

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**
held on Tuesday, 14th June, 2011 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor J P Findlow (Chairman)
Councillor D Newton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors G Barton, G Baxendale, B Burkhill, W S Davies, L Jeuda,
F Keegan, B Moran, G Morris, D Neilson and D Topping

108 **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillor W Fitzgerald – Leader of the Council

109 **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Lisa Quinn – Borough Treasurer
Steve Reading – Principal Accountant
Mark Nedderman – Senior Scrutiny Officer

110 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2011, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

111 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

112 **PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present who wished to make a statement.

113 **WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee considered a report of the Borough Solicitor concerning the 2011/2012 work programme.

On the 14 April 2011, the Committee had reviewed the 2010/2011 work programme to identify any items that could be deleted, and those which should remain.

The following three matters had been subject to Overview and Scrutiny monitoring during the 2010/2011 municipal year:

- Highways Contract Monitoring Group
- Macclesfield Data Centre Monitoring Group
- Budget Monitoring Group

The committee was informed that the Highways Monitoring group was originally set up to monitor the progress of the procurement process for the Council's new Highways contract. On 6 June 2011 Cabinet had agreed to accept a bid from the company which had received the highest score, in accordance with the tender evaluation process.

The awarding of the contract in effect closed the procurement process and the Committee therefore concluded that there was no longer a need to re convene the monitoring group.

The two Members appointed to the Macclesfield data centre monitoring group were no longer members of the Committee and in view of the fact that little progress had been reported back to the Committee during the preceding 12 months, the Committee concluded that this group should also be disbanded.

For the past two years, the Committee had also appointed a Budget Monitoring Group. In the 2010/11 civic year, its original terms of reference were:

- To influence the budget setting process and to ensure that the Council has regard to Corporate priorities and to agree and set milestones.
- To submit initial comments on the draft budget prior to formal consultation with the 5 Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- To determine the future consultation process for Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- To have in place an agreed mechanism for regular budget monitoring

The Committee considered the possibility of re convening this group to guide the formative construction of the budget on behalf of the 6 Overview and Scrutiny Committees. In addition, the Committee considered arrangements to undertake budget monitoring in line with the Cabinet cycle of quarterly reports. The Committee agreed that the work of this committee and that of the Budget task group should be distinct from each other in that the Task group should concentrate on the budget (Business Planning Process) and the Committee on in year budget monitoring.

The Committee also noted that due to changes made by the Leader of the Council in respect of the individual responsibilities of Portfolio holders, a number of items currently in this Committees work programme would now be dealt with by other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be received;

- (b) That the Highways Contract Monitoring group be disbanded;
- (c) That the Macclesfield Data Centre monitoring group be disbanded;
- (d) That a Budget Task Group be convened on a 4 Con:2 Opposition basis; the names of which are to be agreed through the group whips;
- (e) That Budget/Performance monitoring reports be submitted to this committee on a quarterly basis, and the senior scrutiny officer be requested to review the calendar of meetings to ensure that Meetings of this committee are held in line with the quarterly reporting arrangements for Cabinet;
- (f) That the following items be deleted from the work programme on the grounds that they will now be dealt with by other Scrutiny Committees:
 - Risk management
 - Libraries Progress report
 - Outsourcing of discretionary leisure and cultural activities
 - Depot rationalisation

114 **FORWARD PLAN - EXTRACTS**

The Committee considered items listed in the current forward plan.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be received and noted.

115 **CONSULTATIONS FROM CABINET**

There were no consultations from Cabinet.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 2.40 pm

Councillor J P Findlow (Chairman)