

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**
held on Monday, 13th July, 2009 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor A Thwaite (Chairman)
Councillor J Narraway (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors A Arnold, G Baxendale, D Bebbington, S Conquest, J Crockatt,
M Davies, P Edwards, A Richardson, D Stockton and D Topping

Apologies

Councillors G Barton and S Wilkinson

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

17 OFFICERS PRESENT

Russ Glennon
Chris Mann
Alex Thompson
Janis Grant
Mark Nedderman

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2009 be approved as a correct record.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest, or imposition of a party whip.

20 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no questions.

21 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report of the Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2010-2013 which was due to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 14 July 2009.

The report detailed the business Planning proposals to develop a performance framework linked to a MTFS 2010 –2013 and to budget planning for 2010-2011.

The Committee had been asked to comment on the budget process, the processes and deadlines for 2010 and beyond.

The committee discussed the MTFS on a page by page basis and raised the following comments

No.	Section No. / Reference	Scrutiny Comment
1	General Comment	The approach to involving the scrutiny function in the budget setting process should be more clearly stated and recognised
2	General Comment	The use of the term scrutiny should clearly identify the context (ie specific committee, corporate scrutiny, generic scrutiny)
3	11.7 Timetable/September "Member / Officer challenge"	Include reference to Scrutiny
4	11.10 Para 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include reference to Scrutiny - Cabinet need to define 'Star Chamber' and clarify the membership - Amend wording to show "Star Chamber to make final decisions on recommended budget proposals"
5	Appendix A, Para 3 Para 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change "Member Input" to "Cabinet Input" - Delete reference to "opposition"
6	Appendix B Dedicated Schools Grant and Standards Fund	Scrutiny members felt further training was needed in this area
7	Appendix B – Annex	'Consultation' should specifically include Scrutiny input
8	Appendix C, Council Tax on Second Homes etc	Is there going to be a review of this policy, if so when? And, can Scrutiny be involved in the process?
9	Appendix E - iii	Should include specific reference to Scrutiny
10	Appendix E - iv	Change "Savings of £12m were delivered..." to "Savings of £12m were identified in the budget..."
11	Appendix E - vii	Change to "Cabinet members have expressed..."
12 p84	Capital Strategy, 8.2 – 8.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - change name of 'Capital Scrutiny Panel' to avoid confusion with wider scrutiny function - Overview & Scrutiny should have a role in the initial assessment (8.6), and therefore have an input to schemes that will be submitted to

P85		the panel (8.9) - 'panel' should provide list of all schemes (with reasons for recommendations on each project) for reference to Corporate Scrutiny and wider consultation.
13	Appendix G	Note Member Finance Training is 2pm, 16 th July (Municipal Bldgs, Crewe) – not 13 th

RERSOLVED – That the above comments be forwarded to Cabinet on 14 July 2009.

22 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The committee reviewed the work programme 2009/2010 which had been approved by the Committee on 12 June 2009.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed Members that a meeting to scope the review of the role, performance and funding of voluntary organisations would be held within the next two weeks.

The Vice Chairman informed members that the Resources Portfolio Holder had set up a member/officer panel to progress Members IT provision, and that consequently, the Task and Finish group set up by this committee at its previous meeting would now cease work in this area to avoid duplication. The terms of reference of the panel working under the Portfolio holder had not yet been finalised, and therefore the Scrutiny Task and Finish group would be retained and held in abeyance awaiting confirmation of the remit of the new panel.

The Leader of the Council had requested the committee to examine the start times of meetings in the calendar of meetings. The Chairman informed the committee that it would be difficult to make significant changes to the 2009/2010 calendar, that the efforts of the committee should concentrate on the 2010/2011 calendar and that matter be given a medium priority in the work programme.

RESOLVED – That

- (a) The Work programme be noted;
- (b) It be noted that a Members Officer IT panel has been set up under the auspices of the Resources Portfolio Holder, and that consequently, the Member IT Task and Finish Group approved by this Committee be held in abeyance until such time as the Terms of Reference of the Portfolio Holder group are known
- (c) An item be added into the work programme relating to the start times of meetings, and the Democratic Services Manager be requested to submit a report to the next meeting outlining the implications of the various options available to the Council;

23 FORWARD PLAN - EXTRACTS

The Committee considered the items currently on the Forward Plan that related to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – (a) That the contents of the Forward plan be noted.

(b) That the full forward plan be submitted to future meetings.

The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 4.45 pm

Councillor A Thwaite (Chairman)