

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2018 IN STAPELEY COMMUNITY HALL, PEAR TREE FIELD,
STAPELEY, NANTWICH**

PRESENT:	Councillor M Theobald	Chairman
	Councillor M Docker	Councillor S Gwinn-Freemantle
	Councillor P Groves	Councillor J Hillman
APOLOGIES:	Councillors E Boughey and G Gwinn	

92 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests, to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

Councillor Peter Groves declared an interest in Minute No. 93 on the basis that he was a Borough Councillor. No other declarations were made.

93 CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL – PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATION: BUDGET 2019-2022

The Parish Council was invited to comment on the Cheshire East Council Pre-Budget Consultation Report for 2019 to 2022.

A copy of the e-mail sent to town and parish councils had been submitted with the agenda for the meeting held on 19 November 2018, the contents of which were as follows:

Set against a backdrop of increasing demand and rising costs, the report sets out proposals on the council's financial plans as to how services will be delivered for the period from 1 April 2019 through to 31 March 2020.

Along with almost every other local authority, Cheshire East is facing a particularly challenging financial position with the reduction of central government funding to balance the position for the next three years.

The council is inviting the opinions and views from residents, businesses, councillors, staff, town and parish councils, local community groups and other stakeholders. The feedback received will be used to inform the budget setting process.

Councillor Paul Bates, Cheshire East Council cabinet member for Finance and Communications, said: "In response to the difficult ongoing national funding situation and demographic change, the council is firmly committed to protecting the delivery of essential frontline services for children and families, adult social care and for our most vulnerable residents.

But we must also look at our priorities and where we can make savings and operate more efficiently. This might mean that some existing services provided will be reduced or delivered in a different way in the future.

We are fortunate here in Cheshire East that the local economy is strong and growing. We have to ensure communities feel the benefit of that economic growth for the longer term and that is why we are working for a brighter future together with our residents and partners".

The consultation runs until 14 December and findings will be considered before the final budget is agreed by full council on 21 February 2019.

RESOLVED: That the following observations be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of its Pre-Budget Consultation (2019-2022) by 14 December 2018.

- 1) There was general concern at the loss of revenue support from central government and pressure should be put on Cheshire East Council to request its reinstatement.
- 2) The document does not contain sufficient detail to enable informed observations to be made.
- 3) Adult/child social care – Put pressure on local government to ensure that adequate provision is included in the budgets. Each year there will be an increase in Council Tax to fund the gap.
- 4) The Borough of Cheshire East as a whole is being harmed by national policy.
- 5) There is a projected overspend of £5.2m in the current budget. Is this reflected in budget provisions for the forward year?
- 6) **PRIORITIES**

OUTCOME 1 (OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES ARE STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE)

This is similar to the previous financial year. It appears that there is a disconnect between this and the funding. There is no provision in the budget proposals to support the challenges.

OUTCOME 2 (CHESHIRE EAST HAS A STRONG AND RESILIENT ECONOMY)

Car parking charges: There is no consistent approach across the borough. Sandbach, Alsager and Middlewich do not make charges for car parking, but charges are made in the remainder of the Borough.

Community transport: This will adversely impact those who are currently experiencing travel difficulties.

OUTCOME 3 (PEOPLE HAVE THE LIFE SKILLS AND EDUCATION THEY NEED IN ORDER TO THRIVE)

Ofsted had conducted an inspection in March 2018 highlighting the weaknesses in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Parish Council expected to have seen robust provision in the document to indicate how this would be addressed.

There was currently an 8-month waiting list for assessment of children and schools are required to demonstrate that they cannot fund this.

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Line 17. People Directorate Business Management Service (Revenue Investment)

The re-structuring costs were queried.

Line 18. Re-alignment of Children's Services funding streams (Revenue Investment)

The Council expressed the hope that this would be of direct benefit to the children themselves.

OUTCOME 4 (CHESHIRE EAST IS A GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE PLACE)

There is no reference to measures to support the department to meet the challenges. It was noted that the Planning Department has lost several planners who have now taken up employment in the private sector.

Transport: (Page 41)

There was an expectation that this would be set out in more detail.

Proposals to vary the budget (Page 45)

Concern was expressed that savings might mean that the burden would transfer to the voluntary sector and this would make it more difficult for volunteers who wish to make a difference within their own community. The proposed savings were relatively small compared with the overall budget and this proposed reduction should be re-considered.

OUTCOME 5 (PEOPLE LIVE WELL AND FOR LONGER)

There is a need for '*joined-up thinking*' to take into account the fact that if people are to remain in their own homes for longer, there must be sufficient support so that they are able to leave their homes to access services and to avoid social isolation.

OUTCOME 6 (A RESPONSIBLE, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANISATION)

Line 48 Reduce costs of core processes (Revenue Savings)

How will CEC plan for project over-runs?

.....Chairman

The meeting commenced at 7.45 pm and concluded at 9.15 pm