

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Policy Committee**
held on Thursday, 9th June, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor S Corcoran (Chair)
Councillor A Stott (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C Browne, J Clowes, J P Findlow, K Flavell, S Gardiner,
N Mannion, A Martin, J Rhodes, J Buckley (for Cllr Williams), S Pochin (for Cllr
Warren) and J Saunders (for Cllr Parkinson)

Other Members present

Councillor P Redstone

Officers in attendance

Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive
Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services
David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance
Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services
Sara Barker, Head of HR
Josie Griffiths, Head of Audit and Risk
Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

Apologies

Councillors K Parkinson, M Warren and P Williams

The Chair announced that Councillor Phil Williams had been appointed to the Committee in place of Councillor Rod Fletcher who had been appointed Deputy Mayor at the Annual Council meeting.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4 COVID-19 UPDATE

The Committee considered an update report on recent Covid developments, including the Government's 'Living with COVID-19' approach.

In response to questions by members, officers advised as follows:

- There had been full transparency on Delta returns to Government. It was not certain at this stage whether there would be any legacy costs for the Council arising from the pandemic; officers would continue to liaise with the Government to assess the impact.
- The Council had carried forward some business grant funding into the current financial year.
- The level of fraud in relation to the total amount of financial assistance provided on behalf of the Government, through the Council during the pandemic had been remarkably low; any steps taken to address fraud would need to be proportionate so as to ensure value for money.
- There was a live campaign to encourage take-up from people willing to help with fostering and adoption.
- With regard to the backlog of planning applications, the outcome of the deep dive review would be reported to the next meeting of the Environment and Communities Committee.
- With regard to equality implications it was confirmed that staff had been encouraged to undertake individual risk assessments with their line managers. Additional information was provided for BAME staff Members asked if other ethnic groups and those with other protected characteristics had been included among those communities targeted for access to vaccines. Officers undertook to provide a written response.
- It was confirmed that statutory discretion for the Household Support Fund had to be exercised in a defensible manner.
- With regard to asset rationalisation arising from changing work practices, officers advised that work was being undertaken to determine future asset requirements, following which a report would be submitted to the Economy and Growth Committee.

RESOLVED

That the ongoing implications of Covid-19 and Cheshire East Council's response be noted.

5 CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGETS 2022/23

The Committee considered a report on the allocation of the approved budgets for 2022/23 to the Corporate Policy Committee.

The Finance Sub-Committee at its meeting on 2nd March 2022 had approved the allocation of the approved capital and revenue budgets,

related policy proposals and earmarked reserves to each of the service committees.

Councillor P Redstone spoke as a visiting member in relation to the B4B Programme and raised issues relating to complaints in some schools about payroll and pensions. Officers were aware of the issues which were being addressed.

RESOLVED

That the Committee

1. notes the decision of the Finance Sub-Committee to allocate the approved capital and revenue budgets, related policy proposals and earmarked reserves to the Corporate Policy Committee, as set out in Appendix A to the report;
2. notes the supplementary estimates already approved as set out in Appendix B, Tables A, B and C;
3. approves the supplementary revenue estimates set out in Appendix B, Table D;
4. recommends to Council to approve the supplementary revenue estimates set out in Appendix B, Table E;
5. approves the supplementary capital revenue estimates set out in Appendix B, Table F;
6. approves the capital budget virement set out in Appendix B, Table G; and
7. notes the financial reporting timetable as set out in Appendix C.

6 APPOINTMENTS TO SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, JOINT COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

The Committee considered a report on the appointment of members to sub-committees, working groups, joint committees and boards for the 2022-23 municipal year.

RESOLVED

That appointments be made to the following bodies on the basis indicated, and where appropriate, nominations be submitted to the Head of Democratic Services and Governance:

Constitution Working Group

The Working Group to comprise 6 members with the following composition: 2 Conservative: 2 Labour: 2 Independent Group.

Community Governance Review Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee to comprise 7 voting members with the following composition: 3 Conservative: 2 Labour: 2 Independent Group. In addition, 1 member of the Liberal Democrat Group and 1 member of the Real Independent Group be invited to attend and participate in meetings of the Sub-Committee in a non-voting capacity.

Staffing Appeals Sub-Committee

3 members be appointed on an ad hoc basis, drawn from a pool of 10 selected on a politically proportionate basis (4 Conservative: 3 Labour: 2 Independent Group: 1 Liberal Democrat).

General Appeals Sub-Committee

5 members be appointed on an ad hoc basis, drawn from a pool of 10 selected on a politically proportionate basis (4 Conservative: 3 Labour: 2 Independent Group: 1 Liberal Democrat).

Shared Services Joint Committee

The Cheshire East Council membership on the Joint Committee comprise 1 Conservative: 1 Labour: 1 Independent Group, the members being:

Councillor J P Findlow
Councillor J Rhodes
Councillor A Stott

With Councillor A Moran as the Independent Group reserve.

Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board

Councillor S Corcoran be re-appointed as one of the Council's three voting members on the Board.

Joint Extra Care Housing Management Board

Councillor N Mannion be re-appointed as one of the Council's three members on the Board.

7 WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2021-2025 - PROGRESS REVIEW

The Committee considered a report on progress against the delivery of the Council's Workforce Strategy 2021-2025 up to March 2022.

In response to members' questions, officers commented as follows:

- Apprentices were able to choose from a range of colleges and training establishments at which to undertake their training and development.
- The Council's apprenticeships policies provided apprenticeships for individuals within the Council's existing workforce as well as new recruits.
- There were various mechanisms in place for consulting and engaging with staff, including those who were not members of trade unions.
- Targets for apprenticeships were set nationally and Cheshire East Council compared favourably with neighbouring authorities.

It was agreed that the next Workforce Strategy update should focus particularly on apprenticeships.

RESOLVED

That the Committee

1. notes progress in delivering the Workforce Strategy; and
2. agrees to receive further updates every six months to monitor progress.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE - 2021/22

The Committee considered a summary report of accident and information data for the Council and maintained schools for Quarter 4 2021/22 in total, and comparative data for the same periods in the last two years.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

9 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme for 2022/23.

A report was requested for the July meeting in relation to the B4B HR and payroll system with particular reference to salary payments and pension contributions for schools. Members of the Shared Services Joint Committee were asked to raise the matter at the Committee's forthcoming meeting on 17th June 2022. It was also noted that a Member lessons learned review in relation to B4B was due take place in July/August, the outcomes from which would be reported to the Corporate Policy Committee on 6th October 2022.

In view of the workload for future meetings, and to assist those members in full time employment, members asked for the remaining meetings in the current year to start at 10.00 am.

RESOLVED

That

1. the work programme for 2022/23 be noted, subject to the request for an additional item in July in relation to B4B; and
2. all future scheduled meetings of the Corporate Policy Committee start at 10.00 am.

10 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the General Appeals Sub-Committee on 3rd May 2022 be received.

11 REPORTING OF URGENT DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to report.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.14 pm

Councillor S Corcoran (Chair)