

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Economy and Growth Committee**
held on Tuesday, 11th January, 2022 in the The Capesthorne Room - Town
Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor N Mannion (Chair)
Councillor M Goldsmith (Vice-Chair)

Councillors J Barber, S Brookfield, D Brown, S Edgar, P Groves, M Houston,
D Jefferay, A Kolker, R Moreton, D Stockton and P Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Wendy Broadhurst, Lead Finance Partner
Karen Carsberg, Head of Housing (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Brendan Flanagan, Head of Rural and Cultural Economy (attended via
Microsoft Teams)
Paul Goodwin, Head of Financial Services & Deputy Chief Finance Officer
Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development (attended via Microsoft
Teams)
Andy Kehoe, Head of Estates (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Adrian Leslie, Solicitor (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services Officer
Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise

31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor J Clowes. Councillor S Edgar
attended as a substitute.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

33 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021 be approved
as a correct record.

34 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

35 2021/22 FINANCIAL YEAR REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report setting out the financial year review for 2021/22.

Concerns were raised in respect of the rise in energy costs, the knock-on effect these would have, and whether there was likely to be any government mitigation for this. Assurances were given that conversations were ongoing with energy providers to secure the best outcomes possible for the Council.

Clarification was sought in respect of the projects related to Crewe Town Board, specifically where funding was coming from and where it would be spent. Confirmation was given that the Capital Strategy detailed within the report included projects financed from Future High Streets funding, and that projects to be financed by the Towns Fund initiative would be incorporated when business cases have been further developed. An all-committee Member briefing would be held in respect of the Crewe Regeneration and Towns Fund projects, further to information on the development of the business cases.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

1. That the report of the Finance Sub-Committee ([Agenda for Finance Sub-Committee on Wednesday, 1st December, 2021, 2.00 pm | Cheshire East Council](#)), specifically the recommendations of that committee be noted.
2. That the financial update and forecast outturn relevant to the committee's terms of reference be noted.
3. That it be noted that officers would seek to improve outcomes and the financial outturn across all Committees to mitigate the overall forecast overspend of the Council.
4. That appendix 6 of the report and the following sections specific to this Committee be noted:
 - Changes to Revenue budget 2021/22
 - Policy Proposals Update
 - Corporate Grants Register
 - Debt Management
 - Capital Strategy
 - Reserve Strategy

36 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The committee received a report on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 – 2025/26. As part of the consultation process the committee was asked to provide comments and feedback to the Corporate Policy Committee on proposals related to the responsibilities of the committee.

Concerns were raised by Members that the provisional settlement from Government referred to items over a number of years, but the detail of allocations to individual local authorities only related to the 2022/23 financial year. It was noted that it is not unusual for Government to only give one-year allocations, and that whilst the Council must continue to plan for the medium term the settlement creates limited scope for sustainable changes.

A question was raised in respect of the rationale for putting the compensation for under-indexing the multiplier, which related to Business Rates income, into the Collection Fund Reserve, rather than the General Fund. It was agreed that a written response would be provided outside of the meeting and circulated to committee members.

The following comments were raised by committee:

It was felt that the core headings within the Budget Engagement document did not always align with the proposals listed and therefore the information did not flow for the reader. It was proposed that, in addition to the headings with respect to the Council's vision, in future documents supplementary wording could be added under each heading to cover the main services relating to each of the Corporate Priorities.

There was some discussion in respect of the one-year settlement funding from Government, and the services this funding could be put towards. The committee agreed that it would like the following items to be considered for funding at the next stage of MTFS development:

- Landlord Licensing Scheme
- Invest to Save Projects

RESOLVED (unanimously):

1. That the committee noted the MTFS 2022 to 2026 Consultation Document (Appendix 1 of the report).
2. That the following proposals rolling forward from the MTFS 2021-25 relevant to the committee (as part of Appendix 1 (Appendix A of the report) be noted.

25) Transfer of Congleton Visitor Information Centre
49) Estates Transformation - Office Accommodation
51) Neighbourhood Estate Review
80) Tatton Park
81) Asset / Service Transfer

3. That the impact of the local government financial settlement as provided at Appendix 2 on the MTFS Consultation Document be noted.

4. That the minutes of the meeting form the consultation response of the Committee for consideration by the Corporate Policy Committee, including:
 - a. That consideration be given to providing a budget for development of the Landlord Licensing Scheme in the final MTFS;
 - b. That officers be asked to bring forward proposals for Invest to Save projects for inclusion in the final MTFS;
 - c. That the Committee's comments with regard to the Budget Engagement document be noted for future reference.

37 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the committee's work programme.

A list of future items for committee to consider was circulated at the meeting. It was agreed the committee would look at a focused approach on decision making reports therefore any reports to note would be subject to a committee briefing, where Members would be able to ask any questions and seek clarification on any actions.

A question was raised in respect of the 'Town Centre Vitality Plans' item for May 2022 as to whether it would include an update on proposals for car parking charges. Assurance was given that prior to the report being brought to committee, a consultation process would be carried out for the individual towns and that Members would have the opportunity to view the outcome of the consultation prior to committee.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 2.50 pm

Councillor N Mannion (Chair)