

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on Thursday, 31st October, 2019 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor J Clowes (Chairman)
Councillor B Murphy (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J Bratherton, S Brookfield, P Butterill, JP Findlow, R Fletcher, M Hunter, A Moran, J Saunders, M Simon and L Wardlaw

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor A Stott, Portfolio Holder for Finance, ICT and Communication
Councillor J Rhodes, Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Corporate Services

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Kath O'Dwyer, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Frank Jordan, Acting Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Place
Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services
Jan Bakewell, Director of Governance and Compliance
Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance
Alex Thompson, Director of Financial and Customer Services

The Chairman announced that there would be an item of urgent business to consider. They confirmed that, in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, they were of the opinion that the item should be dealt at the meeting. It would be dealt with as the last item on the agenda in Part 2 and the reasons for urgency would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

35 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 6 June 2019 and 3 October 2019, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

37 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

No declarations of a party whip were received.

38 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

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

39 PRE-BUDGET 2020/21 CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to an update on the Pre-Budget 2020/21 Consultation report, which was due to be part of a wider public consultation beginning on 1 November 2019 and ending on 6 January 2020.

Members asked questions and made comments in relation to;

- the fact that the budget implications of the Poynton floods (when?) and Beechmere House fire (August 2019) had not been referred to within the consultation documents;
- how the council was planning to manage the additional cost implications of the Poynton floods and Beechmere House fire, and what pressures and impacts this might have on other services;
- what long-term cost implications would arise from any flood risk mitigation work in Poynton and other affected areas; and
- how the adult social care council tax precept, and additional grant funding for social care, would be allocated and used.

The Chairman asked that all members of the committee be sent a printed copy of the Pre-Budget 2020/21 Consultation report.

RESOLVED –

- 1 That the report and consultation documentation be noted.
- 2 That the relevant officer(s) ensure that members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a printed copy of the full Pre-Budget 2020/21 Consultation report.

40 BEST4BUSINESS PROGRAMME UPDATE

Consideration was given to an update on the council's Best4Business Programme, which informed the committee of the outcomes of the external review, as well as the anticipated budgetary impacts and future timeline of the programme.

Members asked questions and made comments in relation to;

- how the responsibility for managing the Programme budgets is shared between Cheshire East Borough Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council;
- what the original estimated cost of the Programme was, and why its total cost impact was estimated to be £22.3 million; and

- concern that a meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Working Group had not been held for a long period of time.

RESOLVED –

- 1 That the update be noted.
- 2 That a meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Working Group monitoring the progress of the Best4Business Programme, be held before 3 December 2019, when Cabinet is expected to take a decision on the next steps and future timeline of the Programme.

41 STATUTORY SCRUTINY GUIDANCE AND SCRUTINY HEALTHCHECK

Consideration was given to the Statutory Scrutiny Guidance published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in May 2019, as well as the Scrutiny Healthcheck report composed by the former chairmen and vice-chairmen of the council's overview and scrutiny committees in 2018/19.

Members discussed the recommendations within the Scrutiny Healthcheck report and affirmed which committees and bodies each one should be referred to.

RESOLVED –

- 1 That the Statutory Scrutiny Guidance of May 2019 be noted.
- 2 That the committee endorse the Scrutiny Healthcheck report and its recommendations, and ask that the Head of Democratic Services and Governance (Statutory Scrutiny Officer) appropriately administer the recommendations.

42 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the council's Forward Plan of key decisions.

Members raised concern in respect of the proposal within the Pre-Budget 2020/21 Consultation report to delay the 2020/21 new homes bonus round two allocation for one year until 2021/22, and that local town and parish councils, and other bodies that had planned to submit applications for review and allocation in 2020/21, would need to be informed of this potential delay as soon as possible.

RESOLVED –

- 1 That the Forward Plan be noted.
- 2 That the relevant officer(s) ensure that local town and parish councils, and any other interested local bodies, be made aware of the above proposal within the Pre-Budget 2020/21 Consultation.

43 WORK PROGRAMME

The committee reviewed its work programme, and discussed the proposal to move the item to monitor the activity and progress of the Fly Tipping Working Group to the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED –

That the Fly Tipping item be passed on to the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee to add into its work programme.

44 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman made a brief statement about the subject matter of the next item and the reason for its being considered in private.

RESOLVED –

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

45 ASDV PROGRAMME UPDATE

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman agreed that this item be considered as an item of urgent business to enable the committee to provide its comments and feedback on the decision-making Cabinet report in advance of Cabinet meeting on 5 November 2019. It therefore could not have been deferred until the next meeting of the committee on 9 January 2020.

The committee considered the report on this matter. It was noted that the final decision-making report would be presented at Cabinet on 5 November 2019.

RESOLVED –

That the committee notes the report and agrees to pass on its views and comments to Cabinet, to be taken into consideration as part of its decision-making on 5 November 2019.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.45 pm

Councillor J Clowes (Chairman)