

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Economy and Growth Committee**
held on Monday, 10th July, 2023 in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings,
Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor M Goldsmith (Chair)
Councillor N Mannion (Vice-Chair)

Councillors D Brown, J Clowes, L Crane, A Critchley, M Gorman, A Heler,
G Marshall, C Naismith, C O'Leary, P Redstone and J Rhodes

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Skates, Acting Executive Director of Place
Karen Carsberg, Head of Housing
Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Andy Kehoe, Head of Estates
David Fenton, Housing Options Manager
Jez Goodman, Development & Regeneration Manager
Steve Reading, Finance Officer
Mandy Withington, Team Manager Legal Services
Rachel Graves, Democratic Services Officer

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors B Drake and F Wilson.
Councillors L Crane and J Rhodes attended as substitutes.

10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C O'Leary declared an interest in Item 5 – Recommissioning of
Housing Related Support Contracts and stated that he would not take part
in the vote on this item.

In relation to Item 16 – Royal Arcade Phase 2, Crewe, Councillors N
Mannion and J Rhodes declared that they were members of Crewe Town
Board.

11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023 be approved as a
correct record.

12 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

13 RECOMMISSIONING OF HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT CONTRACTS

The Committee considered a report on the recommissioning of the Housing Related Support Contracts.

The current contracts expired on 31 March 2024. Although there was an opportunity to extend these contracts for a further year, changes had taken place in the housing related support market environment due to the challenging financial pressures. A review had been undertaken of commissioned and non-commissioned services which had concluded that recommissioning would provide more targeted services to meet the current and future needs of the residents of Cheshire East.

There was discussion on the provision of services and the engagement of those residents with experience of homelessness in the commissioning process. It was also asked if handy persons services was provided and if housing related support for those with learning or physical disabilities was available, and also for women experiencing homelessness. It was reported that as part of review by Homeless Link consultation had taken place with organisations and individuals who worked with homeless people, and with people with experience of accessing housing related support in Cheshire East. It was confirmed that a handypersons service was provided by Orbitas, and that Adult Social Care were responsible for commissioning services for people with learning or physical disabilities and also provided support for those experiencing domestic violence.

Having previously declared an interest Cllr C O'Leary took not part in the vote on the recommendations.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Committee

- 1 approve the recommissioning of the services as outlined within this report from 1st April 2024 using an open procurement process for an initial term of 5 years, with the option to extend for up to a further 2 years at a total contract value of £5,831,000
- 2 delegate authority to the Director of Growth and Enterprise to award the contracts following the procurement process in line with financial delegations.

14 CHESHIRE EAST COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW

The Committee considered the report on the review of the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy Review.

The current Policy had been approved in 2018 with minor amendments in the subsequent years to bring the Policy in line with legislation. Over the past few months housing staff had been informally consulting with partners in relation to the existing policy and areas of improvement. Comments, compliments and complaints about the Policy have also been considered.

The sections of the Policy for amendment were set out in paragraph 11 of the report with the Appendix to the report setting out the reason and amended policy wording.

A 12 week period of consultation would be undertaken from 25 July to 10 October 2023 using a number of mechanisms including an on-line questionnaire, internal and external briefing sessions and promotion through social media, press releases and direct communication with existing customers. The final draft Policy would then be presented to the Committee for adoption.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Committee

- 1 note the proposed amendments to the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy.
- 2 authorise officers to publicly consult on the revised draft policy for a period of 12 weeks.
- 3 note the final version of the revised policy following consultation will be brought back to the Economy and Growth Committee for approval to adopt.

15 FINAL OUTTURN 2022/23

The Committee received the report which provided an overview of the Cheshire East Council provisional outturn for the financial year 2022/23 and the financial performance of the Council relevant to the committee remit.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Committee

- 1 note the report of the Corporate Policy Committee Consider the financial performance of the Council in the 2022/23 financial year relevant to their terms of reference.
- 2 note the delegated decisions relating to supplementary revenue estimates for specific grants coded directly to services in

accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Section 2 of each Committee Appendix (Annex 2).

- 3 note the update on performance with regard to the MTFFS 2023-27 approved budget policy change items, in respect of Services within the remit of the Committee (Annex 3).

16 **2022/2023 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW - GROWTH AND ENTERPRISE**

The Committee considered the 2022/23 Annual Performance Review report for the Economy and Enterprise Department.

The report detailed the performance against the key priorities and key performance indicators of services in Housing, Estates, Rural & Cultural Economy and Economic Development.

The Director of Growth and Enterprise highlighted that

- the Housing Team continued to work hard to provide effective customer focused frontline services to ensure residents were prevented from becoming homeless and provided help to find accommodation. The Housing Options Team had achieved Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation in June 2022. The Housing Options Team had led on providing housing support to Afghan and Ukrainian refugees.
- the Estates Team continued to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy by surpassing the annual capital receipts target. The Team had undertaken work to decarbonise buildings across the estate in support of the Council's Carbon Neutral Project.
- In the Rural and Cultural Economy Team the Countryside Ranger Service had been working with the Public Rights of Way Team to improve access to the wider countryside. The Ranger Service had received Green Flag awards at Teggs Nose Country Park, Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve and Macclesfield Riverside Park. Tatton Park had received Green Flag and Green Heritage Site awards and also won Business Venue of the Year award.
- the Economic Development Team had focused on town centre projects such as the re-developments in Crewe town centre and the creation of Town Centre Vitality Plans. The Handforth Village Green had obtained planning consent in January and development of the plans were underway.

The Committee commented on the Annual Performance Report and asked about the County Farms strategy. In response it was reported that a report was being brought to the September meeting of the Committee on this.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the performance of the Growth and Enterprise Department during the year 2022/2023.

17 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

It was reported that items relating to the County Farm Estates and for the Handforth Garden Village would be added to Work Programme for the September 2023 meeting. Once the consultation on the revised Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy was complete, it was expected that this Policy would come to the January 2024 meeting for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be noted.

18 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - UPDATE

The Committee considered the report which provided an update on progress with the Housing Development Framework.

The Committee had previously agreed a number of sites to be disposed of through the Housing Development Framework and the Appendix to the report provided an update on the individual sites.

One of the proposed housing development sites currently had allocated Future High Street funding. It was reported that it would not be possible to meet the current government deadline and therefore approval was sought to re-allocate the funding to other Future High Street projects.

During consideration of the report it was proposed and seconded that the Committee move into Part 2 to allow consideration of the confidential appendix.

19 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1,2, 3, 5 and 7a of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

20 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - UPDATE

The Committee the confidential appendix which provided an update on the sites proposed for disposal through the Housing Development Framework.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Committee

- 1 note the contents of the report.
- 2 delegate authority to the Director of Enterprise and Growth to ;
 - (a) determine and pursue the most appropriate delivery route for each Council owned site identified and appropriated for Council-influenced housing development (including but not limited to use of the Housing Development Framework, open market procurement, land deal or joint venture) and, subject to obtaining disposal approval in accordance with the decision making processes for land and property disposals as set out in the Constitution, enter into all necessary legal agreements to enable the site to be developed accordingly;
 - (b) remove individual sites from the Housing Development Framework process should they no longer be identified and appropriated as Council owned sites for Council-influenced housing development.
 - (c) manage the Housing Development Framework and, if necessary, remove any admitted organisations found not to be meeting the terms of admission onto the framework.
- 3 subject to approval by the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC), delegate authority to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Director for Finance & Customer Services to approve the reallocation of up to £2,836,646 Crewe the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) grant earmarked for the In Town Living project to other projects in the FHSF programme, and authorise the use of this funding to continue implementation of projects previously identified in the report to Cabinet 10th November 2020.

21 ROYAL ARCADE PHASE 2, CREWE

The Committee considered the report on the Royal Arcade Phase 2.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee

- 1 note the contents of the report
- 2 ask officers to bring back a detailed report on Phase 2
- 2 approve the delegation as per the recommendation.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.55 pm

Councillor M Goldsmith (Chair)