C Williams

Apologies

Councillors S Broadhurst, L Gilbert and M Hollins

70 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

None

71 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/ OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present wishing to address the Committee.

72 INTERIM PLANNING POLICY ON RELEASE OF HOUSING LAND

Consideration was given to a report outlining that, at its meeting held on 18 October 2010, Cabinet considered the requirement to maintain a five year supply of housing land and approved the draft Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land to manage the release of additional land as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The report considered the responses that had been received to the consultation that took place on the draft policy and proposed revisions to the draft Interim Planning Policy in the light of the comments made. The report had been considered by Strategic Planning Board on 26 January and their recommendations had been included in the report.

Since preparing the report for the Scrutiny Committee, Natural England had submitted its comments on the Habitats Regulations Assessment undertaken on the interim policy. Natural England was seeking additional clarification on the mitigation measures required to ensure that the policy did not impact on European Habitats Sites, and the following revisions were proposed to the justification to the policy:

- Recommendation 41:
The development of any greenfield sites adjacent to the settlement boundaries will be considered as exceptional development and will be required to be of a high design standard and deliver 35% of the development as affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Affordable Housing Policy. New development will also incorporate open space and community facilities in accordance with the relevant saved Local Plan policy and will aim to provide access to open space in line with relevant accessibility standards outlined within the Cheshire East Open Space Assessment. They will also be required to contribute towards the improvements to the strategic and local transport networks and public transport in and around Crewe. In order to safeguard European Sites in proximity to Crewe, any highway improvements to serve the new development will not be located within 300m of a European Site and where necessary will incorporate run-off interception measures.
- Natural England had also commented that the Regulations governing European Habitats should be updated to “the Conservation of Habitats and Special Regulations 2010”
- Recommendation 39 be revised to replace the “Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2007” with “Conservation of Habitats and Special Regulations 2010”

RESOLVED

That subject to the revised recommendations highlighted above, Cabinet recommend that the Council:

1. Approve the housing requirement figure of 1150 net additional dwellings to be delivered annually, to be used pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.
2. Approve the adoption of the Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land as set out in Appendix 2 to the report and agree that it be used in the determination of planning applications.

73 INTERIM PLANNING STATEMENT ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Consideration was given to a report outlining to Members that the Cabinet approved the draft Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing on 20 September 2010. The report considered the responses that had been received to the consultation that took place and proposes revisions to the draft Statement in

the light of comments made. The report had been considered by Strategic Planning Board on 26 January and its recommendations were included in the report.

It was noted that 'staircasing' referred to shared equity affordable housing schemes

RESOLVED

That Cabinet recommend that the Council approve the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing as set out in Appendix 2 to the report and agree that it be used in the determination of planning applications.

74 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - STRATEGY AND DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the proposed changes to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) strategy as a result of public consultation and set out the draft implementation plan, which would be aligned with the Government's four year spending review period (April 2011 to March 2015).

The draft implementation plan contained details of the initiatives which would be delivered in order to meet the objectives and priorities for transport set out in the 15 year LTP strategy. A four week period of public consultation on the draft implementation plan began on the 18 January and would run until 16 February.

It was reported that the wide consultation process including Member events had resulted in some amendments and that some policies were still to be developed.

Members of the Committee made the following comments and observations:

- With regard to paragraph 3.49 – Strategic Rail Infrastructure, Members agreed that the high speed rail network that would be serving the North West should stop within Cheshire East and agreed that the wording should be amended to reflect this.
- With regard to the feasibility study of the tram-train opportunities in the north of the borough, it was agreed that the continuation of the freight trains would need to be considered. It was highlighted that all Member issues would be considered within the feasibility study and that Crewe would not form part of the study as it was a main line station.
- With regard to paragraph 3.50 – South East Manchester Modal Study (SEMMMS), it was agreed that this should be amended to reflect both road and rail schemes.
- That proposals to introduce a check in counter for Manchester Airport at Crewe Station be progressed.
- With regard to the Dial-a-ride service, it was noted that there were no proposals to stop the service; however efficiency savings were currently being investigated.
- It was noted that the possibility of issuing taxi tokens would be investigated over the next 12 months.

- It was agreed that more detail was required as to how the bus service was to be reviewed, especially since the demise of Public Transport Liaison Committees. Members were informed that there was currently an Officer/Bus Company Forum which could be widened to include Members.

RESOLVED

1. That the changes to the final LTP Strategy which had been agreed by Cabinet as a result of the first phase of public consultation be noted.
2. That the comments highlighted above on the draft LTP implementation plan be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.
3. That the possibility of the Officer/Bus Company Forum being widened to include Members be progressed.

75 TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHWAYS SERVICES

Consideration was given to an update report on the procurement of the new 'Highway Maintenance Contract' which was a key work stream within the Total Transport Transformation programme. The report highlighted that Cheshire East's roads were a corporate priority, their condition had been deteriorating for several years and the Council aimed to transform the delivery of future highway services, including replacement of the current term maintenance contract as appropriate to driving improvement in highway condition perception across Cheshire East.

C Simpson outlined the timetable for the contract, informing Members that:

- The current contract would end on 5 October 2011
- The procurement process commenced in July 2010, the vision being to procure a more integrated model with a wider range of highway service being contracted out.
- That an evaluation process of the bids received took place and the bidders had been shortlisted to three.
- Detailed evaluation of the three bids was currently underway with a final provider being approved in June 2011.
- A Members Working Group consisting of 6 Scrutiny Members, had been established to review and track progress.

Members raised concerns regarding staff engagement. However it was highlighted there was a Staff Consultation Group which met monthly and that staff had been invited to the work place of the three shortlisted bidders to visit the work place and meet the current staff.

It was noted that the successful bidder would have to meet an outcome specification that would be monitored through performance management and that communication would form part of this specification.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted

76 HIGHWAY ROUTINE MAINTENANCE OPERATIONAL POLICIES

Consideration was given to the draft routine highway maintenance policies for:

- Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections
- Highway Verge Maintenance
- Highway Weed Control
- Highway Hedge Maintenance
- Highway Surface Water

It was noted that, resulting from the highways maintenance procurement contract, there would be more area based workings with stewards being responsible for certain areas.

With regard to the Highway Verge Maintenance Policy, it was noted that the current height of the vegetation is kept between 12 and 75mm, however this would be increased to between 25 and 100mm. It was also noted that the works would be completed as and when required and therefore the policy would not specify how often the verges would be cut.

With regard to the Highway Weed Control Policy, it was agreed that works would need to be closely monitored to ensure that the policy was adhered to and that the dead weeds should be removed.

With regard to dangerous trees it was noted that there were currently no proposals to replace the trees, however this was something that could be investigated.

RESOLVED

That the Portfolio Holder for Environment be recommended to approve the policies subject to the comments highlighted above.

77 PAVEMENT CAFE POLICY

Consideration was given to a report requesting Members to comment on the reaffirmation of the inherited policy for the control and licensing of pavement cafes on the highway. The Council during its first 18 months had been approving and granting licenses under the Highways Act for businesses to place tables and chairs on the highway to enhance their trading. Such permissions and licences had been granted in accordance with the Highways and Town and Country Planning Acts, where appropriate, within strict guidelines.

The Pavement Café Policy was aimed to set out the Council's consistent approach, for owners and managers of restaurants, cafés, bars, tea rooms, coffee shops and snack bars, who may be considering placing tables and chairs outside their premises. The current operation of the Pavement Café licensing and conditions had served the Council well and adequately controlled pavement cafés for the benefit of shoppers and visitors, the business concerned and the economic well-being of the area.

It was highlighted that the application must fit in with conservation areas and that demarcation on what would require a licence still needed to be determined.

Members were generally supportive of the policy but agreed that issues such as land ownership and ensuring that there were no obstructions to the footpath would need careful consideration.

RESOLVED

That the portfolio Holder for Environment be recommended to approve the Policy subject to the Comments highlighted above.

Councillor C Thorley left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

78 STREET LIGHTING PROJECT

The Portfolio Holder for Environment outlined the salient points of two street lighting trials that were currently being undertaken in Wilmslow. One consisted of turning 4 out of 5 street lights off and the other involved turning all the lights off between 11pm and 6am. Questionnaires would be completed throughout the trials and so far feedback had been varied. It was highlighted to Members that if the project was to be rolled out to the rest of the borough, town centres and main routes through towns would not be affected. Police were monitoring the situation to assess whether or not it had a negative impact on anti social behaviour.

The street lights required new chips at a total cost of £50.00 per light, which would be recouped within two years. There were currently 40,000 street lights within Cheshire East, 20,000 of which were located in residential areas.

RESOLVED

That the street lighting project be supported by the Committee

Councillor M Parsons left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

79 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the extracts of the forward plan which fall within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the extracts be noted

80 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme

RESOLVED

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.35 pm

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 3 March 2011

Report of: John Nicholson – Strategic Director of Places

Subject/Title: Transformation of Waste and Recycling Collection Services

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Rod Menlove

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1** This report describes the transformation of waste and recycling collection services and explains its impact on the Council and residents. It outlines the current service provision, the service design principles and the key operational matters surrounding the proposed new services.
- 1.2** The implementation of the proposed services as detailed in this report will deliver premier waste collection services for the Council through a change of emphasis. The Council's primary waste services will be seen by the public as recycling and composting, rather than residual waste (black bins or bags) as is the case at present.
- 1.3** The transformation of waste and recycling collection services has a significant impact on the resources needed and the operational costs incurred. A reduction in the numbers of staff and vehicles over current levels is evident, (approximately 40 and 17 respectively) and substantial revenue savings of more than £1m can be achieved.
- 1.4** However, in order to implement this transformation and achieve the associated savings, there are a number of key issues to be resolved including the successful procurement of material processing contracts and a waste transfer facility in the north of the borough.

2.0 Wards Affected

- 2.1** All Wards are affected as the waste and recycling collection services cover all households in Cheshire East.

3.0 Local Ward Members

- 3.1** All Ward members.

4.0 Policy Implications

- 4.1** This project has links to high level corporate policy, shared strategies with other Authorities, transformation projects and service-related policies and procedures. These include the Corporate Plan, the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, Total Transport including Fleet Management, the Council's Carbon Agenda and all waste operational policies.

5.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 5.1** The implementation of the new services, as described in this paper, has a significant effect on the operational costs of providing the service. It is believed that through the implementation of these services over the timescale indicated below, savings of more than £1m can be achieved. Savings of £726k are currently reflected in the 2011/12 draft budget and it is estimated that this figure will rise by a further £1.29m in a full year.
- 5.2** However, the savings can only be realised by implementing the services as described and across the whole of Cheshire East. It is not possible to produce the savings indicated if the new services are only rolled out in part. In fact, it is believed that the most significant part of the savings will be generated from the implementation of the services in the north as it covers nearly half the number of properties in Cheshire East and the change to service over current arrangements is the most significant.
- 5.3** Another key factor in producing the required savings is the provision of waste transfer facilities in close proximity to Macclesfield, through an EU compliance procurement process. This facility is fundamental to providing the service in the north and hence pivotal to meeting our financial targets. Without such a facility, it is impossible to provide the service and attain the savings required.
- 5.4** The roll out across Cheshire East relies on the procurement of additional containers for the premier dry recycling service. Capital Funding needed for the containers to enable roll out of the scheme in the former Congleton Borough And Macclesfield Borough areas is as follows:
- Congleton area - £800k (being £363k existing WICG funding & £437k prudential borrowing financed through revenue contribution),
 - Macclesfield area - £1.3m (2011-12 Invest to Save Capital Scheme) being prudential borrowing funded via central capital financing budget).
- This investment is essential in order to provide every household with a 240L silver recycling bin.
- 5.5** The savings are a direct result of a reduction of staff numbers, fewer vehicles, more efficient collection routes and recently procured contract arrangements for the processing of dry recyclables and garden waste.

6.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 6.1** The Council has a duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide waste collection and disposal services for all household waste generated within its control. The introduction of new services does not change this duty. Regarding staff reduction outlined in 10.5.2, HR and legal advice will need to continue to be sought at the appropriate time.

7.0 Risk Management

- 7.1** The risks associated with this transformation relate to the following issues; operations, performance and finance. Failure to successfully conclude the transformation will result in the Council's inability to make significant improvements to the waste collection services that it currently provides and therefore the current inefficiencies, inconsistencies and inflexibility will remain.
- 7.2** In turn, this will impact on the performance that is delivered through the services and this will principally be felt through the recycling rate and waste diverted from landfill. The current recycling performance will not be increased significantly and the diversion from landfill will remain fairly static; this is not including the impact that any future treatment of residual waste may have but this is unlikely to be resolved until 2014 at the earliest.
- 7.3** In addition, the savings targets associated with this transformation will not be possible without a significant change to the way in which the Council delivers its waste collection services, as described in this report.

8.0 Background and Options

- 8.1** Current Service Provision - The waste collection services currently provided by Cheshire East are principally the same as those inherited from the legacy Councils, with the addition of 'free' garden waste in the former Crewe and Nantwich area and a move to alternate weekly collections of residual waste in the former Congleton area. As such, there are a range of different collection methods, materials collected and operational practices in place. Nevertheless, Cheshire East has managed to increase the high levels of recycling; becoming the highest performing Council in the North West of England.

- 8.1.1** The recycling rate for 2009/10 was almost 50% and it is expected to increase slightly by the end of 2010/11. The importance of maintaining and improving the amounts of waste diverted away from landfill is transparent from both environmental and financial perspectives. The service is seeking to deliver these goals in the setting of a premier public service at a substantially lower cost to the tax payer.

- 8.1.2** To achieve this goal, there is a need to rationalise the services provided, create greater flexibility in service provision and optimise the resources at our disposal. Above all, we need to make sure that these new services are available for all residents and where there are physical barriers in delivering them as described, we need to seek alternative ways of providing the services. In short, we must make it easier for residents to participate fully in our collection schemes and safer for both residents and frontline staff to operate.
- 8.1.3** The project to transform the services started in January 2010 aims to design a more efficient set of complimentary services and change the emphasis from a residual waste service to one where the primary services are recycling and composting. The project design stage is nearing completion with detailed rounds being developed that will help to deliver a flagship service for the Council in 2 phases, as described in this report. Delivery is challenging in a number of respects and will need to be driven hard to ensure all objectives are achieved in the timescales.
- 8.1.4** There are several related work streams that support the service transformation including managing the current position with the PFI project, procuring new processing contracts for dry recycle and garden waste, procuring waste transfer facilities in the north, purchasing additional containers to roll out the dry recycling collection borough-wide and, HR related projects that address the issues of terms and conditions of employment (although the latter is a separate work stream that should not prevent the successful introduction on improved waste collection services).
- 8.1.5** Of these related work streams, the timely procurement of new contracts, additional containers and waste transfer facilities are integral to the delivery of new services. Without them the new services cannot be delivered and target savings cannot be achieved.

8.2 Design Principles - In considering all collection methods, including the present ones inherited from the legacy councils, the project identified a series of key factors that needed to influence the method of collection that was finally proposed. These were that the collection method should;

- be safe and easy for residents to use and front line staff to operate;
- minimise the risk of spillage during presentation and collection of household wastes;
- be acceptable to residents;
- maximise recycling and composting;
- ensure that we extract the maximum value from materials that people throw away;

- be easy to introduce and change over from the existing method;
- provide balanced workloads, as far as practicable, for all front line crews;
- be reliable and have flexibility to cope with disruption;
- to be future proof given the uncertainty of the waste PFI project;
- achieve target savings and;
- have a positive effect on the environment, now and in the future, particularly contributing to the Council's carbon reduction target.

8.3 Proposed Services - As a result of these key factors, the following proposed services have been designed to operate across the whole of Cheshire East.

8.3.1 Recycling collections will be based on a fortnightly collection, either in a silver coloured, 240 litre wheeled container or 55 litre boxes if storage of a wheeled container is a problem.

8.3.2 The materials will be co-mingled and include newspaper, magazines, junk mail, office paper, clean paper bags, mixed glass, greeting cards, envelopes (including window type), telephone directories (including Yellow Pages), wrapping paper, junk mail, cardboard, card-based egg boxes, Tetrapaks, cans (steel and aluminium), aluminium foil, aerosols and mixed plastics (including plastic film and containers).

8.3.3 No side waste will be collected but additional containers will be supplied free of charge to those properties that generate more materials than will fit into a single 240 litre wheeled container on a fortnightly collection. It is absolutely essential that the Council provides adequate storage for this valuable resource. Furthermore, all bin lids must be properly closed when presented for collection ('no top hats').

8.3.4 Garden waste collections will also operate on a fortnightly basis with an annual suspension of the service from mid-December to the end of January each year. The suspension is linked to a reduced demand for the service as the tonnage of available materials reduces significantly over this period. This suspension is identified within the contract for garden waste processing. Residents who do have garden waste materials at this time of year can take them to one of the Household Waste Recycling Centres where they can deposit them free of charge.

8.3.5 Again, a 240 litre wheeled container will be used to store and present the garden waste. However, if residual waste is collected in sacks from any given property then no garden service will be

provided as it is assumed that there is insufficient space at the property to store a wheeled container.

8.3.6 As per other collection services, no side waste will be collected and bin lids must be closed for safe and efficient collection. However, additional containers can be provided to households at a cost set by the Council through the Fees and Charges which are reviewed annually.

8.3.7 Residual waste collections will also be provided on a fortnightly frequency in 240 litre, wheeled containers or Council-approved sacks. The same approach is to be adopted regarding side waste and bin lids. Extra bins will only be provided in circumstances where the recycling and garden waste bins are being fully utilised. In these infrequent circumstances, there will be a charge for the second bin but this charge is yet to be finalised through the budget setting process.

8.3.8 All waste collection services will have optimised collection schedules to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources, including staff and vehicles.

8.4 Operational Features and Sites - There are a number of key operational features that cover all waste collection services; these include the method of containment, vehicles, working periods and collection practices.

8.4.1 The standard service will operate on a three bin system, one each for recycling, garden and residual waste. Variations to this will be either 55 litre boxes or Council-approved sacks.

8.4.2 The collection services have been designed to use a range of differently sized standard refuse collection vehicles including, 7.5, 22, 24 and 26 tonne trucks. These will be allocated to specific collection rounds depending on a variety of factors such as the number of properties on the round, its location and accessibility. The reliance on bespoke vehicles and their inherent inflexibilities will be avoided. This will improve service resilience, particularly during 'hard' winters.

8.4.3 The services have been designed to operate on a standard five day working week, including bank holidays, with the exception of the Christmas and New Year period.

8.4.4 The services have been designed so that on any given day, all vehicles collecting a specific type of material (recycling, garden or residual waste) will be working in close proximity to each other. These are known as daily zoned collections and it will provide greater flexibility to deal with service disruption and in turn minimise any inconvenience to customers.

- 8.4.5** The new waste collection services will operate out of two Depots, one located in the south and the other in the north. The southern Depot is Pyms Lane, Crewe and until an alternative location can be found, the northern depot is Commercial Road, Macclesfield. Waste collection services will no longer operate from Brunswick Wharf (Congleton), Town Yard (Alsager) or Newhall Avenue (Sandbach). Again, the centralisation of resources over two locations will provide increased flexibility to respond to varying demands on the services provided and release depots for alternative uses or disposal as appropriate.
- 8.4.6** Waste collection vehicles will deposit their loads at a variety of different locations across Cheshire East, depending on the type of material they are carrying and their proximity to specific deposit sites.
- 8.4.7** Specifically, the following deposit and disposal sites have been identified; dry recycling will be deposited at Pyms Lane and a site to be determined in the north. Garden Waste may be delivered to a variety of sites including Fields Farm (Sandbach), Henshaws (Macclesfield), Brook House Farm (Allostock) and Higher Smallwood Farm (Scholar Green). Residual Waste will be disposed of at Danes Moss and Maw Green landfill sites which is no change to the present arrangements, although the contract for landfill disposal is soon to be considered for replacement or extension.
- 8.4.8** The future longer term destination of residual waste is currently unknown because of the withdrawal of PFI Credits and much will depend on the Council's long term aims and aspirations for this waste stream.
- 8.5** Resource Implications - As a direct result of the optimisation of collection routes, it is possible to rationalise and reduce the resources needed for this service. This applies to both staff and vehicles.
- 8.5.1** The order of magnitude of this proposed rationalisation and reduction is that front line staff numbers are expected to drop by up to 40 people and refuse/recycling collection vehicles by approximately 17.
- 8.5.2** It is believed that the reduction in staff numbers can be achieved mainly through the cessation of agency staff employment and voluntary redundancies within the staff employed directly by the Council in line with the services workforce plans. Consultation has formally started and staff briefings are being planned to fall in line with the budget setting timetable.

8.5.3 The rationalisation and reduction in vehicles will be managed in the short term through the extension of a current vehicle supply and maintenance contract. Long term our strategic fleet management arrangements will further maximise the efficiency of the service.

8.6 Implementation Timetable - It is intended that the project will be rolled out in two phases; phase 1 will be implemented from the southern depot at Pym's Lane, Crewe from 9 May 2011 and phase 2 from the northern depot at Commercial Road, Macclesfield from 3 October 2011.

8.6.1 As part of the roll out of both phases, there will be a comprehensive communications plan for each phase. Member updates and briefings; direct engagement with front line staff to help finalise the rounds will also take place, as well testing as many as possible before the first operational day.

8.7 Communications - A full Communications Plan is being developed to cover the implementation of the proposed new services and a budget has been set aside, partly from the existing 2010/11 service budget and the rest earmarked within next years service budget. The total cost of communications, including all material production and delivery is estimated to be in the region of £160k, split equally between the two implementation phases.

8.7.1 The Communications Plan will be applied to both phases and contains three stages. Stage 1 is the pre-Purdah stage, where the aim will be to raise initial awareness of the forthcoming changes and the benefits to both residents and the Council. Stage 2 will come in late March 2011, where we will ensure that all households have all the information they need to enable them to know when, what and why to recycle in Cheshire East. Stage 3 will include the evaluation of the communications plan and identify how successful it has been, thus providing some opportunity to make changes for Phase 2 of the roll out.

8.7.2 The communications plan also takes into account issues such as the target audience, key messages needed, the channels of communication required and the main risks to its success.

9.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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