

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children and Families Committee**  
held on Monday, 14th November, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

## **PRESENT**

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)  
Councillor C Bulman (Vice-Chair)

Councillors L Anderson, M Beanland, J Buckley, S Handley, G Hayes,  
I Macfarlane, J Saunders, L Smetham, L Smith, D Edwardes and R Bailey

## **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services  
Jacky Forster, Director of Education and 14-19 Skills  
Claire Williamson, Director of Strong Start, Family Help and Integration  
Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care  
Deborah Nickson, Legal Team Manager (People) and Deputy Monitoring  
Officer  
Steve Reading, Principal Accountant  
Gill Betton, Head of Children's Developments and Partnerships  
Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport and Parking  
Alistair Jordan, Business Manager: Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's  
Partnership  
Annie Britton, Lead Participation Worker  
Dave Leadbetter, Head of Children's Commissioning  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services

## **OTHERS PRESENT**

Cllr A Critchley  
Richard Hall, Edge Public Solutions  
Rob Carter, Deputy Chief Executive of OnSide Youth Zones  
Joseph Parrot  
Oliver Probert-Hill  
Anna Morgan  
Jasmine Ward  
Holly Lonsdale  
Lily Cawley

## **44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Addison and Councillor Gregory. Councillor Bailey and Councillor Edwardes attended as substitutes.

#### **45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Hayes declared an interest under item 9 as he had recently been appointed as a Local Authority Governor at St Gregory's Catholic Primary School which was referenced within the report.

#### **46 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

#### **47 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

There were no public speakers.

#### **48 CHILDREN'S TRAVEL SUPPORT REVIEW**

The committee received the report which set out the findings from an independent review of travel support for children and young people.

A query was raised regarding existing available walking routes which may require improvement and maintenance, particularly with regard to rural areas where some existing walking routes could cause difficulties for residents with disabilities. It was requested that input from Highways colleagues be provided in a written response.

##### **RESOLVED (by majority):**

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Note and agree the report contents and the underlying principles and cultural change set out in the independent review of travel support for children and young people at Appendix 1.
2. Endorse the proposal to procure specialist professional capacity, funded from the children and families transformation fund, to drive the initial transformation plans, achievable savings and establishment of the integrated travel support team.
3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children and Families, in consultation with the Executive Director of Place, to make decisions in relation to:
  - The roll out of a three-year transformation and modernisation programme to deliver the recommendations in the report, including a new strategy and integrated travel team, supported by clear performance and budget management reporting and consultation, communication and engagement with stakeholders.

- Proposal to streamline and revise the school transport policy and process from application to delivery, including a new application, reassessment and appeals process and the immediate, in year (2022/23) development of alternative travel solutions, such as personal budgets and independent travel training.
- Proposals to embark on a comprehensive exercise around the operational delivery and re-procurement of school transport to improve the effectiveness of routes, encourage and support new suppliers to Cheshire East, improve value-for-money and the experiences for families.
- Developing a business case for investment for small capital schemes to improve safe walking routes on potential high-volume routes, including the production of an agreed protocol and strategy for implementing safe walking routes and supporting the council's priority outcomes for active travel and decarbonisation.

4. Agree to receive interim reports around specific actions that require committee approval, along with an initial update report within six months and annually thereafter.

#### **49 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 3 GRANT DELIVERY**

The committee received the report which provided an update on the household support fund 3 (HSF3) grant awarded to Cheshire East and sought agreement to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to incur expenditure in line with the HSF3 grant conditions.

Councillor Critchley attended the meeting to speak as a visiting member and seek assurances around the scheme, including the need for communication and messaging to be improved. The Director of Strong Start, Family Help and Integration gave assurances that this was being taken forward through a number of avenues to engage directly with residents and increase awareness of the scheme.

#### **RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Note Cheshire East's final HSF3 grant allocation of £2,203,892.10.
2. Endorse the proposed allocation of the grant, eligible cohorts and payment arrangements set out in this paper.
3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to incur expenditure in line with the HSF3 grant conditions.

#### **50 FINANCIAL REVIEW 2022/23**

The committee received the Financial Review report for 2022/23.

**RESOLVED (by majority):**

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Notes the report of the Finance Sub-Committee (Agenda for Finance Sub-Committee on Wednesday, 9th November, 2022, 2.00 pm | Cheshire East Council), specifically the recommendations of that committee.

Finance Sub-Committee recommend Service Committees to:

- note the financial update and forecast outturn relevant to their terms of reference.
- note that officers will seek to improve the financial outturn across all committees to mitigate the overall forecast overspend of the Council.
- approve supplementary revenue estimates for specific grants coded directly to services up to and including £1,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 2 Children and Families Committee, Section 3 Corporate Grants Register, Table 2.

2. Notes Appendix 2 and the following sections specific to this Committee:

- Changes to Revenue budget 2022/23
- Action Plan 2022/23
- Corporate Grants Register
- Debt Management
- Capital Strategy
- Reserve Strategy

**51 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCORECARD Q1**

The committee received the report which provided an overview of performance against the core indicator set within the three directorate areas of Children's Services.

A query was raised regarding an increase in the figures for young people not in education, employment or training. Committee were advised that this had been impacted by the time of year due to pupils leaving school and awaiting the start of training programmes or employment but that further clarification would be provided.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**52 SCHOOL ORGANISATION: ACADEMISATION OF SCHOOLS: FORWARD PLAN**

The committee received the report which informed of planned schools across the borough which were seeking to move to academy status and join a multi academy trust.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee receives and notes the summary table (Appendix 1) showing the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East schools.

**53 COMMITTEE TAKEOVER FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS MONTH**

The committee held a children's takeover session as part of Children's Rights Month. This involved young people attending to deliver presentations on issues that matter to them and take questions from committee.

**54 CHESHIRE EAST SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22**

The committee received the report which provided an update on progress against the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership priorities and its plans for 2022/23.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**55 WORK PROGRAMME**

The committee considered the work programme. A suggestion was made for officers to look into scheduling an additional meeting to consider the Joint Targeted Area Inspection Update and Improvement Plan item, currently scheduled for January committee, due to the expected size of the January agenda. It was agreed that officers would consider this as part of a wider review of the work programme.

**56 MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the following sub committee meetings be noted:

Local Authority School Governor Nomination Sub Committee – 8 June 2022  
Corporate Parenting Committee – 6 September 2022

**57 CREWE YOUTH ZONE PROJECT UPDATE**

The committee received the report which provided an update on progress for the development of the Crewe Youth Zone.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**58 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

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

**59 CREWE YOUTH ZONE PROJECT UPDATE - APPENDIX 1**

The committee received Appendix 1 for the Crewe Youth Zone Project Update report.

**RESOLVED:**

That the appendix be noted.

**60 CLOSURE OF REACH FOR THE STARS NURSERIES, CREWE**

The committee received the report on the closure of Reach for the Stars Nurseries, Crewe.

**RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

The meeting commenced at 13:00 and concluded at 18:45

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)