

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

held on Tuesday, 23rd November, 2010 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)
Councillor A Martin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors W S Davies, H Davenport, R Fletcher, L Gilbert, M Hollins,
M Parsons, M J Simon, C G Thorley and M J Weatherill

In attendance

Councillors L Smetham and L Thompson

J Goodman, J Lees, G Roberts, A Ross and C Simpson

Apologies

Councillors S Broadhurst

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

None

46 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/ OPEN SESSION

In accordance with the constitution Mr P Smith, addressed the Committee in relation to item 5 – Draft Local Transport Plan Strategy Consultation. He raised strong concerns regarding the fact that the information points in bus stations were to be closed, which was contrary to the aims of the policy.

47 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2010.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48 DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN STRATEGY CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to the report outlining the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) strategy which set out the proposed priorities for transport. The strategy would be directly linked to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and

showed how transport contributes to the achievement of wider ambitions for the area. It was reported that a five week period of public consultation on the draft strategy began on the 19th October 2010.

Section 10 of the report outlined the following 7 key themes of “Ambition for All”, which Members were requested to comment upon:

- To ensure a sustainable future
- To create conditions for business growth
- To drive out the sources of poor health
- Nurture strong communities
- Support our children and young people
- Prepare for an increasingly older population
- Unlock the potential of our towns

Members made the following comments and observations on the key themes:

- With regard to the bus service, it was questioned how the balance between the need for the service and the cost of running the service could be addressed in rural areas, as some buses appeared to be infrequently used. It was reported that the buses may be empty for operational reasons; however access to services was currently being investigated with a view to working closer with operators to ensure value for money was being achieved.
- With regard to Policy S3 – Public Transport (Integration and Facilities), Members agreed that the reopening of Middlewich Station should be included.
- With regard to the proposed budget cuts, it was agreed that the Scrutiny Committee should be involved in scrutinising any possible cuts to services at the earliest opportunity.
- It was agreed that the possibility of being able to use bus passes for other forms of transport such as private taxis, should be investigated.
- It was agreed that the possibility of the general public being able to fill any empty seats on school buses should be investigated.
- Members raised strong concerns that the information points at bus stations were due to be closed and requested that this be reconsidered.
- It was noted that the DFT were still minded to support the Crewe Green Link Road, however a final decision would not be made until December 2011.
- Members agreed that Public Transport Liaison Committees should be reintroduced as they form a vital part of the democratic process.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be informed of the above comments and observations when it gives consideration to the Local Transport Plan Strategy.

49 ALL CHANGE FOR CREWE VISION

The Committee gave consideration to a presentation on “All Change for Crewe” which informed the Committee that:

Over a year ago Cheshire East embarked on establishing its approach for shaping the future of Crewe, a Consultancy team led on a comprehensive programme, including:

- Extensive consultation with key stakeholders, including LAP, internal officers and delivery partners
- Compilation of an evidence base, detailing the economic challenges in particular
- Development of a strategic framework identifying where Crewe should be – in local, sub-regional, regional and national terms
- Devised an action plan

Since then the public funding environment had changed, so actions needed to be readjusted but not the ambition. This approach encompassed everyone, including local businesses, in harnessing skills, knowledge, networks and drive to deliver this ambition

- Not just the obvious economic actions, but wider ones that contribute to confidence in Crewe as a place to live, work, visit and invest
- Not just longer-term strategic actions, but the need to deliver more tangible projects in the short – medium term too
- And need to connect these as part of the ‘All Change for Crewe’ story.

The presentation also outlined:

- Why there was a need for change in Crewe
- The key economic challenges
- The strategic vision
- The priority projects
- Delivering the vision
- Key progress
- Next steps with regard to governance, funding, public engagement and a script that will be circulated to all key stakeholders to facilitate an ambassadorial role.

Members agreed that an important priority for Crewe should be to improve the schooling and raising young people’s aspirations. It was highlighted to Members that this was also a key issue discussed with the Senior Management Team and that educational attainment in Crewe is a priority for the Children and Families Service.

Members requested that a programme of key actions over the short, medium and long term be developed and circulated to the Committee and that a further update be received in the future.

RESOLVED

1. That the presentation be received.
2. That education be considered a key priority.
3. That a programme of key actions be circulated to the Committee
4. That an update be brought back to the Committee at a future date.

Councillors Thorley, Weatherill and Fletcher left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

50 **MACCLESFIELD ECONOMIC MASTER PLAN**

The Committee received a presentation on the Macclesfield Economic Master Plan which informed the Committee that Cheshire East Council had commissioned a consultancy team, led to develop an Economic Masterplan for Macclesfield, with the core focus on Macclesfield Town Centre, and direct reference to the Wilson Bowden Development Agreement that is in place and the South Macclesfield Development Area (SMDA). The presentation also outlined:

- The process to date
- Feedback on the consultation, option 4 (retail, leisure, housing, new football stadium and new link road) being the preferred option for the SMDA.
- Action plans
- Key messages and actions
- Preferred options and testing
- Accessibility
- Planning evidence
- Market perspective
- Next steps and time frame
- Marketing and visioning messages
- Recommended next steps
- Short term goals
- conclusions

Members discussed the plans for the football stadium within the SMDA, and the desire for a theatre, although it was unknown where this would be located.

With regard to town centre management, Members commented that there was a large amount of litter around Macclesfield Town Hall and requested that this issue be rectified.

It was agreed that an update would be brought back to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED

1. That the presentation be received.
2. That an update be brought back to the Committee in due course.

Councillors Hollins and Parsons left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

51 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the extracts of the forward plan which fall within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the extracts be noted

52 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme. It was agreed that the LTP Implementation Plan would be considered at the Scrutiny Committee scheduled to be held on 8 February 2011.

RESOLVED

That the LTP Implementation Plan be considered at the Scrutiny Committee scheduled to be held on 8 February 2011.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.05 pm

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)