

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 8th October, 2013 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

## **PRESENT**

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)

Councillors S Corcoran, W Fitzgerald, D Newton, R West, J Wray and  
G Baxendale (substitute), and Mr J McCann

## **Apologies**

Councillor H Davenport

## **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillor J Clowes – Health & Adult Social Care Portfolio Holder

Councillor P Raynes – Finance Portfolio Holder

Councillor D Stockton – Housing, Planning, Economic Development &  
Regeneration Portfolio Holder

## **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Kate Rose – Head of Integrated Safeguarding Unit

Sandra Murphy – Commissioning Manager

Caroline Simpson – Director of Economic Growth & Prosperity

Steve Irvine – Development Management & Building Control Manager

Rachel Bolton – Section 106 Monitoring Officer

Helen Gough – Senior Compliance & Customer Relations Manager

James Morley – Scrutiny Officer

## **50 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2013 be  
confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **52 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP**

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

## **53 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

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

## **54 ADULTS' SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

The Committee considered a report providing an overview of Adults' Safeguarding in Cheshire East. Kate Rose, Head of Integrated Safeguarding Unit, explained to the Committee that adults' safeguarding covered a large range of areas. The performance of adults' safeguarding services was measured in varying ways across the country so it was difficult to compare Cheshire East to other local authorities.

Kate Rose believed that Cheshire East was doing well at identifying safeguarding issues but could have improved its awareness of mental and psychological abuse. Most abuse occurred in a victim's own home and the perpetrator was often a family member or someone known to the victim.

In light of increased reports of abuse perpetrated by domiciliary care workers. The Council and health care partners needed to ensure that training was undertaken to identify low level incidents early on to avoid them developing into serious cases of abuse.

There had been an increase in financial abuse; the Council was working to make people aware of when they may be vulnerable to financial abuse.

The report contained a list of recommendations on how adult safeguarding could be improved which generally involved better working relationships with partners, improvements to operating systems and adopting best practice in monitoring service users and dealing with safeguarding issues.

The Committee was asked to consider how it might receive Adult Safeguarding reports in future. Members suggested that a general overview with some in depth information on targeted areas of safeguarding may have been a better way to consider performance in future. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that there was considerable overlap with the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and suggested that the Chairman of the Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Chairman should co-ordinate their activities to avoid duplication.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be received.
- (b) That the recommendations made in the report be noted.
- (c) That the Chairman be requested to meet with the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, to co-ordinate activity on reports on Adult Safeguarding at future meetings.

## **55 SECTION 106 UPDATE**

The Committee received an update on the current balance of Section 106 (S106) money held by the Council and an outline of the procedures being used to manage S106 agreements once they had been completed.

To date the Council currently held £8.2million in the S106 account; £4.3million of this money was time limited and had to be spent by a certain date. Since April 2013 the Council had received £2.8million from S106 agreements. Overall, 47 S106 Agreements or unilateral undertakings had been agreed from January 2013 to September 2013; this was considered to follow the usually rate of annual activity.

Members were concerned about consultation arrangements for the allocation of S106 monies by making better use of the local knowledge of Ward Members and Parish Councils. The Committee raised the possibility of seeking Member involvement in collection of S106 monies at the pre-application stage of the planning process. Steve Irvine explained to the Committee that very often developers invoked the right to keep applications confidential due to commercial sensitivity which would preclude local members from being involved in the pre-application phase of a development and the negotiated of an S106 Agreement.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That it be suggested to the Portfolio Holder responsible for Planning that local ward members, wherever possible, should be consulted during the pre-application phase of a development to advise on projects in their ward that would be suitable for allocation of Section 106 money and included in a Section 106 Agreement.

## **56 LEARNING FROM CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

The Committee considered a report which summarised the formal feedback received through the Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Process. Helen Gough, Senior Customer Relations and Compliance Officer, attended to present the report and answer the Committee's questions. The Committee was requested to consider whether the report highlighted any concerns about a particular service area which would require further consideration at a future meeting.

The majority of complaints received were about waste and recycling, highways and transport, or council tax and business rates. This pattern was typical of the type of complaints received by local authorities nationally. There did not appear to be any anomaly in the statistics that warranted for further investigation.

The Committee was pleased that the number of compliment had increased in some services, particularly Streetscape and Bereavement Services. It was suggested that a lot of compliments may not be communicated to the Customer Relations Team by services to be recorded in the statistics the way complaints are. The Committee agreed that officers should be encouraged to record compliments from service users whenever possible and in turn these should be communicated to staff advertise good performance.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted.

## **57 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee reviewed its work programme for the current municipal year.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.30 pm

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)