

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**
held on Monday, 12th July, 2010 at East Committee Room - Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

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

Councillors D Brickhill, S Conquest, J Crockatt, H Davenport, P Edwards and
P Findlow

Apologies

Councillors A Arnold, G Barton, G Baxendale, M Davies and S Wilkinson

24 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor L Smetham –Cabinet Support Member

25 OFFICERS PRESENT

Andrew Leadbetter	Legal Services Manager
Alex Thompson	Finance lead – Strategy and Funding
Gareth Pawlet	Head of Technical Strategy and Planning
Mark Nedderman	Senior Scrutiny Officer

26 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June be approved as a correct record.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest

28 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no statements from members of the public.

29 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Borough Solicitor setting out the draft 2010/2011 work programme. The work programme was due to be shared with Cabinet colleagues at an informal briefing meeting to be held on 19 July 2010.

The report informed the committee that the Budget Consultation group had held its first meeting on 18 July 2010 and had agreed 4 key milestones in the budget consultation process which were:-

- **Stage1** – Backward look at the 2010/2011 process
- **Stage 2-** July/August priorities to be developed based upon the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy
- **Stage 3** – October – Forming of the draft budget
- **Stage 4** – January 2011, stakeholder events with Scrutiny involvement, followed by detailed look at the budget proposals by the group.

The group had also acknowledged that there would be a number of intermediate meetings as required and that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be consulted at each key stage.

The Committee noted that the presentation expected at today's meeting on the asset register would now take place on 7 September 2010.

The Committee also noted that the new Highways contract which was being overseen by a Cabinet sub- committee was currently in the work programme of the Environment and Prosperity committee. Members questioned whether this committee should be involved in the scrutinisation of the procurement of this contract.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the work programme be noted
- (b) That the date for the presentation on Assets be changed to 7 September 2010.

30 LEGAL SERVICES PRESENTATION

Andrew Leadbetter Legal Services Manager, attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the work of Legal services.

Cheshire East's Legal Services dealt with the full range of local authority legal work and was split into 3 teams:

Corporate
People
Places, regulatory and Compliance

Andrew gave an illustration of the level of work undertaken by the section in relation to section 106 agreements and in relation to Childcare. In addition, the Committee was supplied with comparative benchmarking statistics obtained from authorities with similar populations to Cheshire East. Members were also supplied with details of the current establishment and grading structure within Legal Services.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be received.

31 ICT HARMONISATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Gareth Pawlett attended the meeting and gave a brief presentation on the progress made in connection with the harmonisation of ICT services. The Committee had previously received a presentation in December 2009.

The ICT team had identified 10 harmonisation targets as follows:

- Delivery of the Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) system
- Development of the Planning and Building Control Management system
- Full rationalisation of the email system by summer 2010
- Financial systems
- Health and Social care
- Human Resources
- Libraries Administration
- Revenues and benefits
- School Admissions
- Website

Over the next 12 months it was intended to:

- Introduce a new desktop strategy
- Develop green ICT to support the carbon management programme
- Develop the intranet site
- New telephony rollout
- Complete the Macclesfield data Centre for ICT/CCTV
- Strategic Wide Area Network review
- Corporate Enterprise Content management.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be received.

32 OUTSOURCING OF DISCRETIONARY LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Guy Kilminster Head of Health and Wellbeing Services attended the meeting and gave a presentation on Council proposals to investigate the possibility of outsourcing discretionary leisure and cultural services.

The presentation was a prelude to a much more detailed presentation expected to be given at the September meeting.

The current proposals were set against the backdrop of a budget reduction of £420 000 in the current financial year.

In particular, the Council would be reviewing management arrangements of the Council's two municipal golf courses at Malkins Bank Sandbach and Queen's Park Crewe. Likewise, the Council would also be reviewing management arrangements for the Lyceum Theatre Crewe, the Knutsford Cinema and a number of civic halls around the Borough.

The Cabinet had set up a devolution working group which was looking at the possibility of civic/community halls being offered to Town and Parish Councils to manage.

The group was seeking advice from a number of departments within the Council, including assets and human resources, because of the potential impact on staff currently employed by the Council to manage these facilities.

Queens Park Golf Course was currently managed by a third party and the Council had already undertaken some market testing in connection with Malkins Bank golf course. A report was due to be considered by Cabinet in August 2010.

Cabinet was also expected to consider a report in October in connection with the Lyceum Theatre Crewe and Knutsford cinema, following stakeholder consultation.

RESOLVED – That the Head of Wellbeing be requested to submit a full report to the next meeting on devolution proposals in respect of civic amenities.

33 RISK MANAGEMENT

Sandra Smith Compliance Unit Manager Audit attended the meeting and gave a presentation on risk management in Cheshire East.

The aim of risk management was to maximise opportunities and encourage innovation by identifying and managing risks through:

- Risk reduction
- Insurance
- Tolerating them through risk appetite and self insurance
- Avoiding – by discontinuing the activity.

At the strategic level, the Council had set up a Corporate Risk management group whose role was to produce the Corporate Risk register, to undertake ongoing reviews and to monitor and report on these risks.

Each directorate management team was responsible in turn for producing, reviewing and monitoring Directorate Risk registers to ensure that responsibilities within the Corporate Risk Register were managed successfully.

In addition, Lead officers in the Partnerships team identified any risks for the Council and ensured that they were managed appropriately.

Likewise, Project Boards and Project managers ensured that risk profiles were developed and maintained and managed.

The Councils Audit and Governance Committee played a leading role in assessing the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements, the control of environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements.

This Committee's role was to challenge the effectiveness of the framework.

- The top risks affecting public sector were:
- Recession/economic down turn

- Partnerships
- Lack of Financial resources
- Major Incidents/disasters
- Business Continuity

Cabinet had also sought assurances about how the Council managed its reputation.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be received.

34 CORPORATE PLAN

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Human Resources enclosing for comment, the draft Corporate Plan which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 19 July prior to making a recommendation to Council regarding its formal adoption on 22 July 2010.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and Members be invited to submit any comments on the Plan to the Senior Scrutiny Officer by email before the Cabinet meeting on 19 July 2010.

35 FORWARD PLAN - EXTRACTS

The Committee considered items currently listed in the forward plan.

RESOLVED – That the Forward plan be noted.

36 CONSULTATIONS FROM CABINET

There were no consultations from Cabinet.

37 STAFFING OF THE SCRUTINY TEAM

Mark Nedderman Senior Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that interviews were due to be held over the 28/29 July for the post of Scrutiny officer.

RESOLVED – That the report be received.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.00 pm

Councillor A Thwaite (Chairman)