

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee**
held on Thursday, 2nd June, 2011 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)
Councillor M Grant (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors A Barratt, L Brown, J Jackson, W Livesley, M Parsons, G Morris,
P Raynes and J Wray

Apologies

None noted.

In attendance

E Lam

Officers

Juliet Blackburn	Performance and Partnerships Manager
Tony Potts	Community Safety Manager
Mark Grimshaw	Scrutiny Officer

100 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS**

None noted.

101 **PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN**

No members of the public wished to address the Committee.

102 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2011 be approved
as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

103 **SCRUTINY TOOLKIT**

Recognising that there were a number of new Members of the Committee, the
Chairman went through a number of issues relating to the general operation and
function of Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

Firstly, it was made clear that Overview & Scrutiny Committees were non-political
entities, led by Members which encouraged open and informed debate with a
focus on performance.

The Chairman drew attention to Task and Finish groups, highlighting how they were vital in producing detailed evidence based work into various policy areas that were relevant to the remit of the Committee. It was emphasised that these should ideally be short, sharp pieces of work involving a small number of Members who could invest the requisite amount of time into them. It was noted that the membership of Task and Finish Groups would not have to come solely from the Committee as there would be opportunity to enlist assistance from other non-executive Members and external bodies with relevant expertise.

With regards to which Portfolio Holders the Committee held to account, it was explained that whereas in the past the Committee had scrutinised up to 4 Portfolios, under the proposed terms of reference the Committee would concentrate on the remit of Councillors Rachel Bailey (Safer and Stronger Communities), Councillor Jamie Macrae (Prosperity) and Councillor David Brown (Performance and Capacity).

The Chairman then asked the Members of the Committee to introduce themselves and to express an area of interest for the Committee. The issues that Members identified were as follows:

- Community Policing, including ASB, Community Payback and presence in rural areas.
- Supporting the voluntary sector
- Devolved issues and reducing double taxation
- Road safety
- Effective partnership working
- Analysing perception of crime and the reality of crime
- Domestic violence
- Caring for the neighbourhood – helping people to help themselves.
- LAPs

Mark Grimshaw, Scrutiny Officer, building on the points made by the Chairman offered some additional information regarding the scrutiny process in Cheshire East. The point was reinforced that scrutiny in Cheshire East was a Member led process that focused on performance rather than ideology. It was also asserted that it was good practice to keep the work programme focused and dealing with items that offered a scrutiny value to the authority.

As a final point, it was suggested that it would be useful for the Committee to receive the finalised terms of reference for the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee when it became available.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the Scrutiny toolkit presentation be received.
- b) That the finalised terms of reference for the Committee be circulated to Members when available.

104 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members gave consideration to the work programme. Emily Lam suggested that it would be germane for the Committee to receive a paper outlining the possible

ramifications of the recent report following the Pilkington Case. The Chairman agreed that this was an important item and that it should be put on the work programme for future consideration. However, it was also suggested that the Committee should wait until the Police Authority had responded to the report before engaging with it in order to gain a better view of its possible future implications.

It was also suggested that it would be useful for the Committee to receive a briefing on the LAPs, particularly regarding what work they carried out with concern to facilitating community support.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted and amended to include items on the implications of the Pilkington Case report and a briefing on LAPs including their work on facilitating community support.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.30 pm

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)