

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

held on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor L Smetham (Chairman)

Councillors G Baxendale, M Beanland, M Grant, J Rhodes and M Warren

Apologies

Councillors E Brooks

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor E Brooks

11 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2016.

RESOLVED

The minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

13 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no whipping declarations

14 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Parish Councillor K Edwards attended the meeting and spoke in respect of item 6 – Developing a Sustainable Libraries Service. He welcomed the detailed scrutiny of the service and requested that the Council work closely with Town and Parish Councils to ensure the best possible outcome for residents.

15 DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE LIBRARIES SERVICE

The Committee scrutinised the success of implementing the Sustainable Libraries Strategy which was introduced in April 2014. In April 2013 the Council set the service the challenge of making £1m annual savings by 2016, whilst also setting the ambition to buck the national trend of declining library usage and develop community hubs that appealed to a wider audience.

P Bayley informed the Committee that library usage had increased and a customer survey had been sent out over autumn to help the service understand what customers thought of the changes made, the results of which were yet to be analysed.

The libraries strategy would be refreshed by April 2017, which will set out how the service would continue to develop and evolve to meet customer expectations while responding to growing financial pressure.

The following comments were made:

- That the opening hours and possibility of opening evenings be revisited.
- The signage to Crewe Library needs improving as this could be a reason for the drop in visitor figures.
- A drinks machine would only be provided if there were no local provision.
- All staff would receive safeguarding training and dealing with difficult customers.
- The Council was committed to the mobile library service as it recognised the social value for many residents.
- Consideration should be given to whether or not there are too many libraries in some areas.

It was agreed that the draft Libraries Strategy would be considered by the Committee in March 2017.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be endorsed
2. That the Committee consider the draft Libraries Strategy in March 2017

16 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the areas of the forward plan which fell within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the forward plan be received

17 WORK PROGRAMME

consideration was given to the work programme. It was agreed that the Community Cohesion Strategy would be considered by the Committee in March 2017.

RESOLVED

That the Community Cohesion Strategy be added to the work programme for March 2017.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.15 am

Councillor L Smetham (Chairman)