

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on Thursday, 4th February, 2016 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor M Simon (Chairman)
Councillor M Grant (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors C Andrew, Rhoda Bailey, S Corcoran, D Flude, A Moran, J Saunders, B Walmsley, H Wells-Bradshaw, L Wardlaw, J Wray, G Wait(substitute) and G M Walton(substitute)

Apologies

Councillors G Barton, G Baxendale and J Weston

13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor P Groves – Finance and Assets Portfolio older
J Clowes – Adults Health and Leisure Portfolio Holder
R Bailey – Children and Families Portfolio Holder
P Findlow – Performance Portfolio Holder
David Brown - Highways Portfolio Holder

15 OFFICERS PRESENT

Peter Gosling - Principal Manager, Adult Social Care
Susanne Antrobus - Senior Lawyer
Gill Betton – Head of Service - Children's Development & Partnerships
Natalie Robinson – Business Manager Communications
Julian Cobley - Head of Investment
Steve Reading - Principal Accountant

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

17 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of the existence of a party whip.

18 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak.

19 2016/17 BUDGET

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Operating Officer on the Council's Corporate Plan for the years 2016/17 to 2019/20 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the years 2016/17 to 2018/19.

The provisional funding announcements of 17th December 2015 had confirmed that local government spending would continue to reduce through to 2019/20. However, the Government approach had changed, and the reduction in grant had been greater than forecast in the Council's Pre-Budget report (October 2015) as the potential income from Council Tax increases had been factored in to the settlement for the first time. The report submitted to this meeting was based on the Provisional Settlement, which therefore still required parliamentary approval, and included the following headlines:

- An additional £33m would be spent on improving highways;
- Net Revenue spending on services was being reduced by £2.1m to deliver a balanced position in 2016/17;
- Capital spending on infrastructure and regeneration projects would increase by £60.5m from 2015/16 third quarter review budget;
- Value for money would continue to be supported through management of Council investments. This would include the reduction of external loans by a further £6m;
- Reliance on Central Government grants would reduce by £16.3m;
- Funding for essential local services would require a proposed Council tax increase of 3.75% from £1,216.34 to £1,261.95 for a Band D property.

The Committee reviewed the various elements of the budget consultation report on a section by section basis, and representatives of each of the service areas was invited to explain the principal elements of the budget proposals as they related to their service area and were then questioned by Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and noted

20 QUARTER 3 BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Operating Officer setting out the Council's financial and non financial performance at the third quarter stage of 2015/16 and highlighted the latest progress towards achieving the Council's Residents First Outcomes as described in the Council's three year plan 2013 to 2016.

The third quarter review had forecast an underspend of £0.3m . This represented a variance of only 0.1% against a net budget of £246.6m.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and noted.

21 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

RESOLVED –

(a) – That the work programme be noted

22 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee reviewed the forward plan.

RESOLVED – that the forward plan be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.25 pm

Councillor M Simon (Chairman)