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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Informal **Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee**

held on Thursday, 14th May, 2009 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)
Councillor J Hammond (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Mrs E Alcock, A Barratt, E Gilliland, D Hough, A Thwaite,
R Walker and Wilkinson

Apologies

Councillors D Flude, S McGrory and D Stockton

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ PARTY WHIP

None

2 REMIT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Committee considered a paper relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees based upon recommendations made by Scrutiny Members at the training day held on 27 April 2009. Members highlighted any areas for which they have specialist knowledge and it was noted that the remits would be reviewed in 12 months time.

RESOLVED

That the remit of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee be noted and reviewed in 12 months time.

3 STYLE, METHODS AND THEMES FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee gave consideration to the notes of the training session held on 27 April 2009 and a review of the Overview and Scrutiny Function in Stoke-On-Trent.

Members highlighted the following key issues:

- Meetings must be cross party
- Members should bring issues of importance to the Committee
- Scrutiny must be member led
- Outside bodies should be scrutinised
- Public participation is essential
- Outputs must be actionable

- Parameters must be set in the scoping exercise
- The number of tasks groups should be manageable
- The importance of training
- Tight call in procedure
- Dedicated staff
- Task and finish groups work well
- Planned investigations
- Portfolio Holders should not behave as Committee Members
- Recommendations should be monitored
- Observe good practice by visiting other authorities

4 DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a draft work programme, which was based upon matters referred to the Committee by the Shadow Scrutiny Committee. The list of items within the work programme had been discussed by Members at a training session held on 27 April 2009, at which, an initial attempt had been made to prioritise items.

Members acknowledged that the list of matters within the work programme was not exhaustive and that a more comprehensive list would be submitted to the first formal meeting of the Committee following discussions between the Chair and Vice Chairman, relevant Portfolio Holders and senior officers over the next few days.

It was agreed that presentations on the work of the CDRP and LAA would be received at the meeting scheduled to be held on 9 July 2009.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted
2. That the Committee receive presentations on the work of the CDRP and LAA at the meeting scheduled to be held on 9 July 2009

5 SCRUTINY UNCOVERED

The Committee watched a DVD explaining the role of Select Committees in Parliament. The DVD featured Members of both houses reflecting on their experiences, along with clerks and members of the public called to give evidence. The DVD highlighted the role that Select Committees played in the scrutiny of Government.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.30 pm

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)