

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**
held on Monday, 11th January, 2010 at Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

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

Councillors G Baxendale, D Bebbington, S Conquest, J Crockatt, P Edwards,
D Stockton, D Topping and S Wilkinson

Apologies

Councillors A Arnold, M Davies and Rachel Bailey

24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2009 be approved as a correct record.

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no statements from members of the public.

27 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The committee considered the work programme 2009/2010.

The Chairman informed the Committee that he was now optimistic that the Voluntary Sector Task Group would be able to make good progress in the future as a number of issues had been clarified with the Partnerships Manager. Arrangements were in place to convene an early meeting of the Task Group.

The Chairman also highlighted that at a future meeting, it would be beneficial for Members to have a progress report on the Leisure Centre management review.

The position of 'Risk Management' in the Reserve list was questioned, and members sought assurances that this matter would be subject to review with a view to an item being placed in the Active list.

RESOLVED – (a) That the Work Programme be noted;

(b) That the Head of Wellbeing be requested to make a presentation at a future Meeting on the progress of the Leisure Facilities review being undertaken by the Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub- Committee ;

(c) That the position within the Work Programme of Risk Management be reviewed.

28 BUDGET UPDATE

The Chairman informed the Committee that the first meeting of the Budget Consultation Group would be held on Wednesday 13 January 2010. It was expected that the group would recommend that a special cycle of Overview and Scrutiny meetings should be held during early February to formally comment upon the 2010/2011 Budget.

29 PUBLICITY

The Chairman reminded members of the need to make use of publicity generally to highlight the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, particularly when there was a successful outcome.

In particular, the study undertaken by the Childrens and Families Committee into Managing School Places which had recently been approved by the Cabinet was highlighted.

RESOLVED – That the Senior Scrutiny Officer be requested to raise with the Chairman of the Childrens and Families Committee the possibility of asking the Communications team to publicise the successful output from the Managing School Places review.

30 VIDEO RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Committee considered a report of the Democratic Services Manager relating to Webcasting of Council and Committee meetings.

The Council on 15 October 2009, had requested the committee to investigate the possibility of introducing Webcasting of Council meetings and Committees in Cheshire East.

The report centred on the experiences of the former Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council which had introduced Webcasting in 2006 . The facility had been installed into the Council Chamber at the Municipal buildings and comprised:

Three small video cameras positioned around the Chamber
Wi-Fi connection and associated wiring
Server Suite (laptop/ audio equipment/DVD recorder)
Mobile recording kit (stand alone cameras and DVD recorder)

There was a capital cost for the initial installation, and a number of staff were trained to operate the system.

There were three types of broadcast available:

- Test – the action is monitored but not broadcast
- Local – the action is recorded, uploaded onto the internet without editing 24-48 hours after the meeting
- Live – broadcast in real time

The Committee considered the advantages and disadvantages of introducing such a facility at the present time in light of the practical difficulties the Council faced at the moment by operating from 3 separate sites within Cheshire East.

As there would be a significant capital outlay, in the first instance, to install the necessary infrastructure to allow web casting to take place, the Committee was of the view that a decision could not be taken until the long term meeting arrangements for Cheshire East had been agreed.

Members were reminded that agendas and reports were available for all meetings on the Council's website and that all formal meetings of the Council were open to the public. As anecdotal evidence suggested that audiences for web casted Council meetings in other local authorities was on the whole insignificant, it was contended that until such time as the Council reviewed its current peripatetic meeting arrangements, it would not be in the best interests of the Council to incur expenditure to provide a web casting facility.

RESOLVED - That Council be recommended to take no action introduce facilities to web-cast meetings until such time as the long term meeting arrangements of the Council have been determined.

31 FORWARD PLAN - EXTRACTS

The Committee considered the items currently on the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted;

32 CONSULTATIONS FROM CABINET

There were no consultations from cabinet.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.00 pm

Councillor A Thwaite (Chairman)