

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on Monday, 2nd February, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)

Councillors G Baxendale, P Groves, F Keegan, P Hoyland, W Livesley, A Moran, D Neilson and J Saunders

Apologies

Councillors B Murphy, K Edwards, M Grant and M Simon

8 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Barry Moran – Performance Portfolio Holder
Grant Shipway - Price Waterhouse Cooper
Jonathan House - Price Waterhouse Cooper

9 OFFICERS PRESENT

Peter Bates – Chief Operating Officer
Paul Bayley – Principal Manager Local Community Services.

10 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

12 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

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

13 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

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

14 DIGITAL CUSTOMER SERVICES

Paul Bayley introduced to the committee Grant Shipway and Jonathon House from Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC), provided a presentation on a project that PWC had been assisting the Council with to transform the Council's digital services.

The committee was informed that the Cheshire East website ranked in the top 10% authorities in England. Social media interaction with the Council was good and 90% of school applications were made online.

However, the Council's current website was considered to be content heavy and difficult to navigate. Many forms were not available on line, and access to services was limited outside of contact centre hours.

The purpose of the project to transform the Council's website was to design a model to meet future customer demands to deliver a higher quality customer service with a lower cost to serve which would provide a platform for the Council reflect a general shift to digital and social media.

Members made the following points:

- That better links should be introduced on the website to direct members of the public to local Members, particularly in relation to planning matters;
- That the Borough's older population who may be less familiar with the use of 'e' technology would be encouraged to use it more if there was more certainty about transactions, so for instance automatically generated replies would provide reassurance.
- Standards need to be built into the website so that if for instance a member of the public orders a new bin, the Council's response indicates when the bin is likely to be delivered;
- The Council should continue to provide a 'safety net' for those people who are unable or unwilling to interact with the Council electronically;
- This committee should continue to be involved in the project in some way as it develops. In response to this point, Paul Bayley suggested that the committee may wish to be involved in 'customer testing' either before or during the process to transform the website.

The Chief Operating Officer informed the committee that Cabinet was expected to take a decision on the business plan for the project at its meeting to be held on 31 March 2015.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the presentation be received;
- (b) That the Committee gives its broad support to the project to transform the Council's website subject to the points raised above being taken account of;
- (c) That if possible, the business plan be brought to this committee prior to it being considered by Cabinet
- (d) That the offer to continue to involve this committee in the development of the project be welcomed

15 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

RESOLVED - That the quarter 3 performance report be submitted to the 30 March meeting together with the digital customer services business plan

16 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee reviewed the forward plan.

RESOLVED – that the forward plan be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.22 pm

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)