

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Economy and Growth Committee**
held on Thursday, 17th March, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

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

Councillors D Brown, J Clowes, A Critchley, P Groves, M Houston, D Jefferay,
A Kolker, C Naismith, R Moreton, D Stockton and P Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise
Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Dave Fenton, Housing Options Manager
Ralph Kemp, Head of Environmental Services
Paul Goodwin, Head of Financial Services
Adrian Leslie, Solicitor
Rachel Graves, Democratic Services Officer

38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors J Barber and S Brookfield.
Councillors A Critchley and C Naismith attended as substitutes.

39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interests of openness, in relation to Item 5 – Unlawful Eviction and
Harassment Policy, Councillors M Goldsmith declared that he owned
property in Cheshire East which was rented out.

40 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2022 be approved as
a correct record.

41 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Councillor M Houston referred to the 'Homes for Ukraine' sponsorship
scheme and the expectations on local authorities to be able to provide
social care support, a system in place for safeguarding and checks on the
accommodation being offered. With the numbers involved and the
shortness of time, she asked if there was a disparity between what the
Government was promising and what was feasible for local authorities to

actually deliver. The Director of Growth and Enterprise agreed to provide a written response

42 **UNLAWFUL EVICTION AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

The Committee considered the Unlawful Eviction and Harassment Policy.

The Unlawful Eviction and Harassment Policy had been developed to ensure that residents knew their legal rights and the support they could access if they were or were threatened with eviction. The Policy identified a prompt, clear and co-ordinated response by the Council, in partnership with its customers, landlords, and partners agencies to deal with allegations of harassment and unlawful eviction.

The Committee asked how residents would be made aware of the policy, especially vulnerable persons. In response it was stated that awareness would be through promotion and education. The Policy would be promoted on social media, copies of the Policy to be produced in various languages, through working with landlords of private rental properties and of houses of multiple occupation and their licensing, and through contact with various Council's departments.

The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED:**

1. to approve the Unlawful Eviction and Harassment Policy, as set out in appendix 1 to the report, and
2. to authorise the Director of Growth and Enterprise, in consultation with the Chair of the Economy and Growth Committee, to make further amendments to the Policy to ensure ongoing compliance with the law and guidance from the Government.

43 **NOTICE OF MOTION: STARTER UNITS**

The Committee considered a report in response to the following Notice of Motion which had been moved by Councillor A Koker and seconded by Councillor P Groves at the Council meeting on 20 October 2021 and was referred to the Economy and Growth Committee for consideration:

"This Council, in order to support the Borough's post-pandemic recovery, commits to providing a wide range of affordable rental units for small and micro business start-ups."

Councillors A Koker and P Groves spoke on the motion.

The report detailed the current and planned activity by the Council to develop an evidence base to help build a business case and secure investment for small and micro business accommodation.

The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED:**

- 1 that the Council undertake demand analysis and research to identify demand for start-up units, potential sites and to develop the business case for investment in additional start-up and innovation space.
- 2 if research shows there is sufficient demand, to develop the business case for public sector investment in new business start-up space and an incubation support offer and use this to develop up investment plans/funding bids to secure the necessary capital and revenue funding. This could be via sources such as the Levelling Up Fund or UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 3 in addition, to use the business case work to develop a pilot for a 'Technology and Digital Incubation Centre' in Crewe, using funding already secured through the Future High Streets Fund.
- 4 to work with private sector landowners, developers, and investors to promote the development of new start-up space, co-working and innovation spaces in key towns.

44 **CARBON NEUTRAL PROGRAMME: BUILDING STANDARDS AND CARBON OFFSET**

The Committee considered a report on the Carbon Neutral Programme: Building Standards and Carbon Offset.

In May 2019 Cheshire East Council committed to being a carbon neutral council by 2025 and to influence carbon reduction across the Borough and in May 2020 the Council adopted a Carbon Action Plan which set out how this would be achieved.

Among the recommendations accepted was for the Council to reduce carbon from buildings by adopting the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'excellent' or equivalent standard for new buildings and to aim for the highest BREEAM standard achievable for refurbished council buildings.

The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED:**

- 1 to approve the adoption of a Cheshire East low carbon build standard for new build and refurbished buildings valued up to £10 million in addition to the reductions planned as part of the Council's estates transformation project and confirms the adoption of BREEAM Excellent as the standard for all building projects in excess of £10 million.
- 2 note that Council is planning to plant trees on suitable council owned agricultural land holdings as part of the Carbon Neutral

Action Plan 2020-2025 commitment to develop natural climate solutions such as tree planting and peatland management on at least 100ha of Council owned land.

- 3 note that Council is planning energy insetting projects including two solar arrays under development within the Borough and the need for land to be made available for the delivery of these projects.

45 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the Committee's work programme.

It was reported that a virtual briefing meeting would be held for committee members during week commencing 28 March on two matters – Cultural Framework, and Housing Development Framework.

The item on Support Employment Strategy had been put back to January 2023 to allow for consultation and would also be considered by the Children and Families Committee and Adult and Health Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be noted.

46 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involved the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, 5 and 7a of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

47 **UPDATE ON REGENERATION PROJECT**

In accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair had agreed that this item be considered as an item of urgent business on the grounds that the matter could not wait until the next meeting.

The Committee received an information update on this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the information update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.13 pm

Councillor N Mannion (Chair)