

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
held on Monday, 30th March, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)

Councillors G Baxendale, K Edwards, F Keegan, A Moran and J Saunders

Apologies

Councillors B Murphy, P Groves, D Neilson and M Simon

1 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 TRIBUTE TO COUNCILLOR PHIL HOYLAND

The Chairman asked all those present to stand in silence as a mark of respect to the late Councillor Phil Hoyland.

3 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Peter Raynes - Resources Portfolio Holder
Councillor Paul Findlow – Governance Portfolio Holder

4 OFFICERS PRESENT

Lorraine Butcher - Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning
Tony Crane - Director of Children's Services
Judith Tench – Head of Corporate Resources and Stewardship
Angharad Jackson - Business Manager –Adult Social care
Alex Thompson - Corporate Manager Strategy & Reporting
Andrew North - Corporate Manager - Audit, Risk & Business Improvement

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

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

7 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

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

8 THIRD QUARTER REVIEW AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The committee considered a report setting out the Council's financial and non-financial performance at the third quarter stage of 2014/15 and progress towards achieving the Council's Residents First Outcomes as described in the Council's three year plan 2013 to 2016.

The overall financial health, performance, resilience and value for money at Cheshire East Council was strong despite taking £50m out of its cost base from 2011/12, and freezing Council Tax for the fourth consecutive year. Following the three-quarter year review the Council's reserves strategy remained effective, with an underspend of £0.2m being forecast, which represented only a 0.1% variance from a budget of £253.8m.

Annex 1 to the report set out further details of how the Council was performing in 2014-15, including a summary performance, an update on the Council's overall financial position and a summary of key issues relating to the Council's workforce development plan.

The Resources portfolio holder introduced the report and invited questions from members of the committee.

In response to a question regarding the latest position on the local plan, Councillor Raynes informed the committee that good progress was being made and that he hoped to be in a position to provide a public statement in the near future.

RESOLVED- That the report be received and noted.

9 DIGITAL CUSTOMER SERVICES

The committee considered a report of the Chief Operating Officer setting out a business case for Digital Customer Services.

The Committee had received a presentation at its previous meeting on 2 February 2015 setting out the principals behind the concept of improving the Council's digital offer which would enable customer contact across all services to be primarily delivered through digital channels.

The business case promoted the concept of designing and promoting services that were 'digital by default' which would improve access for residents and help the council meet its commitment to be a 'resident first', effective and efficient council.

The committee was informed that at present, 36% of Cheshire East residents preferred to use digital channels in the way they accessed services and there was the potential for 70% of residents to shift to digital in the way they interacted with the Council. A Customer Portal would provide a single route into the Council's digital services, with information tailored around the individual's specific

needs and requirements. It would link various back office systems and data sources to provide an easy-to-use digital one-stop shop for customers.

The committee was informed that the principle which underpinned the future success of improved digital services was better customer insight analysis which would enable the Council to develop the its understanding of customers to help it to consider how to develop and deliver solutions that would improve customer experience and deliver services more efficiently and effectively

The committee discussed the benefits of providing links to the Council's website through town and parish council websites.

RESOLVED – That the business case to improve the Council's digital customer service be supported and Cabinet be encouraged to introduce as much flexibility and connectivity to other public websites as possible.

10 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

RESOLVED That the work programme be noted

11 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 2.58 pm

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)