

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting:	23 rd January 2014
Report of:	Head of Governance and Democratic Services
Subject/Title:	Venue for Meetings of the Strategic Planning Board

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report invites Members to review the arrangements for determining the venue for meetings of the Strategic Planning Board following consideration of the matter by the Constitution Member Working Group.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee recommend to Council that
- a. the revised arrangements for determining the venue for meetings of the Strategic Planning Board as recommended by the Constitution Member Working Group and set out in Paragraph 4.9 of this report be approved; and
 - b. the Constitution be amended to incorporate the arrangements into the Committee Procedure Rules and to allow any consequential amendments.
- 2.2 That the Committee note that the Constitution Member Working Group will report to a future meeting on the outcome of its review of the terms of reference of the Strategic Planning Board and the planning arrangements in general.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that the arrangements are practicable and appropriate.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 The Committee originally considered this matter at its meeting on 20th September 2012 following a motion to Council, proposed by Councillor D Brickhill and seconded by Councillor S Hogben, "That when the Strategic Planning Board agenda contains a majority of items from the south of the Borough, the meeting will be held in Crewe or Sandbach". The motion had been referred to the Committee for consideration.
- 4.3 Having considered the matter, the Committee had resolved as follows:

“That Council be recommended to agree that the venue arrangements for meetings of the Strategic Planning Board should be as follows:

That the Capesthorne Room, Macclesfield Town Hall and the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Crewe be reserved in advance for every scheduled meeting of the Strategic Planning Board, with the room that is not required for a particular meeting being released at the appropriate time, the choice of venue to be at the discretion of the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Board in consultation with officers.”

- 4.4 Council at its meeting on 11th October 2012 had approved the recommendation as set out.
- 4.5 Since the revised arrangements came into effect, 10 meetings of the Strategic Planning Board have been held in Macclesfield and 14 have been held in Crewe (figures updated since the Committee’s meeting in November).
- 4.6 The Committee reviewed the arrangements at its meeting on 21st November 2013 following concern expressed by some members about the choice of venue for a recent meeting of the Board.
- 4.7 The Committee also considered whether there was merit in undertaking a more general review of the planning arrangements in Cheshire East.
- 4.8 The Committee resolved that the Constitution Member Working Group be asked to
 - 1. review the arrangements for determining the venue for meetings of the Strategic Planning Board; and
 - 2. undertake a more general review of the planning arrangements in Cheshire East to determine whether they are fit for purpose or whether alternative arrangements should be explored.
- 4.9 The Working Group has reviewed the arrangements for determining the venue for meetings of the Strategic Planning Board and has recommended that the arrangements should be amended to the following:

“That the Capesthorne Room, Macclesfield Town Hall and the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Crewe be reserved in advance for every scheduled meeting of the Strategic Planning Board, with the room that is not required for a particular meeting being released at the appropriate time, the choice of venue to be at the discretion of the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Board in consultation with the Vice-Chairman of the Board and officers, provided that in exercising such discretion, the Chairman will have regard to the following considerations:

- § the number of planning matters which are to be considered at the meeting in question and the proximity of the development sites to the two meeting venues;
- § the scale of the proposed development associated with the applications to be dealt with at the meeting in question; the complexity of issues associated with, or the controversial nature of, the proposed development, and the likely consequential public interest;

and that, once the Chairman has chosen a venue for the meeting, the Chairman's full reasons in support of that choice shall be summarised and communicated to all members of the Council via the notification email for the meeting."

4.10 At present, the arrangements for determining the venue for meetings of the Strategic Planning Board are not included in the Constitution, although there is reference in the Planning Public Speaking Protocol to the Board usually meeting in Macclesfield. The Committee may wish to recommend to Council that the Constitution be amended to incorporate the revised arrangements into the Committee Procedure Rules and to allow a consequential amendment to the Planning Public Speaking Protocol.

4.11 The Member Working Group is currently reviewing the terms of reference of the Strategic Planning Board and the Council's wider planning arrangements and a further report will be submitted to a future meeting.

5.0 Wards Affected

5.1 All

6.0 Local Ward Members

6.1 All

7.0 Policy Implications

7.1 None

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 None

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 The Constitution Committee is responsible for overseeing, monitoring, co-ordinating and implementing the Council's administrative and political

business, including the administrative arrangements for and the conduct of the Council and other meetings.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 None

11.0 Access to Information

11.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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