

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 9th July, 2013
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2013.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

4. **Declaration of Party Whip**

To provide an opportunity for Members to declare the existence of a party whip in relation to any item on the agenda.

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

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

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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.

Note: In order for officers to undertake any background research, it would be helpful if members of the public contacted the Scrutiny officer listed at the foot of the agenda, at least one working day before the meeting to provide brief details of the matter to be covered.

6. **Schools and the New Ofsted Framework**

To receive a presentation on the new Ofsted Framework from the Head of Service: Strategy, Planning & Performance - Children and Families.

7. **Children's Improvement Board**

The Director of Children's Services to provide an oral update.

8. **Academies and Primary Schools**

To receive an oral update from the Head of Service: Strategy, Planning & Performance - Children and Families..

9. **Work Programme Progress Report (Pages 5 - 14)**

To consider a report of the Head of Governance and Democratic Services.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**
held on Monday, 24th June, 2013 at The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)

Councillors S Corcoran, H Davenport, W Fitzgerald, D Newton, R West,
J Wray, and B Murphy. Mr J McCann (Diocese of Shrewsbury)

Apologies

Councillors P Edwards and J Kelly (Church of England))

9 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Peter Raynes – Finance Portfolio Holder
Councillor Rachel Graves – Children and Families Portfolio Holder
Councillor Barry Moran – Performance Portfolio holder
Councillor Paul Findlow – Corporate Portfolio Holder
Councillor Peter Mason – Cabinet Support Member

10 OFFICERS PRESENT

Chris Mann – Finance Manager
Jo Wilcox – Corporate Finance Lead
Alex Thompson – Finance Lead Strategy and Funding
Steve Reading – Principal Accountant
Kate Rose – Principal Children's Safeguarding Manger
Mark Nedderman – Senior Scrutiny Officer

11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the meeting held on 7 May 2013 be confirmed as correct record and signed the Chairman.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

13 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of the existence of a party whip.

14 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

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

15 QUARTER 4 BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE OUTTURN 2012/13

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Chief Operating Officer providing a summary and detailed information about the Council's financial and non-financial performance at the final quarter of the 2012/2013 Financial year.

Section 1 of the report provided details of Service financial performance for the year. It demonstrated the level of controlled expenditure compared to budget. It also focused on significant changes from the positions reported at the Three Quarter Year Review (TQR), in relation to the key financial pressures which the Council's Services had faced, the areas of high financial risk to the Council, and the strong remedial measures undertaken by Services to mitigate these pressures. Key issues affecting Services' Capital Programmes were also reported.

Section 2 provided an update on the overall Financial Stability of the Council. It demonstrated how spending in 2012/2013 had been adequately funded, including the positions on Grants, Council Tax and Business Rates, Treasury Management, Centrally held budgets, and the management of the Council's Reserves.

Section 3 provided a summary of the key non-financial performance headlines for the year showing how over 60% of the Council's performance indicators were within tolerance targets for 2012/2013.

The Finance portfolio holder informed the committee that the final outturn report provided evidence of much improved financial discipline across the whole Council which demonstrated that the Council was performing better at lower cost.

Christine Mann highlighted the significantly improved position in respect of reserves which had enabled contributions to be increased by an amount of £7.6 million leading to a final balance of £19 million.

The Committee welcomed the financial report, although expressed concerns about the significantly high level of remedial action taken during 2012/13 (amounting to £22.4 million) to mitigate in year budget pressures and therefore sought assurances about the accuracy of future budget forecasts, particularly in Adult's and Children's services.

In connection with specific pressures outlined in Children services in relation to staffing levels, the Children and Families portfolio holder explained that there were national shortages in the supply of qualified social workers. The committee was informed that the Corporate and Performance PDG would soon be undertaking a review of the Council's recruitment and retention policies in this area.

In connection with performance, the Committee concluded that whilst there were many positive aspects to the performance report, one pleasing example highlighted by the Committee being the 20% improvement in relation processing of major planning applications(to NI 157(a)) the committee felt that there were still some areas of concern that would require specific monitoring in the future, for example, the Council's arrangements in respect of personalisation in Adult Social services which had led the Committee to question whether the Council should continue with these arrangements.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report be received;
- (b) That the general direction of travel in respect of the Council's budget management arrangements be commended and the committee's expectation that it hopes that improvements will continue to be made in future be placed on record and conveyed to Cabinet;
- (c) That in relation to the Capital Programme, the Interim Chief Operating Officer Committee be requested in future to provide an explanation of any slippages identified as under - spends in the approved capital programme;
- (d) That in relation to performance, the Interim Chief Operating Officer be requested to identify in future reports, which targets are set nationally and those determined locally;
- (e) That the Committee's gratitude be extended to the staff for their efforts in difficult circumstances.

16 REGULATION 33 VISITS - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Safeguarding Manager on Regulation 33 Visits. Regulation 33 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 Act required a monthly visit to children's homes and units which were run by the local authority, by a person not employed at the home nor directly responsible for it. Visits took place every calendar month, unannounced, varying in time and date, usually requiring a minimum of 3 hours.

It was reported that visits had taken place at the following settings:

- Ivy Lane
- Claremont Road
- Broad Street

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be received and noted;

- (b) That the thanks of this committee be placed on record for all the volunteers and Members who undertake visits to Children's establishments in accordance with regulation 33 of the Children's Homes regulations 2001.

17 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Monitoring Office/Head of Legal Services regarding the Committee's work programme 2013/14.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.40 am

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)

.CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 9 July 2013
Report of: Interim Borough Solicitor
Subject/Title: Work Programme update

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To review items in the 2013/2014 Work Programme listed in the schedule attached, together with any other items suggested by Committee Members.

2.0 Recommendations

That the 2013/2014 work programme be reviewed.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It is good practice to agree and review the Work Programme to enable effective management of the Committee's business.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Carbon reduction - Health

- 6.1 Not known at this stage.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Not known at this stage.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 None.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 There are no identifiable risks.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The schedule attached has been updated to reflect the decisions taken by the Committee at its previous meeting.

10.2 Members are asked to review the schedule attached to this report, and if appropriate, add new items or delete items that no longer require any scrutiny activity. When selecting potential topics, Members should have regard to the Council's new three year plan and also to the general criteria listed below, which should be applied to all potential items when considering whether any Scrutiny activity is appropriate.

The following questions should be asked in respect of each potential work programme item:

- Does the issue fall within a corporate priority;
- Is the issue of key interest to the public;
- Does the matter relate to a poor or declining performing service for which there is no obvious explanation;
- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends;
- Is it a matter raised by external audit management letters and or audit reports?
- Is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service;

10.3 If during the assessment process any of the following emerge, then the topic should be rejected:

- The topic is already being addressed elsewhere
- The matter is subjudice
- Scrutiny cannot add value or is unlikely to be able to conclude an investigation within the specified timescale

11 Access to Information

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

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Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 9 July 2013

Issue	Description/Comments	Suggested by	Portfolio Holder as at February 2013	Current Position R,A,G	Date for completion
Children and Adults Safeguarding issues	Standard agenda item to receive updates	The Committee	Children and Families and Health and Adult Social Care	Standard item to be introduced from April 2013	16 April 2013 and continuing
Ofsted Inspection	To review the findings of the Ofsted Inspection March 2013	The Committee	Children and Families	Further action required to co-ordinated with the Children and Families PDG.	TBA
Performance Management information	To be received at least quarterly	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Performance	To be received quarterly.	2013
Budget Monitoring	To be undertaken at least quarterly	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Finance	To be received quarterly.	2013

Annual Safeguarding Report		The Committee	Children and Families		9 July 2013
Schools and the new Ofsted framework	To review the impact on schools of the new framework	The Committee	Children and Families	Item on today's agenda	9 July 2013
Academies and Primary schools	To review the impact on primary schools	The Committee	Children and Families	Item on today's agenda	9 July 2013
Regulation 33 update	To receive periodic reports on Section 33 visits to Children's establishments.	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Children and Families	To be received quarterly	10 September 2013
Budget Consultation	To determine the Committees involvement in budget consultation arrangements in accordance with constitutional requirements	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Finance	Further information to be provided by the Finance Portfolio Holder on specific consultation arrangements	September 2013
Section 106 Agreements	To receive progress reports on monies owing/spent	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Strategic Communities	6 monthly review.	8 October 2013
Residential Provision Task and Finish Review -update	Review actions of Cabinet in response to the scrutiny review	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Children and families	Further information to be obtained about the	8 October 2013

				scheduling of this item	
Multi-agency inspection results		The Committee	Children and families		12 November 2013
New management Structure	To review the effectiveness of the new management structure approved in February 2013	The Committee	All Portfolios	The new structure is expected to be completed by the Autumn of 2013	April 2014
Libraries Strategy	6 month review - to review the success of the strategy following its implementation in August.	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Strategic Communities	To be held in abeyance until after the current review of the Libraries Strategy led by the Communities PDG	TBA
School Examination data 2012/13	To review the annual school examination data	Handover from Previous Scrutiny Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Children and Families		TBA
Home to School Transport Task and Finish -	Review actions of Cabinet in response to the scrutiny review	Handover from Previous	Children and Families	Further information to be obtained	TBA

update		Scrutiny		about the scheduling of this item	
Business Generation Centres update	Review actions of Cabinet in response to the scrutiny review	Handover from Previous Scrutiny	Prosperity and Economic Regeneration	Further information to be obtained about the scheduling of this item	TBA
BeWilderwood	To review the financing arrangements of this scheme	The Committee	Prosperity		TBA

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