

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets**
held on Thursday, 10th March, 2016 in Room F1 - Westfields, Middlewich
Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor P Groves

Officers in attendance

Peter Bates – Chief Operating Officer

Alex Thompson – Strategy and Funding

Cherry Foreman – Democratic Services Officer

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present.

16 BUSINESS RATES POOLING 2016/17

Consideration was given to the Council continuing to be part of a business rates pooling arrangement under the Business Rates Retention Scheme with the local authorities in Greater Manchester and Chester West and Chester Council.

As part of the Scheme authorities come together, on a voluntary basis, to pool their business rates. This gives them scope to generate additional growth through collaborative effort and to smooth the impact of volatility in rates income across a wider economic area. It also ensures that members of the pool are treated as if they were a single entity for the purposes of calculating levy and safety net payments under the scheme.

Each authority must decide whether such pooling is appropriate for them and the consequences of forming a pool are different in each case and each therefore needs to undertake their own due diligence, modelling their individual position alongside the pool position. This had been undertaken. The situation for the proposed pool suggested that the levy rate would be reduced to zero therefore benefitting the pool as a whole. By comparison, Cheshire East Council's levy rate would be 43p in the pound paid over to central government.

On the basis of the current position of each of the twelve authorities, there was a realistic prospect of Trafford, Stockport, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester generating sufficient business rates growth which would otherwise lead to levies being paid to DCLG should the business rates pool not exist. An application had been submitted on behalf of the Greater Manchester Council's, Cheshire East, and Cheshire West and Chester to the Department of

Communities and Local Government on the pooling of business rates. The pool would become operational from 1 April 2016 unless the Council or another member opted out.

RESOLVED

1. That the application for Cheshire East Council to form a business rates pool with the ten Greater Manchester authorities and Cheshire West and Chester Council from 1 April 2016 be endorsed.
2. That agreement be given for Manchester Council to continue to act as the lead authority for the pool.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 9.40 am